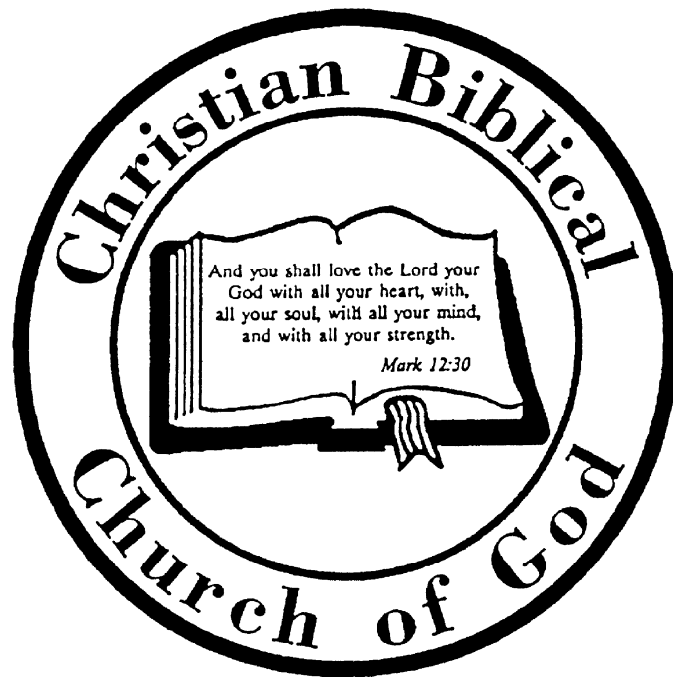


# **General Epistles First, Second & Third John**



**Transcript Book**

By Fred R. Coulter

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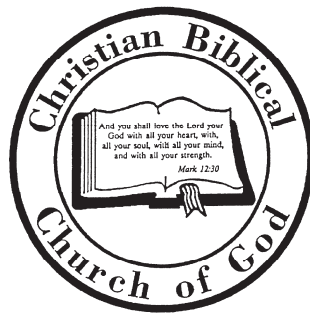
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## 1st, 2nd & 3rd John

Series of 13 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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# Contents

## Booklet

	PAGE
Epistle of First John I -----	1 – 9
Epistle of First John II -----	10 – 20
Epistle of First John III -----	21 – 30
Epistle of First John IV -----	31 – 41
Epistle of First John V -----	42 – 53
Epistle of First John VI -----	54 – 63
Epistle of First John VII -----	64 – 75
Epistle of First John VIII -----	76 – 85
Epistle of First John IX -----	86 – 94
Epistle of First John X-----	95 –105
Epistle of First John Xa -----	106–118
Epistle of First John XI -----	119–130
Epistles of Second & Third John XII -----	131–143

## **Compact Disc I**

*[When included]*

**Tracks 1 & 2 Epistle of First John I**

**Tracks 3 & 4 Epistle of First John II**

**Tracks 5 & 6 Epistle of First John III**

**Tracks 7 & 8 Epistle of First John IV**

**Tracks 9 & 10 Epistle of First John V**

**Tracks 11 & 12 Epistle of First John VI**

**Tracks 13 & 14 Epistle of First John VII**

**Tracks 15 & 16 Epistle of First John VIII**

**Tracks 17 & 18 Epistle of First John IX**

**Tracks 19 & 20 Epistle of First John X**

**Tracks 21 & 22 Epistle of First John Xa**

**Tracks 23 & 24 Epistle of First John XI**

**Tracks 25 & 26 Epistles of Second & Third John XII**

# **General Epistles First, Second & Third John**

## **Foreword**

This collection of sermon transcripts covers in detail the General Epistles First, Second and Third John. These sermons were given by a minister of Jesus Christ for over 56 years, Mr. Fred R. Coulter.

In these sermon transcripts, you will find much study given on the words of the Apostle John and how they apply to a person seeking fellowship with Jesus Christ. Briefly, some of the main points are as follows:

- In Revelation 11 it is said that Jerusalem is Sodom and Egypt. Sodom is referring to sexual mores and Egypt is referring to religion.
- Today Satan is no longer being restrained. In the world and in the Churches of God Satan is sponsoring lies and discredits the very truth of God.
- A question that is brought up and answered in this sermon transcript book deals with the authority of God in churches. The authority of God is based on truth, and Satan's authority is based on lies. So, what happens when Satan is allowed to place tares in places of church authority? This book gives the answer to Satan being in governmental authority.
- The entire Epistle of I John is based upon discerning the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error. The religions of the world are all based on error.
- Jesus Christ came in the flesh, but it should be understood that the flesh is inherently evil.
- The Apostle John emphasized emphatically that if people love the world that the Father does not dwell in them.
- For the New Covenant Sabbath keeping is vital for the covenant because God fellowships with us in the New Covenant on the Sabbath Day.
- People who lie to themselves, so as to justify themselves, have the lies they want to believe become truth in their minds. They can no longer distinguish truth from a lie.
- If a person wants a deep abiding relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, they will have to go beyond commandment-keeping in the letter of the law to commandment-keeping in the spirit of the law.
- The Spirit of God motivates the children of God whereas the spirit of deception motivates Satan's children. The children of God and the children of Satan cannot co-exist in harmony.

- Know that God, for what God wants His people to know, has had His commands written down. Note God's explicit command to write down what he says, as the Apostle John was told to do regarding Revelation. God does not rely on oral tradition regarding His commands and statutes.
- In the Bible, when it says fellowship with God, it is saying that Jesus the Christ and God the Father are dwelling within one.
- Upon the death of the Apostle John, the original Apostolic age ended. The Church of God then just literally blew apart when the time arrived where those that promote heresy gained so much power that those who wanted to hold to the Truth of God had to leave.
- Throughout Church history the servants of Satan (called tares in the Bible) deny that God the Father is a person. They deny that Jesus Christ is the exact image of the Father.
- This transcript book also discusses in much detail the unpardonable sin as well as the fellowship of the Spirit.
- The true love of God has no fear of God. In this spiritual relationship with God a person loves God and does not want to sin.
- In this transcript book there is devoted an entire sermon on prayer: how to effectively pray to God.
- Revealed is the meaning of what the phrase "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God..." means in detail. This is indeed the mystery of God.
- It is a damnable thing to take the Truth of God and exchange it and turn the Truth of God into a lie—once you have known the Truth of God.

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



## Epistle of First John I

### Survey of Greek Words for “Know”

Fred R. Coulter

We see that there are many, many parallels in the First Epistle of John that fit today. The Epistle of 1-John is really quite a tremendous and fantastic book. I’m not going to go much into the background here today. Rather, when I send this out I will have the background all written up so you can go ahead and read it. But there are just a couple of things that I want to cover.

From: *An introduction to the New Testament* (no author cited) concerning 1-John:

The forcible simplicity of its sentences, the node of finality behind its utterances, the marvelous blending of gentle love and deep cutting sternness of its contents and the majesty of its un-garnished thoughts have made 1-John a favorite with Christians everywhere. The simplicity of its language makes it intelligible to the simplest saint.. While the profundity of its truth challenge the most accomplished scholars.

I’ll have to say, ‘Amen’ to that. That is a good evaluation of it.

It’s grand theological revelation and its unwavering ethical demands have left their enduring impact on the thought and life of the Christian church. Now, for example, there’s something most important that we find in 1-John. He says about what he is writing.

What we’re going to do as we go into the book of 1-John, we’re going to go ahead and we’ll use *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*, which I did. We’re going to see some very profound things in an overview as we look at it. You will notice the Greek text from the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by Berry, because this will help us a great deal.

Let’s focus in on something that’s important that John did. He said, *I write* or *I wrote*; and only in one place does he say, ‘*say*’. That in itself is very profound. As we do this survey we’ll go to these verses very quickly. Then when we come back and do a verse-by-verse, this will help us connect it all together.

1-John 1:4: “These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full.”

Let me mention here that the scholars have a dispute as to who wrote 1-John. Because in the first part of it, it is *we*. And I’m convinced that the *we* has to do with the apostles that were *with* John. So, he says, “...we are also writing...”

1-John 2:1 “My little children, I am writing...” It’s very important what he’s saying. We’re going to see that every one of these things has to do with knowledgeable, long-time, converted brethren of Christ, and the crisis that was at hand then.

Verse 7: “Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment.... [yet, on the other hand]: ...I am writing a new commandment to you...” (vs 7-8).

You will notice all the way through that I translated these in the present tense, because that’s what it is in the Greek.

Verse 12: “I am writing to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name.”

Verse 13: “I am writing to you, fathers...”

Verse 14: “I wrote to you, fathers...”

This is most interesting the way it is done—and all the way through.

Verse 21: “I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth...” He is *writing* to long-time, converted members. He’s *writing* to them because they have known the Truth.

Verse 26: “These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.” A current event that *was happening*. That’s why it’s so applicable to the Church today: “...those who are leading you astray.”

1-John 5:13: “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God...” That’s *why he wrote* the whole book.

Verse 16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto 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*” That’s the only place that he said, *I say*. In this case it’s a negation: *I am not saying that you should pray for that individual*.

I’ll continue with a little bit of background so we can really understand it. First of all, the ultimate reason for writing 1-John was *the spiritual*

**condition** of the believers. And **nothing** could be more apropos than that today. The **spiritual condition** of the believers!

Let's discuss something here, which even John may not have fully realized. He says, 1-John 2:18: “Little children, it is *the* last time... [we'll show a little bit more what that could possibly mean as we go along] ...and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is **the last time**.” So, not only was the last time for them, at that particular time, but this is also a prophecy for us today.

Let's see what it was said of John by Jesus; and why he would write that it is the last time—because maybe even John had hopes that this might occur. There are some things that you *believe in absolutely*. There are some things you *believe in until you find out the whole truth* and find something better. There are some things you *hope are true* but may not work out that way, which we have here with the Apostle John. I am sure that he **hoped** that what Jesus said here would be true.

After Christ told Peter three times, ‘If you love Me, feed My sheep’; John 21:19: “Now, He said this to signify by what death he would glorify God.... [that Peter would die a very ignominious death] ...And after saying this, He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’” So, not only did He say **feed My sheep** three times, He said **follow Me**, which means, *as you're feeding the sheep 'you follow Me.'*

Verse 20: “But when Peter turned, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following... [behind] ...who also had sat at the supper and *leaned* on His chest, and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is betraying You?’ Seeing him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what *shall happen* to this one?’” (vs 20-21).

Very profound lesson for us, Peter was not out of the ‘political woods’ at all. As a matter of fact, in the series *Scripturalism vs Judaism* we see that that was an Achilles heel that followed Peter all along. Cost him a great deal of trouble.

Verse 22: “Jesus said to him, ‘If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you? You follow Me.’” Some very profound lessons for any person, but in particularly, any minister. You have to follow God under all circumstances regardless of what any other minister may or may not do.

Verse 23: “Then this saying went out... [and I'm sure that John wrote this in there:] ...among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. However, Jesus did not say to him that he would not die; but, ‘If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you?’”

Even in writing this, John did not say that he was going to die, or that he expected to die. I think that John was hoping that it was the last time, not knowing that it was a prophecy, and hoping that he would remain until Jesus came. Now that didn't happen physically, *but it did spiritually*, because the Apostle John was the one to whom the Revelation of Jesus Christ was given by the Father to Christ to give to John. So, he did **literally see** in prophetic events, the return of Christ before he died. I'm sure in that statement—*this is the last time*—he was hoping that this maybe so.

Now let's look at a couple of other Scriptures and tie this together, because even the Apostle Paul said that ‘*the mystery of iniquity is already working*.’ Brethren, that's what we are dealing with now with this whole New Age stuff and what is happening to all the Churches of God is ‘*the mystery of iniquity*,’ which starts out *leaving the Truth, but retaining a ‘tinkle’ of the Truth*, which *leads to the thud of deception*. That's exactly what we are seeing happening today!

2-Thessalonians 2:7: “For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is* One Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the midst*.”

I feel that the restraint has been taken away. How long it's going to occur before the end comes, I do not know. Because none of us can say what the fullness of the iniquity of Babylon the Great is going to come to. We look at things in the world and we can see that by degree in relationship to what we've known in the past, that things are getting more and more wicked. That they're getting more and more evil. But what is the fullness of that? I don't say I can tell you what it is. But I think we have clue.

Rev. 11 says of Jerusalem that it's Sodom and Egypt. How bad was it when the two angels went to rescue Lot? Is that how bad it's going to get? *I don't know*, but it gives us kind of question mark and a guidepost to say: Why does it say Sodom and Egypt?

- Sodom, referring to the *sexual mores*
- Egypt, referring to the *religion*

We're going to see that all of this stuff that's coming Into the Churches of God today is a reincarnation of the old Egyptian religion under the guise of New Age.

We will see that's why John talks about the light. I think that John's epistle is a direct prophecy to the Churches of God as to what exactly is going to happen in the end-time when God removes the restraint and the evil is unleashed in the world and within the Church. What happens to the doctrines?

from: *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*:

It's talking about the permanent interest and importance for [1-John] for Christian faith and practice. The validity of religious experience, the relation of inspiration to authority... [and that's profound—isn't it?] ...**Does authority exist when lies are enforced?**

What is the authority of God? The authority of God is based on *Truth*! The administration of the Church is through the Spirit of Truth. So, when we have the **authority** of the Church coming along, preaching lies—as we will see in the book of 1-John, that's what was happening—then this tells us exactly what was going on.

The meaning of love and the nature of Christian hope and the proper attitude to those who have convictions radically different than our own.

So, he goes through and identifies the nature of the opposition, the identity of the opponents and how all that fits in.

These are not letters written to convert people or to defend a certain particular doctrine, rather these are pastoral letters, directed to those Christians who have remained faithful in order to under-gird their faith and reinforce their loyalty during the period of crisis.

That's exactly what we have today.

Let's look at some of the nature of the opposition; we will take a little survey as we're going along. This is not a problem of Judaizers as we have in the book of Galatians. This is a problem with Gnostics, meaning *we know*. The illumination of Gnosticism is *illuminism*—the Illuminati today and Masonry—which I think we're in for a big surprise how much that really is controlling everything, and with their subsidiary groups that they have. This has to do with the beginning **paganization** of the Church of God, rather than the conspiracy to bring it back to Judaism through circumcision.

Now let's look at some of this and why he uses this terminology. 1-John 1:6 talks about some of the opposition that is bringing **spiritual darkness**. That's happening in the Church today.

1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness...” **Very profound!** We'll talk about light and darkness as we get into the series, but this is **exactly** what is happening in the churches today;

**exactly** what is happening within all of the ministers today. They are being told to **preach darkness**, and yet, they keep saying they are of the light.

Verse 8 shows that there are those coming around: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

Guess what one of the latest teachings is? *That other religions can also receive salvation through **their** religions!* I think that Satan received permission to take down, in particular, the Worldwide Church of God quickly. **This test**, that we are going to see in 1-John, is going to be so profound because everyone must follow the Truth.

They are saying that it's not necessary for salvation to keep the commandments of God and that commandment-keeping is only the ‘tradition’ of the Church. Think on that **tinkle of Truth** for just a minute. If commandment-keeping is only **a tradition of the Church** that means that other traditions in other churches are just as valid. And above all, I want you to understand that the book of 1-John—though it is simple to read, though it appears easy to understand—is *very deep and very profound and it really teaches you **how to think!*** That's what we will do as we go through here.

1-John 2:4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.” We're also going to cover a little session on commandment-keeping when we're going through here, and we're also going to make this a major series in love.

Verse 8: “Again, **I am writing** a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining”—**if you are walking to the light** (John 3:16-21).

We will see the opposition again v 6: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.” Another way of saying *you shall know them by their fruits*.

1-John 4:20: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?” That's part of the opposition.

1-John 2 is full of the opposition. Let's just nail this down here; 1-John 2:22: “Who is the liar...” That's what we're dealing with today:

- **lies** being preached in the name of Jesus Christ
- **lies** that are being preached as Truth

- *lies* that are, that have a *tinkle* of the Truth **and are not Truth**

“...if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?...” (v 22). How do you deny that Jesus is the Christ?

- that He didn’t come in the flesh
- that He didn’t have the same flesh that we have
- that He is not the Savior of the whole world
- that people can be saved some other way

You can just add the whole list up.

“...He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son” (v 22). How do you deny the Father and the Son?

- you deny the true, revealed existence as shown in the Bible as to the nature of God
- you also deny it by breaking the commandments of God
- you also deny it by trying to find your place in the world

—*which is exactly what is happening*. They’re trying to find their place in the world by denying Christ. That’s the profound part of it.

John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out Into the world.” Let’s reverse that just a little bit: “...many false prophets have gone out Into the world...” ***through the Church of God!***

Verse 2: “By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world” (vs 2-3)—and yea, brethren, ***today is in the Church!***

That’s part of the nature of the opposition. We will see there’s more to it when we get there, but I want to do another survey to show you that this was written to Christians ***who know***. This was written to Christians who should be able to ***think*** with the Word of God, to be able to ***perceive*** with the Spirit of God. ***Very profound!***

There are a combined total of 37 ***profound things*** in the book of 1-John that ***you are to know***. And I think it’s very profound that John used this—translated *you know* or *have known*—which comes from two Greek words, one of which is ‘gnosis.’ *Gnosis* is what they were fighting—the Gnostics

who said, ‘**we know** through our philosophy.’ Paul was fighting this, as we saw in Col. 2, but John now goes right after them tooth-and-nail to label the Gnostics. He shows to the brethren ***what*** they should know. I think it’s most interesting that it does not start until 1-John 2. The first Greek *knowing* that we’re going to go after is:

- ***‘ginosko’***:
  - to *know*
  - to *know from experience*
  - to have *learned by doing*
  - to have *comprehended by practicing*

We are ***to know*** the things of God!

- to learn
- to understand
- to comprehend
- to realize

it sort of overlaps with the other word for *know*:

- ***‘oida’***:
  - to ***comprehend mentally***

Not only is it a result of experience, but taking the ‘ginosko’ of experience of knowledge to then comprehend. Another way of putting it is how we have said, ***we are to think*** with the Scriptures and the Spirit of God.

Let’s understand some other words:

- ***‘ginoema’***—shows *purpose and intent*. So knowledge then reveals the purpose and intent of God
- ***‘gnorizo’***—which then is the verb *to make known* or *reveal*
- ***‘gnosis’***—which is *knowledge*
- ***‘gnostics’***—which is *gnosticism*

Now let’s look at the other word:

- ***‘oida’***:
  - to know by perception
  - to know by close relationship
  - to know by understanding

And we are going to see, as we go through, that John uses ‘ginosko’—*to know by experience*; and ‘oida’—*to know by comprehension and perception*. He uses one and then the other.

Now let’s go through and we will see each one of these as we are going along. Let me make a correction on the number of times it is used. ‘Ginosko’ is used 23 times. ‘Oida’ is used 14 times in 1-John. ‘Ginosko’ is used once in 2-John and ‘oida’ is used twice in 3-John. Let’s go through and see ***what we should know***. It’s also very interesting, that John does not start this until chapter two.

Take the *Interlinear*; I know that sometimes when we do this it is a little difficult for some

people. But if you bear with it and go over it again, and repeat it you will understand it. ***I do not believe that the brethren of God should be kept in a perpetual state of mediocrity in their knowledge of the Scriptures:***

- neither should any minister be kept in a perpetual state of mediocrity
- neither should we say at any time that the knowledge we have is sufficient
- neither at any time should we say that we no longer need to grow in grace and knowledge, because we constantly need to

So therefore, even though some people have criticized me by saying that I go to the original language too much, I’m sorry to tell you that the Bible was not inspired in English. And even though some people say I read too many books, I’m sorry to tell you that if you don’t read you’re going to get *snowed with deception*.

I don’t read a lot of *ferbelfrable*, and I detest novels. I’m very thankful to one lady who sends me things all the time; she sent me some things on thee Jewish Kabbalah, which it just blows your mind when you understand what they really believe. It is necessary, and I hope I can help you along, kind of nurse you along with the *Interlinear*. I understand that there are going to be the Greek words that you won’t be able to comprehend. But you will be able to see the difference in the spelling of the Greek directly above it—so that you can know the difference in the two words: *ginosko* and *oida*.

1-John 2:3 (*Interlinear*): “And by this **we know...**” These are the things we are to know as Christians. This word is ‘ginosko’—pronounced in the case ‘ginoskomen’ because ***we know***; that is all the apostles and all the brethren.

“...that we have known Him...” (v 3). That’s the apostles knowing Christ personally—have known, experiential knowledge—another form of ‘ginosko’—which then is ‘ginoskomen,’ which then is in the past tense.

“...that we have known Him...” because a lot of people go around saying. ‘Well, I’ve known the Lord.’ How do you know you know Him? ***Fundamental Christianity!***

“...**if** His commandments we keep. He that says...” (vs 3-4). Wherever you have ‘He that says’ I translated it correctly: ‘The one who is saying’—because that’s what it means. So, you’ll be able to identify it as we go through.

“...I have known Him...[Christ; attest; profound knowledge] ...and His commandments is not keeping, a liar is, and in him the Truth is not” (v 4)—***because a liar cannot have the Truth in him!***

He may have part of the Truth to deceive you, but he does not have ***the Truth*** because he’s a liar. And that’s exactly what we are experiencing in the Church today. So there it is, *fundamental*. If you know Christ, you’re going to be keeping His commandments. We know that ‘sin is the transgression of the law,’ and no sinner’s going to be in the Kingdom of God, so therefore, ***commandment-keeping is essential to Christianity and salvation!*** We’ll cover it in more detail, but I want to focus on the things we are *to know*.

Verse 5 (*Int.*): “...but whoever may keep His Word, truly in him the love of God has been perfected. **By this we know...** [*experiential knowledge—‘ginoskomen’—we are knowing, present tense*] ...that in Him we are.”

Simplest Greek; the most profound and powerful, and yet, the most loving of all. Remember, when John was called, was called one of ‘the sons of thunder.’ So, he did not come by his love very easily. But the thunder is still there with the love when you get into it.

Now we’re going to see both of the *knowings*. Here is the other *knowing*—‘oida’—v 11 (*Int.*): “But he that hates his brother... [the one who is hating his brother] ...in the darkness is, and in the darkness walks...” We’re going to see that it has to do with our *Christian walk*.

- Are we walking with Christ?
- Are we walking in darkness?
- Are we walking in the light, but are back to it and walking away from it?
- Are we walking in the light and coming to it?

“...and **knows not...**” (v 11—that is ‘oida.’ Wherever you see, look at the first word there, it looks like an *o-u-k*. That’s the same in the Greek as in the English—‘ook’—*the impossibility of comprehending where he’s going*. So, he cannot ***perceive*** where he’s going; he mentally doesn’t get it. So you see the difference in the word. One is you ***know by experience—you know*** because ***you know that you know***—‘ginosko.’ ‘Oida’ means *to perceive, mentally comprehend* the circumstances as you see them.

“...and knows not where he goes, because the darkness blinded his eyes” (v 11).

Again we will see ‘ginosko’ twice in v 13 (*Int.*): “I write to you, fathers, because ye **have known** [past tense] him who {is} from {the} beginning. I write to you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked {one}. I write to you, little children, because ye **have known the Father.**”

By experience of conversion, by experience of living, by receiving the Holy Spirit—*have known*.

Verse 14 (*Int.*): “I wrote to you, fathers, because ye have known him who {is} from {the} beginning.” *Have known by experience!*

Verse 18 (*Int.*): “Little children, {the} last hour it is, and according as ye heard that the **antichrist is coming...**” Notice what he does here: there is *the* antichrist. He understood what Paul was writing about in 2-Thess. 2. And everyone is looking for *the* antichrist, and they forget to look at all the little mini-antichrists.

“...even now antichrists many have arisen, whence **we know...** [because we are experiencing what this is and *by this experience* we understand] ...that {the} last hour it is” (v 18).

Verse 20 (*Int.*): “And ye {the} anointing have from the holy {one}, and ye know [*oida-tee*: comprehend] all things”—or *perceive*.

That doesn’t mean you know everything in the world. But it means that pertaining to life, Christianity, the commandments of God and what’s going on in the Church, you are able to perceive or understand all things. Now, that’s what it means. Notice the difference in it again: This is *you*, you *can perceive* it. Not that you have *experienced* it, but your experience ‘of ginosko’ through Christ gives you ‘oida’ perception of what’s going on.

That’s where we are in the Church today. People know certain things but they don’t take that knowledge so they can perceive. So therefore, the things they know are being taken from them.

(go to the next track)

Comment was made, which is very apropos, that he’s doing the same thing that Peter was doing in 2-Peter 1:12, to establish them in the present Truth. The Truth expands *as you use the Truth*—so this is what John is doing. He’s saying: ‘You are to *perceive* all things because of the truth of the knowledge—the knowledge of the Truth that you have’

2-Peter 1:12: “Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them ... [I’m sure that that is ‘oida’<sub>[corrected]</sub>] ...and have been established in the present Truth.”

But the *present Truth*, brethren, is *eternal Truth*—and eternal truth is to always give us the *perception*, the ‘oida’—so we can continue to function so that you perceive. In other words, he’s talking the same thing as John: using the Truth to understand and perceive based upon the *present*

*Truth*, which you have to expand upon that—in Truth. Because as you are walking to the Light:

- you’re growing in grace
- you’re growing in knowledge
- you’re growing in Truth

Not only are you growing in what you know by experience, but you’re growing in what you *understand* and *perceive* because you’re thinking with the Truth of God.

Peter and John were having the same problems within the Church. I’ll tell you, it is most difficult to try and talk with someone who is leaving the Truth but still having their fingers on it in a corrupt way. It is most difficult! This is why John is writing the way he is, to then base it on the commandments. If you know Him you’re ‘keeping His commandments.’

1-John 2:21 (*Int.*)—and this is another one where it’s ‘oidate’: “I have not written unto you because ye know not the Truth, but **because ye know it...**” There it is used twice. Not only do you experience by doing it, but you *comprehend* and *understand* it as a way of thinking.

We’re going to see it used in both cases, v 29 (*Int.*) “If you know...” Let me just say, the tense of the verb changes the spelling of the verb. That’s why this one is spelled ‘eidte’—*long e*. Because when you use the ‘if’ you change the spelling. In English you don’t change it, but in Greek you do, it still means the same.

Verse 29 (*Int.*): “If you know **that He** [Christ] is righteous, you *also* know... [by experience] ...that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten by Him.”

We’ll come back and analyze that even more when we go through a verse-by-verse study of it. But you have the two. If you comprehend and understand that Christ is righteous, you *know from experience* that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten of Him.

In other words any righteousness that we are practicing is motivated by the Spirit of God within us, because we can’t do it on our own. Why? *Because ‘the carnal mind cannot please God, neither indeed can be!’* But if we are minding the things of the Spirit then we are pleasing to Him because we are walking in the things of the Spirit. So, there (1-John 2:29) we have both of them together.

1-John 3:1 (*Int.*) is going to necessitate change. The first word, where it says ‘see’ that is a command form of ‘oida’ so it really is, instead of “See what love has given to us the Father...” it is:

1-John 3:1 (Int.): “**Comprehend the magnitude of the love** that the Father has for us.” Isn’t that what we’ve been trying to do? *comprehend the magnitude of the love of God!* It’s more than just *behold* or *see*—it is *see*; to *perceive*. It is to *behold* because you *comprehend*. I just about came unglued when I read that, because that is something!

1-John 3:1: “[See or] Behold! [from perception] What *glorious* love the Father... [or what kind of love—when it says ‘what manner’ (KJV) or kind is understood] ...has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us... [Doesn’t understand us; by experience the world cannot figure us out; by experience the world doesn’t realize who we are.] ...because it did not know [‘egno’] Him.”

I don’t know about you, but I get excited when I go through this, so if it’s tough on you don’t worry about it, bear with me, we’ll get it. But, I think when you understand this kind of writing, this just *lifts* your understanding of the Scriptures *so much more*. It gives you a real spiritual feeling and understanding when you’re reading it that this is not just some words that some man wrote down, but the *profound, inspired Word of God!* When we get the spiritual sense out of this, God is speaking to us through His Spirit, just like He inspired it to be written.

Verse 2 (Int.): “Beloved, now children of God are we, and not yet was it manifested what we shall be; but we know... [‘oidamen’—*we comprehend*. You don’t know from experiential fact do you? You don’t know from ‘ginosko’ because it’s something that you know by experience but you know because you comprehend it with God’s Spirit.] ...that if He be manifested, **like Him we shall be...**”

What is it that is being taken away from the Church of God today? *The very comprehension of their ultimate destiny!* **That comprehending knowledge**—obviously we can’t experience it until the resurrection—but we can perceive and comprehend it **now!** That we are going to see Him **exactly** as He is. Because **we** will be as He is! And that’s a most vital and important thing that we can know.

Verse 5 (Int.): “And ye know that he was manifested, that sins our he might take away; and sin in him is not”

This here is: *you comprehend, you know and understand*. A lot of them did not visually *see* Christ crucified—and even then they didn’t understand it by the experience—but you understand it because of the *spiritual perception* that God has given you.

Verse 6 (Int.): “Anyone that in him abides not sins... [practice sin] ...anyone that sins not has seen Him, not has **known** [‘ginoskomen’] Him.”

Very interesting! Were there people alive who had seen Christ? *Thousands!* Were those people going around saying, ‘I know Him but we’re keeping His commandments and sinning?’ *Yes!*

So, we are dealing with some very deep understanding here. ‘Anyone who says that he abides in Him has seen Him, and is sinning, has not known Him.’ There is no way that he could have known Him. Why? *Because he would have gotten the message very loud and clear that ‘the wages of sin is death.’*

Verse 14 (Int.): “We know...”—‘oidamen’—and it looks like a funny ‘y’ with a ‘y’ on the wrong side—that is a Greek ‘em’.

“...we know, ‘oidamen’ that we have passed from death to life...” (v 14). In other words, you **comprehend** this because of all the facts that you know and have understood and have experienced.

“...because we love the brethren” (v 14). That’s how we know. I tell you, all of us ministers better understand that clearly. Do you love God? Do you love the brethren? *If you love God then serve the brethren, feed the sheep!* Isn’t that what Jesus told Peter? *Yes!*

Verse 15 (Int.): “Everyone that hates brother his a murderer is, and **ye know**... [comprehend] ...that any murderer not has life eternal in him abiding.” We’ll talk about *spiritual* murder, because that happens. Have you experienced a *spiritual murderous attack* upon you? If you have you understand what I’m talking about.

Verse 16 (Int.): “By this we have **known love**... [experienced it] ...because he for us has life laid down... [you experience that love—knowledge by experience] ...and we ought for the brethren {our} lives to lay down.”

From here on there are no more ‘oidas’ until we come to 1-John 5. All through chapter three and chapter four are ‘ginosko’—*by knowledge and experience*.

Verse 19 (Int.): “And by this **we know**... [and that’s present tense—‘we are knowing’] ...that of the Truth we are, and before Him shall persuade our hearts, that if should condemn our heart, that greater is God than our heart and **knows all things**” (vs 19-20).

This is talking about experience in relating to you and your relationship with God. Not only does God comprehend everything, but He also

**knows**, by experience, everything—doesn’t He? Because He’s God? *Yes!*

Verse 24 (*Int.*): “And he [the one] that keeps His commandments in him abides, and He in him: and by this **we know...**”—‘ginoskomen’—by an *ongoing experiential knowledge*. This tells us that we have the Spirit of God! We’re not to doubt! Now there are times when the Spirit of God may be, in some people, just flickering. But I know we’ve all experienced that at times. But we know that we are in Him by *experiential knowledge*. How do we know? **By the Spirit which He’s given to us!**

1-John 4:2 (*Int.*): “By this ye **know** the Spirit of God...” We’re also to know the Spirit of God. Not only *in* us, but we’re also to know, **by experience**, the Spirit of God in all the preaching done by false prophets—or true prophets—whether they have the Spirit of God or not.

Verse 6 (*Int.*): “We of God are; he that **knows God...**”—present tense—the one who is knowing God by the experience in their lives—not just comprehending what He shall be. But **knowing God by experience**. That ties right back in with, ‘The one who says ‘I have known Him and is not keeping His commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in Him. The one who KNOWS Him is keeping His commandments.’

“...hears us; he [the one] that is not of God, hears not us. By this **we know** the *Spirit of Truth*, and the *spirit of error*” (v 6). They’re both spirit. We *know by experience*, as well as *perceiving* the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error.

You add up all the things we are *to know* it’s something— isn’t it? **It is profound!** These are things, which those who have the Spirit of God if they don’t know, then Satan can come along and knock them off center—he can get an advantage over them.

Verse 7 (*Int.*): “Beloved, we should love one another; because love of God is, and everyone that loves, of God has been begotten, and [**is knowing**] **knows God.**”

We’ll get Into that a whole, whole much more and very deeply when we come to it. Because when we come to this section it is **profound** and **so meaningful!** I tell you, this book of 1-John just is like when we went through the Gospel of John. That was really exciting when we went through it. When we got all done with it, we said, we just feel like we’re ready to start again. The book of 1-John is going to be the same way, it is *profound*.

Verse 8 (*Int.*): “He that loves not, knew not God; because God love is.” *Doesn’t know God!*

Verse 13 (*Int.*): “By this we know that in Him we abide, and He in us, because of His Spirit He has given to us.”

Again, Christians who have been long-time Christians and converted know they have the Spirit of God. What are we to do with the Spirit of God if it’s kind of left flickering here a little bit? *We’re to stir up Spirit that’s within us* (2 Tim. 1:6).

1-John 5:2 (*Int.*): “By this we know {are knowing}... [present tense] ...that we love the children of God, when God we love and His commandments keep.” I want you to notice that is the same order as Jesus said, ‘If you love Me keep My commandments.’ That’s the same order that you find in Exo. 20, in the second commandment: ‘to those who love God and keep His commandments.’ **Very profound Spirit Truth!**

Verse 13 (*Int.*): “These things I wrote to you who believe [Into] on the name of the Son of God, **that ye may know** [comprehend] that life ye have eternal...”

Again, this is just a survey, we’ll expound this as we get Into each verse.

Verse 15 (*Int.*): “And if **we know...** [all the way through here, we’re using ‘oida’; ‘oidamen’ in this case—we *know*; we *are knowing*] ...that He hears us...”

In other words: You have, when you pray, you comprehend and know that He’s hearing you. Why? *Because of the Spirit that is in us, that He gives us!* Now also, that we know that He hears us.

“...whatsoever we may ask, we **know...** [‘oidamen’—*comprehend*] ...that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.” And that’s because we’re doing the things that please Him.

Verse 18 (*Int.*): “We know that anyone that has been begotten of God not sins... [*practicing sin*] ...but he that was begotten of God keeps himself, and the wicked {one} does not touch him. We **know** [comprehend, ‘oidamen’] that of God we are, and **the world whole in the wicked {one} lies...** [or lies in the wicked one—we *comprehend that*] ...And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding that we might **know** [experiential knowledge] Him that {is} true [Christ]...” (vs 18-20)

2-John 1 (*Int.*): “The elder to {the} elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not I only, but also **all those who have known** the Truth.” Have known by experience the Truth. That’s what we need to do.



- we have to *exercise*
- we have to *use*
- we have to *build*
- we have to *grow*
- we have to *comprehend*

—and all of those things come from God.

3-John 12 (*Int.*)—John uses ‘ginoskomen’ twice: “To Demetrius witness is borne by all, and by itself the Truth... [You can only comprehend that your witness is true—you’ve experienced it. But when you write to someone else, you have to say, ‘We comprehend’] (or): ...and we also bear witness, and ye know that our witness true is.”

Verse 14 (*Int.*): “...but I hope immediately [or shortly] **to see** thee and mouth to mouth... [in English we say, face-to-face, but it’s the same thing] ...we shall speak.” Oh, *to see you*—that’s interesting; notice the ‘see’—that comes from ‘oida.’ That is the infinitive form of the verb: *to see you*. I’m going to have to do some studying on that. That’s interesting! Not only *to see you*, this means *to perceive* and *understand* with you. There are a lot of coded things in John that he writes that way.

We have a little more to go as far as the time goes, but this a pretty intense study that we’ve gone through so we’ll go ahead and end it here for today. This is going to be a very exciting and profound and deep study that we’re going to do in 1-John.

***It’s wonderful!*** It is absolutely a wonderful book. It is filled with, as it says there, with simplicity and with power, and also with knowledge and understanding. Next time we will do a little more surveying because as we went through, you saw many times where it is translated ***by this***. And *by this* comes from the Greek phrase: ‘en toutoo’—which means: ***in this***. Then you supply the word, *test, manner, standard, whatever—in this*.

I’ll show you how I translated that the next time we get together and cover 1-John.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* (except where noted)  
▪ *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-John 1:4
- 2) 1-John 2:1, 7-8, 12-14, 21, 26
- 3) 1-John 5:13, 16
- 4) 1-John 2:18
- 5) John 21:19-23
- 6) 2-Thessalonians 2:7
- 7) 1-John 1:6, 8
- 8) 1-John 2:4, 8, 6

- 9) 1-John 4:20
- 10) 1-John 2:22
- 11) 1-John 4:1-3
- 12) 1-John 2:3-5, 11, 13-14, 18, 20
- 13) 2-Peter 1:12
- 14) 1-John 2:21, 29
- 15) 1-John 3: 1-2, 5, 14-16, 19-20, 24
- 16) 1-John 4:2, 6-8, 13
- 17) 1-John 5:2, 13, 15, 18-20
- 18) 2-John 1
- 19) 3-John 12, 14

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 11
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- Colossians 2
- 2 Timothy 1:6
- Exodus 20

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *An Introduction to the New Testament* (no author cited)
- *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*

#### Sermon Series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*

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## Epistle of First John II

### The Spirit of Truth vs The Spirit of Error

Fred R. Coulter

I don't think we really have understood or realized how important this epistle is for us today, because history is repeating itself right before our eyes, right in the Churches of God.

from *An Introduction to the New Testament* (no author cited):

The author is clearly intent upon refuting doctrinal errors, which are threatening. But the final aim of the writer is practical. Safety of the readers whose establishment in the faith, in the face of these errors is his chief aim and makes it necessary that these errors be refuted.

This is exactly what we are going through today. Let's understand something concerning John. Let's go to Rev. 2 for just a minute, and let's connect the writings of John with a very important function of the Church at Ephesus. The Church at Ephesus was where John finished his ministry. He died in Ephesus. He was temporarily exiled to the island of Patmos, just off the coast from Ephesus, when he was given the vision for the book of Revelation. But notice one of things that they did:

Revelation. 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil..." We are going to see many contrasts:

- good and evil
- light and darkness
- righteousness and sin
- commandment-keeping and not commandment-keeping

—because the whole book of 1-John is a study in, what you might say, *radical contrasts*. One on one hand, one on the other hand.

"...and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and **did find them liars**" (v 2). We're also going to find in the book of 1-John many Scriptures which reference to *Truth*, *Light* and *liars*—because all of these things are coming in and attacking the brethren *from within*.

The problem of the exact nature and identity of the false teachings being controverted in the epistle...

*they're being discussed there*

...are actually the form or forms of Gnosticism.

The reason John went through and showed how many things we are *to know*, *comprehend* and *understand* is to combat Gnosticism, *one who knows, who has been enlightened by the divine illuminating one*. And that's exactly the same thing that is happening in the Church today.

Gnosticism was a philosophy of religion.

Doesn't that tie right in with what we went through in Col. 2 and philosophy and all those things? *Yes!*

Gnosticism professes not to be hostile to the Gospel.

That is a very key important thing to understand. Today, the changes, which are being made in the Truth of the Word of God, profess that they are not hostile to the Word of God.

They say this is *new enlightenment*, this is *new teaching*. But it is an attempt to interpret Christian doctrines from a higher **philosophical** standpoint.

*Think of that! That's exactly what we've been told.*

And in reality, it disintegrates and destroys them. Gnosticism has two guiding principles, which run through all their teaching. The first principle was the supremacy of the intellect and superiority of enlightenment and conduct. The Gnostics laid claim to a superior knowledge, which was the privilege of the few—they were the **knowing ones**.

Now, people are told today, that for your faith in God you don't need to understand theology, you leave that to the theologians. So, John is coming along, saying in the Epistle of 1-John that there are basic principles we need to follow:

- there's right
- there's wrong
- there's light
- there's darkness
- there's good
- there's evil
- there are lies
- there's truth
- there's the Spirit of Truth
- there's a spirit of error

And *the whole Epistle of 1-John is based upon the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error*. This is the same thing that led to the Catholic Church.

The superior insight to which they laid claim led naturally to a sense of pride in themselves as the elite of Christendom, which fostered an unbrotherly contempt for unenlightened members of the Church.

That's another way of saying that they just looked upon the members of the Church to be used, abused, tattooed and pray, pay, stay and obey.

For them, spiritual excellence consisted not in a Holy light, but in a superior knowledge, which enabled a man to rise above the earthbound chains of matter, into heavenly truth. John insisted on the innate relationship between **doctrine** and **conduct**.

I tell you, that's where we are today in the Church and that's what the Epistle of 1-John is all about—**doctrine** and **conduct!** *truth* and *light!*

A second guiding principle of the Gnostics was its view that *spirit is good*...[*any kind of spirit*] ...and matter is inherently evil. These two were regarded as the perpetual antagonism or hostility. And if matter is absolutely evil, it followed that there was no true incarnation of the Son of God.

Now you know why John wrote what he did.

We know why—and we are told almost the same thing today—that what Moses saw was not God, but a physical manifestation of what He wanted Moses to see. So, it's the same thing here. Those who believe in that kind of 'glob' of a god in the sky, **do not believe that Christ came in the flesh**. Because God would have nothing to do, or spirit rather, would have nothing to do with something that is fleshly, **because the flesh is inherently evil**.

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, **do not believe every spirit**... [now you see why this is important] ...but test the spirits..."

Didn't we read what they were doing there in Rev. 2—trying and testing the prophets, the apostles, whether they were speaking the Truth or not.

"...whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (v 1)—which means also that then they are being inspired and led by false spirits.

Verse 2: "By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God." This means:

- not just a special form of flesh

- not a different kind of flesh that we have
- *but that He came **exactly** in the flesh that we have*

Some of the false spirits will say, 'Oh, we believe Jesus came in the flesh, but He didn't have the same kind of flesh that you did, because God can't manifest Himself in the same kind of flesh that human beings have. He was just really a spirit who looked like flesh.' We're hearing the same doctrines today, even within the Church of God.

Verse 3: "And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And **this is the spirit of antichrist**, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world." And by saying, not just in the world, he's meaning in the Church—**from within**.

Two solutions to this were proposed. One view was that Christ did not have a real human body, but only appeared to have one. This theory is known as the 'theory of Docetism,' which means *just to appear, appear to have flesh*. The other view is that Christ was a separate being from Jesus. And, it denied the virgin birth of Jesus but recognized that He was pre-eminent for righteousness, prudence and wisdom, and He taught that the Christ Spirit came upon Him following His baptism and empowered His ministry but left Him before He was crucified.

What is one of the things of the New Age religion today, in the world? *You can receive the Christ Spirit*—in any religion that you are in, because Christ merely means *Messiah*. And another variation of that is: since God is 'glob' in the sky, and God is everywhere at all places at all times and in everything that there is, therefore you now have God in you and your job is through mediation, transcendental meditation, to find the Christ in you, because you have Christ in you. *And this is all a part of the doctrine that is coming upon the churches today*.

Let's look at some contrasts here; here is the whole basis for the book of 1-John; Verse 6: "**We are of God**..." We have to know that, and *those who are of God do know that*.

"...the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception" (v 6).

That's the whole basis for writing this book so that you can see and understand the difference

between the Spirit of Truth, as inspired of God: the Truth of the Word of God vs spirit of deception, which has—as I coined the phrased here recently—‘the *tinkle* of Truth.’

Let’s look and see how all of these things are combined and how they work out. Here’s the foundation of true Christianity, which I’ll read for you. Based upon the Spirit of Truth and the children of God are these following things:

1. life
2. truth
3. love
4. Spirit of God, a begettall from the Father
5. commandment-keeping
6. true knowledge
7. living and abiding in God’s way
8. Jesus Christ spiritually dwelling in each Christian
9. eternal life

Here’s the *spirit of deception*—and we find that John talks about the children of the devil. The *spirit of deception* is based:

1. darkness
2. lies
3. hatred
4. spirit of the devil

—and I wonder what it means, *the spirit of the devil*? Let’s see that the counterfeit spirit of the devil can actually work within a person. I would have to say it’s a *counterfeit begettall*. So that’s why I have number four *spirit of the devil*.

Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience.**”

John contrasts this as the children of God vs the children of the devil. So therefore, *spirit of the devil; begettall of the devil!*

5. commandment-breaking or transgression

Did not John have to re-define sin? *Yes he did!* What’s the Scripture you can think of in 1-John which defines sin for us?

1-John 3:4 (KJV): “Sin is the transgression of the law.” What is so fantastic about this is that John is showing us that for long-time Christians to re-gather themselves out of the mist of this kind of deception, they’ve got to go back to the clear contrasts.

6. false knowledge—*gnosis*
7. living and abiding in the devil and deception

8. the devil spiritually motivating his children
9. eternal death

Those are the contrasts that we are going to see all the way through the book of John.

Now let’s look at some of these as we are to have the affecting us in Christian living. Here are the conditions of Christian living that we find and we’re still just doing the survey of 1-John. Let’s look at the conditions for Christian living. I think it’s something that he listed it the way he has listed it, because so many people today, in talking to some of them, their minds are just kind of—I don’t know how you would describe it—just kind of *fogged over*, the veil.

### Points of Christian Living

#### I. Walking in the Light

1-John 1:5—so he goes back and declares the message from the beginning: “And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that **God is Light...**” That’s defining

- God’s *glory*
- God’s *righteousness*
- God’s **Truth**

everything about God is contained in the word **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...” (vs 5-6). Darkness personifies everything that Satan the devil stands for.

“...we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth” (v 6). Do we not have the same example of that today? *Yes!* What are some of those examples? *Well, other people who don’t keep the commandments of God as we do, they’re Christian and can be saved, too.* We’ll see a little bit later concerning commandment-keeping. And they also say, ‘Well, a person really does not have to be baptized to receive the Holy Spirit of God.’ So, what is happening, the darkness is coming in; **they are walking in darkness**. And the darkness is created by lies and they are not practicing the Truth.

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.” What do we have here?

The first point of Christian living is **walking in the light**. We’ll expound more on that when we go through verse-by-verse.

## II. Repentance

- What is the ‘tinkle of Truth’ to replace repentance?
- What is repentance? *To admit you’re wrong!*
- What else? *To change, to stop doing it!*

*Repentance* is also a **profound confession to God of the sinfulness of sin!** Repentance is a **total commitment** to go God’s way, rather than the way of the flesh. Now, the *tinkle of Truth* is: ‘Well, we have to turn from our human ways.’ That is not an incorrect statement, but it does not enunciate or tell us plainly *to repent*.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins...” (vs 8-9). Not only do you have to repent and turn from them, but you have to confess them; that’s part of the repentance, and sometimes that’s hard to do.

“...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (v 9).

## III. Keep the Commandments

What do you do after you repent? What is it that you do? Once you find out that you’re a sinner—and sin is *the transgression of the Law*—what is it then you are to do after you’ve repented? *You get up and you walk in God’s way; you walk in the light and you keep the commandments!*

Notice what he says here concerning commandment-keeping. So yes, Christian living involves **commandment-keeping!**

1. walk in the light
2. repent of your sins
3. keep the commandments

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if we are keeping His commandments**.” Then comes the contrast. John is saying, ‘Now, I want to make it absolutely, abundantly clear, because there are a lot of people going around here, claiming that you can know God and you don’t have to keep His commandments.’

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.”

So therefore, Christians today, when they have this muddled, fuzzy, blanked-over thinking—fogginess of mind—they have to get back to the absolute contrast. In other words, if anyone comes along and says that commandment-keeping or the keeping of the Law does not affect your salvation, *you know he’s a liar!* Rev. 2 says:

- we are to **test** those lies
- we are to **prove** that they are wrong
- we are to **preach** the Truth
- we are to **expose** the error

—and that’s what John is doing here because the whole book, the whole Epistle of 1-John is based on the Spirit of Truth vs the spirit of error. So all the way through, we’re going to see these contrasts.

## IV. Come out of the World

After you walk in the light and repent and keep the commandments of God, then what are you to do? *You are to come out of the world!* {Note Rev. 18:4, which says: ‘come out of her My people’}—that is out of greater Babylon, *the worldly system*.

John is doing the same thing here in 1-John 2:15—the next requirement for Christian living, constant Christian living: after walking in the light, after repenting of your sins—on an ongoing basis—and keeping the commandments of God.

Verse 15 says: “**Do not love the world...** [come out of the world] ...nor the things *that are* in the world....” Then he gives the contrast. Notice how that everything that John writes is comparing the extreme contrast: *Light and darkness!*

“...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (v 15).

- Can anyone get into the Kingdom of God without loving God?
- Can they get into the Kingdom of God without having the love of God **in** them?
- *No they cannot!*

Therefore, we can conclude that good sincere people in other religions do not have salvation, because their goodness and sincerity is of the world.

- Does the world have its goodness? *Yes!*
- Does the world have its standard? *Yes!*

The reason why the Apostle John is writing this way is because he is combating the degrees of subversion of the mind. That’s exactly what we see in the world; and that’s exactly what we see within the Church. We are being subverted in the world into a **one-world government** bit-by-bit-by; law-by-law, by statute, by enactment, by treaty. If they all of a sudden brought on the total one-world government we would reject it. So, it’s the same way with perverting the **Truth of God**. You pervert it a little here, a little there, a little change on emphasis, a re-wording of something. John is saying, ‘Look, you gotta strip all of that aside and I want you to know that the one who does not have the love of the Father, ***the Father is not in Him***’ if they’re loving the world.

What is happened in one of the largest denominations of the Church of God? *They were trying to define themselves the way the world wants to label them!* A person said, ‘Well, how would I tell someone not in the Church what we are as a church?’ So, the answer was: ‘Well, you can tell them we are not Catholic and we are not Jewish. However, most people would lump us in with Protestants.’

Have you ever heard the Church of God call itself Protestant? So, here’s a little subversion bit-by-bit.

- to subvert a mind
- to subvert a person
- to pervert a mind
- to pervert a person

is done a little at a time. The only way this can be stripped away is to show the sharp, extreme contrasts—and that’s exactly what John is doing.

#### **V. Keep the faith and teachings through the Holy Spirit**

1-John 2:20: “But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and you have knowledge of all things...” To know everything does not mean to know everything in the world, but these are long-time Christians who have known everything concerning the facts of salvation.

“...*pertaining to salvation*. I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because you know it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth” (vs 20-21). Then he compares that with the, with the liar and the antichrist.

#### **VI. We are to live as the children of God**

What I’m doing here, I’m going through and outlining the whole flow of the chapters.

1-John 3:1—we’re to live as the children of God. John says: “Behold!...” This is a very interesting Greek word, which means *to comprehend and see and understand with the mind*.

“...What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...” (v 3). That’s how we are to live as the children of God! That’s why John is stressing this so *profoundly*.

- God has called you **to be** His children
- God has called you **to be** in the first resurrection
- God has called you **to be** in His Family
- God has called you **to be** exactly as Christ is

—so we’re to live as the children of God.

Verse 4: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.” In the *King James*, the word *lawlessness* is *transgression of the Law*. But it really means **against law**—‘*anomia*’ in the Greek. How can a person be against law? *By saying we don’t have to keep the commandments*. Or by people saying, ‘Well, this commandment is not important’ or ‘that commandment is not important.’ But, what did Jesus say concerning the commandments of God? **‘If you love Me, keep My commandments’!** That’s true. What else did He say? Sinning is more than just breaking a law; *sin is against law*.

Isn’t it absolutely amazing, you would never have believed it, that in the Church of God—but I do now after hearing what they’re saying, and I believe it now after going through and really studying deeply into the Epistle of 1-John—how that when Christians have been in for a long time and they get relaxed and they get used to everything and then they get philosophical and they get knowledgeable, and they have all these great ideas. Now the greatest thing is the love of God—which it is—and then everything just comes all apart bit-by-bit and people just don’t even know what sin is. The next thing you know *they’re going against the commandments of God*. It starts out with simple things.

#### **VII. We are to reject the spirit of deception**

What is one of the first things that, that is dropped in obeying God’s way? What is one of the first things that people do? *They start eating unclean meats!* Then the Sabbath doesn’t become important. Then all of these other things just start falling in. Let’s see what Jesus said concerning the commandments of God:

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” And there are two things this verb means:

- 1) Jesus Himself was going to fulfill those things which pertain to Himself
- 2) Jesus was going to make the Law much more full, to fill the requirements of the commandments and laws of God *to a higher standard*.

Verse 18: “For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled. Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall practice and

teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven” (vs 18-19).

1-John 3:4: “Everyone who practices sin.... [living in sin] ...is also practicing **lawlessness...**”—against law. What they do, they justify breaking God’s laws, and that is sin. We are to **reject** that.

Verse 5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin...” (vs 5-6).

Now, we’ll see a little later there is a sin, which is not a sin unto death. But, you are not practicing and living in sin.

“...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him” (v 6).

The next comparison is the comparison *between the children of God and the children of the devil*.

Verse 7: “Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. **Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God**, and neither is the one who does not love his brother” (vs 7-10).

1-John 4:1-6 we already covered earlier. All the rest of the way through it shows that we are to love God and love the begotten children of God.

1-John 4:7: “Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love**” (vs 7-8).

### VIII. **To have eternal life!**

What you might say another *purpose statement* for this epistle; 1-John 5:13 “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God.” So that’s the whole reason.

I’m going through and surveying first so you will get an overall foundation of going through the Epistle of 1-John; so we can take it step-by-step.

One of the things that the Epistle of 1-John is and helps us do is **to think**; because God wants us **to think** and God wants us **to know**. There are certain things that, as we go through, we will see very clearly that he summarizes a statement. In the *King James*, it is translated: *by this, here by or here in*. This comes from two Greek words, which literally translated are: *in this* or *by this*. The two Greek words are: ‘en toutoo.’

Again, we’re still surveying some of these verses so that we can understand more clearly. When we do start going through, then we’re going to find how really profound that this first epistle of John is.

1-John 2:3: “And by this **standard...**” By what standard? Let’s look at that just a little bit. What is a *standard*? *That we are knowing Him if we’re keeping His commandments!* “By this *standard...*”

Verse 5 (last part): “...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.” How?

Verse 5 (first part): “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [made complete] ... By this *means we know* that we are in Him.” So, we have a means, a way whereby we **know**.

Everyone of these places in the Greek it is ‘en toutoo.’

1-John 3:10 “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother.”

So there’s a *standard*. Here’s a **thinking standard** with the Spirit of God that we are to make a judgment in our lives, knowing what we are to know and understand, and apply it in some practical knowledge in this manner.

(go the next track)

Note John 3:16—I think it’s interesting that both of these 3:16s match up very closely—don’t they?

1-John 3:16: “By this *very act* we have known the love *of God* because He laid down His life for us... [the act of knowing the love of God] ...and we ourselves are... [obligated] ...to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.”

Verse 19: “And in this *way* we know that we are of the Truth... [now, that says a lot; that we are to **be knowing** that we are of the Truth] ... and shall assure our hearts before Him, that if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things” (vs 19-20). And obviously **we are to repent and He will forgive**.

Verse 24: “And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him... [and that means *remains* and *lives* in Him] ...and He [Christ] in him... [that person who’s keeping the commandments] ...and by this... [very thing] ...we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us.” All of these begin to tie in. I tell you I am absolutely amazed what this book of 1-John contains.

1-John 4:2: “By this *test*...” That is testing the spirits, as we’ve already covered—we *are knowing*.

Verse 9: “In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.” *In this way*—all of these remember are from the Greek ‘en toutoo.’

Verse 13: “By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us.”

Verse 17: “By this *spiritual indwelling*... [because what I did, I summed the other verses which were before it, of God’s Spirit] ...the love of *God* is perfected... [made complete] ...within us...” (v 17)—and should be continually perfected in us.

1-John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and everyone who loves Him Who begat... [and the One Who begat was the Father] ...also loves him who has been begotten by Him. By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments” (vs 1-2). That helps summarize many of the things we covered last time about what we are to know.

I missed one, which is 1-John 4:10: “In this *act*... [that is in God manifesting Christ for us] ...is **the love**...” So *in this* or *here by*.

Now the reason I’m doing so many verse-by-verse surveys is because I want us to have a grasp of how profound the Epistle of 1-John really is, and how much meaning is in it. This is for us today in the time and circumstances in which we are living, and I hope that it’s going to go a long way in helping some of the brethren who have gone through so much to recover themselves.

Next time we will do some more word-by-word studies, but let’s begin right at the first, the very first verse—1-John 1:1—and in this we will see quite a few things. As I am reading this, I want you to think how much this parallels the Gospel of John, the first chapter—which we will go to the Gospel of John and do a little comparison. As a matter of fact, in a lot of things there are a lot of comparisons and

carryovers from the Gospel of John to First John. And in many of the verses it’s clear that the readers already have in the Gospel of John, because he makes summary references to what he has written in the Gospel of John right here in the epistle.

1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the beginning*, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life.”

Let’s go to the Gospel of John, chapter one, and we’ll be going back and forth quite a little bit. We’re going to see the *tremendous* parallels that are here.

f John 1:1 starts out almost the same: “*In the beginning* was the Word...” We have *the beginning* and in both cases John is referring back to *the beginning*.

“...In *the beginning* was the Word... [that Greek tense is such that it could actually mean ‘*before* the beginning’] ...was the Word, and the Word was **with** God, and the Word **was** God.”

We’re going to see what it’s so important that only God could actually, by manifesting Himself in the flesh and becoming like we are, could only be the sacrifice that would cover the sins of all mankind, because:

- God is the One Who created everything
- God is the One Who made us
- God is the One Who gave us the nature we have

by sentencing Adam and Eve to ‘the law of sin and death,’ put us in a state of vanity, which is says there in Rom. 8 that the ‘creation was made subject to vanity.’

- only God can save us from that
- only God can save us from the devil
- only God can save us from our sins

That’s why John makes it very clear that *the Word was God*. Here in the Epistle of 1-John it is called ‘*the Word of Life*.’

Let’s compare that with John 1:2: “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... [he emphasizes it in the epistle: ‘Word of Life’] ...and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness ...” (vs 2-5). We’re going to see the same parallel in the epistle of *light and darkness*.

Now let’s look just little more closely at 1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the beginning*, that



which **we** have heard..." Now he didn't say 'that which **I** have heard.' In the first chapter he uses **we**. Beginning in the second chapter he uses **I**. Who are the 'we'? What did the 'we' do? Let's see what they did.

"...that which **we** have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled..." (v 1).

Who are the ones that this applies to only? *The apostles!* So therefore, many people feel that the Epistle of 1-John 'in the beginning' was a writing by **all** of the elderly apostles. There may have been Matthew there; there may have been Andrew there; we don't know who was there. Also, how many people were there that saw Jesus Christ, after He was resurrected? It's a lot more than people think.

How many people could qualify, at the maximum number? We know the apostles did. Remember what Jesus said to Thomas? When Thomas first heard of the resurrection, he said, 'I won't believe it until I stick my hands in His wounds.' So, Jesus appeared and said, 'Thomas! Come over here, I want you to see, put your hand in My side.'

1-Corinthians 15:3: "For in the first place, I delivered to you what I also had received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve. Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time, of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen asleep. Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage" (vs 3-8).

So, the only ones that this could apply to—the 'we'—would be the apostles and the maximum number would be that group of a little over 500 people. It's amazing when you really get into studying the Scriptures, and you really think about it, the verses can tell you a whole lot more than we have understood.

1-John 1:2—all the way through this section, he is referring to **we**. "And the Life... [which was Christ—in Him was 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..."

- manifested:
  - ✓revealed in the flesh
  - ✓to be revealed spiritually and mentally
  - ✓to have seen Him after He was resurrected

- bearing witness—that *you are testifying as an eyewitness such as in a court case.*

You are officially 'bearing witness' and testifying that what you are saying is absolutely the truth.

"...and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us" (v 2)

Again, this ties right in with 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was **with** God,' which was with the Father.

Verse 3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are **reporting** to you..." What is important about 'reporting'? I wish we had reporting in the news today. What is important about 'bearing witness' and 'reporting'? *That means you are conveying only what you've seen, heard and learned.* You are not creating fables, that's what's so very important. **You are reporting what God wants you to report!**

"...in order that you also may have fellowship with us..."—vs **them**, the antichrist and false teachers. He's saying, 'Brethren, we want you to have fellowship with us because:

- we have *handled* the Word of God
- we have *seen* the Word of God
- we've *observed* the Word of God
- we are bearing witness and testifying to the Truth of the Word of God
- we are *testifying* to you that He was with the Father
- and we want you to have "...**fellowship with us...**" (v 3).

Now notice the next most important thing concerning *fellowship*: "...for **the** fellowship... [that's important in the Greek because it's a particular kind of fellowship] ...—indeed, **our** fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3). This tells us how important the Sabbath is. Let's ask a couple of questions here:

- Can people get together and fellowship and have a good time by just being together? *Yes!*
- Can people also fellowship in a church setting, but they are 'playing church'? *Yes!*
- What is so deceptive about that?
  - ✓They think that *their fellowshiping is righteousness.*
  - ✓They think that *because they come to a certain church or a certain congregation or a certain building and they're fellowshiping with certain people that everything is all right!*

- But what is the basis of our fellowship?  
*The basis of our fellowship is **with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ!***

That is the **true** fellowship. That's why John says, "...—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3).

How important is this fellowship to God? Most people have never realized it, but how important is this fellowship with God? Let's see how important this fellowship with God is. We will see that it is so important that God created and blessed and set aside and made the Sabbath Day Holy. That's how important it is.

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 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 and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work, which God had created and made" (vs 1-3).

God's fellowship with us is so important that He created the seventh-day Sabbath for us. It's so important for people to understand that God has preserved—through all time—the Sabbath. When we understand that our fellowshiping is first with God the Father and Jesus Christ, and that this is the day that God has made as a **Holy assembly** so that we fellowship together and with God primarily, then we understand *the true fellowship*. That's how you understand the difference between going to church and playing church and going to church to be taught of God and fellowship with God and fellowship with the brethren, because the Spirit of God is in them. A massive complete difference.

Mark 2:27 should be a basic memory Scripture that we have all learned, that we have all memorized, that we all understand, that we put it in practice and realize the powerful message that Christ gives here.

Mark 2:27: "And He said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man...' That's why God made it, He made it **for man** so that

- he could **fellowship with Him**
- that mankind could **learn from God**
- that mankind could **learn of God's way**
- God's laws
- God's commandments
- God's love
- learn how to change their lives
- to direct their lives
- repent

- grow
- change and overcome.

—all of those are a function of fellowshiping with God!

"...and not man for the Sabbath" (v 27). I mean, man cannot come along and say, 'Well God, one day in seven is good enough.' or 'I'll be righteous on Sunday.' *God is not there on Sunday!* That's just a plain fact. In His mercy, because some people are not against Him on Sunday... But how can you say that? How can you say you're not against God, and yet, keep Sunday when God says the Sabbath is His and the Sabbath was created for man? You see the conflict that this brings up? You see how this becomes *against law or lawlessness? Because God is the One Who's created and made and decided which day is the Sabbath!* That's why it says it was 'made for man.' That's why it says, 'and not man for the Sabbath.' For man to decided what he would do.

Verse 28: "Therefore, the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The Sabbath is so important because God puts His presence in it. Isa. 56 is a prophecy of the end-time; and this is a prophecy of when the salvation of God is going to come. As we are reading this, let's also understand that the judgment of God is also upon the house of God. That's why this becomes very important.

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.'" Are we not living in those days? *Oh, yes, absolutely we are!*

Verse 2: "Blessed *is* the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps the Sabbath... [one day in seven] ...from profaning it..." That comes to church on Sunday if it's his hearts desire. That the blood-brother, Ishmael, can come to his mosque on Friday; or the Jews can come on the Sabbath and totally pollute it by not fellowshiping with God and Christ.

**NO!** He says, v 2: "Blessed *is* the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

That's the whole purpose of it: So that every week we're going to **learn of God's way**; we're going to be **refreshed in God's way**; we're going to be able, with God's Spirit, to let Him **lead us and guide us and bring us into the greater understanding and truth and righteousness**.

Verse 3: “And do not let the son of the stranger, who has joined himself to the LORD...” Who is the ‘son of the stranger’? Who is the ‘stranger’ in terms of the Old Testament in relationship to Israel? *Stranger* is what they call a Gentile. Are Gentiles to keep the Sabbath? It’s what he says.

“...speak, saying, ‘The LORD has utterly separated me from His people.’...” (v 3). God doesn’t want the Gentiles separated from His people. That’s the whole basis of the New Testament Church.

“...And do not let the eunuch say, ‘Behold, I *am* a dry tree.’ For thus says the LORD, ‘To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose things that please Me...’” (vs 3-4).

Let’s see how the Word of God is living and powerful and, it says and means exactly the same thing.

1-John 3:21: “Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us...” Isn’t that what he’s saying in Isa. 56? ‘Don’t say this in condemnation of yourself that you’re a dry tree. Don’t say this in condemnation of yourself that I’m a Gentile and cut off from the people of God. Don’t be saying that. Don’t be condemning yourself.’

“...*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).

Isn’t that exactly what he’s saying back here in Isa. 56:4: “...who keep My Sabbaths, and choose things that please Me and take hold of My covenant.” Right here is a whole prophecy of the New Testament. Right here is a summary of what God wants us to do in the New Testament—contained in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 56:5: “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.”

Could we not go through and show that Jesus said, ‘In My Father’s house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.’ And didn’t He say to the churches, ‘I will give you a new name. I will give you the name of the Father and of My name and of the city New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven.’ There it is prophesied right here.

Verse 6: “Also the sons of the stranger, who join themselves to the LORD... [notice what they are to do]: ...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...”

For the New Covenant, brethren, Sabbath-keeping is vital for the covenant because ***God fellowships with us in the New Covenant on the Sabbath Day***. Yet, the Churches of God that we have known in the past are casting it aside. Some are even saying that there is salvation in other religions. So, you see how profound this is.

Here’s a little remembrance of Sabbath-keeping again, so that we can have the fellowship with God.

Isaiah 58:13 “If you turn your foot away from the Sabbath, *from* doing your own desires on My Holy day...”—because:

- God wants to *fellowship* with you
- God wants to *visit* with you.
- God wants to  *dwell* in you

—so therefore, we have to do His pleasure.

“...and call the Sabbath a delight... [not a burden] ... the Holy of the LORD, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor pursuing your own desires, nor speaking *your own words*” (v 13). Hasn’t Sabbath fellowship, without fellowshipping with God, degenerated into this kind of thing? *Yes, it has!*

You know and I know that when you fudge and don’t keep the Sabbath the way that you do and you get in the habit of doing many things of your own pleasure, your own way on the Sabbath, what happens? Well, God is not fellowshipping with you the way that He wants to, so the Sabbath doesn’t mean as much to you. When God does not immediately come down and do some sort of correcting—like lightening out of the sky to give you a bolt of lightening to zap you, to wake you up—it just becomes foggy and thin and less important. That’s what’s happening to too many of God’s people.

But, He says, “Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD...” One of the whole purposes of 1-John was to bring the ***joy of the Lord***, the ***joy of conversion***. You can’t ***joy in God*** unless you fellowship with Him and do so on the Sabbath Day.

“...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” (v 14).

Again, another guarantee of salvation and all this goes right back to the true fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ.

Now, it's the same way with the Holy Days. I think it's very interesting with the Holy Days, that what God has done, He has buried all the Holy Days in Lev. 23—and I think it's a test to find out which of the commandments we think are the least. Because many times out of the least and the lowest and the smallest and the most neglected of the world, ***God does the greatest work!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Revelation 2:2
- 2) 1-John 4:1-3, 6
- 3) Ephesians 2:2
- 4) 1-John 3:4
- 5) 1-John 1:5-9
- 6) 1-John 2:3-4, 15, 20-21
- 7) 1-John 3:1-4
- 8) Matthew 5:17-19
- 9) 1-John 3:4-10
- 10) 1-John 4:7-8
- 11) 1-John 5:13
- 12) 1-John 2:3, 5
- 13) 1-John 3:10, 16, 19-20, 24
- 14) 1-John 4:2, 9, 13, 17
- 15) 1-John 5:1-2
- 16) 1-John 4:10
- 17) 1-John 1:1
- 18) John 1:1-5
- 19) 1-John 1:1
- 20) 1-Corinthians 15:3-8
- 21) 1-John 1:1-3
- 22) Genesis 2:1-3
- 23) Mark 2:27-28
- 24) Isaiah 56:1-4
- 25) 1-John 3:21-22
- 26) Isaiah 56:4-6
- 27) Isaiah 58:13-14

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Colossians 2
- Revelation 18:4
- John 3:16
- Romans 8
- Leviticus 23

#### Also referenced: Book:

*Introduction to the New Testament* (no author cited)

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## Epistle of First John III

Light vs Darkness

Fred R. Coulter

I think there's a whole lot more to fellowshiping than just doing so on the Sabbath, as I pointed out last week, and we went through a little bit showing the real reason and purpose for the Sabbath and the way that God wants it defined. So, let's understand that there's a little bit more about fellowship:

- It is far more than just coming to a place to meet
- It is far more than just some of the things that we've understood on the Sabbath and the Holy Days

I want to cover just a couple of things concerning fellowshiping that we need to realize, that's very important for us, and this will actually help you to draw closer to God.

Before we cover certain things, which give us a greater understanding of fellowship, let's understand a couple of other things that are very important. In this series of 1-John we are going beyond any college class that any Church of God has given. I'm trying to make this at a level that will cover that, going to have a body of Scriptural teachings which is going to be more detailed—when we consider everything that we have done—than many of the Churches of God have ever done.

You go back and you consider all the sermon series that we have done: the Gospel of John, the books of Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, James 1<sup>st</sup> Peter, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter and Jude. When you consider all of those things that are really giving and hopefully arming all the brethren with the knowledge that they need; because the knowledge of God will:

- strengthen you in faith
- strengthen you in understanding
- strengthen you in the days that we are living

—because we're going to literally see the foundations of everything crumble around us. Just as we are seeing the foundations of the Churches of God crumbling from within with false doctrine, people are now being told that the old former pagan teachings—which they came out of in their churches, when they left the churches of the world—are now really good and fine teachings and we ought to have had them all along.

**We need to stand for the Truth!** Part of this is and part of the teachings, and what we want to do

is, is put it in a way that we also understand that the teachings and the knowledge that we are presenting here is not just for information; *it is for your Christian daily living*. That's very, very important for us on a day-to-day basis to understand.

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..." It's a very interesting way that it is in there in the Greek—"...**the** fellowship..."—and there's a great significance to that.

"...—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3).

I went through and showed the importance of fellowshiping with God on the Sabbath; the importance that God even created the Sabbath and the Holy Days as special times of fellowship. But is that the only thing there is to fellowship?

Well, let's learn a little bit more about it, and understand. Fellowship also means:

- to partake
- to commune

Not in the sense of a communion—as even Worldwide Church of God came to call the Passover, as unbelievable as that is—but it means to *be partaking of*.

Romans 15:27: "Now, they took pleasure *in doing this*, and their debtors they are because if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things..."

Let's understand something about fellowshiping and think of it in the way of God *sharing with us*. They are made *partakers* (KJV) or *to fellowship* with their *spiritual things*. **We are also to be partakers of the Spirit of God!** Let's look at some other aspects of fellowshiping.

1-Corinthians 1:9: "God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

We are 'partakers' of God's Spirit; we are 'partakers' of God's Divine nature, and that's how *God fellowship with us on a daily basis*. What I want us to understand: that when John is writing about 'our fellowship' (1-John 1:3), he is not just talking about coming to Sabbath services. He's talking about ***partaking of the Spirit of God, partaking of the fellowship of Jesus Christ***.

Phil. 1 shows that the fellowship is with the

Gospel; that is *partaking of the Gospel*. We will see *partaking of the Spirit*, and also the *partaking of the suffering of Christ*:

Philippians 1:5: “For your fellowship in the Gospel from *the* first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (vs 5-6).

This *partaking* and this *fellowshipping*, and having *God’s Spirit* is really the most important thing of the fellowshipping. In other words:

1. *when you’re studying* the Word of God, you are fellowshipping with God
2. *when you are praying*, you are fellowshipping with God
3. *when you come to Sabbath services*, you are fellowshipping with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So it is a ***complete spiritual partaking***.

This shows then how this comes right over into our fellowship and how it comes from Christ: Philippians 2:1: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any ***fellowship of the Spirit***....”

That’s how we fellowship with God—with His Holy Spirit—and God fellowships with us. By the very fact that we have God’s Spirit in us, ***God is fellowshipping with us***. Have you ever thought of it that way before? That really is meaningful to me on a daily level of Christian living. That means that if God is fellowshipping with me, because He’s given His Holy Spirit to me, and if God is fellowshipping with everyone whom He has called because He’s given His Spirit, therefore, brethren:

- see how important prayer is
- see how important study is
- see how important it is to give ourselves wholly over to the Word of God.
- What does this then result in, in our lives?
- This kind of fellowship of the Spirit of Christ in us?

Verse 2: “Fulfill my joy that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory...” (vs 2-3).

I tell you, that’s the hardest thing for the Churches of God to get out of the strife and vainglory. But if they can really learn to love God; and if we can, if we can understand the fellowship that Paul is talking about, that John is talking about, then this helps go a long way in getting rid of that.

“...but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others” (vs 3-4).

Then what does it come to? What is the ***full fellowship*** with God the Father and Jesus Christ?

Verse 5: “***Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.***” Think of that!

- Are we to have the mind of Christ? *Yes, we are!*
- Is that not the whole purpose and goal of being a Christian? *Yes, it is!*

Because of that there are some very important things that we need to understand. I think that I understand this just a little bit more. I think this helps us understand why we go through so many difficulties and trials of our faith.

Philippians 3:10: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the ***fellowship of His sufferings***...”—plural.

When you think about all that Christ went through in living as a human being—all that He gave up, all that He suffered—and really, He lived, as far as a human being, a very contradictory life compared to the rest of human beings, because ***He was truly the only one who was in complete fellowship and harmony with God the Father!*** That made the sufferings that He went through even more so. When Paul wrote *the fellowship* or *the partaking* or *the sharing* of Christ’s sufferings—and then you look at what Paul went through and you think of the troubles you go through—not even to be compared. So this, ***our fellowship***, is even more.

If we expand this fellowshipping of God with His Spirit, with Christ and the Father, we can put this under the ***true fellowship***. In other words, ***the very true purpose for our Christian lives is fellowshipping with God***. If we keep that in mind, then that’s going to help us reach:

- a greater understanding of the love of God
- a greater understanding of fellowshipping with each other
- a greater understanding of how we can live our lives in a way that’s pleasing to God

Ephesians 3:8: “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ; and that I might enlighten all *as to* what *is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ” (vs 8-9).

Brethren, God is taking you into His full confidence and let's you partake of the secret plan of God that *we are literally going to be the sons of God!* That is something! I tell you, it is something!

When we get into the conflict of the world. We are told that we are not to be partakers, or that is 'have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.'

Paul writes, 2-Corinthians 6:14: "...And what... [participation] ...fellowship *does* light... [righteousness] ...*have* with darkness?"—lawlessness.

Yet, we read what the leaders are doing to the Church: the junking of the Church of God doctrine. What fellowship does it have? Or *what fellowship does Light have with darkness?* Now, we're going to see how that ties in with the first chapter of 1-John.

Verse 15: "And what union... [harmony] ...*does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?...." (vs 15-16).

It says in the *King James* 'the temple'—but in the Greek it is 'a temple.' What are our bodies? *Temple of God, if so be that you have the Spirit of God!* I'm going to expand on this in the Feast of Tabernacles, because our bodies, brethren, are a **temporary tabernacle** for the Spirit of God. And we can think on that and expand on it more.

"...For you are a temple of *the* living God... [if you have the Spirit of God in you.] ...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. Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the* Lord Almighty" (vs 16-18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: "Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, **perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.**" That's what the *true fellowship of God* really is:

- Christ living in you
- God the Father in you by the Spirit of God

—and that fellowship is a daily thing. When that is done on a daily basis by all of those who have the Spirit of God, how much more and how much greater then is it when we come together to fellowship together, and do so on the Sabbath, and let God's Spirit be here to teach us; let God's Spirit

be here to guide us. And *let this be a day that pleases God!* I think that the overall result of that is really quite tremendous.

Just one other verse I want to cover here in *being partakers*. We find that Peter really gives us in encapsulated summary some very, very inspiring things.

2-Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power... [through God's Spirit] ...has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become **partakers**... [fellowshippers, sharers, receivers] ...of *the* Divine nature..." (vs 1-4).

That is through God's Holy Spirit! That's something! And *partaker* comes from the same word as *fellowshipping*, to be *participating in*; to be *receiving of*. That is absolutely on an ongoing daily basis!

Let's get into some things that are very important. We'll read from 1-John 1:4 down through the end of the chapter, and this gives us the foundation of the very basics of Christian living; the very things that we need to cling to in understanding the Truth of God in very difficult times.

I just want to mention here, that 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John are **really high-level New Testament teachings based upon the basics of Christ**. And that there is not one direct quotation from the Old Testament. Isn't that something? Not one direct quotation from the Old Testament! Now for some people that will get them all upset, but let them be upset nevertheless.

1-John 1:4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full.... [he's including himself and everyone with that] ...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). That's literally what it means, **practicing**.

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. **If** we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. **If** we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **If** we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 4-10). So, that’s quite an important and profound section.

Now let’s come and look at this thing concerning **Light** and **darkness**. Ed made quite a few profound statements concerning the Light and darkness. I would like to just mention some of those as we start going more deeply into this particular section and see how it ties in with our lives.

**Light:** No one is running to the Light, they are running away from it. Why? **Because:**

- the Light is **painful**
- the Light is **exposing**
- the Light is **purging**

For example: people like to have a candlelight dinner, so to speak. Because the light is soft, it’s not exposing, it is not threatening. But the Light that comes from God is so brilliant; and Light in this particular case, when we’re talking about God, represents everything of God:

- His **Truth**
- His **glory**
- His **level of existence**

—and the fact that His Word *is Light and it is Truth*. Therefore, Light is purging. We’ll see how this ties in with *Truth and with Light*.

Let’s see some important things concerning darkness in relationship to Light. Let’s go to the Gospel of John, and let’s understand that there are some things in the Bible, which are very important concerning Light and darkness. What is one of the first things that we learn in the very first verses? As we’re recalling, in the Gospel of John the first chapter refers back to the Creation.

- What is the first thing that we learn concerning God and the Creation (Gen. 1)? “*In the beginning was God!*”
- What covered the face of the earth? **Darkness!**
- Who brought Light? *God did*—“*Let there be light and there was light.*”

The whole lesson of the Bible is contained in the very first part of the book of Genesis. **Only God can bring Light. Only God can bring Truth.**

John 1:4: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the

darkness...” (vs 4-5). That’s what men don’t like! I mean, look at some of the congressmen. Look at the President. If you shine ‘**the pure Light of Truth**’ into their lives, nothing would be left.

There’s also something that’s important that this tells us: “...but the **darkness does not comprehend** it” (v 5). It also means that the darkness does not **overcome** the Light.

There’s one thing that’s very important concerning the Light of God’s Spirit in us, which is that Satan the devil can never overcome it, brethren. We have to *voluntarily* give it up.

- What is Satan’s job?
- What is his tactic?
- *To get us to voluntarily give it up!*

That’s why John was writing in the way that he wrote of

- Light and darkness
- Truth and error
- the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth
- keeping the commandments of God

and the difference between God—who cannot lie—and the liars who come in and tell half-truths to try to bring the deception.

John 3 ties exactly in with it; and this is what Ed was bringing out in, in such a clear, clear way when he said: ‘No one runs to the Truth.’ Remember what happened when God came down on Mt. Sinai to bring the Ten Commandments? The Light and the power? *The people couldn’t stand it; they ran away—not to!* Isn’t it true in our own lives when you’re caught in a mistake and doing something wrong, you don’t want to hear it? *Yes! I don’t! You don’t!*

John 3 contains a whole section here. This is very important in our Christian living on a day-to-day basis.

John 3:18 “The one who believes in Him is not [condemned] judged...” Please, brethren, **grasp and understand that!** If you believe in Jesus Christ and have the Spirit of God in you, **God does not condemn you**. When you sin, *which you do*, we confess our sins and He **cleanses** us from those. That’s what’s so important and that’s part of our *fellowshipping with God*; our *fellowshipping with Christ*.

If we can grasp that, and we can understand that, and realize the tremendous calling that God has given us, it is so powerful and uplifting! It is absolutely so great! And when you combine that with the love of God—and this is what you are



seeking, striving for, fellowshiping for, partaking of every day—then I tell you what, it helps overcome human nature, so that you don't *desire* to sin. ***That's the whole point of Christian growth and overcoming.***

“...but the one who does not believe has **already** been [condemned] judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (v 18). They make their own condemnation. No one has to stand up and point a finger.

Verse 19: “And this is the judgment [condemnation]: that the Light has come into the world... [that is Christ—He was the Light] ...but **men loved darkness...**”

That is true in the simplest form: that most crime and evil takes place at night or at dark. And you look at the places of entertainment that men love, and they are dark—and many of the bars and many of the dance halls have psychedelic lights. These lights are moving. Do you know what that does to the human mind? *It hypnotizes you and takes away your character of choice so you will do things that are not right.*

I saw part of a very interesting special on ‘whirling derby.’ Where a person gets out and dances around and around and around and around and around. And I never knew where that came from. But it showed this whole Muslim group where they were all going around spinning around in circles. There was this was this bigger circle and they were all going around individually, spinning around in a circle. They had their arms out and they just would hold their head back, and the whole purpose of that spinning was to get their minds off of everything in the world and to think of nothing so that they could be possessed; that’s really what it was.

They would not like someone coming in to say that is evil and that is wrong and that is not of God! They love darkness; their deeds are evil.

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil **hates the Light ...**”

- can't stand the Light
- doesn't want the Light
- doesn't want the Truth

When it gets so bad in practicing evil, people come to the point that they cannot tell the truth, even when the truth is more plausible. Have you ever met someone like that? I think it's absolutely amazing! There is no one in prison who is there because a crime was committed by that person, whoever you talk to. Nearly everyone is framed.

Nearly everyone is there because of an unjust reason. They hate the truth. Very rare is the hardened criminal who will admit ‘I'm a hardened criminal and I deserve death,’ because truly then Light has come into his life. They hate it.

“...neither comes to the Light, lest his deeds should be [exposed] reproved” (v 20).

I'm telling you, brethren, the way they're exchanging Light for darkness, Truth for error and the doctrines of God for the doctrines of men and demons, they're truly **walking away from the Light**. They're not coming to it, and they're not coming back to it ‘lest their deeds be exposed.’ And there's something also very interesting about the light.

I know that Ed has done a lot of thinking on this because he's given some very important analogies for us, and here's another one: When you first start leaving the Light, by turning your back on it, to walk in a different direction. Instead of coming to the Light, *you're walking away from the Light*. If you have been coming to the Light—Christ and God:

- letting your life be purified
- growing in grace and knowledge and understanding
- fellowshiping with God's Spirit in you and Christ in you

—and then you turn and start going the other way—what is a phenomena that is true? ***Around you it still appears that you are in the Light!*** You walk away from it step-by-step-by-step, so when you do, right at first and for quite a while you think you're still in the Light—but *you're walking away* from it.

This is what it's talking about here, v 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed; 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*” (20-21).

Not only is this true in the sense of us as individuals, but this is also true specifically concerning Christ.

- Was Christ the Light? *Yes!*
- Was He always coming to the Father, Who's called “the Father of Light”? *Yes!*
- Was He always practicing the Truth? *Yes!*

This fellowshiping and living in the Light and walking in the Truth is so very, very important and profound for us to know and for us to understand.

Let's come to John 8:12: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘**I am the Light of the world...**’” Why?

- because He was the Son of God
- He was bringing the Truth of God
- He was bringing the salvation of God
- He was bringing the righteousness of God
- He was the expressed image of the Father
- He was the Light of the world

“...the one who **follows** Me...” (v 12). *The most important thing in our Christian life is to follow Christ!* And the most important thing that we can do as teachers and ministers is to help everyone of the brethren to follow Christ.

“...shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life” (v 12). Who is the ‘prince of darkness’? *We know that’s Satan the devil!*

The reason I’m going through the book of John first is to show that John was really conveying many important messages to us, many important writings to us through the Light of God and the darkness of this world. John 12:35 is a very profound verse for the Church today. We know that the day of reckoning is coming all the way around.

The day of reckoning always seems a long way away. Why? *Because events kind of come up on us a bit at a time, a bit at a time, a bit at a time.* And when that happens, we don’t realize the full magnitude of what is happening **until** we finally get there.

If I could use an analogy here, let’s use one: Remember the potato chip, those good, thin, crispy potato chips that you can’t eat just one! But you eat one and another, and another, and another, and another and lo and behold the bag is empty! I’ve done that. It’s the same way in the Church today. We are getting closer and closer to the end and every event that transpires is like the eating of that one next potato chip. And when the bag is empty, the end has arrived. It’s the same way with *walking in the Light*.

John 12:35: “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Yet, a little while the Light is with you....’ Let’s apply that to the Church. Remember Matt. 25 and the parable of the ten virgins: they took their lamps, five were wise, five were foolish and their lamps were going out. Why? ***Because they didn’t have the fellowship of God with His Spirit!*** They didn’t have the oil, which is the Spirit of God.

(go to the next track)

They did not have the commandments of God, which they were to keep, and that’s why in the book of 1-John—when you study ahead for our series we are doing—in John the second chapter it talks about ***commandment-keeping!***

Know for sure that if you are keeping the commandments of God, *you are walking in the Light of the laws and commandments of God!* If you are keeping the commandments of God with the Spirit of God in you, then you have the Light of Life within you—Christ with you—and you are keeping the commandments of God in Light. So, when Christ said, ‘Yet a little while the Light is with you.’ The prophecy ***will be fulfilled***, brethren, when there’s going to be a famine of the hearing of the Word. Some people wonder if that is not even now. The time ***will come*** when the end will be upon us. And unless we have Christ in us, we’re going to be in difficulty.

John 12:35 “...Walk while you have the Light...” In other words, just like:

John 3:21<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “But the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light...”

John 12:35: “...Walk while you have the Light so that *the* darkness will not overtake you....” When darkness comes upon you then you’re going to be hearing the most profound ridiculous statements! That’s how you know that they’re walking back into darkness. It appears that there’s still light there, because they haven’t left the light entirely and the light shining on their back as they look ahead, they can still see—but not as clearly.

It’s just like when you park your car at night and you need to see where you’re going, so you turn on the headlights and then you have to stop and get out of the car and go forward and examine something that you see that is in the way. The further you go away from the lights of the car, the dimmer that those lights are. It’s the same way with *the Light of God’s Spirit*, the *Light of God’s Truth*: the further you get away from it, the longer you stay away from it, the more that you are bringing darkness into your way of living, or bringing in the doctrines of this world, the darker it becomes!

Jesus said: “...**For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going**” (v 35). That tells us an awful lot. That tells us also that’s why doctrines become confused because they don’t know where they’re going. They are leaving the Light. They are viewing things with the darkness. The light of darkness instead of the Light of Truth.

Verse 36: “While you have the Light, believe in the Light, **so that you may become the children of Light.**’....” That’s what we’re to be, brethren. That’s the whole basic theme of the Epistle of 1-John, the children of Light, who are the children of God vs the children of darkness, who are the children of the devil.

Let’s see something that is very profound concerning the darkness and how it affects us. We

will see who's the *prince* of darkness, who is the *author* of darkness.

- How does Satan appear? *As an angel of light!*
- Is there such a thing as black light? *Yes, there is!*

Luke 22:51: "But Jesus answered *and* said, 'That is enough!' Then He touched his ear *and* healed him."

That's after Peter cut off his ear. I'm sure he was not aiming for the ear. I'm sure Peter was going for the neck. And he turned his head and sliced his ear, and Jesus said, 'Ok, that's enough,' and healed his ear. I've often wondered, I've often wondered what that soldier thought. You would remember it—wouldn't you? If someone came after you with a sword, full force and you ducked and turned your head and your ear was cut off. Big glob of blood all over and this evil man you're arresting said, 'That's enough!' and reached up and touched you and healed your ear. I mean, many of us can remember when we just take a hammer and smash our thumb real good. This would be a profound event.

Verse 52: "And Jesus said to those who had come out against Him, *the* chief priests and captains of the temple and elders, 'Have you come out, as against a thief, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not stretch out *your* hands against Me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness'" (vs 52-53). *Yep! power of darkness!*

Isaiah 60 shows how the whole world is. If you have the *Messiah* by Handel, there is a song sung by the baritone, which is really a tremendous song. Now, I actually heard it sung by a soprano once and it didn't have the same force. Whenever you convey something that is evil and dark—in a musical sense—you don't use the high notes.

Notice on every ad, everything that you watch in drama or a movie or something, when there's something that is nice and sweet and emotional they play soft, high notes. When you find yourself watching a movie or a television program where they are doing this and you're getting emotionally involved and tears about ready to come streaming down your face, just go turn off the sound and then watch it. You won't be ready to cry.

I did that one time. I was sitting there watching this movie and it was very emotional, and I notice that they were playing this music and I was ready to cry! I was getting all choked up and everything like this and I said what are you doing, Fred? So, I tried that, I went and turned off the sound—I wasn't ready to cry. When they portray

something that is evil, something that is horrible, they use dark, deep, bass tones—don't they? In the *Messiah*, the bass sings: "For behold darkness has covered the earth." He gets down there in the bass in gross darkness, and you just really get this feeling of darkness. Well, that's what the world is in!

Isaiah 60:1: "Arise, shine; for your Light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you .... [prophecy of Christ] ...For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness *the* people..." (vs 1-2). If you're going back into the world, that's what you're going back into, *gross darkness*.

"...but the LORD shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (vs 2-3). There's the prophecy of the coming of Christ and the whole application of the Church.

Let's see where Matthew pointed out that this was fulfilled by Christ, Matthew 4:14: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying, '*The* land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, *by the way of the sea*, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people who were sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those who were sitting in *the* realm and shadow of death, light has sprung up'" (vs 14-16)—to them. It's talking about Christ, the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Now let's see something that's very important concerning *light and darkness* and concerning the power of darkness.

Matthew 6:22: "The light of the body is the eye...." What does it say about the eyes of Christ in His glorified form? *His countenance is as the sun in full strength, and His eyes as a flame of fire. "The light of the body is the eye...."* There are so many things you can tell about the eyes. All moms and dads know they can tell when their kids are lying—just look at them in the eyes.

If you want to see something very interesting, when you go down to the post office next time, you walk up to the 'wanted by the FBI' section, and you take a look at the eyes of those who are the criminals, who have committed heinous crimes. Very important! You watch the eyes of some of these politicians. You watch some of the Sunday newscasts, and you watch them. And the one that just blows my mind is Bob Dole. His eyes look like they're a merry-go-round. They're just going back and forth, back and forth, around and around. He can never look you straight in the eye. You can never feel that you've really have made contact with a

person that you can know assuredly that that contact is right and true.

“...Therefore, if your eye be sound, your whole body shall be *full of light*.... [that is single-purposed, single toward God, then it'll be full of light] ...But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be *full of darkness*. Therefore, if the light that *is* in you be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!” (vs 22-23).

So, there is such a thing as ‘enlightened darkness’—***dark light***. Who is the ‘prince of the power of the air’? *Satan is!* He is the one who brings the darkness. He says, ‘How great is that darkness.’

Christ has come to bring us out of that darkness. Christ has come to bring us in the Light and in the Truth and in the power and glory of God through His Holy Spirit. There is ***the power of darkness which grips this world***, and that is of Satan the devil.

Speaking of Christ, Colossians 1:13: “Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love.” Of course, that darkness is ***of the world***.

Acts 26 shows the whole mission of the Apostle Paul and what he said that his preaching the Gospel was to do.

Acts 26:17: “I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles... [sparing Paul from the people and the Gentiles] ...to whom I now send you to open their eyes, that *they* may turn from darkness to light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God... [and when that happens] ...so that they may receive remission of sins...” (vs 17-18).

When we go back and read 1-John 1 and those verses we just read, what are we talking about? *From darkness to Light; forgiveness of sin; confession of sin*. See how it follows right exactly along with what we have here.

“...and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me” (v 18). That inheritance is eternal life, eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God. So that’s why the book of 1-John is so absolutely important.

Eph. 6 talks about these powers and it talks about the darkness. I tell you, there’s never been a time when we have seen this happen as it is happening right today.

Ephesians 6:10<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “Finally, my brethren, ***be strong in the Lord***...” That’s the whole thing John is trying to tell us in 1-John—we’re going to see how absolutely perfectly all the writings of the Gospel fit together.

“...and in the ***might of His strength***” (v 10). Brethren, let’s all do that!

There are a lot of brethren that need to be turned back to God. There are a lot of brethren that need to be healed. I think that if we’re going to be ‘walking in the Light’ that God is going to be with us and there will be those things. There will be the healings. There will be the interventions.

I saw a special on this Peter Pop-off. Have you ever heard of Peter Pop-off? Well, Peter Pop-off was an evangelist, and when he preached he ‘popped off.’ He had healing campaigns. They finally caught him because he ‘popped offed’ once too much. But his wife, Mrs. Pop-off would be back of the stage and she would have these little introductory cards that everyone filled out with the name and the address and their telephone number—and if they came because they needed to be healed, what illness they had. And she was back there ‘popping off’ to Pop-off and telling him the names over a wireless radio that he had in his ear. And he would be out there and he would ‘pop-off’ the name of the individual; and “pop-off” their sickness; walk up there, lay hands on them, pop them off and knock them on the floor. It was amazing!

So there was this one mailman, and he says, ‘I’m going to catch me a pop-off.’ He and his friends got these radio detecting things and picked up the conversation from Mrs. Pop-off who is popping-off to Mr. Pop-off and they caught him popping-off. And what they would do—he even shaved his head and put on different disguises—he would go into where he was meeting, he would fill out a card with a different name, a different address, and he would fake all of this. Sure enough, he got called three different times. People look at that and think that that is what religion is all about. And then you get these exposés to show that Pop-off was a pop-off and in his popping-off it was a fake-off. Not the truth.

When I read something like this, brethren, where it says: “F Finally, my brethren, ***be strong in the Lord*** and in the ***might of His strength***”; I just pray, brethren, that God will give us the capacity to do the things in healing and in serving—that the people can truly be healed, because there are a lot of people who are sick. There are a lot of people who have broken hearts. There are a lot of people who are dispirited. They need help and they need healing. But it can only come if we’re strong in the Lord.

Now, in our individual lives, it says, v 11: “Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the ***wiles of the devil***”—who is the ‘prince of the power of the air,’ and who is the ‘power of darkness.’

Verse 12: “Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*.”

That’s why it’s a shame, brethren, that the Church of God that we know, that we were originally called into, is walking step-by-step right back into the world and *bringing in the dark light of the darkness of this world*. Because it’s not only the darkness of this world, but ‘against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.’

Verse 13: “Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand.” That’s what the whole book of 1-John is about, to be able to **stand!**

- **stand** in the Light
- **walk** in the Light
- **live** in the Light
- **be in** the Light
- **be cleansed** of God

—and all of these things are so very, very important for us.

Let’s really get a glimpse of our calling as Peter let us know, as we know and understand, as God has given it to us. I want you to really think on this, brethren. If you get discouraged, you get down, you feel God has gone way off someplace, He really hasn’t—remember this:

1-Peter 2:9: “But **you are a chosen stock**...

- God Himself has *called you*
- God Himself has *given you* of His Spirit
- God Himself has *given you* of His Light

“...a royal priesthood...” (v 9). That’s what we’re going to be. We’re going to be kings and priests with Christ.

“...a Holy nation, a people for a possession of God, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God...” (vs 9-10). That’s what we are, ***the people of God!***

“...who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy. Beloved, I exhort *you*, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your way of life honest among the Gentiles so that although they speak against you as evil doers, through having witnessed *your* good works, they may glorify God in *the* day of visitation” (vs 10-12).

1-John 1:5: “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 5-6).

Now let’s look at this aspect of ***the Light***, v 7: “However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another...”—and also that’s fellowship with Christ and God the Father.

Let’s see how all of this flows along in our Christian living, in the Light *that we are to be walking in and practicing the Truth*.

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them. For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth)” (vs 1-9).

Now notice, what the Spirit of God has to do with, the fruit of it, v 10: “Proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*” (vs 10-11).

So, we have ***the contrast of Light and of darkness and showing how we need to walk in the Light of God!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-John 1:3
- 2) Romans 15:27
- 3) 1-Corinthians 1:9
- 4) Philippians 1:5- 6
- 5) Philippians 2:1-5
- 6) Philippians 3:10
- 7) Ephesians 3:8-9

- 8) 2-Corinthians 6:14-18
- 9) 2-Corinthians 7:1
- 10) 2-Peter 1:1-4
- 11) 1-John 1:4-10
- 12) John 1:4-5
- 13) John 3:18-21
- 14) John 8:12
- 15) John 12: 35
- 16) John 3:21
- 17) John 12:35-36
- 18) Luke 22:51-53
- 19) Isaiah 60:1-3
- 20) Matthew 4:14-16
- 21) Matthew 6:22-23
- 22) Colossians 1:13
- 23) Acts 26:17-18
- 24) Ephesians 6:10-13
- 25) 1-Peter 2:9-12
- 26) 1-John 1:5-7
- 27) Ephesians 5:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1
- Matthew 25

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Romans*
- *Ephesians*
- *Philippians*
- *Colossians*
- *James*
- *1-2 Peter & Jude*

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## Epistle of First John IV

### Walking in the Light and the Converted Christian

Fred R. Coulter

Let's cover a little bit more concerning *God is Light*.

1-John 1:5: "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**." It refers to the fact that God—everything about God—is contained in that statement *God is Light*:

- God has glory
- God has light, like the sun

—so therefore, men in their foolishness, worship the sun. Men, in their foolishness, draw analogies between God the Father and Christ in comparison to a flame. That is not what it means at all.

- Light also means *Truth*
- Light also means *the way of God*

So where it is talking about "...God is Light, and there is **no darkness at all in Him**," means that you cannot accuse God of sin, of things that are evil. That ties right in with *God is love*.

If you want a full-fledged study in the Bible—which I will encourage you to do, and when we go through and study like this, I also do it from the point of view to help inspire you study your Bible more—go ahead and study about *Light and darkness* all the way through the Bible, and I think you will find that it's quite revealing.

Psalms 104:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty, covering Yourself with light as with a garment..." (vs 1-2).

Now, it's talking about the *very existence* of God. His level of existence is living in eternity. His level of existence is that His whole spiritual body, and His whole spiritual being is like looking at the sun in full strength. When Moses asked God, 'Show me Your glory and it will suffice me,' God answered and said—and this is the One Who became Jesus Christ—'***No man can see My face and live!***' Why?

- the human being with the 'law of sin and death' in him cannot be in the pure presence of the glorified God and live
- no sin can exist in His presence
- no evil can exist in His presence
- flesh cannot exist at that level of existence

That's why God said, 'Now there's a crack in a rock here and I will pass by and I will show My glory but you cannot see My face and live, but you can see My

back parts.' That was really, literally the backside of God that Moses saw. God is a person, God is a being, but His existence is likened unto ***light*** and He *clothes Himself with light*.

You will see that all the way through, that what John is talking about ***all the way*** there is so much about light and darkness in the Bible; good and evil.

Psalms 36:9: "For with You is the fountain of life: ***in Your light shall we see light***." The only way that God is going to give us understanding is through the *Light of His Holy Spirit* that He gives to us. That's why that everything in Christ has been personified in Christ. '***I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the Light of the world***.' The only way that men can find the ***Truth*** and the ***Light*** of God is to have it brought down to their level, which is what God does.

Psalms 27:1: "The LORD is my ***Light***..." So, when we're talking about God ***is Light*** we're talking about:

- His being
- His glory
- His way
- His laws
- His commandments
- His Truth

Now we will see how Jesus Christ said, ***clearly***, that ***He*** was *the Light of the world*. And when we understand the writings of John and the Epistles of John, we will see that John was really clearly showing that Christ is the ***only way***, and yet, everyone is teaching salvation through some other way, through some other Christ, that you can receive the Holy Spirit without baptism. Well, the Bible doesn't teach that.

John 8:12: "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, '***I am the Light of the world***...' " The way that we can come into the *Light of God* is through the Holy Spirit. And to *walk in the Light*, we will see is *His Truth*.

"...the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but ***shall have the Light of Life***" (v 12). That's the whole key: ***We are to follow Christ!*** We are going to see that when John is done with the section of light and darkness in 1-John 1, then he gets in: How then do you walk in that way? And the emphasis on commandment-keeping ***vs*** sin, and truth

vs lying is so profound in 1-John that it really fits today. How can people in today's world and today's climate in the Church of God find their way out of all the confusion that is going on? That's why 1-John was written. *Study and live by 1-John*, a very profound book!

John 12:35: "Then Jesus said to them, 'Yet, a little while the Light is with you. Walk while you have the Light, so that *the* darkness will not overtake you. For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.'" ***That's the whole exemplification of the Christian walk!*** Let's tie that back in with what we covered in John 3, because the whole Christian life can be summarized in:

- Are you walking in the Light?
- Are you coming to the Light?
- Are you following the Light?

which is

- God
- God's Word
- God's Spirit

John 3:19: "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. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed" (vs 19-20).

That's the whole thing we are supposed to be doing in our lives, brethren. We're going to see how John ties this right in with: forgiveness of sin, repentance, walking in Truth and fellowship with God, they all come together.

Verse 21: "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*."

When the darkness descends upon you, you don't know where you are going. Have we seen that happen? Have we seen that happen to people who turn their backs on the Light instead of coming to the Light? *They turn their backs and they walk away from the Light and they walk further and further from the Light*, and pretty soon it's only a distant flicker in the background. They are in darkness and the darkness has covered their eyes. Just like Jesus said, 'He doesn't know where he is going.'

But, when you are walking in the light which is *darkness, Satan's light*—because Satan appears as an 'angel of light'—when you've turned your back on the ***true Light*** you think the 'dark light' now is the illumination and truth. ***But it's not!*** That's why John has written this:

- so we can have these contrasts

- so we can understand the Truth from error
- so we can understand righteousness from sin
- so we can understand Light from darkness

It is really a *very simple* book, but it's a *very profound* book. It is one that helps us. As one woman said, after she read some theological trash, 'I threw it out!' because she could see the Truth and the Light from the error and the darkness.

John 12:36: "'While you have the Light, believe in the Light [Christ], so that you may become *the* children of Light.'...." That's what we want to be, brethren, the children of God, 'the children of light.' That's the whole thing that John is writing.

We will see how all of this becomes personified in Christ, as we will see how Christ looks (Rev. 1). Let's understand that this also reveals that:

- Christ is God
- God is a person
- God has shape
- God has form
- spirit has shape
- spirit has form

God had to show it to him in vision because he couldn't see Him directly face-to-face. This is the One Who says, 'I am the Beginning and the Ending.'

Revelation 1:10: "...I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last...'" (vs 10-11).

He also says in v 8: "...*the* Beginning and the Ending..."

Verse 11: "...and what you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia..."—and he lists all the seven churches.

Verse 12: And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands; and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *One* like *the* Son of man..." (vs 12-13). *That tells you what His form is!*

Always remember this, brethren, it is fundamental: ***The Bible teaches that we have been made in the image of God.*** 'Male and female made He them.' *Image is a reflection of the reality! The reality is God!* and we have been *made in His image*. That's why when Philip asked Jesus, 'show us the Father and it will be sufficient' (John 14:7-9). Jesus said, 'If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father.' In other words, to see Christ in the flesh would be to see what the Father looks like if He appeared in the flesh. I know that Scripture is going



to be twisted so that people will say that, yes, it's just one God. But it doesn't mean that at all. It just answered a simple question with a direct, visible answer. here's what Christ looks like in His glorified form:

"...clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet..." (v 13). We read the Psalm where He *covers Himself with light, clothes Himself with light*. There are things made of spirit, which are **things**. the thing made of spirit is for spirit beings to use. Physical things, such as a shirt or a dress or a coat or shoes would burn up in the presence of a spirit being. You must have spirit things—spirit clothes, *spirit* sea of glass, *spirit* throne—made of spirit things. Those spirit things are not living beings. They are made of spirit **for** spiritual beings. So, there is such a thing as a *spirit* garment.

"...and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire... [so bright, so powerful, so piercing] ...and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword..." (vs 13-16)—the Word of God.

Not that He had a tongue from which a sword went out of. Why is the Word of God called 'a sharp two-edged sword'? Let's think about this for a minute.

What is the Word of God? **Truth!** So, when anything is confronted with Truth, if there is error in it—guess what? *schwit!!!!* That's what we need to be doing with the Word of God, brethren. And that's how the Word of God needs to be in our lives and needs to be preached. We need to understand how **profound** the Word of God is, and why Jesus Christ came and was called 'the Word of God.'

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God **is living**..." It's not dead! Means the same thing in the same place in whatever circumstances, down through history forever and ever. It is **living!** Why? *Because God spoke it!*

"...and **powerful**..." (v 12). There is nothing more powerful than the Word of God. I think, brethren, **unless we're walking in the Light of God's Word we're not going to grow in the power of God's Word**; unless we're walking in the Truth. It's the same way in our lives. It's the same way in preaching. Some of the things we see now coming out in the name of some of these churches—**it's pabulum!** Moreover, it's *poisonous* pabulum. And worst than that, it is **dark** pabulum. Coming from the *light that is darkness*—not coming from the Light

that is Truth. But here's what's going to happen to them, and this is what John is talking about in the Epistles of John—and that's why they are so **powerful!** Because it's bringing the pure Truth of God, the pure Light of God.

"...and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both **soul and spirit**..." (v 12). That's why when you sin you get a guilty conscience. It is God's Spirit **convicting** you of that sin so that you may repent, because God wants us to repent. That's the whole ongoing situation with Christians.

"...and of both *the joints and the marrow*..." (v 12). Why does he use 'marrow'? *The marrow of the bones is the physical life where the blood is produced! Right down into the very essence of human existence!*

"...and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12).

It's not going to be like this thing in Los Angeles—can we get a jury to convict O.J.? **God knows!** It doesn't matter what the defense may or may not do. It doesn't matter what the prosecution may or may not do. Now you know why there has to be a final judgment, and **God is the One Who's going to judge the secrets of men!**

- How many things have been done that human beings don't know?
- That have been held secret?
- That have been held back?
- That have been perpetrated on people?

God is going to know, and the judgment is going to happen and everyone is going to come before the judgment seat of Christ. **Everyone** is going to give an account of himself, **because God knows!** It's no difficult task for God. There is the 'spirit of man,' which is recorded upon it everything we've ever said or done—*period!* That's why we need grace and forgiveness and mercy **constantly**.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight..." Why? *Because when you come to the Light, the Light exposes your living and your evil!* That's why those who are walking in darkness don't want to come to the Light. But they're going to be forced to one of these days.

"...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... [that's fantastic, brethren] ...*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 13-15).

I want you to understand: every time we come to *light and truth*, then there is sin and there is repentance and there is cleansing, as the way that John wrote.

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.”

Revelation 1:16: “...went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power.” If you get where it’s plenty hot enough, anything that truly has life in it cannot even exist in the power of the sun. But that shows what Christ looks like. Now you know why a human being cannot live in the Divine presence of God. You can’t even look at the sun for 15 minutes and not go blind if you truly stared directly into the sun. That’s the kind of light we are dealing with.

Now let’s cover just a couple of other things before we go back to the Epistle of 1-John. Let’s come and see that *the commandments and the laws bring us Light*. Not only is the Lord Light, but everything that God does is in the Light. Everything that God produces, *produces light*. The laws and commandments of God produce a way for us that is light.

Psalms 43:3: “Oh, send out Your Light and Your Truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to Your Holy mountain and to Your tabernacles.” What is this telling us? *He’s walking in the Light!* Coming to His Holy hill, coming to His tabernacle.

Verse 4: “Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; yea, upon the lyre I will praise You, O God, my God.”

Psalms 97:11—shows the **way of** Truth, the **way of**: “Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous ones, and praise His Holy name” (vs 11-12).

Psa. 119 shows the profound, converted attitude toward everyone of God’s laws and statutes and judgments and commandments and precepts and way and word. That is a whole deep and profound study in itself.

Psalms 119:105: “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Verse 130: “The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” So, when you combine all of these together, this shows what the true Christian life is, *walking in the light*.

Proverbs 6:23: “For the commandment *is* a lamp; **and the Law is Light...**” No wonder when John is done with the light and dark section he talks about keeping the commandments of God. Then he makes no uncertain comparison.

1-John 1:5: “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 5-6)—which shows that the only way that you’re going to have fellowship with God is to be *walking in the Light*.

Now another thing, ‘if you are walking in darkness and saying you are having fellowship with Him [Christ], we are lying to ourselves.’ This is the Greek verb, which I told you about, which is the verb that expresses something in Greek that is not exactly expressed in English. It is something that you yourself are doing to yourself. If you tell a lie do you still know what the truth is? *Yes, because you know the truth and you know the lie!* Generally if you tell a lie, you are telling it to someone else. That’s bad enough, but what is so wrong about lying to yourself and you’re doing it to yourself is that, *the lie becomes truth in your mind*.

When you’re lying to yourself in that way *you can no longer distinguish truth from a lie*. And that’s what’s so profound about it. And that’s what’s so profound on the political scene today. So many lies are being told that no one knows what a lie is! Definitions are being changed constantly so no one knows what the truth is. That’s what happens when you are lying to yourself and you are doing it to yourself.

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the Light... [how?] ...**as He is in the Light...**”—*as God is in the light!* That is an ultimate thing! Isn’t that the *ultimate* of how we need to be walking? *Yes, it is!* Let’s see what it says about *God and the Father and fellowship*, and the whole thing is just absolutely profound.

James 1:17: “Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights... [Who has so much light that]: ...with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning.” That’s a profound light! That’s what it means to be ‘*walking in the light as He is in the light*.’ So then, translated to us, that means:

- How constant should be *our walk*?
- How constant should be *our belief*?
- How constant should be *our conviction*?

Verse 18—which gets into the fellowship: “According to His own will, He begat us by *the*

Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings.” The *creation* of His family.

Ultimately *that fellowship and that light* is going to be profoundly expressed. Let’s understand something here: today we are to be ‘the light of the world’ because:

- we have the Spirit of God
  - we are walking in God’s way
  - we are fellowshiping with God
- we are fellowshiping with God because*
- He is Light
  - we’re walking in Light
  - He’s given us His Spirit

We’re still talking about the Light of God, but in relationship to our walking with Him. The theme *all the way through* the book of Revelation is *the Beginning and the Ending*. Each Holy Day is a *beginning and an ending*. With everything that God does with us, there’s a *beginning and an ending*.

The **beginning** is:

- God calls us
- God leads us to repentance
- we’re baptized
- we receive the Holy Spirit of God
- with the Holy Spirit of God, Christ is in us—*the hope of glory*
- we are fellowshiping with God and Jesus Christ the Son, because of the Holy Spirit in us
- we are walking in the laws of God
- we are walking in the commandments of God, ***which are Light and Truth***

God is *Light and Truth*. We are to be walking in it ***as He is walking in it***. What is the ***ultimate end*** of that Light?

- when we are with God the Father
- when we are not only are part of the Light, but we are ***the Light***, because we have glorification

Revelation 21:22: “And I saw no temple in it; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city has no need of the sun, or of the moon, that they should shine in it; because **the glory of God enlightens it, and the Light of it is the Lamb**” (vs 22-23).

So, the ***ultimate of walking in the Light is to be living as spirit beings in New Jerusalem forever!*** That ending, brethren, then is a *new beginning*. What are we going to do for all eternity?

- now that we are equipped

- now that we will be in the Kingdom of God
- now that we will have radiant glory
- now that we can walk in the Light of the Lamb directly, because we will see Him

If you think that God’s plan now is fantastic. Do you want something to inspire you and to think on? We can’t answer it because we won’t know until then, which is: **What is God’s plan for all eternity? It’s got to involve the Universe. It’s got to involve us.** Isn’t that something? It’s worth it to walk in the Light. So if we’re going to walk in the light, as He is in the Light, let’s see what this will do for us.

1-John 1:7: “However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another...” [truly our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son (v 3)] ... and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, ***cleanses us from all sin.***”

***Every sin***—not just some part of the time—***but every sin!*** *Cleansing us*; that is in present tense. You see once you get into this relationship with God, then:

- there is repentance
- there is forgiveness of sin
- there is wiping the slate clean constantly

What is Christ doing to the Church?

Whenever we are brought into this relationship with God, there is a *constant cleansing*; ongoing cleansing. That’s all a part of the grace of God. Here is what Christ is doing to the Church:

Ephesians 5:25: “Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it... [making Holy] ...having cleansed *it*... [‘katharizo’] ...with the washing of water by *the Word*...” (vs 25-26).

That’s why it’s so very important for us to know and understand. Christ in us is the Word of God. The Holy Spirit in us leads us in the Word of God. ***It is cleansing us from every sin!*** How does it cleanse us from every sin? Well, the world lies in wickedness and they don’t know what sin is. The world does not go through what we go through.

(go to the next track)

Now, I’m going to talk about sin in relationship to us first. That’s why the first message we hear is *repent* and be baptized for the remission of sins—***forgiveness and remission of sins***—and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I need to interject in here—and this is very important—*repentance* is not just *turning from*.

That's part of it. **Repentance is a deep and a profound conviction of sin!** Your turning from sin is a metamorphous, which is called **conversion**. You are to be changed **from the inside out**—not the *outside* in. And was that not the sin of the Pharisees? 'Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are like whited sepulchers. You're white indeed, and beautiful on the outside, **within** you're full of dead men's bones.' Christ said, 'Full well you make the platter clean, **but you don't clean that which is within.**' The Holy Spirit is that which **convicts us, to be clean within**, removing every blot, every blemish, every sin, because we're 'walking in the Light as He is in the Light.' What does that do to converted Christians? This is the battle that true, deep and profoundly converted Christians go through.

Romans 7:7 "What then shall we say? *Is the Law sin?...*" Most people think the Law is sin, so when too many people are breaking the law, what do they do? *They get rid of the Law*, so there is no more sin, because the carnal mind is that way. The carnal mind is not interested in getting rid of sin. The carnal mind is not convicted of sin like we are, because they don't have the Holy Spirit.

"...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'" (v 7). But even at that, you still don't understand the truth of covetousness just because the law defines it.

Verse 8: "But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind* of lust because apart from law, sin was dead." Why? *Because where no Law is there's no sin.*

Verse 9: "For I was once alive without law..." He was a Pharisee. Now let's understand what we're really talking about here.

"...but after the commandment came..." (v 9)—which means: *when the true understanding of the commandment came*, and also the true understanding of the commandment. Remember how Paul was called? *He was, on his jackass going to Damascus to arrest those*—and all of a sudden what happened to him? **A blinding Light!** What happened to his vision? **He went blind!** So, we can also have an illusion to the commandment here of Paul to preach—not directly, but secondarily.

"...sin revived, and I died" (v 9). No, Paul didn't die, *but by baptism*. How **profound** is repentance? *So profound that you die!* How do you die? *You die the death of baptism! You are joined together in His death!* (Rom. 6).

Verse 10: "And the commandment, which *was meant to result in life*, was found *to be* unto death for me"—because now **he could not escape the consciousness of sin when he sinned.**

Verse 11: "Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good" (vs 11-12).

Now then, here's a dilemma that's hard for the carnal mind to even grasp. This is why, brethren, the Church has to go beyond commandment-keeping in the letter of the Law, **to commandment-keeping in spirit of the Law**, to doing the things which are pleasing to God. When you do that then the conviction of sin is going to be there and you're going to wonder: Oh, God, when can I ever overcome sin? That is a profound experience that only Christians go through, **because of God's Spirit in them to convict them of the sin!** To do what? **To lead you to repentance!** What are you going to find? *You're going to find that you're doing just exactly like the model prayer says:* 'Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses [daily].' **Yes!**

This is some pretty profound stuff we're going through here, brethren. So, he brings up the question:

Verse 13: "Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful." That's what happens with the Spirit of God.

Verse 14: "For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin." The only way you get out from under that is through Christ.

Verse 15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do." Here is this battle going on within—this inner battle.

Verse 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the Law that *it is* good. So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me" (vs 16-17).

You come to the realization and the true conviction of mind that in your mind and your nature is a sinful nature and it is always there to cause you to sin, and **that is a conviction, which only a converted mind understands!**

- a carnal mind does not understand that
- a carnal mind does not even know what sin is
- a carnal mind does not have conviction of sin

All we have to do is witness some of these heinous crimes that come along. If a jury can be convinced that the perpetrator is the victim, instead of the one who has been killed, they're off, and they have no consciousness of it.

Verse 18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good...." That's always a good one to read when we start getting all **high and mighty** and we start thinking we're the **greatest** gift to God—no good thing!

In the world, if a carnal-minded person were told 'there is no good thing in you,' they would have what psychologists would say, 'low self-esteem.' What that does, that pokes a hole in the pride. Just like taking a balloon and sticking a pin in it—BAM! You have nothing left. Only a converted mind can handle that and still have the hope and the faith and the esteem, *which comes from Christ!* A carnal mind cannot handle it. There's no good thing in it. Now you know why Christ said—when the young man came and said: 'Good Master'—'There's none good but God, don't call Me good.' Because He was carrying human nature.

"...there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good.... [the desire to do good] ...For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me. Consequently, I find this law in *my members*..." (vs 18-21)—which is:

- by *conviction* of God's Spirit
- by *conviction* of conversion
- by the **Light** of God's Word
- the **Light** of God's Truth
- the **Light** of God's Spirit

"...that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me" (v 21). This is why we need to be **cleansed**. This is why we have the promise that the blood of Jesus Christ **is cleansing us** from *every sin!* **Every sin!** When we really grasp that, the way that God wants it, that is so uplifting and that is so profound and that is so releasing as it were, because then you know that you're in God's hands.

Verse 22: "For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law

within my own members, warring against the law of my mind..." (vs 22-23)—which is the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ, which is in you. It's warring against us, which is the law of sin.

"...and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. O *what a* wretched man I am!..." (vs 23-24).

I tell you what, brethren, without the Spirit of God you cannot contain the wretchedness of human nature and understand it to the point that you love God and know there's no good thing in you and realize that only through Christ can this be cleansed. So, now maybe this will help you even understand more about overcoming and human nature and the Spirit of God and the light that is to be in us.

Verse 24: "O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ...." (vs 24-25). That's how the deliverance is going to come. So, as we're walking in the Light as **He is in the Light**—the blood of Jesus Christ is cleansing us, **continuously, from every sin!**

"...Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin" (v 25).

This will help us to understand when we come to the kind of commandment-keeping that John is talking about.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..." God gave you the 'law of sin and death' within your members. If you're walking the way that this describes here—*walking after Christ, walking in the Light*—then the Spirit of God is cleansing you from every sin. Therefore, if it's cleansing you from every sin, there is no condemnation. Because you're walking in Christ, because you're walking in the Light 'as He is in the Light.'

"...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death" (vs 1-2). Not made you free to remove it, but has justified you to make you right before God.

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; in order that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit" (vs 1-4).

John teaches the same thing, simply between Light and darkness, good and evil, Truth vs lie.

1-John 1:7: “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.**” We could go through and study about the blood of Jesus Christ with another whole sermon. So, I’ll let you study that on your own.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin... [which—let’s read this whole statement and understand it then] ...If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

What is one of the doctrines that is taught of being *born again* now in the flesh. We will see that 1-John 3:9 is an erroneous translation because it **conflicts directly** with 1-John 1.

1-John 3:9 (KJV): “Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he **cannot** sin, because he is born of God.” Now, **that is an erroneous translation!**

People today claim that being born of God now, or *born again* now—which is the traditional acceptance of many Churches of God as well as the Protestants—they say you **cannot** sin. But that contradicts directly what we’re going to read here in the first chapter of 1-John. The truth is, when we get to it, **you have been begotten** and you cannot **practice** sin. It doesn’t say *you can never sin!* Otherwise that would conflict with

1-John 1:8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

Let’s see the correct translation of it, and we will go back and get into it more in detail when we come to the third chapter. But since I brought it up, let’s just put it into the record here.

1-John 3:7: “Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of begettal is dwelling within him, and he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God**” (vs. 7-9).

- practice means *to live in*
- practice means *to walk in darkness*
- we are to be walking in the light, as He is in the light

Notice 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”—which is also like saying Christ is not in us. Jesus said, ‘I am ***the Way, the Truth and the Life.***’

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins...”—which fits right into the model prayer: ‘forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who transgress against us.’

“...He is **faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (v 9). **That’s tremendous!** That is a promise, brethren. God will forgive every one of your sins.

Verse 10: “If we say that we have not sinned, **we make Him a liar**... [Are we going to make God a liar? *No!*] ...and His Word is not in us.”

Once we understand what Paul really wrote, notice how the same spirit is inspiring the same message in slightly different words. John is ***so profound***, but *direct* and *simple*.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is ***the propitiation*** for our sins...” (vs 1-2).

‘Propitiation’ means *continual mercy seat, continual forgiveness, continual atonement on an ongoing basis*, which ties right in with the fact that He is ***cleansing us from every sin!*** We have an Advocate with the Father!

- Christ is *advocating* for us
- Christ is the *sacrifice* for us
- He is the *propitiation* for our sins

“...and not for our sins only, but also **for the sins of the whole world**” (v 2).

What is the sum of all this, brethren? Let’s just start right here: ***The sins of the whole world!*** The sacrifice of Christ has not yet been applied to the sins of the whole world, because God has not called them. That’s why the Holy Days tell us the key as to when this will be applied. But for us, it is telling us that we have an ongoing relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Our sins *are being* cleansed—***every sin!*** We do have a conviction of sin in us, because of the Holy Spirit of God to lead us to repentance. I know that when I have sinned, and I’ve thought, well, you know, I’ll wait until I’m in a better attitude before I go repent.

- Have you ever done that?
- Do you ever get in a better attitude so you can go repent more righteously?

- How can you repent more righteously when you're a sinner? *They're contradictory terms!*

If you're fighting a battle with sin, let's understand what's happening. It's all a part of the grace of God. Did you know that? It's part of the grace of God that *is leading you* to repentance. That's how God is cleansing us from *every sin!* That is so great! Brethren, God has done this so that to inspire us, to love Him even more, to grow in grace and knowledge. And while you are doing that and being cleansed from every sin, you will find that you are sinning less, but you understand the *profound* depths of sin at the same time, while you're being cleansed. Well, that's part of the graciousness of God.

Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness..." Isn't that rich? Isn't that profound? Isn't that good? 'goodness' (KJV) means *graciousness*. Do you despise the goodness of His graciousness?

"...and forbearance... [because He doesn't strike you dead on the spot] ...and longsuffering; not knowing that the graciousness of God **leads you to repentance?**" (v 4). That's what God is doing. That is all a part of the 'conviction of sin.' That's all a part of *being cleansed* of every sin. John writes this in the beginning so we can know and understand and have confidence, brethren, that in Christ and Christ alone can this be done.

Eph. 1 to show you the riches of the graciousness or grace of God. That's got to be an awful lot of love on God's part—don't you think? *That God the Father would put His Spirit in you, and with the inner workings of Christ in you, lead you to repentance, convict you of sin, cleanse you of every sin.* That you can have confidence in keeping the commandments of God. That way you can have *true* esteem—not *self-esteem*—*Godly esteem* because of the greatness of God.

I tell you one thing, we really need to understand the profound depths of God's love for us, that He would do this!

Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with **every spiritual blessing...**" Isn't that a spiritual blessing what we've just covered today?

"...in the heavenly *things* with Christ..." (v 3). That is a heavenly things that God is doing with us. Cleansing us from every sin. Washing of the water by the Word.

Verse 4: "According as He has personally chosen us for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love." That's why we're being

cleansed from every sin: that we can be Holy, that He can sanctify us. That's why we are called *Holy brethren*.

"...be Holy and blameless before Him in love..." (v 4). That is to inspire more love in us, brethren. To uplift us! To give us that great and that profound love and desire to be the Son of God!

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ... [to God the Father Himself!] ...according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace... [the graciousness of God leads you to repentance] ...wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (vs 5-7).

- that's what it means to be *cleansed* from every sin
- that's what means to have *Jesus Christ at the right hand of God as a Helper*, as an Advocate
- that's what means to *walk in the Light* as He is in the Light
- that's to inspire us so that when we come to the next section here in first John, that we will know *we are to keep the commandments of God*

After going through and showing that we are to every sin cleansed. That we're to be walking in the Light, that we're to be keeping *the commandments of God*. What is always one of the first things that happens when a Church of God begins to deteriorate, they leave off keeping the commandments! Which ones do they leave off keeping? *The ones which they consider the least!*

It's taught that in some Churches of God that commandment-keeping is a *tradition* of the Church. Can you believe that? **No! Commandment-keeping is a command of God!** It's not a 'tradition' of the Church.

- What does this pave the way for?
- What does this 'tinkle' of the Truth and the watering down of the Truth pave the way for?

If commandment-keeping is *our tradition*, then *your traditions* are what God led you to do—such as: Sunday-keeping, Christmas and Easter.

John makes this profound statement here, 1-John 2:3<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "And **by this standard** we know that we know Him: **if we are keeping His commandments.**" That is clear, that is *profound*, that is *sharp* and that is *powerful!* There are three ways of knowing Him:

- 1) You may have seen Him and have known Him when you were growing up in Judea and maybe have been one of those what *knew* Him because you were living then.
- 2) Can refer to the apostles; that if there are those who are saying they're apostles and are not, and are saying you don't have to keep the commandments of God. The *true* apostles *knew* Him.
- 3) We know Him because He has called us and we have the Spirit of God. And We *know* Christ from the point of view as revealed in the Divine Word of God.

So "...by this standard..." *we are knowing*—constant, ongoing knowledge—that we have known Him if we are keeping His commandments. *Constant*, present tense: *keeping always*. Again the contrast; notice the books of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> John are sharp contrasts between:

- Light and darkness
- Truth and error
- love and hate
- commandment-keeping *vs* sin

Verse 4: "The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments..."—is a nice, wonderful fella, is a brother in Christ, is just misguided. **NO!** No psychological statements of acceptance here.

"...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 4-5).

That's how important Sabbath-keeping is. Is that not *profoundly* important? *Yes, indeed! It is!* John is making it clear because we're going to see in the latter part of 1-John 2 there were those antichrists coming in and teaching them wrong and false doctrines.

- they were bringing in the darkness of Satan and saying this is light
- they were bringing in the transgression of the law and commandments of God and saying that is Truth
- they were saying that 'we know Jesus, we know God, we have a greater revelation'

John is saying, 'No they don't!' If you're not keeping the commandments of God, if you're not walking in that way, you don't know God. And boy, it needs to be said that way.

Verse 6: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him... [you're saying you're living in Christ; if

you're saying that Christ is in you, here is your obligation:] ...is obligating himself **also to walk even as He Himself walked.**" There is the whole definition of true and profound Christian living, right there.

- Did Jesus ever sin? *No!*
- Did Jesus ever break a commandment of God? *No!*
- Did Jesus ever eat any unclean food? *No!*
- Did He ever eat anything with blood in it? *No!*
- Did He ever break the Sabbath Day? *No!*
- Did He ever break a Holy Day? *No!*
- *He never sinned!*
- *That's our example!*
- *That's how we are to walk!*

It is true we do need to understand the technical things, but God puts it on a simple level. For example, let's just use the example of clean and unclean meats. We could do scientific studies into those things and understand that they are not fit for human consumption. We could get very detailed and very involved in it. All that knowledge descends from a very simple thing: 'These are the beasts of the earth which you shall eat: everything that parts the hoof and chews the cud.' That is the simple introduction to everything that is clean. Is it good to have a complex and technical understanding of some of these other things? *Yes!*

Just like it's good for us to have a detailed and complex understanding of God's Word when we're able to do so. But John is saying, 'I'm putting it in simple terms for you: *keep the commandments of God, walk in the Light, walk in the Truth.*' Then he says, 'Now, you're obligating yourself to walk even as he walked'—in the more profound way. ***So we need both!***

1-Peter 2:20: "For what commendation *is there* if, disobeying and being beaten, you endure it? But if *while* doing good you endure suffering, this *is* acceptable with God; **for to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps**" (vs 20-21).

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

#### Scriptural References;

- 1) 1-John 1:5
- 2) Psalm 104:1-2
- 3) Psalm 36:9
- 4) Psalm 27:1
- 5) John 8:12



- 6) John 12:35
- 7) John 3:19-21
- 8) John 12:36
- 9) Revelation 1:10-11, 8, 11-16
- 10) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 11) Revelation 1:16
- 12) Psalm 43:3-4
- 13) Psalm 97:11-12
- 14) Psalm 119:105, 130
- 15) Proverbs 6:23
- 16) 1-John 1:5-7
- 17) James 1:17-18
- 18) Revelation 21:22-23
- 19) 1-John 1:7
- 20) Ephesians 5:25-26
- 21) Romans 7:7-25
- 22) Romans 8:1-4
- 23) 1-John 1:7-8
- 24) 1-John 3:9
- 25) 1 John 1:8
- 26) 1-John 3:7-9
- 27) 1-John 1:8-10
- 28) 1-John 2:1-2
- 29) Romans 2:4
- 30) Ephesians 1:3-7
- 31) 1-John 2:3-6
- 32) 1 Peter 2:20-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 14:7-9
- Romans 6

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## Epistle of First John V

### Keeping the Commandments

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As we started out and showed that the Epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John are a study in *contrasts*—and what John is doing is contrasting God's way *vs* the devil's way. John does this in simple and easy to understand language. What he's doing is showing that of these two ways:

1. walking in the Light
2. walking in the darkness

That's the whole theme of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John. So let me just review here. God's way is Light and the *Spirit of Truth*, which means that He's giving us the *true foundation* of Christianity through Jesus Christ and God the Father. which then is based on:

- 1) light
- 2) truth
- 3) love
- 4) repentance
- 5) the Spirit of God
- 6) obedience and commandment-keeping
- 7) true knowledge
- 8) living and abiding in God's way
- 9) Jesus spiritually dwelling in each Christian
- 10) eternal life

Satan's way is the *spirit of deception* or the *spirit of error*—and we are to know both. This is the whole summary of everything in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John:

1-John 4:6: “**We are of God**... [and this is what we are to know]: ...the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the **Spirit of the Truth** and the **spirit of the deception** [error].”

Could a Christian be deceived? We have heard in the past that it's *impossible* to deceive Christians or *true* Christians. Let's read that again. It does not say it is *impossible* to deceive them.

Matthew 24:24: “For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

We've never thought about what if those who have been called *elect* were to be deceived—or choose to be deceived. How many Scriptures have we read over and over and over again: ‘Let no one deceive you by any means. Let no one beguile you.’

Satan's way is *walking in darkness*, the *spirit of deception*. Here are the main points of the

*spirit of deception*. The children of the devil are walking in darkness:

- 1) darkness
- 2) deception and lies
- 3) hating the brethren and God—that is loving the world
- 4) the spirit of the devil—which he can influence and possess and be a counterfeit begettal
- 5) disobedience or commandment-breaking, lawlessness and transgression
- 6) false knowledge
- 7) living and abiding in the devil and deception
- 8) the devil's spiritually motivating his children
- 9) eternal death

What John is doing here in the book of 1-John, especially, is clearly laying out how Christians, in time of confusion and deceit going around, can really get their bearings. Can stay true to God. Can understand the difference between Truth and error. So, I have a summary of living in the Light *vs* living in the darkness. I cross-reference some of the verses. Then we're going to see, when we get to 1-John 2, how he builds upon that to show the concrete method that you really can actually know, and *know* that you know.

### REVIEW:

- 1) practice the Truth is *walking in the Light*. And you're constantly walking in the Light, *coming to the Light*
- 2) practicing sin is *walking in darkness*.

*When people sin, this brings spiritual blindness!*

When people sin, *and repent*, then that clears everything up. God will cleanse us from that. But when people sin and are *walking in darkness and do not repent*, they become blind, *spiritually blind!* And they don't know where they're going.

- 3) the claim that you do not have sin means *denying the sinful nature of humans*. The Truth is not in you and hence you are practicing sin
- 4) the claim that you have not sin and action and behavior makes God a liar.

Think about that for a minute, about how profound that is if you *make God a liar*. It's one thing to lie, it's one thing to be a liar; but it's

another thing, by your action and your behavior and proclamations, **to make God a liar!**

- 5) confess your sins; God cleanses us from every sin and unrighteousness

Now let's look at the comparison of the Scriptures there in 1-John, and what I've done, I've taken the things that show *walking in sin* or *walking in the darkness* and *practicing sin*. So I've got 1-John 1: 6, 8, 10. That is paralleled by 1-John 1:7, 9 and 1-John 2:1-2. Let's just look at 1-John 1:6, 8, 10 for a minute. Notice the **if** clauses here:

1-John 1:6: "**If** we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him... [we know God, we're fellowshiping with God] ...but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are **not practicing** the Truth." The Greek there means literally *practice the Truth*. Every time you come across the word *Truth* immediately certain Scriptures should come to your mind:

- God's Word is Truth
- Your commandments are Truth
- Your laws are Truth
- all Your precepts are Truth

When we get into the 1-John 2 we're going to see about commandment-keeping and how so important that is. All the way through we are looking at claims in the plural: **we**. That could be either be the apostles or that could be the Christians as a group.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin..." That means *you do not have a sinful nature*. All people are good people and all people are righteous people and all good people everywhere will all get together and we will all build this wonderful New World Order. That's what the whole **spirit of deception** is all about.

"...we are deceiving ourselves and the Truth is not in us" (v 8). You have two things here: they are not practicing the Truth, and the Truth cannot be in them. Why? *Because we're looking at the differences we just saw in 1-John 4:6*—we are to know the *Spirit of Truth* and the *spirit of error*.

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."

Let's look at the other side of that—of walking in the Light, v 7: "However, if we walk in the Light... [How are we to be walking 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"

As we saw in Eph. 5, God is washing us, Christ is washing the Church with the '**washing of the water by the Word**'—cleansing us from every sin.

Verse 9: "If we confess our own sins... [which then is repentance] ...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That goes a little bit further. That goes to those things that you might say are the sins which are 'not unto death'—missing the mark—the sins which are sins of just originating from human error. But they are more like just indiscretions rather than gross sins.

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And yet, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the Righteous*." Christ is *advocating* for us, *interceding* for us, our High Priest at the right hand of God the Father. That allows us to come into the very presence of God the Father:

- through prayer
- through fellowship of God's Holy Spirit
- through fellowship with Them
- through fellowship with each other

Verse 2: "And He is *the* propitiation for our sins... [which means a continual source of mercy and forgiveness] ...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*" (vs 1-2). God's plan is that He so loved the world that He's going to bring salvation to all of those who believe in Jesus Christ.

1-John 1:7: "However, **if we walk in the Light**..." Meaning:

- Light is Truth
- by the Spirit of Truth
- one walks in the Truth
- lives in the Truth
- loves the Truth

That's what it means to be *walking in the Light*: **live in the Light, walk in the Light, love the Light**. In order to walk and live in the Light a Christian must renounce and confess sins and sinful nature. That is the whole key in importance to our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Now, we're also going to see that we have to **keep the commandments of God**—and that is the thing that begins to give us the understanding concerning the *spirit of deception* or error. The *spirit of deception* comes along and says:

- this commandment is not so important
- that commandment is not so important

- if you're sincere in your heart and you are meaning well—even though you're living in sin—that's okay

That's the whole basis of the book *I'm Okay, You're Okay*.

Verse 6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth."

Verse 8: "...we are deceiving ourselves..." Now the comment for that is the Greek is most emphatic—and this becomes so important for us to realize: ***we can deceive ourselves!*** If we do deceive ourselves, if we are *the elect*, then that portion or that individual of *the elect* in general ***can be deceived*** because you deceive yourself. That's the worst kind of deception. So, it does not say 'we are deceived.'

Satan has the whole world in deception. We put ourselves in a different category when we come out of that deception and then go back into it, because we have to justify that deception to the being equivalent to Truth in our minds. So therefore, in doing so we are lying to ourselves. All of those then—self-deception—there's no room for Truth, and the *spirit of deception* will consume you.

One cannot know and share the reality of God while 'walking in darkness' because you are not practicing the Truth. So they *live* in darkness and they *walk* in darkness and they *love* darkness and *hate the Light*.

Verse 10: "***If*** we say that we have not sinned, we make Him [God] a liar, and His Word is not in us." ***To make God a liar is blasphemy because God cannot lie!*** The sinner is the liar and Satan is the father of lies ***and liars***. Let's notice the ***If*** clauses that we find in 1-John 1:

- v 6: "***If*** we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him..."
- v 8: [transcriber's correction]: "***If*** we say we do not have sin..."
- v 9: "***If*** we are confessing our own sins..."
- v 10: "***If*** we say that we have not sinned..."
- 1-John 2:1: "...***if*** anyone does sin..."
- v 3: "...***if*** we keep His commandments."

What becomes so important is that when you have an ***if*** clause then we are to make a *determination* and we are to make a *judgment* and we are to come to an *understanding* concerning that. That's why when the Church reaches a certain point of maturity—that's what it is here with 1-John—

then we have to go back to the very basics and we have to get a ***clear and sharply defined understanding of the Truth*** and how we are to live in it.

Just one last comment on *propitiation*: God, in the person of Jesus Christ the Righteous, is the sacrificial sin Offering, the Offerer and the Cleanser for the forgiveness of our sins. God the Father is the *receiver* and *forgiver* of our sins and Jesus Christ is the *continual propitiation, the continual source of mercy and forgiveness for our sins*—and ***it is all the operation of God!***

Now let's come to 1-John 2:3. The first part of 'walking in the Light' consists of:

- 1) living in the Light and practicing Truth
- 2) confessing and repenting of your sins

Now we come to the part that is so important: ***keeping the commandments of God!***

1-John 2:3—and this is very *emphatic* and this very *specific* and very *profound*. "And by this *standard*... [as we went through and saw before: 'en toutoo'] ...***we know***... [we have to *know*, ***there cannot be any doubt***] ...that we know Him: ***if we keep His commandments***"—present tense: *keeping, on going*.

You don't keep them for some of the time, part of the time, when it's convenient for you to do it; but you are keeping them *always, continuously, all the time*, because ***that's what God requires***. That's how we know we are in Christ and God the Father—and we are to ***know*** it. Also this is the kind of knowledge where it is experiential knowledge—by keeping His commandments and *walking in the Light* and by *practicing the Truth*, we ***learn from experience*** and ***we know!*** God wants us to know!

Satan's going to come around and say, 'How do you know?' If you are not keeping the commandments, and if you don't know the difference, or if you're discounting the commandments of God then there's an entrance for the *spirit of deception* and an entrance for the light of Satan, ***which is darkness***.

We are to know! Most emphatic, most specific—now here's another aspect of it: ***commandment-keeping and obedience is a condition of true Christianity!*** You cannot be a Christian and not keep His commandments.

Let's see how He expounds this even further: Notice what happens in v 4. All the way down through v 3 we have: 'if we.' Now he changes:

- v 4: "The one who says..."

- vs 5-6: “Anyone...”
- v 9: “Anyone...”
- v 10: “The one who...”
- v 11: “...the one who...”

So, this becomes very important for us to understand what he’s saying.

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.” There’s an awful lot in here for us.

We are to **know** Christ! We are to **know** the Father! That very knowledge is based upon the fact that we are **keeping His commandments**.

John 17:1: “Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh...’” (vs 1-2).

Let’s understand that. That *with all flesh* means **there is no salvation through anyone other than Jesus Christ. None other! There cannot be!** There is not any other salvation!

“...in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him” (v 2). This goes right back to one of the very basic premises of our calling. ‘No one can come to Me except the Father, who sent Me, **draw** him.’ And ‘no one can come to the Father except through Me.’

Verse 3: “For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send.” We are *to know*, and we are **to know** that *we know*! Because when the *spirit of deception* comes, and when the *spirit of deceit* is pushing upon us, **we’ve got to know!** That’s exactly what’s happening to the Church of God today. These books of the letters of John or the Epistles of John are so important for today, because they are fundamental and they just are so weighty—and yet, when you read them they are **so simple!** They are easy to understand. There is no mystery here at all.

1-John 2:4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.” There’s one thing Israel always did; Israel always made God to serve with their sins and their lies. Now we can’t do this under the New Testament.

Let’s just cover just a little bit here: “I have known Him”—because of John writing this, we could be dealing with a couple of other possibilities.

1. that there were people who were still alive who had actually seen Jesus in the flesh

2. that we know Him because of the Spirit which is dwelling in us

Now, if you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you, what is the Spirit of God going to do for you? *The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ! It is the Holy Spirit!* What does the Holy Spirit do for us? What is the one main purpose concerning the laws and commandments of God that the Holy Spirit is going to do for us? *The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth!* Let’s go to the book Hebrews for just a minute. If we have Christ in us, and if we have the Holy Spirit in us, it is going to **lead us to keep the commandments of God IF we follow the lead of the Spirit!**

Here is what God wants to do, Hebrews 10:15: “And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us...” This is exactly what we’re talking about here—Christ in you:

- the Spirit of Truth
- the Spirit of knowledge
- the Spirit of love
- walking in the Light
- walking in the Truth
- loving the Truth

“...for after He had previously said, ‘This *is* the covenant...’” (vs 15-16). We’re all under the New Covenant, and this is what John is writing about, the New 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” (v 16).

It actually means in the Greek *to inscribe* or *to etch*. That’s actually what happens when knowledge comes into your mind. Your brain cells actually are modified to store that information or it is *etched*—it becomes a part of your very being. That’s why commandment-keeping becomes very important. Not only to discern who a true Christian is, but also for true Christians to gauge the level of their activity in relationship to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, walking in the Light, having the laws of God in our hearts and in our minds, and written there—**inscribed there!**

Here’s what happens if you walk in the darkness, and here is what happens when you continue living in sin—in a powerful, and in a continuous and determined effort:

Jeremiah 17:1: “The sin of Judah *is* engraved with a pen of iron... [pretty profound, pretty tough words] ...with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars.”

Now, that shows what happens when people just dedicatedly give themselves over to sin. They give up keeping the commandments of God. So therefore, the keeping of the commandments of God become most profound. We're going to zero in on some of those commandments in just a little bit here.

1-John 2:4: "The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar..."—*not God!*

In order to keep Sunday, do they have to lie about the Sabbath? *Yes!* Is the doctrine of Sunday a lie? *Yes!* God did not *suggest!* The Ten Commandments are *not* God's suggestions; they are the **commandments!** What John is writing is most emphatic. He did not say, 'Since I've made man and I know you're physical and I know that you need rest, I'm hereby suggesting that you rest one day in seven.' That is the *spirit of deception*. Jehovah Witnesses come along and say, 'Well, every day is Holy.' *No it's not!* God didn't say they were. God did not make them Holy. Every time you have to get around one of the laws of God, one of the commandments of God—which is Truth—you *become a liar!*

Verse 5: "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word..." Now we go from more than just commandments, we go to God's Word, which includes all of it. How much does Sunday-keeping, professing Christianity throw away of God's Word? We'll talk about that in just a little bit.

"On the other hand, *if* anyone keeps His Word..." So, it's not just commandments, not just laws, His Word includes faith, hope, love, endurance and understanding.

"...truly... [in truth] ...in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [is reaching its fulfillment] ... By this *means* we know that we are in Him" (v 5). What he's really saying here is, 'If you really want to know that you are continually in Christ and God the Father, you have to be keeping His Word.'

John 14 ties right in there exactly with it. Then we're going to see that the requirement even gets stronger. We go from commandments to His Word, and then this is **perfecting** love in you. And by this means we **are knowing** that we are in Him. We've gone to these verses quite a bit, but let's come back to them because these are profound and are:

- the very *basic substance* of Christian living
- the very *basic substance* of how you can avoid the spirit of deception

- the very *basic substance* on how you know you are in Christ

The whole key to Christian commandment-keeping. The Jews or Judaism look to the mechanics of the law, so therefore, if it's not specifically defined in a finite law written down in some book, they can't understand it. Christ has it the other way around.

John 14:15: "If you love Me... [the book of 1-John has awful lot to do with love] ...**keep the commandments**... [the Greek there is]: ...namely, My commandments." The exact same word for 'commandments' is in 1-John 2.

If we know—which we do—that Christ was the God of the Old Testament, which He was—then any commandments that He gave, which apply in the New Covenant as well as the Old Covenant, are those commandments, which we are to keep. I've seen it time and again, when it comes to the least of the commandments that's what people want to **first** give up. Then that spirit of deception begins to creep in. But if you love and keep His commandments then you'll *receive the Spirit of Truth* (v 17)

Verse 20: "In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you." Notice again, 'know'—you are **to know**. True Christianity

- is very *dogmatic*
- is very *punctilious*
- is very *knowledgeable*

Christ doesn't want us to be without knowledge. Christ doesn't want us to be in doubt. So, when you get a whole Church of God that is run on fear and run on doubt and keep people on edge all the time—so then human manipulation and control can take over—Christ does not want that. He wants you *to know* that you're in the Father, and that He's in the Father; that you are in Him and that He is in you.

Verse 21: "The one who has My commandments... [again, in the present tense] ... and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him."

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, **If** anyone loves Me..."

- How many people say, 'I love the Lord'?
- How many people preach the *spirit of deception* in the name of love?

We have said for years that God has been against all those preachers who take all kinds of money and misuse it. Well, Jim Baker was originally sentenced to 40 years in prison. He got his sentence

reduced and he's getting out now in eight years; it doesn't seem like it was eight years ago. Now whether this is sincere or not, I don't know. But I have never heard it from any minister in the Church of God who has also squandered millions of dollars. He said, 'I ask forgiveness to everyone that I have taken money from and then have lived an arrogant and abusive lifestyle. I know that I offended God and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for what I did.' Now, I don't know how sincere that is, but at least it came out of his mouth! I heard it on the radio. I have never, never heard that from others who stole millions more.

Verse 23 transcriber's correction: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...'" Notice, you will **keep** the words of God—that is the whole foundation of the spiritual knowledge and understanding of true Christianity. ***Are you keeping and living by and walking in the Words of Christ?*** And Jesus said, 'The words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life'—and those are the true words of God. So, if you are walking in the Light, you are *practicing* the Truth and you are doing just what Jesus said here.

"...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him" (v 23). That's why in 1-John 1 it says, 'And truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ—**both!** And **they are living in us.**

Verse 24: "The one who does not love Me does not keep My words..." We come down to the very sayings of God. How important are the words and commands of God? *If God utters it, it is Truth.* If God puts it into the form of law, ***it is Truth and binding***—and the 'wages of sin is death.'—is that not correct? *Yes, it is!* That's what John is showing here. This is very profound.

"...and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me" (v 24).

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**...."—a constant state of ***being perfected!***

Let's see how—with love *as the foundation*, with love *as the motivation*—you're going to want to be keeping the commandments of God, the words of God, the sayings of God. When I mention that, think about the message from the angel Gabriel to Zachariah the father of John the Baptist, and what happened to him because he didn't *believe*. That's why *belief* becomes very profound.

1-John 5:2: "By this *standard*... [*'en toutou'*—*in this way*] ...we know that we love the children of God..." Again, notice the things we are

to know. Go back and study that. When you do that, you go through and ask yourself, give yourself this test: Do I know this? Do I know everyone of these things we are to know?

"...when we love God and keep His commandments" (v 2).

All the way through 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John you have ***love, Truth, Light and commandment-keeping***—and it becomes very specific and very profound and very pointed. John is making it in such a way there is no 'wobble room.' You're either on one side of the fence—which is God's way, walking in the Light. Or you're on the other side of the fence, walking in the darkness—and the only problem is, too many people are climbing the wall....

(go to the next track)

Now today, because the *spirit of deception* is coming on the whole world, there are a lot of 'twilight zone' Christians. Isn't there a series called *Twilight Zone* on television? Isn't that dealing with witchcraft, demonism and oddball stuff? I've only seen the title, but I've never watched it.

Another way of expressing the 'twilight zone' Christians are the Laodiceans. That they're neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm and are running around naked, and nakedness reveals that they are not keeping the commandments of God.

1-John 5:2: "By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome" (vs 2-3).

I tell you these first two chapters of 1-John are so loaded, but yet, when you just sit down and read it, when you just say, 'Okay, I'm going to read it through'; it's pretty simple reading. We fail to understand how profound and how deep this really is. So, this means that the love of God is being perfected or fulfilled in us on an ongoing basis.

1. keeping the commandments
2. keeping His Word

Now, let's take the next step.

1-John 2:6: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him..."—Christ, and 'can also include God the Father. This is a test, this is a condition, this is observable.

"...**is obligating himself**..." (v 6)—that's what it means. So, if someone wants to get picky about the commandments, notice this obligation:

"...also **to walk even as He Himself walked**" (v 6).

- Didn't Christ walk in the Light? *Yes He did!*
- Are we to not walk in the Light? *Yes, we are!*

That's quite an obligation—isn't it? *That is a whole perfecting goal!* What he's stating here is:

- this is the whole goal
- this is the whole purpose of loving God
- this is the whole purpose of keeping His commandments
- this is the whole purpose of being in Him

This is it! ***'To walk as He Himself also walked.'*** Now we know He did not do any sin. That's quite an obligation.

Let's understand something very important here. I know some of these are a little bit repetitious, but I also know that it is so important for us. The only way we're going to grow in understanding in depth of knowledge and understand the deep things of God, is to really understand the foundation of love and the Spirit of God and walking in the Light and walking in the Truth.

Luke 17:5: "Then the apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.'" What He is doing is saying, 'I can't increase your faith. You can increase *your* faith by ***trusting God, by loving God:***

Verse 6: "But the Lord said, 'If you had faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you might say to this sycamine tree, "Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea," and it would obey you. But which of you having a servant plowing or shepherding will immediately say *to him* when he comes in from the field, "Come and sit down *and eat*"? Rather, will he not say to him, "Prepare what I may eat, and gird yourself, *and* serve me while I eat and drink; and afterwards you may eat and drink"? Is he thankful to that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. Likewise you also, when you have done all *the* things that are commanded you, say, "We are unprofitable servants, because we have done that which we were obligated to do"" (vs 6-10).

Now, let's understand something very clearly: ***God gave His commandments and they are required to be kept by all mankind.*** That's how God is going to judge the world. How can God judge them of sin, if it were not a requirement for ***all*** human beings to keep the commandments of God? This shows that unless we love God in faith and hope and trust—that's why He's saying here, this fits right in with we are '*obligating ourselves to walk even as He walked*' (1-John 5:6). In other words, to grow beyond the basic commandment-keeping, because ***we are to do it because we love God.*** We

are to do it because we won't to live by every Word of God.

The *spirit of deception* will come along and say: 'That's not so important; this is not so important; the other thing is not so important.' Or as one man who is a high minister in the Church of God, when he was found sitting in the Sizzler eating shrimp by church members, they asked him, 'Well, what are you eating shrimp for?' *I'm a Gentile!* It is the least commandment that people want to do away with. Now the commandment for the Sabbath is not one of the least, it's one of the most important.

One of the very basic things, this is one of the very first things that you heard and that you understood when God was calling you. But this is one of the most profound things that we need to understand in a continual, ongoing basis for our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ and walking in the Light and walking in the Truth and practicing the Truth.

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. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law **until everything has been fulfilled...** [or 'until all are fulfilling it.'] ...Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall **practice** and teach *them...*" (vs 17-19)—the Greek is 'poieo' meaning *to practice*.

That ties right in exactly with 1-John 1, that we are to be **practicing** the Truth. Not acknowledge that the Truth is truth, but to **acknowledge it and to practice it**.

"...this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven" (v 19).

Think of the Ten Commandments. I'm sure you should have those memorized. Which of those would you consider is the 'least'? Let's go another step further: Which commandment would you think is the least commandment to you? and you then have justified not keeping that commandment—which are parts of the words of God—and therefore, you are becoming a 'twilight' Christian.

- Could it be not keeping the Sabbath?
- Could it be taking God's name in vain?
- Could it be lusting and coveting?
- Could it be clean and unclean meats?

We have a Mexican restaurant that we like—and we found out that they switched their



refried beans and put lard in them. So, we asked them, do they have beans without lard—and yes, they have beans without lard. But I told Delores, I said, ‘I’m not going to go back there.’ She found out that they will give us beans without any lard in them—fine!

- If it’s unclean foods, is that the least that you think it is?
- What about tithes and offerings?

There are a lot of people who think that is the least, and the truth of the matter is, is that the covetousness of their own—which is not theirs, because that which belongs to God belongs to God. That which belongs to Caesar—he even takes it before you get it now—that belongs to Caesar. So, which is the least of the commandments? *You think about it!*

- How about the Holy Days?
- Is that not *a lie* to justify not keeping the Holy Days because you think those are the *least* of the commandments?

But what does God always do with the least? What does God always do with the least? ***That becomes the most profound!*** That’s why the Holy Days are so profound. They contain the whole meaning, contain the whole plan of God and God has buried it in a section of the Bible which people consider the least, the book of Leviticus. That is something, when you really begin to analyze this.

1-John 2:6: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.” That’s more than just strict, letter of the Law, commandment-keeping and all of that sort of thing. It is very profound. What did Jesus do? What did Jesus say that He always did?

Let’s see some things, which are also tying right in with this. Before I get done with this whole study, I’m also going to do some parallels between the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John—and I think we’re going to find that that’s going to be most revealing. Absolutely the most revealing!

Notice again how John makes this clear-cut. All the way through the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John he makes it absolutely clear-cut!

John 8:23: “And He said to them, ‘You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am **not of this world**.... [tie that in with John 17:11-18—***we are not of this world***] ... That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins” (vs 23-24).

What is one of the *least* doctrines that people today are overthrowing. Now remember, He

says, ‘Keep My words, keep My sayings.’ This is part of the sayings of Christ. Many of them are saying that Jesus was not the Lord God of the Old Testament. And yet, He says right here: ‘If you do not believe that **I AM**’—which is a name of God in the Old Testament—and that he is saying, ‘I AM’ that He is the Messiah of God. And in saying that, ‘I AM’ which refers to ‘I am **the Way** and **The life** and **the Truth**’—he says, ‘You shall die in your sins.’

Verse 25: “Then they said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘The One that I said to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world.’ But they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father. 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” (vs 25-28).

And all the way here through John 8, He’s saying, ‘I AM.’ He told them after saying that ‘you are of your father, the devil.’ And He says, ‘Before Abraham was, I AM.’ And they said, ‘How could this man see Abraham, He’s not even 50-years-old.’ They understood the ‘I AM.’

“...then you yourselves shall know that I AM, and *that* I do nothing of Myself...” (v 28). So, if you are ‘obligating to walk as Jesus walked’ then we’re to do nothing from ourselves. In other words, with Christ in us, with God the Father in us, we’re to do what the Father wants us to do.

“...But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him” (v 28-29).

That’s the whole summation of what it means to be ‘walking as He is walking.’ To do the things that **please** God. If you want a real goal and a real incentive. If you want a charter to give you a change of behavior, to give you a change of attitude, then take this: examine in your life and ask:

- Which is the least of the commandments to me?
- Which commandment am I habitually putting in a very low category, so therefore, I justify it in my mind to not do it?

And then you’re getting to the truth of the matter!

Verse 30: “As He spoke these things, many believed in Him. Therefore...” (vs 30-31).

There’s another Bible study for you. If you want a good Bible study, go through and study all

the *if* clauses in the New Testament, because those are conditional—and IF you are not doing the *if* clauses you can be deceived.

Verse 31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘**If** you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free.’ They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed...’” (vs 30-33). Christ made it clear: it doesn’t matter who you are now, *it matters what you are, not who.*

1-John 2:6: “...is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked. Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment...” (vs 6-7). That’s interesting—isn’t it? Lev. 19 gives quite a bit of New Testament teaching; let’s notice how He ends each one of these commandments:

Leviticus 19:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel and say to them, “You shall be Holy, for I the LORD your God *am* Holy”’” (vs 1-2). New Testament doctrine (1 Peter 1-2).

Verse 3: “You shall each man revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths.... [notice how He ends every one of these]: ...**I am the LORD your God**.... [*Specific, dogmatic and emphatic!*] ...Do not turn to idols, nor make molten gods to yourselves. **I am the LORD your God**” (vs 3-4). And then He talks about offering the peace offerings, how they are to eat it, when it should be done.

Verse 9: “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field. And you shall not gather the gleanings of your harvest.... [you’re to leave that for the poor] ...And you shall not glean your vineyard. And you shall not gather the *fallen grapes* of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger. **I am the LORD your God**” (vs 9-10). Emphasizes every one of them. In other words, he’s saying: *‘I’m saying to you in the name of God. These are binding commandments for you.’*

I see none here that should not be observed today—do you? There are people who think that one of the least commandments is, ‘Well, it’s all right if you wear a cross, or a Star of David.’ But when you really understand what those really are you wouldn’t want to wear them. After all, if you wear it, you’re telling God, ‘I think that is the least of Your commandments, because I am embolden to wear an idol.’

Verse 11: “You shall not steal, nor lie, nor be deceitful to one another.... [Eph. 4: ‘lie not one to another’; Eph. 4; Col. 3] ...And you shall not swear

by My name falsely...” (vs 11-12). Jesus said, ‘Now, it’s even more binding. You’re not going to swear by My name or by the city, but let your ‘yes’ be *yes* and your ‘no’ be *no*.’ He says:

“...nor shall you profane the name of your God. **I am the LORD**. You shall not defraud your neighbor nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not stay with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God. **I am the LORD**” (vs 12–14).

This is all part of the old commandment, brethren, but it is *new* because now it is spiritually binding. It is *new* because now we are obligated to walk as Jesus walked.

Verse 15: ““You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment...” Oh would to God that that would be true today.

“...but shall fear your God. **I am the LORD**” (v 14).

Verse 15: “You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment. You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty... [Is that applicable today? *Yes!*] ...*but* you shall judge your neighbor in righteousness. You shall not go *as* a slanderer among your people; you shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor. **I am the LORD**.” (vs 15-16). This is pretty profound New Testament doctrine—isn’t it?

Verse 17: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall always admonish your neighbor, that you may not bear sin because of him. You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. **I am the LORD**” (vs 17-18).

1-John 2:7: “Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment, which you had from *the* beginning; the old commandment is the message that you have heard from *the* beginning.”

This could be applied in many different ways. This could be applied in the way that Jesus began preaching—which then is the message, which then you go Matt. 5, 6 & 7. That’s all part of the *new* commandment—isn’t it? Which is an *old* commandment. Jesus said, ‘You’ve heard of it said of old time, you shall not commit adultery, but I say unto you, you’ve heard it said of old time, but I say unto you...’ Same thing! *Exactly the same thing!*

Verse 8: “Again, I am writing a new commandment to you...” A lot of people look at this and say, ‘This is double-talk and gobbly-gook and He doesn’t know what on earth he’s saying. Old commandment/new commandment—it’s not old, it’s

not new, but it is new.’ What is the new commandment?

John 13:34: “A new commandment 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.”

We will see that it is not only that *new* commandment of loving each other, but it is the new dimension of all the commandments of God. So again, I ask: **Which commandment do you think is the *least* commandment?** The way you know that it is the *least* commandment is if you’re breaking it, and justifying yourself from the fact that it’s okay to break this one because it is one of the *least*.

Verse 34: “A new commandment I give to you...” That’s what He’s referring to here. This new commandment then is new because now it is the Spirit of God *in* you. Now it’s based on:

- the Spirit of love
- the Spirit of Truth
- the Spirit of Light
- the Spirit of willingness
- the Spirit of love

Verse 34: “A new commandment 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.”

That’s pretty profound— isn’t it? And that’s how we need to do. And why is the Church of God all scattered abroad today in many different groups? They’re going to stay there until they learn this. They’re going to stay there in their little groups because God is going to impress upon their minds, in smaller groups you can’t hide. In smaller groups you can’t fade into the background. You are either there or you’re not there. That’s why God wants it because He wants us to grow in the grace, and grow in the knowledge, and grow in the understanding that comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Here is the overall complete goal that we are, are aiming at. Here is the fullness of the stature of the measure of Jesus Christ

John 15:9: “As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love.” How do we do that? *For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome! If you love Me, keep My commandments!* All based upon God’s love and Spirit.]

Verse 10: “**If** you keep My commandments...” There again is this ‘*if*’ clause. Are you an *if* Christian? Or are you an ‘in fact’ Christian? And if you are ‘in fact’ a Christian, you will fulfill all of these *if* clauses:

- Verse 6: “**If** anyone does not dwell in Me...”
- Verse 7: “**If** you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you...”
- Verse 10: “**If** you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.”

Why? *Because Jesus said, ‘I always do those things which please Him.’* Do we need to make ourselves a little plaque for that? Put it on top of our hands to look at it all the time. In our foreheads? *Yes!*

Am I doing the things that please God? Boy, I tell you, based upon that we have to repent many times a day—don’t we? *Yes, we do!* Because this old human nature doesn’t want to do anything that pleases God.

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. 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 11-14).

John is showing, very clearly, that commandment-keeping is:

- the *measure*
  - the *standard*
  - the *outward manifestation*
- of what’s inside, and then you go beyond that to
- *keeping* His commandments
  - *keeping* His Word
  - *obligating* yourself *to walk as He walked*.

There is no gobbly-gook between *old* commandment and *new* commandment, but it is the Word of God, which is always *new* even though it is *old*.

1-John 2:8: “Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him... [which we just read] ....and in you, because the darkness is passing away... [that is, *in* you and *for* you and *to* you] ...and the true Light is already shining.... [Here’s another gauge of it]: ...**Anyone who claims** *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now” (vs 8-9).

That’s another reason why the Church of God is so separated and scattered so that we’re going to learn this. Too much of this was done within a large organization and hidden within the institution and covered up with the hierarchy and these things are still burning in the hearts of some men in hating their brother. But they’re in darkness, so they may be ‘twilight’ Christians. Let’s hope and pray they overcome it.

We are to hate the evil! We are to hate the sin! ***But we're not to hate the brethren!***

Verse 10: "The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him." That's a pretty tough one. If people are offended at the Word of God—then that's too bad—they're offended at Christ. But we're not to be deliberately making our self an offense to other people.

Matthew 18:6: "But whoever shall cause one of these little ones who believe in Me..." How profound does God look at 'offending'? *Very profound!*

"...to offend, it would be better for him that a millstone be hung around his neck and he be sunk in the depths of the sea" (v 6). Those are parts of the Words of Christ—aren't they?

Verse 7: "**Woe** unto the world because of offences! For it is necessary... [it's bound to happen] ...that offenses come, yet **woe to that man** by whom the offense comes!"

So, part of our Christian living is to learn how to have the kind of love, the kind of *commandment-keeping and the walking in Christ* that we don't offend each other.

Verse 8: "And if your hand or your foot causes you to offend, cut it off... [that's how important it is to get rid of offense] ...and cast *it* from you; for it is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed than to have two hands or two feet *and* be cast into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to offend, pluck it out and throw *it* away; for it is better for you to enter into life one-eyed than to have two eyes *and* be cast into the fire of Gehenna. Take heed *that* you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that their angels in heaven continually look upon the face of My Father, Who is in heaven. For the Son of man has come to save those who are lost" (vs 8-11). Then He goes on with a parable about the one sheep that is lost.

One of the things we're trying to do, brethren, is help people of God to be healed from their offenses. Every one of us are going to make offenses in our life. When we do we need to repent of it; we need to change of it; we need to grow out of it.

1-John 2:10: "The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because **the darkness has blinded his eyes**" (vs 10-11).

There are a lot of people today who say that they see, but are 'twilight' Christians and are

becoming *dull* of seeing, *dull* of hearing, *dull* of commandment-keeping, *dull* in everything they do. They're just kind of washed-out Christians.

What they need to do is get their lives back in order. How? Just exactly as John is saying here. That's why it's so important: commandment-keeping! ***You must be obedient!*** This obedience ***must be based on love***, because that's how it's perfected. And it's more than just commandments. ***It's His Word and it is His Truth.*** Then we're ***obligating ourselves to walk even as He has walked.***

I know that 1-John 2:9-11, for many people—for us, for me, for you—to ***really fulfill in a right and proper way is quite a challenge for us!***

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

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- 1) 1-John 4:6
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- 5) 1-John 1:7, 6, 10, 6, 8-10
- 6) 1-John 2:1, 3-6, 9-11,
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- 8) 1-John 2:4
- 9) Hebrews 10:15-16
- 10) Jeremiah 17:1
- 11) 1-John 2:4-5
- 12) John 14:15, 20-21, 23-24
- 13) 1-John 2:5
- 14) 1-John 5:2-3
- 15) 1-John 2:6
- 16) Luke 17:5-10
- 17) Matthew 5:17-19
- 18) 1-John 2:6
- 19) John 8:23-33
- 20) 1-John 2:6-7
- 21) Leviticus 19:1-4, 9-15, 14, 15-18
- 22) 1-John 2:7-8
- 23) John 13:34
- 24) John 15: 9-10; 6-7, 10-14
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- 26) Matthew 18:6-11
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- Ephesians 5
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- John 17:11-18
- 1 Peter 1, 2
- Ephesians 4
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Also referenced: Book:

*I'm Ok, You're Ok* by Thomas Harris

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## Epistle of First John VI

### Ten Commandments to Come Out of the World

Fred R. Coulter

I'm constantly amazed how much is jam-packed in these three little epistles. It's really amazing what is here, and it fits so well today.

1-John 2:12: "**I am writing** to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name. **I am writing** to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. **I am writing** to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*. **I am writing** to you, little children, because you have known the Father. **I wrote** to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. **I wrote** to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*" (vs 12-14).

Then he comes to the next section, v 15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and **the pretentious pride of physical life...**" (vs 15-16). I'll explain why I translated it that way; it says 'the pride of life' in the *King James*.

"...is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 16-17).

I want to focus in on something that will help us understand and prove also that John was writing and his writing was in such a way that he understood that he was writing these things to finish the Bible. There's a reason for writing them. Let's go back and we'll just analyze the verses that we've come to so far, and see the reason for writing.

1-John 1:2: "And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are **reporting** to you the eternal life..."

Verse 3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are **reporting** to you..." The reason he uses 'reporting' is because they're not devising fables. They are not devising religious theses. but reporting the actual facts of Christ.

- 1-John 1:4 "These things **we are also writing** to you, so that your joy may be completely full."
- 1-John 2:1: "My little children, **I am writing** these things to you so that you may not sin..."

Now, ***all*** the rest of the instructions that are given here are to keep us from sin, from this verse clear up to the end of 3-John. So, it's important what he's writing.

- 1-John 2:7: "Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment..." The Truth of God is always understood.
- Verse 8: "Again, **I am writing** a new commandment to you, which is true in Him..."

As Christ amplifies and makes the Truth and the Light of God known.

- 1-John 2:12—here John is really making an impact: "**I am writing** to you, little children..."
- v 13: "**I am writing** to you, fathers.... **I am writing** to you, young men.... **I am writing** to you, little children..."
- v 14: "**I wrote** to you, fathers..."

Which shows he's written in the past, concerning things.

- v 14: "...**I wrote** to you, young men..."

Now then, he doesn't have 'I'm writing to you' until he comes clear down to chapter five.

1-John 5:13: "These things **I have written** to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God."

So he starts out 1-John 2:1: "My little children, **I am writing these things**... [everything contained in the first epistle.] ...to you so that you may not sin..." Then all of these things show how they need to stay close to God and how not to sin. Very important! An awful lot there.

2-John 5: "And now I beseech you, lady, not as though **I am writing** a new commandment to you, **but that which we have observed from the beginning...**" So all of this is going through and explaining why they need to stay with the beginning of the Gospel.

3-John 9: "**I wrote** to the Church..." So, he did an awful lot of writing, did ***an awful lot of writing***, then he says he has other things that he needs to say to them, but he wasn't going to be

putting it in writing. We come down to v 13: “I had many things **to write**, but *now* **I do not desire to write with ink and pen.**”

Now let's look at something else that is important concerning this. Let's go to the book of Revelation for just a minute, because there are quite a few commands here and it's very important that this is written, and it's very important that God has preserved this information for us. God is going to make it absolutely sure—***no one is ever going to tell God, 'You never told us.' No one is ever going to tell God that!*** Especially to the Church!

Revelation 1:2, concerning John: “Who gave witness *to* the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all the things he saw. Blessed *is* the one who **reads...**” (vs 2-3). The book of Revelation was **commanded to be written**. Very important for us to understand that.

“...and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things *that are written therein...*” (v -3).

Verse 10: “...I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, and what you see, **write in a book...** [not just a letter—**a book**] ...and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia...” (vs 10-11).

Notice what is said, especially to the churches so that we can have **no doubt**. And you tie this in with what we read in:

1-John 2:1: “My little children, **I am writing** these things to you so **that you may not sin...**”

Revelation 2:1: “To the angel of the Ephesian church, **write...**” John is doing exactly the same thing what Moses was doing. Didn't God say, ‘Tell the children of Israel, thus says the Lord’? *So, he wrote it down!* Now God want the message to go, He says: **Write!** And He says so to every one of the churches. I think this is very important because that it shows that God is giving a permanent record. Now, notice what He also says to every one of the churches.

Verse 7: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches...” We have a combination of things which are very important!

### **It is written:**

What is written are the words of Christ. Now, what did Christ say of His words? *His words are true! They are light!* He also said, ‘The flesh

profits nothing, but ***the words*** that I am speaking to you, they ***are spirit*** and they ***are life***.’ What is written when it comes to us who are Christians? *With the Spirit of God it is to have a spiritual impact that we are to hear what the Spirit in us*—when it connects with these words—*tells us!* It just really came to my mind, in preparing for this sermon, WOW! that's really important! He says, ‘To each one of the churches **write,**’ and to each one of the churches, **‘he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches’**—all the way through, every one of the seven churches.

Revelation 19:9—this is a tremendous verse: “And he said to me, ‘**Write...** [so this is a command] ...Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’....” That's what we've been called to, brethren. That's something! He wants it written so no one can say, ‘I didn't know.’ No one can say, ‘Lord, you may have told them, but You didn't tell me.’ So, John was told to write.

“...And he said to me, ‘These are the true words of God’” (v 9).

Revelation 21:5: “And He Who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ Then He said to me, ‘**Write,** for these words are true and faithful.’”

Now then, we have them given to us! God has made sure! In spite of all of the evil that's going on in the world, the Bible remains the #1 best seller around the world, ***everywhere—every year!*** That has got to be the doing of God, because how many people hate the Word of God? But they have a Bible at home; yes, they do.

How important are these words? Not only just the book of Revelation, but we're going to see that Peter said that he wanted them to always have in remembrance what he was telling them, after he died. That remembrance actually means a **written record**—like a memorial. You've heard of a ‘memorial stone’? That's what kind of remembrance that Peter wants them to have.

This finishes the whole Bible; this is pretty powerful stuff at the end. Revelation 22:18: “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...** [they're awesome, indeed] ...And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from *the* Book of Life... [pretty dangerous stuff] ...and from the Holy City, and from the things that are written in this book. 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 18-21).

When John was putting together the finality of the New Testament he knew exactly what he was doing. Christ as the Head of the Church knew exactly what the churches needed. Through all the difficulties down through time we have the Truth of God, we have got with the Greek text, right here—*Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry—we have essentially the text that came from the Apostles. The book *The King James Version Defended* and it will show you that. This Greek text, the Berry, is the same text that was used for translating to the *King James Version* of the Bible, and is the most accurate.

Before he was dying, Peter knew that he had to make a permanent record of these things. So, it becomes very important for us to understand and realize that when John says, ‘***I am writing*** to you, that you sin not. ***I am writing*** to you that you may know Christ and have eternal life. ***I am writing*** these things to you.’ And then you read the book of Revelation with everything that is there, this is really something!

What happens when you have a dispute with a contract? First thing they ask you: ‘Do you have a written contract?’ And if you do, ‘let’s see the contract.’ That’s why God sent the written Word. When you buy something and you have dispute concerning something you have purchased, what is it that they ask you for, always? *A written receipt!* Why? *Because that is evidence of law! The Bible is evidence of eternal life!* So, God has made sure that everyone has a copy.

Peter wrote here in 2-Peter 1:12: “Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things...” How is he putting them in remembrance of it? *By writing to them!*

“...although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come...*” (vs 12-14).

He knew he was going to die. So, where he says, ‘that always put you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must die, put off this tabernacle.’

“...even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me. But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have **a written remembrance...**” (vs 14-15). Then what does he do? *He refers to the writings of the prophets for the*

*authority for what he’s doing!*

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.” He’s establishing this authority to make this remembrance for them *always*. And this word for ‘remembrance’ is the same as chiseling out a memorial in stone.

I’ll show you the same word used as a memorial, chiseled in stone. Matthew 23:29: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and **adorn the tombs** of the righteous.”

Now, adorn/garnish means *to inscribe*, in this particular case for remembrance. That’s what Peter was doing; then he went on and gave the authority of the prophets. So, what God is doing in having the Bible *written...* It’ll be a very interesting study if you want an interesting handy-dandy concordance word-study, just look up the word *write* and *wrote* and *written* and find out all the way through that everyone knew what they were doing to put this in order.

Let’s go to the first chapter of the book of Luke, and let’s see that Luke understood what he was doing when he was writing. Notice his mission in writing the Gospel of Luke: he was straightening out any misunderstood details, and he clearly says so.

Luke 1:1: “Since many have taken **in hand to compile a written narration of the matters**, which have been fully believed among us, as they delivered *them* to us, those who from *the* beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, It seemed good to me also, having accurately understood everything from the very first, to write *these things* in an orderly sequence to you, most excellent Theophilus” (vs 1-3).

The writing of the New Testament was done by those who knew what they were doing and knew what they were writing, **and God did not leave it to chance** for the Catholic Church to canonize it and write it and add to it, and so forth! We’ll see the evidence of that when we get into 1-John here in just a little bit more, and see some of the other things.

1-John 2:12: “**I am writing to you**, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name.” Now, *little children* to John was virtually anyone younger than himself, because he calls all of us, *little children*.

Verse 13: “**I am writing to you**, fathers...” This is not writing to priests in the sense that they



were fathers as some people could look at that and say that; it doesn't mean that at all. 'I am writing to you fathers' then who are heads of the household, etc.

"...because you have known Him Who is from *the* beginning...." (v 13). Here he is writing to those people who were still alive. Some of the older, older members in the congregation, who knew Christ at the beginning of the Gospel. These are **long-time** church members. In this case, we are dealing with people who are probably in their 70s and their 80s, who were teenagers when they saw Jesus Christ, and who were followers of Christ from the beginning.

"...I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*...." (v 13). We have to overcome Satan—without a doubt—and his influence in the world, which is now far more intense than when John wrote this.

- What was the "wicked one" doing?
- Who was the "wicked one" using?
- What was it that they overcame?

John tells us a little later: *antichrists, false prophets* and *transgression*. That's the tactics then of the 'wicked one.' So they overcame him. But once you overcome something once in one period of time, does it mean that you never have to overcome it again later? *No!*

I remember a man who was a high church leader who once said, 'Well, you know I've been in the church so long and I've overcome so much, Satan has no more interest in me'—and guess what? BAM! The axe fell!

So, if you overcome the 'wicked one' today, that's fine. Remember what it said about Jesus when He overcame Satan at the 'temptation'? '*And he left Him for a season!*' **Satan was coming back again!** It doesn't mean: once you've overcome one time, does not mean you've overcome forever.

"...**I am writing** to you, little children, because you have known the Father.... [How? *By the Spirit of God!*] ...**I wrote** to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who is from the beginning.... [that's what he wrote to them in the past] ...**I wrote** to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*" (vs 13-14).

So, he repeats it! Why does he repeat this? *To show that it has to be an ongoing thing.* Not once, but continuous. Now, to tie right in with that, then we have this:

### **Do not love this society:**

Verse 15: "**Do not love the world**..." Now, 'the world' here means: ***not the things that God has created and made.*** Because what did God say after He had created and made everything that He had made? *Behold it is very good!* So we are talking about the world and ***the society.***

Verse 15: "Do not love the world, **nor the things** that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.... [and we'll see why that is so important] ...because everything that *is* in the world... [it's talking about the things that are in the world then] ...the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 15-17).

Now let's go back and count 'world.' It is used six times—the number of man"

1. do not love the world (v 15)
2. the things in the world (v 15)
3. anyone loving the world (v 15).
4. everything in the world (v 16)
5. but is from the world (v 16)
6. the world and its lust is passing away (v 17)

Interesting that it is six! What are people going to accept when they want the things of the world more than the things of God? *They're going to accept the **mark** and the **number** of the beast.*

The finality of the system is based upon ***merchandising religion, merchandising goods and services, merchandising people,*** and the most efficient way to do that is with the ***mark of the beast.*** Now, we've covered some of that here recently, but notice what it says:

Revelation 13:16: "And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads; so that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the **mark** or the **name of the beast**, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom...." (vs 16-18).

I don't think we fully understand this yet, so we need to concentrate on this and ask God for the wisdom of it. We have the promise that the wise shall understand (Dan.12); *so we **will** understand!*

Verse 18: "Here is wisdom. Let the one who has understanding count the number of the beast ... [so it's all going to come together] ...for it is a man's number, and his number is 666."

So, isn't it interesting here where we're told not to love the world—the *world* is mentioned six times. Let's notice something else that's very important concerning the love of the world vs the love of God.

- 1-John 2:15 shows: the love of the world; it comes *from* the world
- Verse 17 says what is going to happen to the world: "And the world and its lust is passing away..."

That's really something the way it's laid out. The love of the world comes from the world and the world passes away.

- Verse 15: "...the love of the Father..."
- Verse 16: "...comes from the Father..."
- Verse 17: you "...abide forever..." or *live* forever

That's really something! Quite a comparison! Right there in those three verses: we have 'the world' six times, which is fitting for the world and man's way. We have 'the Father' in comparison to the way that the world is.

1-John 2:15: "**Do not love the world....**" It's interesting, this is referring to *all the thoughts and the ways of the world!* God the Father loves the world and sent Christ so that it may be saved. But it isn't going to be saved until God's way and God's plan.

Now, if you have the love of the world—let's look at a couple of Scriptures here, which are very important for us to understand. While we are to not love the world, or love each other as sinners love each other, there's still something that we need to do in relationship to the world.

Luke 6:31: "And exactly as you would have men do to you, you do the same to them also. But if you love *only* those who love you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners love those who love them" (vs 31-32).

This is talking about the *love of the world*. **All sinners love each other in this world, for the worldly things.** We're going to be seeing this manifesting itself even more as we are coming down toward the end of the age, as they are building up their religions and bringing them together, and as they are building up for this one-world government, which is just about ready to put the noose around the neck of the whole world. I am amazed! It is something else, how quickly that has come.

John 16 also talks about the world and how the Holy Spirit is going to lead us and guide us in it.

John 16:7: "But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you. And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning sin..." (vs 7-8). That's why we're not to love the world, because John writes and says, **'the whole world lies in wickedness.'**

"...and righteousness, and judgment: Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged...." (vs 8-11).

If you love the world, and you love the 'god of this world'—and as Rev. 13 shows, everyone is going to worship the devil—you *are going to receive the judgment of the devil!* Because he has been judged!

Verse 12: "I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come" (vs 12-13). **Brethren, that's how the wise will understand!**

Who are the true wise ones? *The ones who have the Spirit of God!* Many people will read that verse that we just read in Rev. 13 and think that *by their own wisdom* they can figure this out. No! It has to be by the Holy Spirit and the promise of God that the **Holy Spirit will show you 'things to come.'** This makes it very clear that if we are not loving the world and are not part of the world—and you could entitle this whole section: *Since You have Overcome, Don't go Back into the World*—then it's going to show us if we're loving God, which comes from the Father; have the Spirit, which comes from the Father, then we're going to know these things when they come. That's why it's so vitally important living in the days that we are, that we really go through and understand this. Now, the whole power of evil in this world is organized against God, **and God calls us out of it!**

Everyone is involved in this sort of thing in the world. I tell you, I'm just amazed! I was talking to this man and he was talking about radio and television and so forth, and I said: Since television is so bad now, what is it going to be like with 500 channels? that you can just dial up and can put on your computer screen or your television screen or whatever? Because here's what's going to happen:

Ephesians 2:1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins.” So, if you go back into the world, if you love the world, *then you are loving the things that causes the world to sin and abide in death.*

Here’s what they are, v 2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience.” All the organized evil that there is that goes against God!

Verse 3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind...”

It’s the *lust of the mind* and the *pride of life* that is going to be the downfall in the end run. Why? *Because men are going to be all organized together in their whole system against God!* God is going to let them have the greatest perfection and pinnacle of things that they have ever had in the whole history of mankind, *and it’s going to pass away!* But God has called us out of it,

“...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world” (v 3).

Here’s the way the world is, 1-John 3:4 “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.”

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin is of the devil...” Why did John write this epistle? ‘*My little children, I write this to you that you may not sin.*’

“...because the devil has been sinning from the beginning....” (v 8).

Here’s part of the world, 1-John 4:3: “And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist...” Where is ‘antichrist’? *In the world!* And ‘antichrist’ is different than ‘false-Christ.’ A false-Christ is saying, *I am bringing you some saving knowledge.* An ‘antichrist’ is *against* Christ, *totally against Him!*

“...And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world” (v 3). So, *if you are loving the world, you are loving antichrist!*

That’s why John wants to make it very clear—as we said when we began this series, that there is a division between righteousness and evil and what is right and what is wrong and what is God’s and what is of the world and what is of Satan.

(go to the next track)

Verse 4: “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them... [that’s all a part of the overcoming that John is talking about] ...because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world.”

- What did Jesus say? *He said, ‘Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!’*
- If Christ is in us, is He greater than anything in the world? *Yes!*
- Can we then overcome the world? *Yes!*

**But** we have to:

- love God
- draw close to God
- let God’s Spirit be in us
- drink in of His Spirit

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and **the world listens to them.**” When you’re watching the news, listen and watch for how many leaders are saying we need a ‘one-world government.’ It is going to astound you.

This is what God wants us to know, 1-John 5:18: “We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him.... [Why? *Because he’s not loving the world!*] ...We know that we are of God, and **that the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one**” (vs 18-19).

Now that’s why we are not to love the world, and we are not to love the things in the world. That’s why it says very clearly that ‘if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.’ Sooner or later God is going to rescue the world ***in His time-plan***. But this is showing what we should and what we should not be doing in relationship to the world, and the lust in the world and everything there is going to pass away. Without a doubt it is all going to be gone.

I think this is interesting, because we’re going to compare this with overcoming worldliness that James wrote. John is writing to those people who have come out of the world. There are some who are going back into it and he’s saying, ‘You have overcome the wicked one, you have come out of the world, *don’t go back into the world*; and don’t let the *lust of the eyes* and the *lust of the flesh* or the *pride of life* trip you up and go back into the world, because it’s going to pass away.

We will see James’ message of worldliness—coming out worldliness; how to overcome it. He is talking to people that were already back into the world; not wholly, not totally,

but they were into the world. Here's how to overcome **worldliness**. There are quite a few commands contained here in just these next five verses:

James 4:6: "But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, 'God sets Himself against *the* proud.... [we're told: 'to beware of the pride of life'] ... but He gives grace to *the* humble.'" So, here it is:

#### **How to overcome and come out of worldliness:**

**1. "Therefore, submit yourselves to God..." (v 7)**

Whatsoever, you do then, in word or deed, let all be done in the name of Christ—*submit yourself to God*.

**2. "...Resist the devil..." (v 7).**

Because he's in the world and he hates God. And what does he do before God every day to us? '*He accuses us before God, day and night*' (Rev. 12:10)! He ceaselessly is **seeking to destroy us, to accuse us and to bring us back into the world!** So, we must resist the devil! Now we'll show you then not only must you resist him, but you must also overcome him. We'll cover that later. Notice what happens when you resist him: **"...and he will flee from you"** (v 7)

**3. "Draw near to God..." (v 8)**

What happens when you draw near to God? **"...and He will draw near to you..." (v 8).**

- What do you do when you find yourself slipping back into the world?
- How is it that the lust of the eyes and the pride of life and the love of the world affects you? *You draw away from God!*

So, you "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you..." There is something that is always true that God does, if you don't want Him around He won't be there. If you avoid and neglect Him, He will avoid and neglect you. So "draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

**4. "...Cleanse your hands, you sinners..." (v 8)**

Let's go to 1-John 3; I want to put it here because **this is so important**. In order to survive in this world and in order to not love the world nor the things in the world—because it's passing away—this is what we need to have in the forefront of our minds so that we cleanse ourselves. How do we cleanse ourselves?

1-John 3:1: "Behold!...."—*to grasp, to comprehend, to understand*. In other words, let this be the mental power of God's Spirit

- to keep you from going back into the world
- to draw you close to God
- to cleanse your hands and your life

Verse 1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...." Remember, Rev. 22 says that **we will see His face**. That's something! So if there's any one thing that we need completely, spiritually burned in our minds is this right here:

"...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).

What is this supposed to do for us? Verse 3: "And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself... [cleansing himself] ...even as He is pure."

- How do you cleanse yourself?
- How do you purify yourself?

This tells us how it is done; here's why we 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, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin." That's how we cleanse our hands. This is how we cleanse ourselves. This is how we overcome the world.

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."

That's why these commands are given. So if you find yourself *slipping into worldliness*, because the world has its attractions for you... That doesn't mean you can't have physical goods. That doesn't mean that you can't have even fine physical goods. It just means this: **Don't let the lust toward any of those things consume you, and don't get carried away with it!** Enjoy it for what it is, but realize it's all going to pass away.

The next time you see some of these old classic cars, remember: They were just as zippy to the people who first bought them as whatever new car you may get. It's all going to get old and pass away; same way with anything in this world.

That's why he says here, James 4:8: **"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you..."** What do you do when you do that? *You confess your sins!*

**5. "...purify your hearts, you double minded" (v 8).**

Because where does sin always originate? *In the heart!* Jesus said, 'Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts.' That's the first thing He said; *evil thoughts first*. If you try to please the world and you try to please God you become double minded.

- Have we seen that?
- Have we seen that in the Church?
- Have we seen those people that have wanted to have the acclamation of the world?
- What happens to them? *They become double-minded!*
- And then what happens after they become double-minded? *They begin bringing in the ways and the doctrines and the things of this world.*

When you become double-minded, then you are torn. What does Christ say? What does Christ say? '*No man can serve two masters!*' Anyone who is double-minded is serving two masters. It won't work. Here's the solution:

**6. Repentance:** "Be grieved... ['afflicted,' *KJV*)] ...and mourn..." (v 9).

Does *afflicted* refer to fasting? *Yes, it does!* David said, 'I afflicted my soul with fasting' (Psa. 35:13). So when you're repenting and you fast; that's how you draw close to God.

"...and weep..." (v 9). In other words, *come to a deep, spiritual conviction of the sins!*

- 7. "...let your laughter be turned into grieving..." (v 9)**  
**8. "...and your joy into mourning" (v 9)**

In other words, the wonderful things of this world that makes people happy. What happens when you have the Spirit of God and you see all of these people out there in the world doing things, which seemingly make them happy? It makes you mourn inside that they would be so joyful to do these things.

**9. Verse 10: "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you."**

In other words, *put God first!*

- exalt God and not the world
- exalt God and not your sins

**10. Verse 11: "Brethren, do not talk against one another. The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother..."**

This helps remove a lot of strife and contention.

- Have we had strife and contention?

- Brother against brother?
- Church against church?
- Because of going back into the world?
- Have we had strife against strife?
- And brother against brother?
- And doctrine against doctrine?
- Of those who want to go back in and teach the things of the antichrist?
- *Yes!*

So, that's why God is scattering the Church. So that we can all get down to the fundamental level of loving God and loving each other. I see that happening everywhere in the world; I get letters from all different places in the world. So here then are **the Ten Commandments as it were, the ten points that James gives of coming out of this world:**

1. Submit yourselves to God
2. Resist the devil
3. Draw near to God
4. Cleanse your hands
5. Cleanse your heart, because that initiates the sin
6. Repent
7. Let your laughter be turned to sorrow
8. Let your joy be turned to gloominess
9. Exalt God by humbling yourself to Him
10. Don't talk against the brethren

If we all do these things then there's nothing that's going to be there to be, be talked about.

I just want to cover one other aspect of this. I want you to notice how this follows right along in a pattern that is age-old.

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world.... [v 16]: ...because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father..." (vs 15-16).

Now, let's understand that Eve went through the same thing. She saw the fruit, it was pleasing to the eyes, desirable to make you wise in the world. Now, Christ had to go through the same thing. Jesus Christ had to go through the same thing.

We will understand something that's very important. That when Jesus said that He 'was tempted in every way like we are,' He was tempted by these very things. Who is the 'god of the world' that came to tempt Him, but none other than Satan the devil.

Luke 4:3: "Then the devil said to Him, 'If You are *the* Son of God... [it's challenging His position] ...command that this stone become bread.'" Of course, that was really tempting—wasn't

it? The things of this world, the pride of life and so forth.

Verse 4: “But Jesus answered him, saying, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”’ Then the devil led Him up into a high mountain *and* showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time” (vs 4-5).

*The whole love of the power of this world!* That’s why, brethren, we’re not to want to have the power of this world and loving the world. Believe me, everyone who wants to have power in this world must love the world. Because Satan ‘ain’t gonna’ give it to you unless you do! Then when you do, then he’s going to compromise you with lies. He’s going to compromise you with illicit sex. He’s going to compromise you in such a way that he has got you—*hook, line and sinker!* All we have to do is witness the political things that are there today.

Satan came and tempted Him in saying, v 6: “...‘I will give You all this authority, and the glory of them *all*; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I desire.’” Everything in the world is not of God, it passes away. It’s of Satan! But, notice what you have to do to get it:

Verse 7: “Therefore, **if You will worship me** in my presence, all things shall be Yours.” If you want to know where those who rule the world get their power, **you got it right here.**

Then he challenged Christ, v 9: “Then he led Him to Jerusalem and set Him upon the edge of the temple, and said to Him, ‘**If You are the Son of God...**’” Notice in each case: *if*, *IF*:

- “...**if** you will worship me...” (v 7)
- “...**If** you are the Son of God...” (v 9).

shows that God the Father ***gave Christ the choice to make.*** Everyone of these was a choice.

“...‘If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down from here; for it is written, “He shall give His angels charge concerning You to keep You; and in *their* hands they shall bear You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone”’” (vs 9-11).

So, even if you know the Truth and even if you know the Scriptures that are right, and Satan accurately quoted that—if you will read it in the Old Testament—

- you are not to misuse the Word of God
- you are not to misuse the gifts of God
- You are not to misuse the power of God

Verse 12: “But Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘It is *clearly* stated, “You shall not tempt the Lord your God.”’ Now, when the devil had

completed every temptation, he departed from Him for a time” (vs 12-13).

All the ministry of Christ was given to overcoming the world; was given to overcoming Satan; was given to overcoming so that He could bring the love of God so that those who love God the Father and Jesus Christ will abide forever.

We see that ***the love of the world comes from the world*** and the world is passing away. The ***love of the Father comes from the Father*** and will be doing the will of the Father.

1-John 2:17 says: “...**abides forever.**” ***Right on the heels of all of that the antichrist is active!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-John 2:12-17
- 2) 1-John 1:2-4
- 3) 1-John 2:1, 7-8, 12-14
- 4) 1-John 5:13
- 5) 1-John 2:1
- 6) 2-John 5
- 7) 3-John 9, 13
- 8) Revelation 1:2-3, 10-11
- 9) 1-John 2:1
- 10) Revelation 2:1, 7
- 11) Revelation 19:9
- 12) Revelation 21:5
- 13) Revelation 22:18-21
- 14) 2-Peter 1:12-16
- 15) Matthew 23:29
- 16) Luke 1:1-3
- 17) 1-John 2:12-17
- 18) Revelation 13:16-18
- 19) 1-John 2:15-17
- 20) Luke 6:31-32
- 21) John 16:7-13
- 22) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 23) 1-John 3:4, 8
- 24) 1-John 4:3-5
- 25) 1-John 5:18-19
- 26) James 4:6-8
- 27) 1-John 3:1-3
- 28) 1-John 1:7, 9
- 29) James 4:8-11
- 30) 1-John 2:15-16
- 31) Luke 4:3-7, 9-13
- 32) 1-John 2:17

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 12
- Revelation 12:10; 22
- Psalm 35:13

Also referenced: Books:

- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *The King James Version Defended* by Edward F. Hills

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## Epistle of First John VII

Exposing Antichrists Within  
Fred R. Coulter

We're going to continue and make progress in it. I do know that going through each verse, and going through in depth really has been a help and a benefit to the brethren.

Let's review just a couple of things here. I think the best way to review it is to go to John 12—because you cannot go through the Epistles of John without also connecting back to the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John brings into focus some of the things in an overall summary that he brings out in detail in the Epistle of 1-John.

John 12:44: "Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me...'" That's the whole focus and point of the Gospel of John is *belief*, and *believing* is the *action of faith*.

"...does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me" (v 44). When we come to 1-John, what that is talking about is the application of this in a very detailed way.

Verse 45: "And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me." It's no mystery of what God looks like, not at all. Looks just the way that Christ looked like when He was in the flesh.

Verse 46: "I have come *as* a Light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me... [present tense, because that's what it should be] ...may not remain in darkness." Now, the word 'abide' we're going to cover here quite a bit in 1-John 2. But the strongest meaning of 'abide' means *to live*. It can mean *remain*, *to stay in*, *to live in*.

If you're believing in Him, you are not living in darkness, because Christ is the Light. He's the 'Light of the world.' The Word of God symbolizes the light of God—it is 'a lamp unto our feet.' Christ is also called the *Word of God*. So we find the

- *Light of God*
- *the Word of God*
- *the love of God*

all fit in on:

- how we are *to walk*
- how we are *to serve*
- how we are *to keep* in God's way.

Verse 47: "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."

What is going to judge them? *The Word of God, the message of Christ!* Their own actions compared to Christ.

Verse 48: "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."

Now, think about this. Think about all the words that Jesus spoke. Now when we understand also—which we do—that Jesus Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament. Then when we understand that Jesus said, 'The one who teaches even the least of these commandments shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven'—guess what's going to judge them? *The whole Word of God* and the words that Jesus spoke in the New Testament on top of it! So, that's pretty profound when we understand that.

Verse 49: "For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak."

When we understand that, and understand how that Jesus did nothing of Himself—whatever He heard the Father tell Him to do, that's what He did. Whatever He saw the Father do, that's what He did. So, it comes directly from God the Father.

Verse 50: "And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me."

That adds to our review of 1-John, so let's go back and let's take just a couple of other things as we're going along here, so that we understand what we're doing. We're going to just review some basic things in outline form.

1. In John 1 we are told that the most important thing we have is *fellowshipping*—*fellowshipping with God* means that Christ and God the Father are in you. They're tabernacling with you and God wants this fellowship.

Carl Franklin's son summed up really well. He said, 'God is not looking for someone to punish, God is looking for someone to love and have a relationship with.' That's exactly the whole theme of the Epistles of John, all three of them. So that's why he starts out with *fellowship*.



2. He says we're to **"walk in the Light."**  
And as we walk in the Light, what does this do?
3. We are to **confess our sins** and He will cleanse us from every sin.
4. We are to have **obedience** (1-John 2).

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if we keep His commandments**.... [the Greek there is the present tense, ongoing] ...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). That also has got to mean the Sabbath commandment.

It was most interesting and most revealing and that at the Feast of Tabernacles when we had a discussion on where do the Protestants and Catholics stand? It soon all centered around the Sabbath commandment—and the Sabbath commandment becomes most important. Then the next one is the commandment, 'you shall not make any graven image' or idolatry of any kind. So therefore, if we are breaking the Sabbath and say we know Christ, **we don't know Him!** We may know something *about* Him, but we don't *know* Him.

What does it mean 'to know'? *To know* in the sense of an intimate relationship, and very much akin to marriage, and very much akin to the marriage act of sex—and I say, **marriage act**, because there are acts of sex in which no one knows each other. You only temporarily share a physical contact. But 'to know' means **to intimately know in a most profound and personal way**. If you do, then you will be keeping His commandments. If not, it says:

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." So, that becomes a very important thing. **We are to be obedient and keep the commandments of God!**

5. That's likened to walking in darkness vs walking in Light, and loving God and loving the brethren vs hating the brethren and living in hate and all that.

Verse 12: "I am writing to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*..." (vs 12-13).

Now, let's put this all together in John. How do you overcome the 'wicked one' in a very profound way? *We have found that the more you strive to love God, the more that you're able to see what you need to overcome!* Let's look at a couple of

things here that are important, because some people have turned to the section and have said because you have 'overcome the wicked one' means that once you have the blood of Christ applied to you, you have completely overcome and there's no more overcoming to do. You just kind of sit back and you relax on that statement.

Let's see where they get this concept misapplied. This has to overcoming Satan, and I tell you what, Satan is out there really working hard right now; really working hard everywhere!

Revelation 12:9: "...who is deceiving the whole world... [v 10]: ...And I heard a great voice in heaven say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb...' (vs 9-11). This shows a final completed state; not your current state.

"...and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death" (v 11). This shows a **completed** state of overcoming. However, Rev. 2 & 3 gives us a different picture. It's just like salvation. What are three steps of salvation?

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

*it's just like with overcoming the devil*

- we have overcome him
- we are overcoming him
- we shall continue to overcome him

We find this right in Rev. 2 & 3—I'll just cover one or two verses here, but I want you to understand that it is a process that we are doing.

Revelation 2:7: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches. To the one who overcomes..."—which shows a process, *ongoing, completed* because Christ has called us. **Being completed** because we're overcoming; to be **finally completed**:

- When?
- What is the last enemy to be overcome? *Death!*
- When is death overcome?
- *At the resurrection!*
- Is that not the final overcoming of Satan the devil? *Yes!*

It has to be all put together, and I'm sure that when we come to the Feast of Unleavened Bread we will get into it even more in detail about overcoming.

6. We are to **reject worldliness!**

As we study through here, I want us to understand something very important: what John has written is so concentrated in meaning. Yet, it is simple that you can read right through and understand as you read through it. But it is so concentrated in meaning that we have to go back and look at it and study it several times to get all the meaning.

1-John 2:15: “Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God **abides** forever” (vs 15-17).

Now, let’s look at this for just a little bit. The love of the world comes from *Satan in the world*. Didn’t he just say that we’ve overcome the ‘wicked one’? The love the world comes from the world and the ‘wicked one’ or Satan **and** your human nature. It wants to go that way, yes, absolutely! Of course, we are to overcome human nature.

The love of the world comes from the world, v 17: “And **the world and its lust is passing away...**”—*it is temporary!* If you don’t think it’s temporary, all of you 49er football fans can realize how temporary all these big strong guys are because they’re falling down with injuries right and left. It’s the same way with everything in the world. Everything in the world is eventually going to pass away—and that’s why we find one of the theme’s of the Feast of Tabernacles is ‘Behold, I make everything new.’

Now, let’s notice on the other side. The love the Father comes from the Father. The one who is doing the will of God will live forever. So, there is something to *doing the will of God*. That’s the whole important thing in our lives, brethren: **the will of God!**

One reason why prayers are not answered in the way that a person thinks they ought to be answered is because they are not asking the will of God to be done. That may sound a little strange. Too many people go to God and say: ‘God, approve **my will**.’ But that’s not how Jesus taught us to pray. So, when we come back to some of the most simple, some of the most basic things that we should know and learn and live by.

Matthew 6:9: “Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: ‘Our Father, Who *is* in heaven,

hallowed be Your name.’” First thing we need to understand and realize is:

- God is Holy
- God is true
- God is righteous
- God is just

Verse 10: “**Your kingdom come....**” Not that we may be extended in life in this world. Why? *Because this world is passing away!*

“...**Your will be done on earth...**” (v 10). That’s what we need to ask. ‘God, Your will be done.’ I think if we do that more and more, then we’re going to see our prayers answered in a way that it ought to be. When we understand that **all** of the circumstances in which we find ourselves in, will work together for good, because we love God and we do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

If we’re going to be doing the will of God, what is the will of God? That’s another whole study, which I’m not going to get diverted into at this particular point. Let me ask you to maybe do that as a study on your own. What is the will of God? Well, the major will of God is expressed in the four basic principles that God operates by:

1. God is love
2. you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul and being
3. you should love your neighbor as yourself
4. you should love the brethren as Christ has loved us

Everything else comes out from that. Maybe it is God’s will that, for a time, you suffer. Maybe for a while that is God’s will. Maybe that’s why there are so many difficulties going on in the church today. God wants to know what is in our heart.

Here’s what we’re to do when those circumstances come about, 1-Peter 5:6: “Be humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you” (vs 6-7). That means that you’re submitting everything to the will of God. Not only everything we do, but what does it say of every one of our thoughts.

2-Corinthians 10:5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.” Is that not the will of God? *Yes, it is!* So, if we are doing that, regardless of the circumstances, we’re going to live forever; that’s what Christ promised.

Here's this battle. The same thing we find in the Epistle of 1-John:

- Light and darkness
- good and evil
- obedience and sin
- love and hate.

1-Peter 5:8: "Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world. Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while..." (vs 8-10).

That sometimes is God's will. Was it God's will that Christ suffer? *Yes, it was!* What does suffering do? I've learned this: *The most important thing that suffering does is you realize the value of God's love.* I think that brings home the lesson more than anything else. But notice what he's going to do. After you have suffered for a while,

"...Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle you" (v 10). I think over the period of years that we've gone through, have we not all experienced that? *Yes, we have!* Does that mean that we no longer have any trials? Satan would love you to believe that! *If you have trials, you're a great sinner and God hates you. If you have no trials, everything is wonderful and God loves you.*

Now you think on that for a while, because that's exactly what Satan would love you to believe. Will he give you a smooth way? *Sure he will!* What does it say of the way of the world: "broad is the way" and easy is the way and "wide is the gate that leads to destruction." So, it has to be according to the will of God.

We will continue back in 1-John 2—through v 29—and then come back and study the verses so we can learn what we need to out of it, because there's a tremendous amount for us here.

1-John 2:18: "Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now **many** antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time."

This is not only a statement of fact for then, this is a prophecy for today and a statement of fact today. That's why these epistles are so important.

Verse 19: "They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless,

*they left* that they might be exposed to *show* that *they* all were not of us. But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and you have knowledge of all things *pertaining to salvation*" (vs 19-20)—not everything in the world.

Again, I want to draw your attention to how many times he says, 'I write' or 'I wrote.' All the way through here, he says it so many times.

Verse 21: "I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because you know it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth." Therefore, the Word of God being Truth, Christ being 'the way, the *Truth* and the life' etc., etc., there's not a single lie coming from there.

Verse 22: "Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son. Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either" (vs 21-23).

In the *King James* there's an added you will see in your *King James* translation that he used denying the Father is also denying the Son. That was not in the original.

Verse 24: "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you... [if it isn't living in you and abiding in you, it's more than just remain] ...if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.... [Do we see that happening today? *Yes!*] ...But you yourselves have dwelling in you the anointing that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you..." (vs 24-27)—***teaching you false doctrines!***

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

Now let's go back and look at these verses, and we're going to study them in just a little bit different sequence. First of all, you can put down here: Signs of the End, Last Hour, End-Times, Last Time can all be equally translated the same.

**Signs of the End:** 1-John 2:18, 19, 22, 23 and 26—so if you tie them all together with a line, you'll see why.

Verse 18: “Little children, it is *the* last time...” For them it was the last time. Why? As we look at that, it is for them in that time, down through history and for us at the end-time. Now, why was it the last time for them? *Yes, because they were living then*, but much more importantly, in relation to *with John coming to the end of his life, it was ending the original apostolic age*. John was the last living apostle. What happened when he died? *The Church just literally blew apart!* We’ll see why. Do we see the same thing happening today? *Yes!*

As we’re going through this, I want us to keep in mind those three things:

1. The last time for them

—and I might mention, go back and review the sermon that I did on the *Two Generations*. When it says ‘that generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled’—for that generation it happened in type. *That’s one generation*.

2. The second generation is us at the end

—where the fullness of this is going to be completed. Not just restricted to the little area around the Holy Land, but the whole world.

“...and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming...” (v 18).

Now, let’s understand something. What was the first thing that Jesus said when the disciples wanted to know when He was coming, when the end of the world would be? God would give us the right understanding of world events—religious and political. Because, too many times we have been told, ‘watch those things’ but what should we really be watching? *The antichrist within! The false teachings within!* That’s the major thing to be watching for, and isn’t that the major thing that is happening today? *Yes!*

“...even now **many** antichrists have risen up...” (v 18). Is that not happening today? *Yes!* So that’s why the Epistle of 1-John is so important, because we are repeating, at the end-time, the same things that he was going through, the same thing that the first century church was witnessing, just before the Apostle John died. It’s no wonder that all of these events have been taking place within the Church. Why? *We’ll see in just a little bit*.

Verse 19: “They went out from among us, but they were not of us...” How many times have you heard that not everyone who is attending church is converted? *Yes!* Well then, it’s no surprise the things that happened as they did. There is a time when those who believe in heresy *leave*—which is what happened here at this particular point. **There**

***comes another time when those who believe heresy have so much power that those who want to hold to the Truth must leave.*** So, you’ve got two operations; let’s see that.

“...but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed to show that they all were not of us” (v 19).

God has to expose this. Today we don’t have to ask the question: Where have all the apostles gone? Today we have to ask: Where have all the evangelists gone? You stop and think of all the great names of the great evangelists we knew years and years ago—where are they? With the exception of two or three, they are ***all*** gone! Were they of us? or not of us? I would have to say, ***they were not of us.***

We will see what happens when they finally get the upper hand. And this has happened, too—hasn’t it?

3-John 9: “I wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes, the one who loves to be chief among them, does not accept us.... [finally took over by political power] ...Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account for the actions that he is practicing with evil words—maliciously berating us; and he is not satisfied with these things, *for he himself neither receives the brethren, nor does he permit those who wish to receive the brethren, but he forbids them and casts them out of the Church*” (vs 9-10).

We’ve seen that happen—haven’t we? It’s happening today. If you want to follow Christ within the Church of God you’re being cast out.

Let’s see how this was even prophesied. And ***almost every one*** of the churches that have been raised up recently, if you listen to their sermons to begin with, they always go to Isa. 66:5. *We did!* Because all of this is a purifying process for the Church.

Isaiah 66:5: “Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, ‘Your brethren...’” Did the Apostle Paul write about false brethren? *Yes!* He said that false brethren came in to ‘spy on our liberty.’ (Gal. 2)

“...‘Your brethren who hated you...’” (v 5). Have you experience hate in the Church of God from brethren that should love you? *Yes!* This is all a part of the end-time, antichrist attitude of movement from within.

“...that cast you out for My name’s sake... [Yes, they even do it in the name of Christ, don’t they?] ...said, “Let the LORD be glorified.”... [that

is, ‘on our actions of casting you out’—just like Diotrephes. He cast them out of the Church and said, ‘It’s the will of God. The Lord be glorified.’ But, God is going to turn the tables] ...but he shall appear to your joy, and **they will be ashamed**” (v 5).

What is one of the first signs of the antichrist movement *within* the Church? We can put it: *the sign of the tare and their teachings!* John labels what those teachings are, and it comes from *within*.

Matthew 13:24: “And He put another parable before them, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field.’” Isn’t that true? We all try and do the best. We all try and sow what is good. But what happens? *Difficulties arise!*

Verse 25: “But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.... [notice how difficult this is] ...Now, when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared” (vs 25-26).

*It looks just like the real thing!* But it doesn’t bring forth fruit. Now, what kind of fruit are we to bring forth?

Galatians 5:22: “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).

They’re not bringing forth the fruits of the love of God, or the faith of God, or the Truth of God. But they are in there and they look good and they sound good. They take energy. They take money. They take people, don’t they? *Yes!* In amongst.

Matthew 13:27: “And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?’ And he said to them, ‘A man *who is* an enemy has done this.’ Then the servants said to him, ‘Do you want us to go out and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, “Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary”’” (vs 27-30).

I’ve said this several times that most of the brethren that we know have either been affiliated or associated with the Worldwide Church of God and Herbert Armstrong, and many of the ministers still rely on his teachings. So, I want to give you just a little scenario that I’ve said, off the record, but this

time I’m going to put it on the record so we can understand about the tares.

(go to the next track)

Let’s go back to the book of Job. I’m going to say that the best way we can account for the difficulties that have been happening in the Churches of God—let’s go back to a scene very similar:

Job 1:6: “Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD. And Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it’” (vs 6-7).

Just like we read in 1-Peter, he’s going around seeking whom he may devour. Or, he’s going around planting the tares wherever he may.

Verse 8: “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?’ And Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, and around his house, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has *is* in your power. Only do not lay your hand upon him.’ And Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD” (vs 8-12).

Now let me combine these two into what I think may be something that happened in heaven right about the time Herbert Armstrong was repenting of all the major things he did that were not right. And I say this because I know for a fact that he told Joseph Tkach, ‘Don’t go around the world anymore because when we went around the world God didn’t open a lot of those doors. We had so much money we kicked them down,’ which shows he was repenting of those things.

So, I think one day, when Herbert Armstrong was repenting, Herbert Armstrong was drawing close to God—and I think, just before he died—remember all the things he wrote: the 18 things in the *Worldwide News* and getting the Church back on track. He never got the Church back on track, he got himself back on track. I think one day, God said to Satan, as Satan came around, ‘Look at My servant Herbert, how he’s repenting of all those things that you enticed him to do.’ And Satan said, ‘Yea, when he dies, I bet in 10-15 years I can

turn the Worldwide Church of God into a New Age church.' And God said, 'Ok, it's in your hands.' And Satan said, 'Fine, I already have my tares planted within.'

Now, some people may think that's a little radical explanation. But I think there is no other explanation that you can explain what is going on in the Worldwide Church of God and why the whole church is being scattered—I mean *the brethren*. I really think that he repented of all the things that he did; I'm happy that he did, and I'm glad that he did. I'm sure that God forgave him without a doubt. I'm sure that He did.

So, here are all the tares. God is going to let it be. Let's go back to Matt. 13 again. Did God let all the tares of the Catholic Church continue, from the time of the death of the Apostle John? *Yes, He did!* Is God going to let all the tares continue, as well as the good seed, to the end? *Yes, He is!*

Matthew 13:36: "And after dismissing the multitude, Jesus went into the house. Then His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.' And He answered *and* said to them, 'The One Who sows the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*'" (vs 36-38)—the antichrist, of which there are now *many*.

Verse 39: "Now, the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is *the* end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vs 39-42).

We see the process beginning back here in the Epistle of 1-John where it's really reaching a very intense level. And we've seen it happen within the Churches of God today—a very intense level. God is going to let in continue to the end. Many people say, 'Well, we're going to wait on God to do something.' *No!* Jesus said, 'let them be unto to the end,' which means, each one of us must do something. Every minister must do something. Everyone of the brethren must do something. *Many antichrists!* That way we know that it is the last time.

1-John 2:19: "They went out from among us, but they were not of us..." How can they go out from you, but still remain within? *It's possible! We will see it is by denying Christ!* When enough of the

tares are together in one spot they start getting rid of the wheat. And God takes them and transplants them over here where they can grow in good soil; wherever *here* may be for the individuals involved.

"...because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us" (v 19).

- How are we going to know that they're exposing themselves?
- How do we know today that they are being exposed?
- What is it that exposes them?
- How do we know?

Remember I said, vs 18 & 19 connect with 22, 23 & 26. Here's how they are exposed. Not only by their actions of leaving, but when they get the power to stay within, here's how they are exposed:

Verse 22: "Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? **He is the antichrist**—the one who denies the Father and the Son. Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either" (vs 22-23). How do you deny?

Let's see how they deny God—while they profess that they are not. Let's go to 2-Peter 2:1, the way they deny God is to **change the nature of God**. That's how you deny God, and bring in the tares—from within—now, some may have left, some may have stayed. Peter brings out very clearly here:

2-Peter 2:1: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you... [that's what he's talking about in 1-John 2] ...who will stealthily..."—privately bring in, just like the tares planted among the wheat—you can't tell them apart at first, but sooner or later they do not produce the fruits.

"...introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves" (v 1).

How do you change the nature of God? *You teach what the Bible doesn't teach*. That's what has happened with the doctrine of the trinity. They **deny the revelation that God the Father is a person. That Jesus Christ is the exact image of the Father**.

Let's see how this then manifests itself. 1-John 4 shows the responsibility we have. But it also shows the whole process that is happening. It also shows the source of these things that are happening.

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the

world.” What motivates false prophets? *False spirits!* That’s why they have *charisma*. That’s why they have *magnetism*. That’s why they *sound spiritual*. It is a fake, false spirit. Now what are we to be doing?

Verse 2: “By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God.” What does that mean?

- the first hint of a wrong spirit is that Jesus Christ was not as we are
- Jesus Christ did not have same flesh as we have
- Jesus Christ had no possibility ever of sinning

Remember that? *Yes!* That’s how it starts. That’s why I have a sermon: *Could Christ have Sinned?* Why come and be tempted if there’s no way to sin? So then, they also deny something else concerning human nature. That human nature does not have the inherent ‘law of sin and death’ within it; that we are basically good people. Remember the statement that was made: ***Once you change the nature of God, you change all other doctrines.*** And we’ve seen that happen, haven’t we? *Yes!*

Verse 3: “And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world.” *Change the nature of God!*

- What happens when you change the nature of God by saying that God is a trinity?
- What happens when you change the nature of God by saying that God is only One with three manifestations or modes of being revealed?
- What happens?
- What is the next action that you can begin to see?

This happens just as sure as the setting of the sun happens every day. Have we not seen this happen? Not only in the churches in the world, but also within the Churches of God.

2-Timothy 3:5: “Having an outward appearance of Godliness, but denying the power of *true* Godliness...” They deny the power of God—don’t they? How do they do that? *Well, first of all, it starts out that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ had nothing to do with your physical healing.* Is that not denying the power of it? *Yes, it is!* Then you don’t use the Spirit of God in your life the way you were told in the past, and on-and-on. Then what does that lead to? *It begins to reflect in their works!*

Titus 1:15: “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.” Have you heard a minister speak with that kind of speaking? To try and explain the nature of God? Which is inexplicable, because it’s not true? *Yes!*

Verse 16: “They personally profess... [just like we found there in 2-Tim. 3:5] ...to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work” (vs 15-16).

Once you change the nature of God, everything else then changes right down the line. Now what else does this lead to? When you come to a certain point then it really becomes difficult.

2-Timothy 2:12: “If we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; **if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us.**” Let’s tie this together with several other Scriptures.

It’s amazing! I mean, here it is, all of it right in God’s Word. He will deny us. Why? *Because we deny Him!* This ties right in with 2 Peter 2:1:

Jude 4: “For certain men have stealthily crept in...” Just like the tares—right? *We didn’t know they were there. We didn’t know what was happening.*

“...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).

Then they began teaching things. Changing the grace of God into something that was never, never meant to be. Now let’s carry this one step further.

It’s one thing to sin and confess sin; it’s another thing to sin and take a while to repent, as did David with the situation with Bathsheba. It’s one thing to temporarily deny Christ, as Peter did. Remember, Peter said, ‘Hey, I’ll never deny You.’ Jesus said, ‘Look, before the cock crows twice, you’re going to deny me three times.’ Not only that, it says the last time he even swore—but he went out and repented. So, it shows all the way along the line there are places of repentance and recoverability, which God has given. We can get the comparison, as we have here, same thing all the way along in 1-John 2.

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).

Let’s pray for our brethren and also those ministers involved that they don’t come to the point that Christ starts denying them before God. What is the ultimate result of that? We started out as you recall concerning the will of God. That he who does the will of God abides forever. Let’s see a Scripture we’ve gone over countless, many, many times. But here it is, very clear, right before our eyes.

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”—*practicing, doing, following, keeping, obeying, living by*—meaning *constantly on an ongoing basis*. What are we doing? *The will!* Not just *a* law, not just *a* commandment, not just *a* thought, not just *a* precept, *but the will of God!*

Verse 22: “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you....’” (v 22-23).

1-John 2:4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth... [God’s Word] ...is not in him.” So, you see how all of this builds. What John is telling us here is how the apostasy builds within the Church. You put it all together and 1-John 2 comes out to be very powerful.

Matthew 7:23: “And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.’” What is the Greek word there? The Greek word is ‘a’—which is *a*, which means against ‘nomia’—which is *law*. Or maybe if you have a *New King James Version* it would even translate it: ‘you who practice lawlessness.’ They are practicing lawlessness. In other words, they are against God’s Law. How can you be against God’s Law? Not only by breaking it, it is more than transgression. It doesn’t say, ‘You who are transgressing the Law.’ It says: ‘You who are **against** law.’ What do you do? *You say the laws and commandments of God don’t apply!* Well, this doesn’t apply and that doesn’t apply, and this doesn’t apply.

- Well, what is the will of God? *The will of God is here in the Scriptures!*
- Is this not the will of God?
- Is this not the mind of God?

- *Yes, it is!*

1-John 3:4—I translated it the way that it should be. In the *King James* it says—let’s read it in the *King James* first. 1-John 3:4—which is one of the very first things that struck you. Remember when you first began to understand about the will of God, the Word of God, what sin was and God began to call you and open your mind.

1-John 3:4 (*KJV*): “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the Law.” Now, it’s much more broad than that.

1-John 3:4: (*FV*): “Everyone who practices sin is also **practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness**”—against law.

Outside of the problems with designating the Holy Spirit as a person, the *New King James* has many of the things there translated in a more precise manner. It’s not just breaking *a* law, it’s not just transgressing, it is **practicing lawlessness**, which means *you’re against the Law of God*, which starts with what? *Well, it doesn’t matter which day you worship on.* The Jehovah Witnesses say, ‘Well, every day is the Sabbath.’ Well, if every day is the Sabbath, then there’s no such thing as *the* Sabbath. Different ones say, ‘Well, I agree, one in seven. So therefore come to church on Sunday.’ That becomes very profound.

Let’s see also how this develops even more in denying God. Let’s see the end result with what happens with all of this. That’s why Jesus said, ‘Let the tares remain until the end. Because the fruit of their works will be evident.’

2-Peter 2:17—speaking of these false prophets: “These *false prophets* are fountains without water... [they don’t have any spirituality to them] ...clouds driven by a storm... [that means *blown with every wind of doctrine*; every change, every new thing] ...for whom is reserved the **blackest of darkness forever**”—*the veil of darkness* or *the covering of darkness*—and are we not talking about light and darkness, Truth and error, love and hate in 1-John? *Yes, we are!*

Verse 18: “For they speak bombastic words of vanity... [which is new doctrine] ...enticing others through the lusts of the flesh by granting indulgences to sin, and *ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception. While promising them freedom...” (vs 18-19).

Isn’t that amazing? **Promised them liberty!** Think of the politicians. I mean you can apply this politically, religiously, Church of God—all three are true.



“...they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage. For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...” (vs 19-20).

Go back and couple that in with *What is the Chance for Salvation?* And *What is the Unpardonable Sin?* and so forth. This means **unpardonable sin**.

“...they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the Holy commandment that was delivered to them” (vs 20-21). It shows they had it.

Verse 22: “But the pronouncement found in the true proverb has happened to them: *The dog has returned to eat his own vomit; and the sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing place in the filthy mire.*” That’s the end result of *denying*.

Does this happen to good people in the Church? That depends on what you mean *good*. At the end-time is God letting Satan go around really stirring things up, similar to what at the end of the Millennium would be? *In a way it’s similar, but in a way it’s different!* But, the similarity is: What about people who have known the Truth and so forth, and have obeyed and now, when this happens, what is going to happen to them? *Well, I think God lays out the choices for them and gives them various stages where they can repent.* And it comes down to a choice every step of the way.

God surely does not delight in the death of the wicked. God does not want those that He’s called to really truly do this. But then, how many people are brought in which are not truly converted. And I think the question becomes: **How do we get all of these tares within, who are not converted?** Let’s approach it from that point of view, because those who truly have the Spirit of God, God is not going to lose any of them. He will bring them to repentance unless they totally reject Him, which is possible in some few cases. But, when you have a situation then where you start doing the work of God to call people, like say, to open the church doors and say to the world ‘come in, we love you; come in and see how good God is’—*without repentance*. Then you have a lot of tares come in. Then you have a whole new set of circumstances.

It’s possible to be *called but not chosen* and even some to be baptized but not receive the Holy Spirit. Yes, we have an example of that with Simon

Magus! *Yes, he was baptized.* I imagine Philip rued that day all his life. I imagine there were people who came up to him and said, ‘Are you the one who baptized Simon Magus?’ I bet he hung his head and said, ‘Yeah, yeah that was a bad mistake.’

Now, for a while they were so protective of people coming in that it was like trying to get an inner, inner spy circle. I don’t think it needs to be that way. I think it needs to be ‘let your fruits show’ and really show what the calling of God really is. For example: if you open the door to the world, you say, ‘Why is the world in the condition that it is in?’ *Because of sin and God commands us to repent!* Then you’re doing your job. That’s what needs to be. But if you open the door to the world and say come on in say how good we are and by the way, ‘you’re good people and God is calling all good people,’ all bets are off; it’s going to turn into a church of the world so quickly you will never believe what’s going to happen. Because if you do that, then people are going to come in wanting to bring *their* religion. ‘Oh well, we’ll change from Sunday worship to Saturday worship.’ But are you converted? Do you have the Spirit of God? So, that’s how all these things develop where you have so many, many, many antichrists.

1-John 2:26: “These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.” Now we’ve come back full circle of the whole operation of apostasy within the Church! We have to test, we have to know, we have to understand.

Now, let’s go back and study those verses, which then are the opposite of this. Remember, we had 1-John 2:18, 19, 22, 23 & 26—all those verses have to do with denying Christ, the antichrist, the wrong teachings. Now let’s pick up 1-John 2:20, 21, 24, 25 & on to the end.

1-John 2:20: “But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One...”

{Note sermon: *What Do You Mean, Anointing of God?* } Anointing means: it comes from the Greek, ‘chrisma,’ which is a *gift*. Which is *the Holy Spirit*. Which begins when? *Repent and be baptized everyone of you for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift* [‘chrisma’] *of the Holy Spirit*. That is an anointing from God. What is this to do in times of crisis?

“...and you have knowledge of all things *pertaining to salvation*” (v 20). That’s what it’s talking about. He’s talking to long-time members, from which out of their midst was coming the antichrist. Out of their midst were coming liars and false doctrines, but ***you have an anointing from God.***

Verse 21: “I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because **you know it...**” Have we known the Truth of God? *Yes!* And you can go through with a whole study on what is Truth? *and* how do you live by Truth? Jesus said, ‘Your Word is Truth.’ We’ve already covered that so we won’t dwell on it too much, except to say that the whole thing with 1-John is:

- Truth and error
- Light and darkness
- righteousness and sin
- love and hate
- Christ and the devil
- true preachers and false prophets

“...and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth” (v 21). That is profound! That’s why we are to understand that we’re not saved by anything other than the **Truth** of God. We’re not saved by fables, which it’s now being taught: ‘Well, many of these things are allegories and myths to portray a truth.’ Now, how can you have a myth—which is a lie—portray the Truth. *Never happen! Not a single lie coming from the Truth!*

Here is what we need to do, v 24: “Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning...” What from the beginning?

- The Truth of God
- the commandments of God
- the Light of God
- the love of God.

That’s what he’s saying here. *Let it be dwelling in you!* Now, at this point John really focuses in on ‘dwelling.’ The *King James* has ‘remain’ or ‘abiding.’ But as I mentioned earlier, I’ve chosen the stronger terminology: ‘dwelling,’ because it would have to be living in you: *dwelling*.

Verse 24: “Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father.”

I call your attention again, to sermons that I’ve done during the Feast of Tabernacles about Christ and God the Father *tabernacling or dwelling in us*. There it is right there.

Verse 25: “And this is the promise that He has promised us: **eternal life**.”

Verse 27: “But you yourselves have dwelling in you the **anointing...**”—*the gift of God*—which opens your mind, brings you

understanding of the Truth, gives you understanding of His Word.

“...that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone **to indoctrinate** you...” (v 27)—with false doctrines. I know that I will be accused: that is an interpretation; but I took it from the things that were brought here.

It says in the *King James*, v 27: “But the anointing which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you...”

- What were they teaching? *False doctrine!*
- What were they following? *Darkness!*
- How were they walking? *In sin!*

That’s why I said here, “...to indoctrinate...”—because *teaching* comes from the Greek ‘didasko’—which means *to teach* or the noun of it is, ‘didaskalias’—which is *doctrine*. So, *indoctrinating you with false doctrines*.

“...for the same anointing instructs you in all *spiritual* things...” (v 27). It says in the *King James*: “...but as the same anointing teaches you of all things...”—of the true Gospel. Why? *Because we’re talking about Truth and error; the Gospel is the false gospel.*

“...and is true, and is not a lie; and *if you do* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him.” (v 27).

In other words, there comes a time when long-term Christians—having the Holy Spirit of God, knowing the Truth of God, understanding the Word of God—do not need any false teachers coming along to indoctrinate them in ‘new’ doctrines which **deny the Father**, which **deny the Son**, which **deny the Truth**. And you have to sit there and take it because they’re in authority. When people, who are in authority, start teaching lies in place of Truth, they have lost any right to teach the Word of God. And when you, with the Spirit of God, can detect that—is what John is saying here—you don’t need them to come and teach you.

Verse 28: “And now, little children, **dwell in Him...** [that’s what it has to be—*live in Christ*] ...so that when He is manifested... [the return of Christ] ...we may have boldness... [rather than shame] ...and not be put to shame before Him at His coming.”

I Remember what He said: ‘Bring Me here My enemies before Me and slay them.’ That is ‘shame’ and ‘egnomai.’

Verse 29: “If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who is practicing righteousness **has been begotten by Him**.”

What is righteousness? *All Your commandments are righteousness. Your Truth is righteousness. Your Word is righteousness.* You're practicing it. So, as we have learned through the years, the Word of God is like a sphere. It all fits together and you can approach it from many, many, many different ways and it still all agrees with itself.

There are probably some other things we could add to the second chapter, but I want you to understand that going into the third chapter, because the third chapter then becomes very profound in the things that it teaches us.

- *Two Generations*
- *What is the Chance for Salvation*
- *What Do You Mean 'Anointing of God'?*

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) John 12:44-50
- 2) 1-John 2:3-4, 12-13
- 3) Revelation 12:9-11
- 4) Revelation 2:7
- 5) 1-John 2:15-17
- 6) Matthew 6:9-10
- 7) 1-Peter 5:6-7
- 8) 2-Corinthians 10:5
- 9) 1-Peter 5:8-10
- 10) 1-John 2:18-29
- 11) 3-John 9-10
- 12) Isaiah 66:5
- 13) Matthew 13:24-26
- 14) Galatians 5:22
- 15) Matthew 13:27-30
- 16) Job 1:6-12
- 17) Matthew 13:36-42
- 18) 1-John 2:19, 22-23
- 19) 2-Peter 2:1
- 20) 1-John 4:1-3
- 21) 2-Timothy 3:5
- 22) Titus 1:15-16
- 23) 2-Timothy 2:12
- 24) Jude 4
- 25) Matthew 10:32-33
- 26) Matthew 7:21-23
- 27) 1-John 2:4
- 28) Matthew 7:23
- 29) 1-John 3:4
- 30) 2-Peter 2:17-22
- 31) 1-John 2:26; 20-21, 24-25, 27-29

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- Revelation 2; 3
- Galatians 2

#### Also referenced: Sermons:

## Epistle of First John VIII

### Word Studies from the Greek

Fred R. Coulter

This week we saw the tragedy unfold where the young mother confessed to killing her two children leaving them in the car, rolling the car into the lake with them strapped in the back seat because she wanted to have an affair with a new-found boyfriend who didn't want the children around—although he didn't cause her to do it as such. Then she pleaded as if someone had carjacked her car with the children in the back and then accused someone of doing it. Well, as the week went along, it got worse and worse and, as it turned out that she was the one who had done it.

Now, I imagine that in this town of Union City, South Carolina—this is a good Baptist town—all the kids there go to Sunday school; and I imagine they are taught all of the Bible belt lessons that are there. However, that—believe it or not—is the first step that leads to things just like this; because they are living too many things that are not true. They are leading lives that are lies—and their religion is lies. So they are shocked when it comes!

We are going to see how this ties right in with what John is talking about.

Matthew 24:12: “And because lawlessness shall be multiplied... [not just ‘abounding’ (KJV), but *multiplied*] ...the love of many shall grow cold.” That’s certainly true in this instance and other instances—and we’re going to see things like this occur again and again and again.

Now let’s look at one of the famous Scriptures—and we’ll do this in the *King James*—one of the famous Scriptures. As we go through 1-John 3, we’re going to see how many of these things have been misconstrued.

Here’s one of the famous chapters that the religionists use today—1-John 3:9 (KJV): “Whosoever is born of God **does not commit sin...**” It is taken literally in that sense by a lot of the Protestants, which means that if you open your heart, you accept the Lord, you have been born again and *you cannot sin!*

I remember talking to a lady one time who had a friend who was a Baptist, and this Baptist told her friend (who was in the Church of God) she said, ‘Well now,’ she said, ‘according to Scripture, I’ve been born of God and I cannot sin. When the *rapture* comes, God has to take me.’ So she looked at her and said, ‘What if you were in the act of committing adultery when the call came? ‘He would have to take me, because I cannot commit sin.’

We’re going to see in 1-John 3 that it does not mean the *impossibility* of committing sin. It means something else. But, it’s just like in this society, the seeds, which now have grown into the plants in this generation, were planted because of this type of theology. Let’s take a look here at 1-John 3, and let’s just do a little review of the verses. So, I’ve broken this down into basically nine different sections within this chapter. And we’ll see them as we go along.

- 1-John 3:1-3—God’s love for us and that we are the children of God
- v 4 tells us what sin is, and we’ll analyze that quite a bit today
- then it talks about practicing righteousness or practicing sin
- the children of the devil and the children of God
- loving the brethren or having hatred.
- God’s love for us in relationship to what we should do
- love, commandment-keeping and the Holy Spirit

Those are the things that come down through 1-John 3.

What I want to do is, I want to go ahead and let’s begin right here in, in 1-John 3:4, and in some of this we’re going to use the *Interlinear* quite a bit. Let’s read it first of all in the *King James*, which is one of the first verses that I am sure that you memorized or that sort of stuck in your memory when you were coming to the knowledge of the Truth—

1-John 3:4 (KJV): “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the Law.” That’s a pretty good translation overall. But it doesn’t really give us the full account of it. Let’s read it in the *Faithful Version*, which is translated directly from the Greek. It gives us an entirely different connotation, because ‘iniquity’ in is ‘lawlessness’ (Matt. 24:12)—the same as it is here.

1-John 3:4 (FV): “Everyone who is practicing sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness”—*against law*. This is what our Protestant society has created—*against law*. ‘Oh, you don’t have to keep the commandments of God.’ I just talked to a man yesterday (he stopped by to visit me) and he has a wife who is solidly Protestant.

And they say, ‘Well, if you have love in your heart then you automatically keep the commandments and you don’t have to keep them.’ She is against the Sabbath. She is against the Holy Days. But, boy does she *love* Christmas; and she believes in the trinity, and believes that anybody who doesn’t believe in the trinity is committing blasphemy.

So, here you’ve got all of this together. It creates *lawlessness*. Now, if you will please turn the section in the *Interlinear*—1-John 3:4. Now the reason I have this here is so that

1. you’ll be able to see the English in the *Interlinear*
2. the Greek will be there for us when we need it
3. for everyone to understand that when I do a study translation, I’m not trying to create a new official Scripture—but just to give us greater understanding

1-John 3:4 (*Int*): “Everyone that practices sin, also lawlessness practices, and sin is lawlessness.”

Verse 9 (*FV*): “Everyone who has been begotten by God **does not practice** sin...” It’s the same word, the same verb in the Greek—‘poieo’—*to practice*. So, when we’re talking about lawlessness abounding, this is what we are talking about here in, in verse four. It is *abounding*! Now, let’s see what it’s talking about concerning *practicing sin*.

I’ve laid out an explanation of all of the basics necessary for understanding this.

*The Seven General Epistles, Word Studies from the Greek*, pg 106

### **“Sin” and “Transgression”**

Now there are many forms of sin. Lawlessness or *against law* means that you are *resistant* against law. There is another sin, which is *missing the mark*. And, as we will see, there is “a sin **not unto** death.” and there is a “sin **unto** death,” as John explains.

The opposite of commandment-keeping is sin and transgression. Then we just read how that was translated. So, John is clearly defining what sin is: **it is commandment-breaking!** I did an article concerning Sabbath: *Which Day is the True Lord’s Day of the New Testament*. I make it very clear that Sunday-keeping **is sin!** Needs to be labeled as such.

- Is murder sin? *Oh yes, all the Sunday-keepers are all mad because of this murder!*
- Is stealing a sin? *Yes!*

- Is taking God’s name in vain a sin? *Yes!*
- Is idolatry a sin? *Yes!*
- Is breaking the Sabbath a sin? *‘No! Because we keep Sunday.’*

And that’s the kind of thinking that is generally proffered to justify Sunday-keeping. Sunday-keeping **is a SIN!** Sabbath-keeping **is righteousness!** Now in this verse, John uses the Greek word ‘anomia’—which actually is defining sin in the strongest terms. When you’re practicing it, it is defining a life-style, the way you are living. Then it also shows that those who live that way are of the devil.

What we are going to find when we are going through all of this, we’re going to find that we do sin, but we don’t **practice** sin. We’ll see some very interesting things in the first chapter of 1-John.

### **Practicing sin:**

1-John 3:4: “Everyone who is practicing sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.” Let’s analyze these three verses in relationship to the common understanding that you cannot commit sin. And this is what makes some ‘Christians’ really so upset. Because if you cannot commit sin, why is it that you sin? Even in the Church of God, it creates some difficulties for people.

1-John 1:7: “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.**” That is a present tense verb, which means: *it’s constant cleansing—constant cleansing all the time.*

What is it that we ask in the daily prayer (Matt. 6 and Luke 11)? What is it that we pray?

- Our Father in heaven,
- Holy is Your name,
- Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
- Give us this day our daily bread
- Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those *who trespass against us.*

That is part of the cleansing! Because we need our sins forgiven every day because we have the *law of sin and death*. So, this one verse here, when you put it right alongside the *King James* translation: ‘cannot sin’; then you have a great contradiction. But if it is: ‘you cannot *practice* sin,’ then that tells us the correct understanding of it.

Verse 8: “If we say that **we do not have sin...**” There it is, right there—that ties right in with, with the 1-John 3:9. There’s the contradiction.

Because if you read 1-John 3:9 and take it for what it says in the *King James*, where it says: “Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin...”

Then you read 1-John 1:8: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

So, we have two things here. 1-John 1:7: “...if we walk in the Light... [of God] ...the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.... [present tense] ... If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us” (vs 7-8).

When you compare that with 1-John 3:9 in the *King James Version*, you’ve got a contradiction that’s going head-on. One says *if you’re born of God you cannot commit sin*. The other one says *if you do not have sin, you’re deceiving yourself*. That’s why I have the *Interlinear* here.

Now, let’s go to the *Interlinear* and let’s again look at 1-John 3:9, and I’m going to read the English right under the Greek. Very few people know Greek, but it is good to have the Greek *Interlinear* just for the English sake, because the English in the *Interlinear* is different than the *King James Version*, and it gives us a whole different perspective on many of these things. I would have to say, that the English in the *Interlinear* is far superior to the translation of the *King James*—far superior.

1-John 3:9 (*Int*): “Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices...”

1-John 3:9 (*FV*): “Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin ...” That’s as close to a literal translation as you can get, with the verbs and everything. So, if you are not practicing sin what does this say? *This says and means you are not living a life of breaking the commandments of God!* It doesn’t mean you don’t sin. Nowhere does it say it’s impossible for you to sin. It’s talking about you don’t *practice* sin.

1-John 1:9—we will see it right here. These agree, and they should agree. Why is it that we can live a life not practicing sin, and yet, we still sin? *Because we have the ‘law of sin and death’ in us!* And there’s something else that takes place as to the reason why we can’t practice sin. As we will see, the Spirit of God in us *convicts* us of that sin, so that we will repent. And another thing that we will see, which is also true: when you have God’s Spirit, *you become more aware of sin mentally*, more-so with yourself than you ever have in your whole life, because *sin begins in the mind!* Then you start putting out that sin; that’s overcoming. But you have to confess it.

1-John 1:9: “If we confess our own sins... [which means that we do have sins] ...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

That in itself is a tremendous promise. So, *if* you find yourself sinning—which you will—then what you do is *confess* your sin and God will forgive it. Therefore, you are not living a life of *practicing* sin; it’s far different. Now let’s turn the coin on the other side. If you are constantly keeping Sunday and breaking the Sabbath, are you *practicing* sin? *Yes!* Every single week—two ways:

1. you’re breaking the Sabbath
2. you’re trying to keep Holy a day that God *never, never* made Holy

So, you have two sins. That’s why we need to go through and really understand this as deeply as we can.

### Propitiation:

1-John 2:2: “And He is *the* propitiation for our sins...” Now, ‘propitiation’ means *continual source of forgiveness and reconciliation*. ‘Propitiation’ is different than a one-time forgiveness. A one-time forgiveness is called *expiation*. ‘Propitiation’ is that you can *continually* come to Christ. He is *continually* there to *continually* cleanse you of every sin, to *continually* forgive every sin that you confess, to grant you of His Spirit to grow and overcome. Now then, He adds this—lest we get all conceited.

“...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world” (v 2)—which then will be in God’s time and plan of salvation to bring it to the whole world.

Verse 12: “I am writing to you, little children, because *your sins have been forgiven you* through His name.” What we have all the way through: either practicing sin or not practicing sin. As we will see, there’s *practicing righteousness*—which is what we are doing. We are *practicing righteousness* by living God’s way.

1-John 3:5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and *in Him is no sin*.” That becomes profound and very important. As we get down to the Passover time we’ll understand a little bit more about the whole life of Christ and how He became a human being and carrying the ‘law of sin and death’ and all of that.

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin is of the devil...” We’re going to see how profound this is when we go back—we’re going through this now so

we will go back and go through mostly the *Interlinear* when we finish this section.

“...because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil” (v 8).

1-John 4:10: “In this *act*... [talking about the crucifixion] ...is **the love**—not that we loved God... [we can boast how great we are] ...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the propitiation for our sins*.”

### **Sin not unto death & a sin unto death:**

The next one, 1-John 5:16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin...” There you go. If it’s impossible to sin, once you have been ‘born again’ so-to-speak, how is that you can see your brother sinning? *Wouldn’t be!*

But he clearly says, v 16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is not unto 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.”

- a “sin unto death” is the *unpardonable sin*
- a “sin *not* unto death” is a sin *that can be repented of*

It does not say if you see your brother sinning, run and tell the minister as fast as you can. It says: ***pray for him***.

Verse 17: “All unrighteousness is sin, and **there is a sin not unto death**.” So, he repeats it again.

1-John 3:6: “Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him.”

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin is of the devil... [Why? *Because practicing sin is a way of life!*] ...because the devil has been sinning from the beginning.... [Is that way his way of life? *Yes!*] ...For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because **His seed of begettal** is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God” (8-9).

### **Begettal, begotten and born again:**

Why does the translator here use the term ‘begettal’ in the *Interlinear*? Let’s go back to the *Interlinear*, 1-John 3, and let’s answer this question. This is a little bit in addition to what we’ve covered

on ‘born again.’ Why is it ‘begotten’? Some of the current thinking is: As soon as you receive the Spirit of God you are *born again*. That means that if it’s so, then you should be a *spirit* being. Because Jesus said, ‘That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.’ That’s what you are. That is not correct. And the translator here, when he was translating this understood it.

1-John 3:9 (*Int*): “Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices...” He uses *begotten*, and all the way through he uses *begotten* in 1-John. Why? What are some of the proofs that we have that we are not *born again* now at this present time, other than the fact that we are not a spirit being. That’s plenty enough proof. But what are some others? Let’s look at a couple.

You’ve heard it said that we are growing in grace and knowledge and understanding and spiritual character, and at the resurrection we will be *born again*—changed from flesh to spirit. That is the correct understanding.

***Christ is being formed in us!*** Which means that you are *spiritually developing*. So, the analogy, which is perfectly true, that if you’ve been *begotten* then you have to grow to that full spiritual maturity, and at the resurrection you will be *born again*. Just like Christ was *born again* from the dead, as it says there in Rom. 8.

Galatians 4:19: “My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until **Christ has been formed in you**.” In other words, he’s not, he’s going through labor pains here with them, they haven’t been born. It’s what’s he’s saying, ***Christ has to be formed in you first***. So, there is a very clear one right there.

1-John 3:9 (*Int*): “Anyone that has been begotten of God, sin not practices, **because** seed... [the actual Greek word for *seed* is “sperma”] ...seed his in him abides...”

When there is a begettal of a child, it’s an exact perfect comparison. When a child has been *begotten* it hasn’t been born. Been *begotten*! And we have God’s seed ***in*** us. Now, how do we know that we haven’t been born again and it is a *begettal*? Because it says, *His seed remains in us*.

We have some other Scriptures to go along with this—don’t we? What does it say of the Spirit of God? That we have all of the Spirit of God, or the ‘earnest’? *It is the earnest of the Spirit (Eph. 1:14), which is the begettal!* So, with God’s Spirit, which is called ‘seed’; this is the seed to eternal life. This is why we know God is re-creating Himself.

With our own children, we are not creating something unequal to us. That’s why we’re called

*the children of God.* First, we have to be *begotten*. And ‘His seed abides’ [or dwells] in us. Then it says:

“... and he not able to sin...” But what does this refer back to? This is something in the Greek that is understood in the Greek. It refers back to *practicing*—‘He is not able to *practice* sin.’ That’s why in my translation, I added the word, to give clarity, ‘not able to practice sin.’ You can’t! When you sin you get a guilty conscience. When I sin I get a guilty conscience. You can’t live with yourself. Now, you may try. You may try to put it out of your mind and live with yourself for a while. But you can’t. Why? *Because God’s Spirit is there to convict you! So you are not able to practice sin!*

- Do you think that you could walk into—what I read here with this New Age worship thing—and live that way of life?
- Do you think that you, that you could live a life where you knew that Sunday-keeping was a sin?
- And every week you would walk into that Sunday-keeping church and practice it?
- *No, you couldn’t! Because God’s Spirit is there to convict you!*

Let’s see why this is so important to understand. Some people get so discouraged because they are told, ‘*You* overcome the sin.’ That’s true, we need to overcome sin—that’s absolutely true! Without a doubt, we need to overcome sin.

- How do you overcome sin?
- With your own effort?

*No, you need the cleansing of the blood of Christ!*

- you need the confessing of the sin
- you need God’s Spirit
- you need God’s love

And you will find, in some cases, the you try to overcome sin, by *your own power*... And how many people have thought, ‘Well, I know I’ve sinned but I’m going to wait till I get right with God before I go pray again.’ I’ve said that. That’s a dumb statement. Because you can’t get right with God if you don’t repent of sin. That’s contradictory!

But there are a lot of people who go out there and say, ‘Oh boy, I’ve sinned and I know I shouldn’t sin. Well, I can’t pray to God because I know that I shouldn’t have sinned.’ Well, that in itself is a contradictory statement because he says, ‘I will cleanse you of every unrighteousness, and if you confess it, He is faithful and just to forgive.’ So here is the dilemma. We’ve covered this before, but we need to, we need to go over it again so we can fully understand it. Here’s what’s going to happen when you try and do it *yourself, alone!*

Paul is talking about when he comes to the full awareness of sin internally, mentally and spiritually. We can look out and see crimes going on in the world: Oh yes, yes, we can recognize that. But it’s the ‘ole self that’s the tough one. Here’s what every Christian goes through.

Romans 7:9: “For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” That is a different way of explaining baptism, because we know in Rom. 6, when you’re baptized, you’re baptized into His death.

Verse 10: “And the commandment, which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me.” Why? *Because he couldn’t get rid of the sin in his mind!* Sin in your mind, sometimes, is just like a commercial. It’s happened to you, and it’s happened to me. That’s why I turn a lot of commercials off on the radio.

Who’s this guy on Motel 6 that does Motel 6? What’s his name? You all know it. Yes, Tom Bodett. But anyway, here I am walking down the hall in the house the other day and I start singing that stupid song. And I thought, ‘Why is that there?’ Have you had that happen with a commercial? It’s just like sin. It comes back on you. The Law says you shall not lust. Now what happens when you lust? The Law says you shall not hate. What happens when you hate?

“...which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me; because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. Therefore, the Law is indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good” (vs 10-12).

But Protestants, because they can’t cope with this, they have to say ‘there is no sin.’ So, they walk along and nothing phases them.

Verse 13: “Now then, did that which is good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which is good...” That’s what happens when you’re converted, and the longer you are converted, the more you understand that sin *is sin!*

“...was working out death; so that by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful. For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin” (vs 13-14). That is the whole thing that we need to understand. Of and by ourselves, our own human nature, we are “sold unto sin.”

Can sin overcome sin? *No!* It’s like saying: Can gasoline put out a fire? *No!* That’s why it takes God’s Spirit to change that—and it takes the



cleansing of the blood of Christ. It takes something separate from you to accomplish that within you because within you, you do not have the ability. Because here's the battle that went on—

Verse 15: “Because what I am working out myself... [which means: he doesn't want to do it] ...I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do.”

He's just explaining the ordinary life. You're doing things you hate. Did you do something this week that you hate? *Yes, I did! Yes!* I've also found this—and it just seems to happen that way—that when I know that God has really been with me to do something, He just kind of let's me stand alone some time and just let's me fall into it. Just to let me know.

With Protestantism, people agree that sin is not sin.

(go to the next track)

That's exactly what psychology does. Psychology says: *All your evil thoughts are normal, just accept them!* They're normal in as much that we have sinful nature, but we are not to accept them, ***we're to repent of them!*** Psychology gives you a way to live *with* your sin and not condemn yourself. Protestantism does the same thing. It gives you a way to live with your sin so you don't condemn yourself and you're really not going to Christ to be cleansed. You're trying to do it yourself. So therefore, the only way a sinful nature can exist is to deny that sin *is sin*. They end up by searing their conscience. They agree that sin is not sin. They keep Sunday, they believe in a trinity, and all of these sort of things.

Are we going to blame God for this? Because you do something you hid, are you going to blame God? ‘God, You made me do this. God, if You didn't have that law there.’ That's why they do away with the Law, because they don't like the Law there, precisely right.

Verse 16: “But ***if*** I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the Law that *it is good*.” The Law is good, nothing wrong with the Law.

Now, we've talked about two famous murder cases: the two kids down in South Carolina and O.J. Simpson. They don't want the law to say murder is wrong. They want to say, ‘Well, I was victimized.’ Or whatever the case may be. *Perfect justification of trying to square evil in your mind!* But you can't!

Paul, the apostle, said, ‘I consent to the law that it is good.’ It is good which says, ‘you shall not murder.’ It is good which says ‘you shall not steal.’

It is good that says, ‘you shall not commit adultery.’ It is good when it says, ‘remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy.’ It is good to ‘honor your father and mother.’ It is good to have ‘no other gods before you.’ ***The Law is good!*** People turn it around and ***blame*** the Law. ‘Well, I can have my idol here if it weren't for the Law. The Law is bad. Oh, we'll do away with the Law. I go my idol, that's wonderful.’ See, that's the way human nature is.

But, he labels the source of it, v 17: “So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is dwelling within me*.” The biggest thing that we need to understand concerning Christianity is this: even though you have God's Spirit, you still have—as we have understood—the ‘law of sin and death’ in us. *That's the source of sin!* Now, with God's Spirit in us, it begins to deliver us from that because it convicts us of sin:

- so we will repent
- so that you won't be *practicing* sin
- so that you will not be *loving* sin
- so that you will be hating sin
- and confessing and repenting

Verse 18: “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me ...” (v 18). Now, that's obviously compared to God. It's good to have a heart that works. It's good to have hands that work. It's good to have a mind that works, and eyes that see. But spiritually speaking, character-wise speaking, no human being can say he's ‘good.’ Now, we may do good things.

They're going to take this big lie of Christmas and ‘all the good we're going to do,’ and all the sanctimonious stuff that is done, you'll see it. They're trying to compensate for their evil by doing ‘good’ externally, but it doesn't change the inside.

“...there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any good*....” (v 18). Everyone desires to do good—and I imagine, even those who are murderers *desire* that they still be accepted, except for this one little mistake.

“...For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*. Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me” (vs 18-21). That's why we have to confess our sins daily. That's why we have to keep going to Christ.

Verse 22: “For I delight in the Law of God

according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members” (vs 22-23).

Have you ever had it where you were inadvertently, you’ve been around people who swear and curse and then it happens to you; you’re walking down the hall and guess what, it pops into your mind. You didn’t mean to. You didn’t want to. But now you’ve got to be delivered from this.

Verse 24: “O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin” (vs 24-25).

That’s why we have the confession of sins. That’s why when you receive the Holy Spirit, and the begetting from the Father, ***you cannot live in sin! You cannot practice sin!***

This becomes so very important, if we understand this: The *law of sin and death* is within us, and it’s received by inheritance. If you don’t believe it, put two sweet nine-month-old babies in a room by themselves with one toy. You will see the operation of sin very quickly, because someone’s going to take it. If one of them takes it, the other one’s going to steal it back: ‘It’s mine!’ It’s inherited! That’s why God has to give His Spirit, so we can overcome it. Now, let’s go back and study through, with the *Interlinear* this time—all the way through.

1-John 3:4 (*Int*): “Everyone that practices sin...” Now, I want to stop right here for just a minute. You see above the English word ‘that’—it’s the second word in; it looks like there’s a little tail or comma above it, apostrophe. That should be ‘who’ instead of ‘that.’ ‘*Everyone who is practicing...*’ That is a present tense Greek participle. Now, I know this is getting a little deep. But it’s present tense. Wherever you see that little *ο* and then the word immediately following it, you should read: “the one who is.”

Verse 4 (*Int*): “The one who is practicing a sin, also lawlessness practices... [is practicing] ...***and sin is lawlessness.*** And ye know that he was manifested, that sins our he might take away; and sin in him is not” (vs 4-5).

That’s very important. Let’s think about this for a minute. Why can’t you overcome your own sins, of and by yourself with your own effort? Now, you may overcome one sin for one while, but then you can’t overcome every sin.

- you may be able to quit smoking, but you might not be able to quit drinking
- you may be able to quit drinking, but you may not be able to quit lying
- you may be able to quit lying, but then you may not be able to quit cheating
- you may be able to be nice to some people, and always lose your temper to other people

Why can’t you overcome your own sin? ‘Partakers of flesh and blood,’ the answer is simple. ***You have a sinful nature! A sinful nature cannot overcome a sinful nature.*** This sentence is put in here for us to understand something.

Who is the only one that can really take away sin? *Someone who has never sinned!* That’s why it says: “...and in Him [Christ]...” He came to take away our sins. But a sinful person can’t take away sins. That’s why, “in Him is not any sin.” He’s perfect.

Does that make any sense? Now, here is the big mistake that we made years ago in childrearing. This is true confession time, as well. We were told that children are sinful because they learn it. So therefore, if you correct them and discipline them they won’t be sinful. So, we all dutifully disciplined, corrected, spanked, punished! Did it drive it out? *No!—because it was inherent within!* We could have done so much better had we not done that.

***Only Christ can take away sin because there was not any sin in Him!*** If we all understand that children, as well as all adults—from birth until death—have “the law of sin and death” in them, then I think we can all understand why we need to look to Christ to do things and help us overcome. Therefore, that’s why a church organization cannot bring salvation. It can’t! ***Christ alone can!***

Verse 6 (*Int*): “Anyone that in him abides... [is not sinning] ...not sins...” We’re talking about whether to practice sin or to practice lawlessness. So, if you are dwelling in Christ, you are not practicing sin. So you can just insert the word practice, because the Greek verb “of practice” follows right along with this structure.

“...anyone... [who is sinning, who is sinning—that means, *practicing and living sin*] ...that sins not has seen him, not has known him” (v 6, *Int*). Why is that important? There are people going around saying: ‘I know the Lord.’ Don’t we have a lot of Protestants saying:

- I know the Lord
- Do you know the Lord, brother?
- Do you know the Lord?

- Have you given your heart to Him?
- Come to church on Sunday

1-John 2:3 (*Int*) says: “And by this we know that we have known him, if his commandments we keep. He that says, I have known him, and his commandments is not keeping, a liar is, and in him the truth is not” (vs 3-4).

If Sunday-keeping is sin, perpetually. If Sunday-keeping is practicing sin, **they don't know the Lord**. They may use His name. They may treat their lawlessness as grace. **But they don't know Him!** That's why He says back here in 1-John 3 again—let's go back there: “...anyone who is practicing sin has not seen Him nor knows Him.”

1-John 3:7 (*Int*): “Little children, no one let lead astray you; he [who is practicing] that practices righteousness, righteous is, even as he righteous is.” That's quite a statement! What does that mean? We know we're not as righteous as Christ, because in Him is no sin. But the righteousness that we are practicing—if it is Christ in us, motivating us—then we are righteous as He is righteous. That's why it's so important:

- that you love God first
- that you look to Christ
- that you ask Him to **motivate** you
- that you ask Him to **inspire** you
- that Christ be formed in you

But there are people going around saying: ‘I am righteous. What my sinful way of life is, is righteous.’ What is he saying? If he's not doing the righteousness of Christ, he's leading you astray. Because he's saying, don't let anyone mislead you. The one “who's practicing righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.” In other words, we'll keep the same commandments of God. We'll keep it in an attitude of love and so forth.

Then he draws a distinction. The one who's leading you astray, v 8 (*Int*): “He that practices sin, of the devil is...” John is really laying this out clear. It is *of the devil* if you are living a life of sin God is not your God, *the devil is*. Who is called *the god of this world*? Who is what? “*The prince of the power of the air, that spirit that works within the children of disobedience!*”

Now, why? “...because from {the} beginning the devil sins” (v 8, *Int*). That's quite a statement in itself. {Note sermon series: *Evil Good, Good Evil*}. Not everything that appears good is good. Some things that appear good are actually evil.

I've got this wonderful publication I've shown you and referred to several times here. It is

very well done. It is a high-gloss cover. It is gold-embossed. It is bound. It is printed nice. It's got illustrations in it. But it tells all about Christmas, and how to make Christmas a family affair. There is no good that can come out of Christmas. The good that is apparent in Christmas is not *true* good. Why? *Because it is a sin and a lie!*

‘Let us do evil that good may abound.’ I remember, and I've told this several times, when I found out that my mom lied to me and there was no Santa Claus, boy, I was really angry because I got all those spankings for lying. But I learned it was a ‘good lie.’ **Satan the devil is sinning from the beginning!**

- there is no doctrine we need of him
- there is no inspiration we need of him
- there is no teaching we need from him, because everything he does is sinning

Verse 8 (*Int*): “...For this [cause] was manifested the Son of God, that he might undo [loose or destroy] the works of the devil.”

That's why on Trumpets I preached that Babylon is going to be destroyed. He's not going to modify it. He's not going to adjust it. He's not going to take what looks good to the world and incorporate that into the Kingdom of God—**no way!** Because it is of the devil and it is sin! Can any good come from sin? *No!*

Now that we have it in context here, on the other hand, compared to those who are following Satan the devil—v 8 (*Int*): “...he that is practicing sin, because the devil is sinning from the beginning and for this cause was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Anyone that... [on the other hand, notice again how John is writing this: Truth and error, light and darkness, commandment-keeping, sin, Satan, God, here we go:] ...has been begotten of God, sin not practices, because seed his in him abides, and he is not able to sin, **because of God he has been begotten**” (vs 8-9).

God's Spirit will **convict** you of it and will cause you to do this. 2-Cor. 10 is the whole life-long goal. Here's what God's Spirit will cause you to do **when** it convicts you of sin. You go back and study the whole episode of David and Bathsheba. Perfect example of sin and enticing! Bathsheba was not innocent because where she put her bath. David was not innocent because he leaned over the edge. The servant was not innocent because he didn't say: ‘My lord’—who's going to say ‘no’ to the king. Have we heard of things like that before? But when ‘he came to himself’ he repented. Same way with us, because of God's Spirit.

2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal...” Didn’t we just cover that? ***You cannot overcome carnal nature with carnal nature.*** You cannot put a fire out with gas! ***You cannot overcome sin with a lie.***

“...but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds... [then he names the strongholds]: ...casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ...” (vs 4-5).

That’s why we’re convicted of sin: mentally, spiritually. When we begin to think of it, then if we carry it out and do it like David, then when we come to the point when we repent and we understand how sinful sin is. All of that is that you can’t live in sin. Whereas, you take a hardened criminal, that’s all they can do is live in sin. Once they start robbing and stealing, that’s all they can do. Once these serial killers start killing that’s all they can do. They live in it. They are obsessed by it.

But we, on the other hand, are “...bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled. Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s” (vs 5-7).

That’s why you cannot; God’s Spirit is there. The begetting of God’s Spirit is to bring us the mind of Christ. We covered the section there in John 14 quite a few times—about ‘if you love Me keep My commandments’ and so forth, all the way through. All right, let’s come back here.

Now notice, then he summarizes this section very clearly—1-John 3:10: “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil...”—a pretty profound statement!

1-John 3:10 (Int): “In this manifest are the children of God... [Why? *Because we have the Spirit of God!*] ...and the children of the devil... [Why? *Because they’re practicing sin.* That’s how you know. So he gives it right here]: ...Anyone that not practices righteousness not is of God... [Now, what is *righteousness*? ‘All Your commandments are righteousness’ and you could do a whole Bible study on ‘righteousness’: the righteousness of Christ; Christ in you; and all of that, you see. Then he carries it another step further]: ...and he that loves not his brother his.”

Have you seen it when doctrines of Satan are introduced into a church and are beginning to be

accepted, what happens? *There’s a division of the brethren!* You’ve got a little group over here, and you’ve got another little group over here, and you’ve got another little group over there, and they’re supposed to be brethren in Christ that love each other. But the lying spirit has entered in and they don’t love each other and they don’t trust each other, and everything goes ‘to hell in a hand-basket.’ That’s literally true, that has happened.

That’s why he’s saying, it happened back here when John was writing this: ‘...and the one who is—neither is he that is not loving his brother.’

Verse 11 (Int): “Because this is the message which ye heard from {the} beginning; that we should love one another.”

I’ll tell you one thing we have learned down through the years, and this is something that many of the brethren are writing in now and we’re getting calls and letters and things, and people, and it’s all I can do to keep up with it. Whenever these doctrines come in, you are not loving each other. We have learned through the years, and the whole lesson that God is putting us through is that. You’ve got to love God first! With all your heart, mind, soul and being, and then these things don’t take a root. I mean, you have your human nature to overcome. You have your own difficulties and problems to work with. But God is there! Christ is there! He will help you. But look what happens here.

Verse 12, (Int): “[and] not as Cain {who} of the wicked {one} was, and slew brother his; and on account of what slew he him?... [We’re having the same thing today. You could say the same thing of this woman who slew her children. Now, why did he kill him?] ...Because his works wicked were, and those of his brother righteous”

That’s what Satan likes to do. He likes to come at people who are serving God, who are living righteous lives, who are trying to overcome and to turn their love away from God and to turn people to come into them and to hate them and to slay them spiritually. You take and analyze every one of these things that that went on with these, with these two children that were killed down in South Carolina. There was a divorce that was going on or just completed. She was going out with another man, committing adultery. One sin led to another sin, which led to another sin, and now it came to its ultimate conclusion of killing her own children.

Now then, we come to another whole section here, which we will, which we’ll begin to cover next time. I realize that we have, we still have little bit left but if I start getting into this, if I start getting into this, then it’s, it’s going to be just little over-much.

Let's go back and let's just cover into, so we'll have into the records—we'll just use the *Interlinear* here. This also shows us by way of summary and review that we are not yet the full-born spiritual children of God. We have the begettall. God's seed is in us.

1-John 3:1 (*Int*): "See what love has given to us the Father, that children of God we should be called. On account of this the world knows not us, because it knew not him. Beloved now children of God are we... [it's not a completed process yet] ...and not yet was it manifested **what we shall be...**" We're not saved completely, yet. What are the three steps to salvation?

1. Eph. 2—you **have been saved** from your sins and Satan the devil
2. 1-Cor. 15:2—if you remain in the Gospel wherein you are standing, **"you are also being saved"**—a process
3. Rom. 5—That **we shall be saved** because of His life—which is *at the resurrection*

That's what he's talking about here.

1-John 3:2 (*FV*): "2: Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be..." Just exactly like when children say: 'When I grow up I want to be dada, dada, dada'—whatever. Like, whatever. Means the same thing.

"...but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (vs 2-3).

How do you 'purify' yourself? That's not taking a bath every day. That is not using the right deodorant. This is **you purify yourself by confessing your sins!** So that you won't be *practicing sin*. You won't be living in lawlessness, and you will be **practicing righteousness**.

Now there are some other and more tremendous things in the Epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John, and I hope I will go fast enough to get through it, but slow enough so you won't get lost when we're going from page to page.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:12
- 2) 1-John 3:9. 4
- 3) 1-John 1:7-9
- 4) 1-John 3:9

- 5) 1-John 1:9
- 6) 1-John 2:2, 12
- 7) 1-John 3:5, 8
- 8) 1-John 4:10
- 9) 1-John 5:16-17
- 10) 1-John 3:6, 8-9
- 11) Galatians 4:19
- 12) 1-John 3:9
- 13) Romans 7:9-25
- 14) 1-John 3:4-6
- 15) 1-John 2:3-4
- 16) 1-John 3:7-9
- 17) 2-Corinthians 10:4-7
- 18) 1-John 3:4, 10-12
- 19) 1-John 3:1-3

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 6
- Luke 11
- Romans 8
- Ephesians 1:14
- Romans 6
- John 14
- Ephesians 2
- 1-Corinthians 15:2
- Romans 5

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *Interlinear* Greek-English New Testament by George Ricker Berry
- *The Seven General Epistles* (Word Studies from the Greek) by Fred R. Coulter

Article: *Which Day is the True Lord's Day of the New Testament* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Evil Good, Good Evil*

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## Epistle of First John IX

### The Love of God and the Truth of God

Fred R. Coulter

Here in 1-John 3 let's understand the whole way that this chapter has been written. It talks about:

- the love of God
- the righteousness of God
- what sin is in (v 4)
- why Christ came to take away our sins (v 5)
- everyone who's dwelling in Him is not practicing sin
- everyone who is sinning hasn't seen Him
- the one who is practicing sin is of the devil

So, there is a *counterfeit* spirit of God, which comes from the devil, which inspires people to behave as Satan wants them to behave. Now, let's just cover one verse concerning that.

Eph. 2 shows the counterfeit of God's Spirit, which comes from Satan the devil. Remember that when you are talking about Satan the devil and what he does, how does he come and appear? *He appears as an angel of light*. His ministers—and he has ministers—appear as ministers of *righteousness*. a *counterfeit* righteousness! Here's how he's done it:

Ephesians 2:2: "In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world... [the way that the world is] ...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within..."

It's very interesting, there are two Greek words put together in the Greek: *in* is 'en'; *work* is 'ergon.' In the Greek they are put together as one word, emphasizing *inner working within*. That's the counterfeit! Please understand, *not all demon possession is lunacy*. Some demons are intellectual. Some demons like to try and do good works. Satan would love you to expend your life on doing good works and never come to the knowledge of salvation.

That's why Paul said, 'If I give all that have to the poor, and I give my body to be burned, and I don't have love, **I'm nothing**.' *You have accomplished nothing!* Because all of that is a counterfeit of the true righteousness of God, which is inner working in:

"...the children of **disobedience**... [which tells us God requires obedience] ...among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and **by the mind**... (vs 2-3).

How much do we have concerning mental abilities? Every Sunday you can turn on a couple of programs which have to do with how to use your mind, how to be positive, how to overcome. There are the desires of the mind. What are the desires of the mind and what did Satan appeal to Eve and to Adam? *To make you wise!*

- everyone wants to be smart.
- everyone wants to be wise.
- everyone wants to use the greatest amount of their inner powers.

How many times have you been told that you don't even use one-tenth of your mental capacity? Well, the truth is, if you used your entire mental capacity your brain would short-circuit. It would! That's why God doesn't expect us to use all of our mind all the time. That's why we sleep at night, to give the brain a rest.

"...the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the children of wrath*, even as the rest of *the world*" (v 3). So, Satan has his counterfeits out there. We have that practicing sin is of the devil. Read John 8, that's profound!

1-John 3:9: "Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of *begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. **Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God...**" (vs 9-10). *Think of that!*

They may have some of it. Just like any counterfeit needs to look as close to the real thing as possible. I read in the paper that they found the counterfeiting ring in the maximum-security prison in the print shop; which is amazing when you think of that. But their counterfeits weren't too good.

What is righteousness? *All the commandments of God are righteousness!* And those who are against it are against law, against God.

"...and neither is the one who does not love his brother" (v 10)—which is pretty profound. You think of that in relationship to your church experience. What happens when a lot of tares come into the Church and in the congregation? *You don't have the love of God!* You don't have the love brethren. You have a little group over here; a little

group over there; a little group over here; a little group over there. That's why it's combined together.

Verse 11—this is where we begin the new section here: “For this is the [commanded] message that you heard from *the* beginning, that **we should love one another**”—present tense. You are *loving*! Everything that God wants you to be doing, is present tense, *doing*. Why?

Not future, ‘I’m going to love him tomorrow’—which you need to. Not past: ‘I have loved.’ Why? *Because the only thing that counts is what you are doing!* What you’ve done in the past may or may not have been right; may or may not have been good, but that’s in the past. What does God say even of the wicked people? *If they will turn from their sins and turn to Me, all they’ve done will not be mentioned!* So, it’s in the present tense. That’s why it’s so profound, and all these things are in present tense, *that we should be loving one another*.

2-John is a very short epistle; as a matter of fact it’s only one page long. I think there are some pretty coded things that are being written, because John knew what was happening. By this time do you think that John knew what was happening? *Yes!*

2-John 1: “The elder to *the* **chosen lady** and her children...” Who is the ‘chosen lady’? *I think this is a coded message to the whole Church!* Showing what the whole Church should be doing.

“...and her children, whom I love <sup>1</sup>**in Truth**...” (v 1). What you may do for a separate, individual study, as you go through: I want you to study <sup>1</sup>**love** and <sup>2</sup>**Truth**. We’re going to do a little bit of it today, but there’s so much of it. *Love and Truth* go hand-in-hand, always go hand-in-hand. That’s why we have love and hate, Truth and error all the way through here.

“...and not I alone, but also all those who have known the <sup>3</sup>**Truth**” (v 1)—with a reference back to the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel.

Notice how he uses this, v 2: “For *the* sake of the <sup>4</sup>**Truth** that is dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever: Grace, mercy, *and* peace shall be with us from God *the* Father, and from *the* Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, <sup>5</sup>**in Truth and love**” (vs 2-3).

Since God does not do anything in vain, and since in the Bible there are no vain repetitions... I remember when I was first coming into the Church and I heard the instructions on praying: ‘when you pray you should not be as the heathen who use vain repetitions’ over and over and over again. And then I read Psa. 132, where you have about 40 verses: ‘His

*mercy endures forever.*’ Gives a statement and then it says: ‘His mercy endures forever.’ I thought that sounded like a vain repetition to me. But it’s not! So, likewise here.

The number of times we see *love* and we see *Truth*, John is telling us something **very profound**. That, when in the Church, you are struggling to hold on to the true doctrines of God and the true love of God you have to have **Truth** and you have to have **love** together. *They always go together!*

Verse 4: “I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking <sup>5</sup>**in Truth**... [the *Truth* is *the way of the Lord*—walking in it] ...exactly as we received commandment from the Father. And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you ...” (vs 4-5).

Let’s think of this in terms of prophecy to the Church of God down through time. When they’re coming down through time, how many times have they come across ‘new truth’ *that was not* ‘new truth’? Which left the love of God? Which left the Truth of God? *Many, many times!* So, this is part of the message.

“...but that which we have *observed* from *the* beginning, that <sup>3</sup>**we love one another**” (v 5). There it is again. That is amazing!

Verse 6. “And this is <sup>4</sup>**the love of God**...” You want to sum it up in ‘the love.’ What is ‘the love’ that God wants us to do? *Love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and being!*

“...that we walk according to His commandments....” (v 6). If you connect:

- walking in Truth
- walking according to His
- walking in love

what do we have? *We have them all together.* They’re all part of **one thing** we need to do.

“...This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it, because... [now here’s the reason why he emphasized all that down there]: ...many deceivers... [now you know why he emphasized *Truth*, why he emphasized *love* all the way] ...have entered into the world; those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is *the spirit* of the deceiver and the antichrist” (vs 6-7).

Quite a message there in that first part of 2 John. Do we find ourselves in the same situation today? *Yes, exactly the same situation today!*

Let’s go to the Gospel of John—where we

find this commandment, which is the new commandment. But after it was given it was no longer new, though it wasn't the old commandment. We've seen this misconstrued so many times, too, that it's unreal. Then we will see *how* this is to be done. Jesus gave this commandment, and of course, it was on the Passover night.

John 13:34: "A new commandment 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. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another" (vs 34-35).

Can a church get on a program to sort of 'play love' to impress other people in the world, yet, lose the Truth? *Yes!* We've seen that done. This is not the final commandment, but this is a *special* commandment within all the rest of them. Now here's how we are to apply it.

Philip. 2 is really very profound, and I tell you, this is something that I'm learning more and more, the more I study the Bible, the more I study the Word of God, the more profound I really see how these things truly, truly are. Philip. 2:1 tells us *how*.

- How are we to love each other as Christ has loved us?
- Where does this begin?
- Do you just do it because it's something that you do?
- How does it come about?

Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any **fellowship of the Spirit...**"

Remember how Gen. 2 discussed the Sabbath as being required of God for all mankind? That was a special Sabbath. It had to be, because first of all, God created the time. He blessed it, He sanctified it, and He fellowshiped with Adam and Eve. What is the Sabbath called? *It is called the rest of God!* Combine this all together with 1-John.

Hebrews 4:1: "Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into **His rest**"—*the rest of God*, which the Sabbath is a picture of. He wants us to enter into **His rest**. That goes clear back to the very first Sabbath, where the One Who became Jesus Christ, the Lord God of the Old Testament, on that *rest* day, fellowshiped directly, face-to-face with Adam and Eve. That is **the rest** that God says we are to enter into spiritually when the Kingdom of God comes. So, when we are keeping the Sabbath Day, not only are we remembering the creation, we need to look forward to entering into **that rest** with God. Which today, we

can have with the fellowship of the Spirit, where we find in 1-John 1, where it says: '...and truly our fellowship is with the Father and the Son.'

Combine that with Philippians 2:1: "...**any fellowship of the Spirit...**" Maybe this will help us keep the Sabbath better, as it were, because we do it in a more spiritual way by fellowshiping with Christ. But this is how we are to love one another:

"...if any *deep* inner affections and compassions" (v 1)—your feelings from your innermost part of your being. That's the way we need to feel for each other. We do need that on the Sabbath. We need it every day. What we're leading up to brethren is this: That we can understand that when we come to God to pray—which we need to—that you're going to desire to pray, you're going to desire to have this fellowship with God, you're going to desire to have the love one to another, because of the fellowship of the Spirit and because of the mind of Christ in you. Which does not do away with any of the commandments of God by the slightest stretch of anybody's imagination, but makes it far more meaningful.

Verse 2: "Fulfill my joy that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself" (vs 2-3).

That's a big-ticket item! Not like as I read in the book of Romans where these profess themselves to be the wise ones. 'And we're better than you.' That's the whole philosophy of theology. 'Why you're nothing but a bunch of dumb sheep out there, we're the smart ones.' No, we're to grow to have the mind of Christ. That's the whole purpose of why we study. That's the whole purpose of why we go diligently through the verses in the Bible, so we can grow to have this. Do you not want to grow to have the mind of Christ? *Yes!* Well, it doesn't come automatically.

Verse 3: "*Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus" (vs 3-5).

We can have the mind of Christ. He says, 'let it be in you,' which means it's a possibility. Because once we are begotten of the Spirit of God, Christ is in us: *Christ in you, the Hope of glory.* (Col. 1:27).

Here's what God did, v 6: "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 6-7)—divested Himself of His glory, His power, His Divinity, His name—and came to die!

Imagine that! God volunteering to die! God, Who cannot die, did the impossible by volunteering to die. That's why He had to become a human being. None of us have even come close to that kind of, of service to God at all, in any way.

"...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant... [slave] ...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). That's something!

As we go down through time, we'll come back to this again and we will have more that we can understand about it, especially when we get around the Passover time. I'll have to give part of that credit to, to Roger Rusk, who wrote the book *The Other End of the World*. He made a comment concerning the cup that Jesus said, 'if You be willing, let this cup pass from Me.' His comment on what that cup was **really profound!**

I have been thinking on that and praying on it, and I think he's pretty much right. So, when you're studying that, if Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, what was the cup that He had to drink of? *You think on that!*

So, "...He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (v 8). What is this to do for us? *It is to inspire us!*

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. For it is God Who works in you..." (vs 12-13).

Notice the comparison, the same words of Satan, inner-working in the children of disobedience. Now, we have the same words where it is the Father inner-working within you. "...both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure" (v 13).

Now we're going to talk about how our relationship improves with God if we do the things that are pleasing to Him. That improves the relationship with God tremendously.

As you go through and you study through 1-John 3 :

- you have righteousness/you have evil
- you have sin/you have good
- you have love/you have hate

1-John 3:11: "...we should love one another; not as Cain, *who* was of the wicked *one*..." (vs 11-12). Note: Eph. 2:2-3. Did Satan obviously inspire Cain? *Yes!* The 'wicked one.'

"...and murdered his own brother. And what was the reason that he murdered him? Because his own works were wicked, but his brother's works were righteous" (v 12).

What did Cain think of his own works? *I'm sure he thought they were righteous! I'm sure he thought that they were works that God ought to accept!* We're talking about the difference between 'works were wicked and the works of his brother were righteous.' There are works we are to do.

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship... [and, as we have noted, salvation is *creation*] ...being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [very important] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

- Who determines what a good work is? *God does, yes! Obviously!*
- Do we do things that we think are good, but are not good? *Yes!*  
*especially if it gets you an advantage*
- Based upon lust?

*Yes, it's good, according to human nature!*

Genesis 4:3: "It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground."

Does God command anywhere that we are to bring the fruit of the ground unto God? *Yes, He does!* We're to bring the 'firstfruits' and also the fruit of the ground from a tree. The first four years of a new sapling tree that you plant, you don't eat any of the fruit, you let it all fall to the ground, the fifth year it belongs to God and then from then on you have the rest, but you give the firstfruits to God. Everyone of the grain harvest, you have the first fruits that to go God. So, if Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, what had to be something that was not correct? *It was not according to God's command,* because God does command of the fruit of the ground; yes, He does.

Now, let's come here to v 4: "And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock..." This shows that the laws of sacrifice and offerings were there: 'the firstlings of his flock.'

"...and of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering" (v 4). Why? *Because it was correct and it was righteous!* Who defines 'righteousness'? *God defines righteousness!* Abel was walking in the good works, which God

had created and ordained for them to walk in, with that sacrifice, which then pointed to Christ.

Verse 5: “But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering....” Now, think of this in relationship to other people who are out here doing good works; and are saying, ‘This is what God requires’; *but God hasn’t required it of them*. And they’re coming to God and saying, ‘This is a good work, God.’ Had not respect. What happens when you tell people? Let’s just use Christmas: all your good works at Christmas **are not of God**. You may have attached His name to it. You may assert family reunions and family love and getting together and put that in there to make it right, to justify it. What happens? *They get mad!*

Verse 6: “And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well...’” (vs 6-7). That is proper and right according to what? *The commandments of God, obviously.*

“...shall you not be accepted?... [Was it not something that Cain could have changed? *Yes!*] ... But if you do not do well...” (v 7). That is according to the commandments of God, because what is sin? *Sin is the transgression of the law or sin is lawlessness!* So, what was Cain doing here? *He was bringing something not according to the commandments of God!*

So, “...**sin lies at the door**...” (v 7). What did God do? *God gave Cain a choice!* God explained it to him. Yes, He did, very clearly. Just like the Word of God explains to us what is right and what is wrong.

“...Its desire *is* for you...” (v 7). In other words: sin is going to have its desire upon you if you don’t get a hold of it and rule over it. And how do you rule over sin? *By using the commandments of God so you don’t sin!* Then, Cain didn’t like that a bit. What did he do? *‘I know what I’m going to do. I’m going to get rid of this guy that makes me look bad in the eyes of God—my brother!’* So, he kills him. Sound like something that happens today? *Yes, indeed!* This that’s why God uses this example.

So, Cain murdered Abel, 1-John 3:12: “Not as Cain, *who* was of the wicked *one*, and murdered his own brother...” Have you ever been around people who are duopolistic? Perfidious? Two-faced?

(go to the next track)

Have you ever had someone really close to you, like a close friend—someone who professed to be your *best* friend in the world—and he stabs you in the back? That’s why this is here. Because if you hate your brother in your heart, you’re a murderer already. That’s why it’s here.

“...And what was the reason that he murdered him? Because his own works were wicked, but his brother’s works were righteous. **My brethren, do not be amazed if the world hates you**” (vs 12-13).

Jesus warned us of it, and it’s going to hate us. When they **truly know**. Now, there’s a time with the Church, when we go public and lambaste everything, everything under the sun. And then when they hate us and chase us away, or come in an infiltrate and tear down, what does God do? *He scatters us and we disappear*. To do what? *To re-gather strength, to come out!* And there’s going to come a time again when we are going lambaste everybody under the sun again.

How God is going to do it, I don’t know. But, I know the day is coming. Just like with those who have been attending with us for a long time, where I said when we got down to—I think when there were different people who were sick and couldn’t come—there were three or five of us here, and I said, ‘You wait, there will be brethren that God is going to send who will come.’ They have, and you’re here, and there will be more. There’s going to be the day when God is going to open the door. And it’s going to be done in a way that’s different than some people are trying to force the way through now. If you go on television, you’re controlled, hands down. You won’t get on unless you are—*period!*—same way with the radio.

It seems to me this, brethren: maybe because of the severity of the times which lie ahead—whether how far or how near, we don’t know—but the time can be severe at any moment for any one of us under any given circumstances. Maybe that’s why we’re concentrating so much on the love of God, as we’re going through this. {note sermon series: *Love of God*}

John 15:17: “These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you” (vs 17-18). Notice how we have the same thing: love, Truth, and then from the world: hatred and violence. Follows right along.

Verse 19: “If you were of the world, the world would love its own...” Apply that to Billy Graham. Apply that to the pope. Are they of the world? *Yes!*

“...However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world...” (v 19). Please notice that Christ is the One who does the choosing with God the Father.

“...the world hates you for this. Remember

the word that I spoke to you: a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they kept My word, they will keep your word also” (vs 19-20). Why? *Because the Spirit of Truth, with God the Father and Jesus Christ, will call them and they will keep it!* That’s what we are trying to do here.

Verse 21: “But they will do all these things to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin...” (vs 21-22). That means they would have no excuse for their sins.

“...but now they have nothing to cover their sin. The one who hates Me hates My Father also” (vs 22-23). This ties right back with the second chapter of the Epistle of 1-John.

Verse 24: “If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done, they would not have had sin...” It makes you wonder. They hated Christ so much that outside of the Bible, the New Testament, there is no written history of what went on that they can find. That’s how much they hated Him.

Yet, what did Paul say when he was talking to Festus? He says, ‘Oh king, **you** as the king **know** that this was not done in a corner.’ John wrote and said that ‘if everything were written in a book that Jesus did there would not be the books to contain all that was done.’ What Christ really did was just absolutely turn that whole society absolutely upside down, and their hatred and their vehemence against Him was so rabid that they didn’t want to preserve one shred of secular history that Christ existed as a person. That’s why we’ve got the New Testament. That’s why it’s so profound.

Verse 25: “But this has happened so that the saying might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’ But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me” (vs 25-26).

John 16:1: “I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended. They shall cast you out of the synagogues... [and recall what Paul was doing, before he was called] ...furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you will think that he is rendering service to God. And they shall do these things to you because they do not know the Father, nor Me” (vs 1-3).

When it talks about the world hating us, isn’t it profound that whenever it talks about it, we have it preceded by love and followed by love so

that we know that in those circumstances God still loves us, Christ loves us and that’s why we need to love each other.

1-John 3:14: “We **know**... [something you have constantly be knowing] ...that we have passed from death into life...” That’s pretty profound. Definite article is there in the Greek. If you are dead in your sins and your trespasses, wherein you are held—that is *the death*—you have been transformed into *the life*, which is Christ.

“...because we love the brethren. The one who does not love *his* brother is dwelling in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer... [all of this is in the present tense] ...and you **know** that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him” (vs 14-15). This must have been a pretty profound thing even within the Church at that time.

- What is this telling us? *He’s emphasizing loving one another, and hating!*
- What was the Church experiencing? *Hatred within the Church!*
- Have you experienced that? *Yes!*

When John was writing this, you are dealing with a congregational situation that there was hatred within the Church and people didn’t know whom to trust.

1-John 2:8: “Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining. Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in **the darkness** until now” (vs 8-9).

Go through and study *hatred* and *love* in 1-John and you’re going to see that must have been a **profound** problem. Now, as someone who is an apostle and trying to correct the problem, how do you do it? *You don’t!* The problem was so far out of hand that what John had to do was say, ‘This is the way it is, folks! You’re going to have to choose:

- Do you want God the Father and Christ?
- or**
- Do you want the wicked one?
  - Are you going to walk in God’s way and love Him?
- or**
- Are you going to walk in darkness?”

This first Epistle of John is **profound!** And it’s so simple; it’s only five little chapters. You read and it sounds so simple, and it’s easy to read. There are not complicated words in it. *But the message is really deep!*

Walking “...in the darkness until now. The

one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him” (vs 9-10). This is the perfect state of fellowshiping with the brethren that we want to come to.

Verse 11: “But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

Then he goes on, explaining it further—the last sentence there: 1-John 3:14 “...The one who does not love *his* brother is dwelling in [the] death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling with him” (vs 14-15).

What he’s saying is this: if you have this attitude of hatred toward the brethren, you are *the same as Cain!* That’s what he’s saying.

Remember, the book of Jude was the of the General Epistles.

Jude 10: “As for these, whatever things they do not understand, 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). There is *the way of Cain!* This is what John is also talking about. What is *the way of Cain?*

- anger
- hatred
- murder
- accusing God
- going around establishing his own righteousness and anger because God does not accept his righteousness

We could turn that around and say, ‘I wonder what’s going to happen with some of these Sunday-keepers.’ We need to get around to labeling it very clearly, brethren, that Sunday-keeping it their own righteousness by which they are trying to compel God to give them salvation. It’s going to have to be stated that way sooner or later, and publicly, sooner or later. But when it does, you better all have a little place for me to come.

“...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam’s delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah” (v 11).

Take the *three worst people* in the Bible and put them together in one verse. That’s pretty profound! Now, the doctrine of Balaam is being foisted upon us today. What you do under the guise of goodness is you get people to sin. Then when they sin—because God must judge—you come under the condemnation of God because you sin. Maybe that’s

why the hand of God has been held back. Because when *the way of Cain, the way of Balaam* and the *way of Korah* all come together, believe me, in this country all hell is going to break loose. When it does, if we don’t have the love of God, we’re going to be standing there with an empty vessel.

We’re going to compare this with some other verses that are chapter three and verse sixteen, also. It doesn’t work in every book of the Bible because I’ve gone through every book of the Bible and it doesn’t fit every book of the Bible—it fits *some* books of the Bible.

1-John 3:16: “By this *very act* we have known the love of *God* because He laid down His life for us: and we... [are obligating] ...ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.” All right, that tells us a whole lot, too.

Let’s first of all compare that with John 3:16, which is the first comparison that you’re going to go to because that is written by John. But, we’re going to see that there are some other very interesting things in chapter three and verse sixteen, as we’re going through, and how some of them tie directly to the same topic. We know that men divided the verses, but maybe somehow there was some inspiration in it, because some of these things fit together so nicely.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...” I don’t think we really comprehend that yet, brethren. How much it is that God did in loving the world and mankind.

“...so that everyone...” (v 16). That angers some people, because that means anybody—that means anybody.

“...who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (vs 16-17). We’re condemned because of sin. ***But God lifts that condemnation!***

Now, let’s look at another one. We’ll just sort of tie these together and let the Scriptures tell the story. Sometimes that’s very interesting.

Matthew 3:16: “And after He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him.” Having to do with salvation. We’re going to see that many of these have to do with a facet of salvation for us that either Christ was doing, or that He did for us.

There’s nothing in Mark 3:16. I already checked it out, so we can bypass Mark. Luke 3:16 is

pretty much in the same account, but just a little bit differently.

Luke 3:16: “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.’” Again, having to do with *repentance, baptism and salvation!*

I could fudge because in a couple of places I could say let’s target this study within a two-verse margin—two verses before or after—but I didn’t, I wanted to keep exactly the 3:16.

1 Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you understand that you are God’s temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?” Again, having to do with Christ, with salvation, with the Spirit of God.

Galatians 3:16: “Now, to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, ‘and to *your* seeds,’ as of many; but as of one, ‘and to your Seed,’ which is Christ.” Again, having to do with Christ and salvation.

Ephesians 3:16: “That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man... [conversion, being strengthened, receiving God’s Spirit] ...That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (vs 16-17)—and so forth. But, I said I wouldn’t fudge, so I won’t.

2-Thessalonians 3:16: “Now, may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.” Again, having to do with your status and condition before God.

1-Timothy 3:16—which is really one of the profound ones: “And undeniably, great is the mystery of Godliness... [‘God so loved the world, gave His only begotten Son’] ...God was manifested in *the* flesh, was justified in *the* Spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory.”

There’s a tremendous summary of the whole Gospel! That is a summary, which covers the whole Bible!

I think 2-Tim. 3:16 is quite fitting when you put all of this together, this makes an interesting story. So, if you would like to, sometimes it’s good to do this: to take and print them all out one after the other, so that then you can see it in a direct column.

2-Timothy 3:16—it ends this way: “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). I couldn’t find any others that matched up with it. But those are sufficient to tell a very interesting story.

1-John 3:16: “By this *very act* we have known the love *of God...*” When we put it all together and we really understand the love of God and what God has done; how the Father has loved the world and how Christ has loved us.

“...because He laid down His life for us...” (v 16). He gave up everything, brethren. He gave up ***literally everything!*** And risked it, because Christ could have sinned, when you know the Truth—but He didn’t. So because of that:

“...we... [are obligating] ...ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren” (v 16).

Just one caveat that I want to mention here. It is absolutely true that we need to do what it says, without a doubt. But it is also true, one word of caution: *Do not let anyone, for their own purposes, leverage that to themselves to accomplish their own ends and means so that they take advantage of you!* That’s why Jesus said of the poor, when Judas said, ‘Well, we could have given this to the poor’; He said, ‘You always have the poor with you. But Me you won’t have with you always.’

So, we need to do that. And we are. We have been doing that here for each other and we’ve been doing that for all the brethren wherever they are; the very things that we are doing is that. One of the best ways that you can really lay your life down for the brethren is that ***you always remain true to God, have the love of God, serve God and be true to His Word!*** That’s the greatest service that you can do to help the brethren, besides just going out and doing physical things as this refers to here in verse seventeen. Because you can give them everything that they need; ***if you don’t have the love of God it will not do what God wants!***

Verse 17: “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him?” *We all have to make a judgment on that concerning ourselves.*

We could tie it around the other way, too, and say, ‘which one of us having the Word of God, as we know it, and we see our brethren over here languishing and suffering and being taken advantage of and throwing the Truth away, should we not reach out to them also?’ *Yes!* That’s how the Christian Biblical Church of God has grown. That’s why we send the Care Packages. When they get the Care Packages and they begin to listen, then they say, ‘Oh boy, I know someone, I know someone...’ So, we

are, we are doing what this says in a spiritual way. And when we have need, we will, for those who have need in a physical sense, too, without a doubt.

This could also be on an individual basis. I'll just have to say that there are times when you see them, you drive up, you're going to go into a mall, you're going to come to a stop sign and there's someone there you know is just 'shucking' you. Like if you go to San Francisco and you go up there and hear people pandering. Then you look down at their shoes and they're all brand new. You know that this is someone who's working in the daytime and pandering at night.

But there are occasions when you may need someone who's truly in need. In those occasions we, we can reach out and help them, because our neighbor is anyone who is near to us that we can help. There have been times when I've gone up and I've been touched to give people, just standing there out of work, need food, will work, do anything. And you look at them and you know that they're really not 'shucking' you. If you can help them, help them. That's perfectly fine, and we should.

So much so with the brethren, too. Because the last thing you want to do is misapply that verse where Jesus said, 'you always have the poor with you' and say, 'well, you know, don't give them anything.' What did Jesus do? He gave them food in abundance beyond when He fed the four thousand and the five thousand, and did the healing. We are to be what we are and we are to act the way we say that we want to be.

Verse 18: "My little children, we should not love in word... [just by mouthing it or that is in message—'word' can mean message] ...nor with *our* tongues... [that is by the words that you say] ...rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth. And in this *way* we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him" (vs 18-19).

I have learned over the years that if you pray because you have to pray, your prayers are really not what they ought to be. We have been trained in the past, start out pray by the clock, but, we're going to find out that if you really love God, and God's Spirit is in you, and you desire what God wants you to have and you are truly coming to the attitude that is exemplified here as we're studying in the Epistles of John, that *you're going to want to pray*. That your desire in prayer is going to be wholehearted and the most important thing in praying is that you love God **and believe!**

So we'll cover that and show how it ties in here in doing the things that please God.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 2) 1-John 3:9-11
- 3) 2-John 1-7
- 4) John 13:34-35
- 5) Philippians 2:1
- 6) Hebrews 4:1
- 7) Philippians 2:1-8, 12-13
- 8) 1-John 3:11-12
- 9) Ephesians 2:10
- 10) Genesis 4:3-7
- 11) 1-John 3:12-13
- 12) John 15:17-26
- 13) John 16:1-3
- 14) 1-John 3:14-15
- 15) 1-John 2:8-11
- 16) 1-John 3:14-15
- 17) Jude 10-11
- 18) 1-John 3:16
- 19) John 3:16-17
- 20) Matthew 3:16
- 21) Luke 3:16
- 22) 1-Corinthians 3:16
- 23) Galatians 3:16
- 24) Ephesians 3:16
- 25) 2-Thessalonians 3:16
- 26) 1-Timothy 3:16
- 27) 2-Timothy 3:16-17
- 28) 1-John 3:16-19

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- Psalm 132
- Colossians 1:27
- Ephesians 2:2-3

#### Also referenced:

Book: *The Other End of the World* by Roger Rusk  
Sermon Series: *Love of God*

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## Epistle of First John X

### Effective Prayer

Fred R. Coulter

I just want to review because the Epistles of John were written in a time

- when the Church was in upheaval
- when the Church was in turmoil
- when the Church had those who came into the Church and were changing the doctrines and turning the people away from God

The book of Jude tells us—and so does 2-Peter—that they have come in ‘privily’ (secretly). Almost like this movie with Charles Bronson, where the Russians are just absolutely beside themselves because they have this one renegade KGB official who had programmed all these American spies to where years later they would get a phone call; and the phone call would be something like: ‘the meadows are green,’ you know, and it’s ‘beautiful and wonderful.’ It triggered in their mind to go ahead and get their stored-away bombs and go out and blow up their pre-determined mission that they were to blow up, usually American bases.

But I think that there are people that come into the Churches of God who are distinctly plants. Who are there for the moment and the time to do what they were sent there for. Because it’s happened not only in Worldwide, but it’s happened in Church of God Seventh-Day and the Seventh-Day Adventist Churches. Just to give you an example of what some of them do: Have you ever tried to go the public library and check out the book *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop. What happens in the library, it’s perpetually checked out until it’s lost. Because there are people who are sent to take it away and get it out.

Now, there’s a book called *Four Thousand Years of the History of Christmas*, which is listed in Andrew’s University Library—where Carl is doing a lot of his research right now, getting his research material—and it’s gone. For the first time in years, that Seventh Day Adventist college—which is the home of Samuele Bacchiocchi if you have his book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*—they are celebrating Christmas in a way that has never been celebrated in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. They had the Christmas carols playing and Christmas trees and everything. So, Carl went up to the, to the librarian as he was checking out and said, ‘My, what’s all of this going on with Christmas? I can’t find the book, *Four Thousand Years of the History of Christmas*. You know it’s pagan don’t you?’ She said, ‘Yes, I

know, but all of this is just, is just being pushed upon us now.’ So, it’s happening worldwide in all ‘Christian’ churches—whether Sabbath-keepers or Sunday-keepers—to meld them together. The secret, undercover ecumenical movement waiting for the moment.

Now, the pope—man of the year—I’ve got his little book, been reading it. It’s amazing, but it’s going to come! That’s why the Epistles of John are so important for us; because of several profound things: First of all, let’s go to where it says, ‘God’s way’—*The Word Studies from the Greek (Seven General Epistles)*, pg. 92-93). And so, I’ve listed out the ten things, which point out God’s way *clearly, profoundly, contrasting*. They are simple, but yet, they are deep when you get in and study them.

- Light
- Truth
- love
- repentance, confession of sins
- cleansed and forgiven through Jesus Christ our Advocate
- Spirit of God—begettal from the Father
- obedience—commandment-keeping
- true knowledge
- living and abiding in God’s way
- Jesus Christ spiritually dwelling in each Christian
- the end of that then is eternal life

Then he contrasts it with the devil’s way, which is. Darkness, deception or error. What is the key Scripture we’ve gone back to time and time again? ***There is no lie from the Truth!***

This, I think, is going to have to be the basic way that we are going to have to approach things for new people. New people are interested in ***Truth!*** There’s been enough around that they can all see the phony-baloney stuff of hierarchy, religion, politics and all of this. If God is going to call them, how is God going to call them? *Through His Truth!* So the way to approach a lot of this is this way: ***There is no lie of the Truth.***

- How can the Truth of God be supported by the lie of Christmas?
- How can the Truth of God be supported by the lie of Easter?
- What are those?
- *Those are merchandising, which is the greatest sin of Satan the devil!*

A lot of people think that the sin of Satan the devil was his original rebellion. But his original rebellion was merchandising. Are they not merchandised with Christmas and Easter? *Oh my, yes!* Then you take all of these other things.

- Why does the God of *light, love and truth* need a lie to support Him?
- *He does not need it!*

So, that's why John wrote this. Here's *the way of the spirit of deception*, the children of the devil in darkness:

- darkness
- deception and lies
- loving the world
- hating God and the brethren
- the spirit of the devil, which is his influence and the counterfeit begettal
- the denial of the sinful nature and sinful actions: 'why, we're all good wonderful people'
- disobedience, commandment-breaking, lawlessness and transgression
- false knowledge

Isn't it interesting how that a true translation of eating of the tree: 'You shall know good and evil.' But it really should be translated: 'You shall be **knowers** of good and evil.' There's a difference, because a 'knower' is someone who establishes the standard of good and evil, which then really tells us that going all the way back to the Garden of Eden, the religion that Satan the devil preached was *Gnostic!* A Gnostic is a *knower!*

What do all these religions do? *They establish their own religion while they're rejecting God's*—every single one of them. What are all these secret societies based upon? *Inner knowledge! Knowers!* Goes right back to the beginning—that's incredible! And that's Satan's way, *false knowledge*.

- living and abiding in the devil and deception, the devil spiritually motivating his children, and the end of that is *spiritual death!*

We ended up in part nine by covering 1-John 3:16, and we looked at many of the verses in the New Testament where we have chapter three and verse sixteen and it turned out to be quite profound. Now, not all 3:16s match up, but there were enough of them. Let's just review:

1-John 3:16: "By this *very act* we have known **the** love of God... [in sending His Son Christ] ...because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the

brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him?" (vs 16-17).

All the way through it is a present tense verb or it is a present tense participle indicating *ongoing action*, or something that is *continuously taking place*. "...how can the love of God be dwelling in him?"

Now, let's look at a couple of Scriptures. James says the same thing. James put it in another way, and it's quite interesting the way that he does this; notice what he says concerning the Law. And I think it's profound that it is, it is the same way in the Epistles of John. Many people look to the 'Royal Law.' What is the 'golden rule' in business? *He who has the gold sets the rules!* That's **not** the 'golden rule' of God.

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).

Which commandment does that encompass? *Many! Many!* You go back and read in the book of Deuteronomy and Exodus how many laws pertain to your neighbor, his property, his field, his animals, his wife, his children—and all of those are encompassed in this Law. But, if you have 'respect of persons' you're sinning. That takes it above and beyond then—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!*

Verse 10: "For *if* anyone keeps the whole Law, but sins in one *aspect*, he becomes guilty of all.... [Sunday-keepers need to think about that] ...For He Who 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" (vs 10-11). You know what someone is going to say: 'See, he didn't say the Sabbath—did he?'

- Does he have to? *No!*
- Why?
- Who is James? *The brother of the Lord*—correct?
- What was he? *He was the apostle at Jerusalem!*
- Do you think when he was alive they had Sunday-keeping in Jerusalem?
- Was Sunday/Sabbath-keeping a controversy then? *No way!*

That's why this is mentioned. If it were a problem back then he surely would have mentioned it—wouldn't he? *Yes, indeed!*



Verse 12: “In this manner speak and in this manner behave: as those who are about to be judged by *the* law of freedom. For the one who has dealt without mercy *will be* judged without mercy....” (vs 12-13). That’s what happens when you have respect of persons and are judging.

“...But mercy triumphs over judgment. 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? Now then, if there be a brother or 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? In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself” (vs 13-17).

What happens if you say you have faith but no works? Say, ‘Oh, I love the Law.’ That ought to be. Then what are you? *You’re a hearer of the Law, not a doer!* But what did Paul say? Paul said, ‘The hearers of the Law are not just before God, but the *doers* of the Law shall be justified.’ All the way through the New Testament it all fits together in one big whole.

Sometimes you’re going to do these things that you won’t even, you won’t even realize that you’re doing it. This has to do with the Church as well as some other needy:

Matthew 25:31: “Now, when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon *the* throne of His glory; and He shall gather before Him all the nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at *His* left. 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; 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” (vs 31-36).

Verse 37: “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 37-40). Then you know the opposite of it.

That follows right through. The reason that we’re going through these this way is so that we see the consistency that is in all the Bible. If you want another study to do beyond this, go back into the Old Testament and look at the things that God provided for the poor. First of all, He said: ‘Don’t cut out the corners of your field, but leave the gleanings for the needy. You shall not deprive them.’ He also even said, ‘You shall not even muzzle the ox that’s treading out the corn.’ Now, how would you like to be an ox treading out the corn and you’re hungry as can be and you smell all of this that you’re grinding up and you can’t even stick your head down there and, you know, grab a little bit of it and eat.

I know there are times when the horses want all this green grass just on the other side of the fence. I’ve always notice that when you go up there and pluck out some that green grass and hold it up, boy, that’s what they want. They really like that.

John shows something that’s very, very profound, very important. It has a lot to do

- with our relationship with God
- with answered prayer
- with our relationship one with another

1-John 3:18: “My little children, we should not love in word... [*message*; also *that which you write out*] ...nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth.”

Now, ‘work’ can be *in action, in deed* in the things that you do, and ‘in Truth.’ There is *Truth* again, coming up over and over again in the things that are required for our behavior. We have all of those things that are required there. {note Matt. 5, 6 & 7; that’s how Christ said that we are to live God’s way.}

All the spirit of the Law, as we covered in the sermon on the *Two Righteousness*’—the imputed righteousness of Christ, Christ in you. What it’s supposed to do is to give us the right action

- of faith
- of love
- of belief
- obedience

—and all that these things that we’re studying stands for in relationship to Christ and what we are to do. It’s to be something that is in deed or an action or in work and in Truth.

What does this do for us? It does something profound. Now, there is a book called *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried and Goldin. In the first paragraph of that book: The whole reason for the laws of Judaism is to make you have a guilty

conscience before God. That is the total opposite of what God wants us to have. Here's what Christ's way is supposed to be doing for us:

Verse 19: "And in this *way* we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts... [in His presence] ...before Him." God wants us to be confident. God wants us to be loving. We're to fear God, keep His commandments—that is true—but God does not want us to go around with a guilty conscience.

- God is offering us eternal life.
- He's offering us the Kingdom.
- He's offering us the greatest and most profound promises that can possibly be given.
- Plus He's giving us the ways and the means to get there—is He not? *Yes!*

He wants us to have our hearts reassured in His presence. Now that is not going to make us cocky. That is not going to make us self-confident; because *we know that there's nothing we haven't received*—it all comes from God, 'and be assuring our hearts in His presence.' He also accounts for the problems of sin. All the way through 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> John!

Verse 20: "That if our hearts condemn us..." What happens when you sin and you know you've sinned? You've done something you know that you don't want to do? As we've read many times in Rom. 7: You didn't want to do it, but you did it. Now you feel guilty because you have done it. The first thing you want to do is wait until you're right with God before you go pray, which is the last thing. You want to bring every thought into captivity to Christ, which means: *God knows it.*

When you sin, not *if*. Do we know it? *Well, most of the time!* Sometimes we try and avoid it. Sometimes we try and trick ourselves out of it. 'Well, it wasn't that bad.' What's the first thing that happens when you want to trick yourself out of it and make yourself feel not so bad?

- What's the first thing you always, always, always do? *You rationalize it!*
- How do you rationalize it? *Ok, it wasn't that bad!*
- Why wasn't it that bad? *Because someone else did worse than me!*
- Now what else also happens?

Today, the psychologists are right there to say: 'Society made you do it. You're not responsible for that. It's not your fault.' Notice the famous trials we've had: the Menendez brothers brutally shot and killed, with shotguns, their mother and father. And

they ran out of ammunition, went out to the car and got more ammunition, reloaded it and came in and killed them. Finally they were arrested and brought to court and they all got up there and cried and boo-hoed and said, 'Well, they made us do it.' Hung jury. Couldn't convict them, because after all, it wasn't their fault.

So you see, *when you sin*, your heart condemns you. Now what do you do? Well, the longer you run around with this guilty conscience, the worse off you're going to be. Here's what John shows is the solution.

Verse 20: "That if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things." What do we do then? *We go to 1-John, the first chapter!* Here's what we do.

I know people say, 'I know I shouldn't have done this.' God knows that, too. Other people know that, too. 'I'm so bad God can't forgive me.' Oh really? What have you done? We won't list our sins but I'm just going through a rationalization. *Have hope!*

Go back and read 2-Chron. 33. King Manasseh—the worst king, the most sinful king—for *55 years* he did it. Got involved in demonism, building idols right in God's temple. God was so angry He sent him off in captivity. He humbled himself and prayed to God and repented, and God heard his prayer and set him back on his throne as a vassal king under the Babylonians. Have you sinned for 55 years as bad a Manasseh? *No!* Therefore, don't ever say that God doesn't understand. That's the point. So, if you have a heart that's condemning you, don't say that God doesn't understand, *He does!*

Here's what to do, 1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the Light... [is what we are doing] ...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." God knows that we're going to sin with the 'law of sin and death' in us, so He has provided this way and this means so we can have the condemnation removed and reassure our hearts before God. This becomes:

- most important in prayer
- most important in faith
- most important in understanding how we get through to God

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. **If we are confessing our own sins...** [present tense] ...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"

(vs 8-9). So, if your heart condemns you because of sin, that's what to do. That's exactly what to do. **Go to God and repent!**

Now there's something else concerning God, which is important. They were having a discussion concerning physical circumcision vs spiritual circumcision (Acts 15:8); forgiveness of sin; right standing with God; and, the term there where it says 'and God knows the heart.' It's interesting in the Greek—it's much better. It is the **heart-knowing** God, because that's what God is looking to. God is greater than our hearts and knows everything.

1 John 3:21 is where prayer really begins to take hold. Have you ever wondered, some of those promises concerning prayer? We'll look at some of them. They are profound! They are carte blanche, they are blanks to be filled in, all according to the will of God. Remember, when you have any prayer that you pray, first thing is that you honor God the Father. Then the next thing is 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' And that's what we want with our lives. God's will for our lives. Our desire, in prayer may not necessarily be God's will, but if we are truly loving God and seeking His way, and we are asking God to help us to have His will become our will, then there are some profound promises concerning prayer.

1-John 3:21: "Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God." That's a tremendous feeling. When you go pray with a conscience that is not condemned, with a conscience that is assured and have *confidence toward God*. That's a whole other level of communicating with God—if I could put it that way.

Verse 22: "And **whatever** we may ask we receive from Him... [that's pretty broad] ...because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight." Notice all of the conditions involved.

1. You have to have your heart assure you by getting rid of the condemnation through repentance and confession to get rid of the sin and the guilty conscience.
2. You reassure your heart before God and then you have confidence.

If your heart is not condemning you then that confidence goes to:

- 1) asking—whatever you may
- 2) we're going to receive
- 3) because we're keeping His commandments
- 4) we are practicing those things that are pleasing before Him, *in His presence*

Though you are not geographically in the presence of God, you are always *spiritually in the presence of God* **if** you have His Spirit! So, you are practicing those things, which are pleasing to Him.

Let's look at this and see how this all ties together with quite a few other Scriptures which we can put together here. This is going to help us understand, especially now, especially for those of you who have been Christians, having the Spirit of God, for a long time. This becomes especially important so that you can really have that confidence that God wants you to have. God is not going to bless you with some things of the world that you don't need. What is the will of God concerning that? What did Jesus say? *'If a man gain the whole world and lose his soul.'* So, you don't measure **spiritual** things in terms of physical things. You don't measure **spiritual** growth by physical things.

What if, what if your life has been one of a great deal of suffering and misery? And you are truly building the character of Christ? *It's the will of God!* Sometimes it is the will of God that you suffer things. When you suffer things are they unjust? What did Peter say? 'Well, if we suffer because of what we've done, then you haven't done anything great. But, if you suffer as a Christian, then that's commendable before God.' Notice this little Church:

- anytime you think you're down and out
- anytime you think you've had it bad
- anytime you get depressed and feeling sorry for yourself
- anytime your heart is condemning you and wondering, well where is God, now is He going to answer your prayers and what is God doing for you, to you and in you

Come to:

Revelation 2:8[transcriber's correction]: "And to the angel of the Church of *the* Smyrneans write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead but is alive. 'I know your works and **tribulation and poverty** (but you are rich)...'" (vs 8-9)—a life of trouble and poorness—and nothing seems to work. But, if you have spiritual character, what does Jesus say?

"...and the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast *some* of you into prison... [is that going to happen to some of us? *Yes!* The day's going to come] ...that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days.... [here's something to really cheer you up]: **...Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life**" (vs 9-10).

In today's world that's not too cheerful. But when you're struggling and you're down and out, and those things are happening, that gives you

- strength
- power
- determination

I know this for sure: There is no way, *no way* that anyone is going to be faithful unto death unless they love God with all their heart, mind, soul and being; unless they believe what they believe to the very core of their being. Otherwise, the way out is going to be very simple. Because the alternative is going to be: 'Well, you don't need to suffer these things; you are doing this to yourself.' ***Just think on that!***

Now, this kind of ties together both of these things; Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful... [the Greek there is 'didumos'—*has power*] ...and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit..." So, they are separable. 'The soul that sins shall die.'

"...and of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of the heart" (v 12). You think about that when it says, 'and if your heart be condemning you,' go to God and get it straightened out. Let it assure you, because God knows.

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, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*" (vs 13-14). ***In spite of any circumstances around us, whatsoever—period!***

Verse 15: "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.... [How do we come to God?] ...Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 15-16). And that's what they were doing there in the Church in Pergamos.

Remember when Paul was thrown into jail? They put him in jail, and he was back there pounding his fists on the rocks and saying: 'God how dare you let this happen to me, don't you know I'm your apostle. Don't you know that I'm the greatest thing that's ever walked the face of the earth? You called me.' ***NO!***

They went back there with Silas, and they were sitting there with their hands and their feet in the stocks and what were they doing? *Singing hymns, praying to God!* What did God do? *Just sent an earthquake* and POW! Opened it up, all the doors came open and the jailer went out there and he said, 'Oh my, get the swords, they're all going to be gone.' Then he was going to commit suicide and kill himself, cause he thought, man, it's the worst thing that ever come. All the prisoners are going to be gone, and Paul said, 'Don't do it! Don't do it! We're all here. Keep it cool.' Then he came crawling up to him and, and said, 'Come on. Come on to my house and we'll clean you up.' And they were all converted.

(go to the next track)

Through those things, God can change a person's mind and heart. We are not praying to a God who has not experienced what we have—and worse. We're praying to God, Whose Son suffered worse than any human being ever created has suffered, ***so that He can forgive us.*** Now, we'll have more and talk about that as we get down toward the time of Passover.

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..." That's quite a profound verse! Did Jesus have to be saved from death? Why would He pray to be saved from death if He didn't have to be saved 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).

We can look back now because hindsight is always 20/20—and we can look back and see many of the things that we have gone through, that we can see the lessons and the reason why. I think one of the reasons for us is so that we would not have to be controlled by some corporation in telling us how to study and interpret the Bible, but just stick with the Bible. That's been the most profound and important thing for us to do. We had to suffer. We had to suffer at the hands of friends. Suffer at the hands of enemies. Not that we have wounds. We can't stand up and say, "Look at this one, I remember where I got this, you know, slash of the sword in the side." But we had daggers in our backs! And the worst thing of all, it all happened within the Church of God—the place of 'brotherly love'—right? ***Yes!*** Why did it happen? *Because of the very things that are going on as accounted here in the Epistles of John!* Christ went through that. He suffered those.

Verse 9: “And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him.” Very interesting, there is obedience required—is there not? *Yes!*

There’s something concerning prayer that’s very important; when you read some of these verses, they’re really quite astounding:

John 14:6 is one of the most profound verses in the entire Bible: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life...’”

- Very profound!
- Very specific!
- Very narrow!
  - He is not *a* way
  - He is not *a* truth
  - He is not *a* life
    - He is ‘*THE Way*’
    - *THE Truth*
    - *THE Life*’—*no other way*.

“...**no one** comes to the Father, **except through Me**” (v 6). That’s interesting there, **no one!** It means absolutely **no one!**

Verse 10: “Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I speak to you, I do not speak from My own self; but the Father Himself, Who dwells in Me, does... [present tense] ...the works.”

Even the One Who gave up being God to become a human being did not go out and do something Himself on His own—*the Father in Him!*

This is what’s dumbfounding to me, v 12: “Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to the Father.”

We know in the book of Acts we can see there were greater works that the apostles did, in some cases, that literally fulfilled this. But I would have to say, brethren, that in our lifetime, we have yet to see this done. Can it be done? *Yes, when it’s God’s will to be done!* But notice what we have to do. We have to have that *living believing faith*.

Verse 13: “And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do... [carte blanche] ... that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.... [notice the condition]: ...**If** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments” (vs 13-15).

These are some of the things we can look to when our heart is not condemning us and we are

assured before God. It doesn’t have to be great long prayers. I tell you what. You can have a great long prayer, just like Jesus said, ‘Be not like the heathen for they think with their much speaking that they will be heard.’ Try listening to the *Catholic Hour*, which is fifteen minutes, sometime. See if you can get through all the way through the ‘hail Marys.’ I tried that one time. I memorized the whole thing: ‘Hail Mary, mother of God, blessed be the fruit of your womb Jesus. Hail Mary, mother of God, blessed be the fruit of your womb Jesus’—over and over and over.

- What do you learn with that? *Nothing!*
- What have you prayed with that? *Nothing!*
- What answer are you going to get? *Nothing!*

John 15:7: “If you dwell in Me... [remain and live in Christ] ...and My words dwell in you... [remain and live in you—that’s how we’re to have the mind of Christ] ...you shall ask whatever you desire...”

Now it’s turned around to what you desire. Why? Why do you suppose it’s changed here from the prayer which says: ‘Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven’? The answer is simple: ***if you have the words of Christ abiding in you, you’re going to ask what according to will of the Father truly is.*** Then your will is the will of the Father, because it is in you.

- you’re going to know better than to ask, ‘Oh God, bless me with the lottery’  
*because you know that’s not God’s will*
- you’re going to know better than run down to the racetrack and say, ‘God, which one should I bet on?’
- you’re going to know better than to get into schemes, which are deceitful. Why? *Because deceitful things never work!* You want the truth.

“...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. 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” (vs 7-11). He says a little later: ‘Watch out because they’re going to kill you.’

Verse 12: “This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you.” We’ll expound that a little more when we get into the

whole section concerning love.

John 16:23—concerning prayer: “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing....” Please always remember and please understand that what God the Father has done through Jesus Christ is this: that **you have direct access to God the Father!** There is nothing between you and God the Father. Not even Christ. Does Christ stand in front of the throne of God? *No! He’s at the right hand!* Therefore, there can’t be a pope; there can’t be an apostle; there can’t be a minister or pastor or deacon or anyone **between you and God**. When we pray it is our Father in heaven—**it’s direct!**

Verse 23: “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name...” You ask in His name because Christ is in you, so then your prayer actually becomes the prayer of Christ.

“...He will give you. Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full” (vs 23-24).

Verse 26: “In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you...” (vs 26-27).

Always remember that when you get down, when you get out, when you get discouraged, when you have hit bottom. As one man that I wrote a letter to—he had just gone through so much—and I said, yes, I know what it’s like to ‘walk through the valley of death. But have hope, God is always there.’

So, **when all else fails**, remember, **God loves you!** Maybe there will be times when you feel your wife doesn’t love you, your husband doesn’t love you, your children don’t love you, none of your co-workers love you—no one in the world loves you and you’re walking around with this, with this look on your face, you know, that’s all discouraged and down and out. **Remember, God the Father loves you! Himself! Personally!** And if you have the Spirit of God in you, that’s from the Father; that’s how much He loves you.

Verse 27: “the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

Verse 33: “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace.... [that is peace of mind, understanding, peace with God] ...In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world”—which is very profound for us to understand.

God is going to continue to answer prayer; Matthew 7:7: “**Ask**... [the Greek means: *keep on*

*asking*] ...and it shall be given you. **Seek**, and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened unto you.” Who has to do the initiating? *You do!* You have your works that you have to do.

Verse 8: “For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you who, if his son shall ask *for* bread, will give him a stone? And if he shall ask *for* a fish, will give him a serpent? Therefore, if you, being evil...” (vs 8-11).

Now, think on that. That’s quite a profound statement by Jesus talking to His own disciples. If you who are evil by nature—apart from the Spirit of God, apart from the way of God.

“...know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?” (v 11). God knows how we need these things.

Matthew 6:6: “But you, when you pray, enter into a private room... [some quiet, closed, private place] ...and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*; for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him” (vs 6-8).

One time I had someone ask me: ‘Well, if He knows we have need before we ask, why do we have to ask?’ Sometimes what we have need of is not what we think we have need of. *God is going to give us what we have need of!* But how great is God, going to do that? How great is He, going to do that?

We could add many other Scriptures, many other Psalms—go through the whole subject of prayer, that’s not the intent of this. The intent of this is to show how that your prayers are much more effective when you’re loving God, confessing your sins and are not condemned in your heart and conscience, but have assurance to God.

Ephesians 3:20: “Now, to Him Who is able... [*has the power and the capacity*] ...to do **exceeding abundantly**...” I want you to think what it’s going to be like:

- to truly have eternal life
- to truly be in the Kingdom of God
- to truly have your body transformed into a spirit body
- to truly see God face-to-face

That’s what he’s meaning here: “...to do **exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think**...” (v 20). What does God want to give and grant to us?

That's what it is right here: "...**above all that we ask or think** according to the power that is working in us" (v 20). That's through the Spirit of God, Christ in us.

There's something else that we're to do. There's another special, important ingredient that follows with that.

1-John 3:22: "And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight." Not only just keep the commandments, but do the things that please God. Obviously, it's not pleasing to God that we sin. That's why He provides the way so we can repent.

- How can we please God?
- Ever thought about that?
- How can you please God?

Paul tells us that the average person cannot please God. The one without the Spirit of God cannot please God. ***You have to have the Spirit of God!*** Now, this follows right along with the 'no condemnation.' If you've repented of your sins, received the Spirit of God, are walking in the way of God, keeping His commandments, loving God, confessing your sins, walking in the grace of God.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation... [so you see how pleasing God and 'no condemnation' work together] ...to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the flesh*, but according to *the Spirit*."

- motivated by the Spirit of God
- thinking the thoughts of God
- doing the will of God

Verse 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death" (v 2).

Verse 5: "For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh..."—the things of the world—all the things that are in the world. We covered that, when we went through there, that section in 1-John 2.

"...but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit" (v 5). Here is one of the very first Scriptures you ever heard when you were being called.

Verse 6: "For to be carnally minded *is* death, but ***to be spiritually minded is life and peace...*** [peace with God] ...because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be* (vs 6-7).

- it conveniently changes Sabbath to Sunday
- it conveniently changes that you will not make any idols to have them everywhere
- it conveniently changes the nature of God
- It conveniently changes the use of the name of God
- and all the way down with all the commandments of God

"...is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*. But ***those who are in the flesh cannot please God***" (vs 7-8). And yet, it says:

1-John 3:22: "...we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight."

Quite a transformation! Quite a life of conversion from one of hostility to doing the things that please God. You try this sometime. This is the test, for all you married people. In the face of even adversity, do the things for your husband or your wife that is pleasing to them. Try that! That'll give you a little practice. Try it! I challenge you this way. Try it, right after you've had a little spat! *Then it's tough!* I speak from experience. One of the greatest sins of the Church of God is to make the ministers nearly God! ***They're not!*** That's quite a challenge.

Let's look at what was told of Jesus. This is where we are to come to on our Christian walk, in our conversion. Here's where our walk needs to come. This was right after Jesus was baptized.

Matthew 3:16: "And after He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And lo, a voice from heaven said, '***This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I have great delight***'" (vs 16-17). Why is that?

John 8:29 is where we need to come to in our lives with Christ. In growing, in changing, in overcoming, and with each other. Here's what Jesus said:

John 8:29: "And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him."

That is the ultimate goal of everything that we do, brethren. So, when we tie that in with 1-John 3:22 here, that we are *practicing, doing*—action—"those things which are pleasing to Him."

All right, where does this begin? The truth is this: You grow in your conviction, in faith and belief and love of God the longer that you have the Spirit of God. I personally do not want to go back to my

first love when I was first baptized—except just in the sense of the innocence of it—because I knew nothing. We are to come to **know** God. We are to come to **know** the Father.

Hebrews 11:6—here's where we begin the whole process: "Now, without faith *it is* impossible to please *God*..." You can't come to God and say: 'Well, I don't believe You, God. I've prayed all this and You never answered a prayer.' That's the wrong statement. If you've been praying a long time for something and God hasn't answered the prayer, you need to ask: Why has that prayer not been answered?

- maybe it's not God's will
- maybe you're seeking it for your own
- maybe God has a greater lesson
- maybe the spiritual growth that God wants you to have is what you need to look to and not the thing of a prayer being unanswered

You've got to have the faith and believe. "...For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God **to believe**..." (v 6). Absolutely demanded of God, because God *is* God! God has created all that there is. *Must believe!* Now granted, you can't see Him.

"...that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (v 6).

What if you were born—and of course, this statement is kind of a 'what if'—you never knew your mother, you never knew your father. Therefore, your mother and father don't exist because you've never seen them. How did you get here? *Therefore, your mother and father must have existed!* But you have never seen them, and you don't know them, but they are, in reality, your mother and father, provided that they're not old enough to have died at this point. We'll assume that you were a younger child.

It's likewise with God. When you come to God you **believe** that He is the One Who has created everything that there is. You don't have to see Him to know that that is a fact. *He'll diligently reward you!*

Let's see something about what it is when we please God and we will see the contrast here in how this is applied in pleasing God and not pleasing God.

Proverbs 16:1: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the LORD. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes... [self-justification] ...but the LORD weighs the spirits.... [here's how to begin to please God]: ...Commit your works unto the LORD, and **your thoughts shall be established**" (vs 1-3).

That's how you overcome a carnal mind and

the lust of the mind. *You bring every thought into captivity unto Christ* (Cor. 10). When you do that, is that pleasing to God? *Yes!*

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... [that's one that's not doing what pleases God] ...*though joined* hand in hand... [the majority] ...he shall not be unpunished" (vs 4-5).

What did Jesus say? '*Straight is the way and narrow is the gate that leads to life, but broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads unto destruction.*' And many there be that go in at that gate. They're all going to be, they're all going to suffer their punishment. They make look prosperous. They may look like they're doing well. They may be in the majority. They may sound very convincing. *But if it's not of God the day is coming!*

Verse 6: "By mercy and Truth iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the LORD *men* turn away from evil.... [What does that do?] ...When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him" (vs 6-7). That's quite something!

Here's another way to make your ways please God. To where then we are practicing those things, which are **pleasing** in His sight. I wonder how many sermons that the Apostle Paul preached on this, where he would go to Jer. 30 and say: 'The New Covenant is to have the laws of God written in your heart and your mind, your inward parts.'

Then I'm sure he would go to Proverbs 3:1: "My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commandments... [within] ...for they shall add length of days, and long life, and peace, to you. Do not let mercy and Truth forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them upon the tablet of your heart; and so you shall find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (vs 1-4).

Why? *Because your ways then are pleasing God!* This all adds to the power of prayer. This all adds to the confidence in our standing with God.

Verse 5: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding." That is a lifetime project, right there.

I look back at all the mistakes I've made, and there are many. Every one is that I 'leaned to my own understanding.' Many times I was told that, but I wouldn't listen, so guess what? BAM! It happened!

Verse 6: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil" (vs 6-7). All that ties in with doing the things



that please God.

1-John 3:22: “And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments...”

Oh, by the way, a Protestant ploy is: you keep the commandments of love. Isn't that what they say? *Yes!* Always remember this

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. 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 37-40).

***Every single commandment of God is a commandment of love!*** So think on that! Let's turn it around the other way: God through the Old Testament and show me which commandment is not a commandment based upon love; even the health commandments. *They're all based on love!*

1-John 22: “And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight. 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...” (vs 22-24).

The word *abides* from the Greek is ‘meno’—which means *abides, remains, dwells, lives*. I helped straighten out who the ‘he’ and the ‘him’ is. The capitalized word is Christ.

Verse 24: “And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him, and He in him; and by this...” This is what we are to know. Now, there are times when you feel low, when you feel condemned, that you kind of wonder. But nevertheless, this is what we're to know:

“...we know that **He is dwelling in us; by the Spirit which He has given to us**” (v 24).

***We are to not ever have a doubt that we have the Spirit of God!*** It is God's Spirit in us then,

- which leads us to keep His commandments
- which leads us to understand sin that we may repent
- which leads us to desire to do the things that please Him

And all of these come together here in the Epistles of John. So, ***the days and times we're living in these epistles are very important!***

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

#### Scriptural References

- 1) 1-John 3:16-17
- 2) James 2:8-17
- 3) Matthew 25:31-40
- 4) 1-John 3:18-20
- 5) 1-John 1:7-9
- 6) 1-John 3:21-22
- 7) Revelation 2:8-10
- 8) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 9) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 10) John 14:6, 10, 12-15
- 11) John 15:7-12
- 12) John 16:23-24, 26-27, 33
- 13) Matthew 7:7-11
- 14) Matthew 6:6-8
- 15) Ephesians 3:20
- 16) 1-John 3:22
- 17) Romans 8:1-2, 5-8
- 18) 1-John 3:22
- 19) Matthew 3:16-17
- 20) John 8:29
- 21) Hebrews 11:6
- 22) Proverbs 16:1-7
- 23) Proverbs 3:1-7
- 24) 1-John 3:22
- 25) Matthew 22:37-40
- 26) 1-John 3:33-34

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 5-7
- Romans 7
- 2 Chronicles 33
- Acts 15:8
- 2 Corinthians 10
- Jeremiah 30

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
- *Four Thousand Years of the History of Christmas*
- *From Sabbath to Sunday* by Samuele Bacchiocchi
- *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin

Sermon: *Two Righteousnesses*

FRC:bo

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## Epistle of First John XA

Live in the Love of God

Fred R. Coulter

In going through the General Epistles, we have seen how that James starts out with *faith*; Peter's theme is developed into *hope*; and John develops into *love*. If you want to make a comparison between 1-Cor. 13, which is Paul's chapter on *love*, you can say that this is John's chapter on *love* in relationship to the things in the world and our standing before God.

We're going to briefly cover the first couple of verses here; because we have another series *Who was Jesus?* so, we will just input a few verses here on this one.

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

This is what we need to do all the time, especially in religion, because if you think there are liars in government, the slickest ones are in religion. Of course, this also tells us something very important, and this confirms what Jesus said: '*Many false prophets shall come in My name saying I am the Christ, and deceive many.*'

So, he gives us here another indication, because it says, 'believe not every spirit, but test the spirits,' which then tells us that there are satanic, demonic spirits behind those who are the false prophets. And even though they *appear* to really be good, and though they may *sound* very pleasing, we always have to take the admonition that was given to us in Isa. 8, 'to the law and the testimony if they speak not according to His word, it's because there is no Light in them.'

Here's one of the tests; this is not the only test, but this is the major test, because the thing that is important in understanding this, is that almost every false prophet or teacher does not teach the true nature of who Jesus Christ was.

This is the major test, v 2: "**By this test** you can know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard was to come, and even now it is already in the world" (vs 2-3).

When we understand that this was written, perhaps maybe as late as 80<sub>A.D.</sub> (maybe somewhat

sooner) just think what has happened since then. That's why religion is such confusion. That's why so many people today, in our society, are turned off on religion because of many things; they do not understand that what God teaches is a *way of life*. He doesn't teach a religion. That's why we have the series: *Why God Hates Religion*. And so, here is the test.

Now let's look at a few of these Scriptures, that clearly define for us who and what Jesus was. And you know where those are. We've covered this many, many times in the past and we'll cover it again many, many times in the future; is central, heart and core to who and what Jesus was.

We'll just look at only a couple of Scriptures, and if you want a more in-depth study, write in, ask for our sermon series on *Who Was Jesus?* The way that John wrote and the Greek that he used, Koiné Greek, was very simple, and that disappoints a lot of philosophers and high scholarly mucky-mucks, because they like things complicated and hard to understand so they can maneuver around it. But here this doesn't give any maneuvering room in English or in the Greek. We see that John was talking about the true nature of God in many of the things that he wrote.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We'll get a definition of Who the Word was in just a minute, but obviously it is Christ.

When you read that, even in the English, what does this tell us? *In the beginning, when things were created, the Word existed!*. You have to have the Creator before the creation. If you watch any of these things on television where it talks about how the earth and universe came into being, it is almost ludicrous. When you understand the truth, it's foolish.

"...and the Word was with God..." What does this tell us? There are two that are called *God*. In the Old Testament, God is called 'Elohim' and the ending of that word 'im' *Elohim*—translated *God*—means more than one; it is a plural noun. So, this reveals that there was the one God Who became the Word and Jesus Christ, and the one Who became the Father, *when* Jesus divested Himself to become a human being and take on the flesh of what human beings have in order to become the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.

God is just. Since He sentenced man to human nature, He also took it upon Himself to overcome it Himself, so that He could give hope to human beings and redeem them. That's really something! I would like to see a judge today to be so compassionate and understanding that in order to save someone, he would take that very sentence upon himself. That tells you what Christ did.

Notice that He emphasizes it, because all the false spirits come along and say, 'Well, no, no, no it wasn't like that. God is not a person. God is inanimate, meaning *He's everywhere*. He's in everything, every physical thing that there is, every living thing that there is, God is in it.' From whence then we get the Hindu philosophy of you go from different animals and insects and you progress up the line through re-incarnation if you do good. Then if you become a human and you don't do good, you don't work your own salvation. Then you revert back to maybe a rat or a spider or something like this, because God is in everything. The next conclusion of that is that since God is in everything, then God is in you.

We've also studied about the thing concerning what is called 'Docetism'—meaning that Jesus did not come in the flesh. Rather, Jesus Christ was actually two beings: Jesus was the man, Christ was the Spirit from heaven that possessed the man. This is where you get the thing now with the 'Gospel of Judas,' where it says that Judas was used by Christ to release Him from the flesh, to betray Him. So, when Jesus died it was only the man Jesus that died and Christ, the Savior, had nothing to do with it. That's why, what I'm doing, I'm pointing out the simplicity of what the Scriptures teach vs the complicated, philosophical theories and demonic theories that people present.

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" (vs 2-3).

It's like the cartoon with the evolutionist had a fight about God, or with God, about creating and finally He told the evolutionist, because the evolutionist said, 'Well, we'll start with this dirt.' And God told him, 'No, you get your own dirt.'

Verse 4: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Let's stop and think about this for just a minute. Since God is Creator, no human being anywhere in the world can be free from God—though they reject it—because God has set before all human beings *choices*: life and death, good and evil. So, you reject God, now how's your life? *You suffer all the penalties for rejecting God!* You're not free

from God; you're still under His control from the point of view that God has set forth living laws. If you reject Him, there are sure consequences. If you love Him and do what God says, there are other sure consequences of blessings, and understanding why we're here and where we're going.

Verse 10 talks about Jesus: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him.... [perfect description of the world today] ...He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him; but as many as received Him, to them He gave authority 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 10-13).

God has a plan for everyone in His own due time. But God is so great that He can deal with people with His Spirit, and the rest of the world cannot detect it. How do you handle this?

Verse 14<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup> "And the Word became flesh..." Follow along with that '*the Word was God.*' What does this tell us, very simply? *God became a human being!* You don't need some complicated philosophy to figure that out.

"...and tabernacled..." (v 14). That means *dwelled temporarily with us*, and this is referring to how God dealt with Israel, originally was in a tabernacle and also relates to the Feast of Tabernacles. There are many other things that we have concerning that.

"...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth" (v 14).

Let's see what it says about Jesus Christ. This is the whole theme of the Bible when we really get down to understanding it.

1-Timothy 3:16 "And undeniably, great is the mystery of Godliness..." This is something! This is why God has to intervene and call people. This is why Jesus Christ did what He did.

"...God was manifested in *the* flesh..." (v 16). Can anything be more clear? The Word became flesh.

"...was justified in *the* Spirit..." (v 14). That is He lived perfectly before God to be able to bring justification to all men.

"...was seen by angels, was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory" (v 14). So, when John writes these things concerning the nature of God, it

becomes very important that these things are wholly considered. That ties in with:

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.” Quite a thing!

Let’s look at another very basic Scripture. In the series that we have on *Who Was Jesus?* we go through this in quite a great length and depth in our word-by-word study there. We don’t want to have everything repeated over and over again, but we’re talking about the nature of God and what Jesus did. That’s why, when Jesus came, He said that He came to *reveal* the Father. And this also tells us that we know that the Father is a personal Being and personal God, because Jesus told Philip, ‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’

Here’s the ultimate goal of what we need to keep in mind. We’re going to see that this is very, very important when we get back to 1-John 4. The whole purpose is to keep people’s minds focused on God, the Truth, the love of God, so that they can obtain eternal life.

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [the literal translation from the Greek] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God” (vs 5-6).

He had to do that in order to become a man—because God in His full glory cannot live in the flesh. He had to reduce Himself down to as much of God that He could retain, that He was of Himself, to become a human being.

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, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (vs 7-8).

This is what John is talking about. And this is why there’s so many versions of Christianity in the world. *It gets back to this: it gets back to Satan’s original rebellion!* He wanted to become like God and tell God what to do. Well, human beings, with their human nature, like to come along and what do they like to do? *Same thing!*

- they like to tell God what to do
- they like to tell God who He is

What does that do in effect? *Puts them in the position of God;* same attitude that Satan had! We see that John says this is the spirit of antichrist and so forth.

1-John 4:4: “You are of God, little children...”

- What makes a person *of* God?
- What is it?
- They profess it?
- Does that make them of God?
- They agree with certain things of God?
- What makes them of God?
- That you know that you are of God?

Here’s how we know we are of God, and it’s not because we run up and align ourselves with God—because we are good, righteous people—is because God has to *call* us. God makes a dividing line very clear, very important to understand.

Romans 8:5: “For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh...” That is what the Bible calls ‘carnal minded.’

- God has to call a person
- they have to answer the call
- they have to repent
- they have to be baptized
- they have to receive the Holy Spirit

“...but those who walk according to *the* Spirit mind the things of the Spirit” (v 5). That is, you live God’s way. You strive to do the things of God. You love God, etc.

Verse 6: “For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.” All you have to do is just look out in the world and see how troubled everyone is. That’s why the Sabbath is so important; that we can, on the Sabbath, come and escape from the world.

I know here recently, just looking at the television, all the things that are on there—I felt like David said in the one Psalm. He said, ‘Oh, that I was like a bird. That I might fly into the wilderness, get away from all this.’

All the news was on murder, court cases, lying, cheating, stealing, war, famine, disease; it was like watching Matt. 24 unfold in the nightly news. I thought I’ll switch over to the History Channel—and what was that showing? *The History of WWII!* I thought I’ll switch over to the National Geographic channel, and guess what they were showing: instruments of torture down through the ages. ‘*To be carnally minded is death!*’ I thought to myself, all they’re doing is thinking on death, war, crime, killing. *Enough!* I turned it all off.

Here’s what happens, v 7: “Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God...”—which means it’s an enemy of God. There are many people who are very nice and decent people, but God hasn’t called them. When it gets down to, well, what do

you think about obeying God, then you see the hostility come up. Try any good, hard-shelled Southern Baptist, and you'll see the carnality come up.

Here's the reason: "...for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*." That's why the false religion has come along. And what's one of the first things they say? *Jesus did away with the law!* So there's a distinct dividing line that we find in the Bible that substantiates what John is telling us in 1-John 4.

Verse 8: "But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...." (vs 8-9).

That's what we covered in 1-John 3—the begetting of the Spirit of God within us. How do you get the Spirit of God? We know that: *repent, be baptized, receive the Spirit of God!* And Peter said to the Sanhedrin, when they were questioned about their preaching, he said that *God gives His Spirit to those who obey Him*. "...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). In this:

- Who is the controlling one?
- The person?

*or*

- God?
- **God is!**

God gives the Holy Spirit! That's why God has blinded the minds of people in the world so that later He can save them. Now He is working with the few that He is calling to be in the first resurrection. But here's a clear-cut line, there is no other way you can put it:

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, **the body is indeed dead because of sin...**"—which we read in Phil. 2:5, 'Let the mind of Christ be in you.'

"...the body *is* indeed **dead** because of sin..." (v 10)—because you've been baptized in a burial death.

"...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness" (v 10). That's why you tend to the things of the Spirit, because you want to:

- love God
- serve God
- obey God
- have peace of mind
- have the relationship with God
- receive the blessings of God

*And you need the blessings of God to endure the difficulties and trials that are in the world!*

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 your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you." That's how we *know*; that's what John is talking about here. That's why we have the comparison again. This is talking about, this is talking about those who are in the world.

1-John 4:4: "You are of God, little children... [we saw how we are of God] ... and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world." What happens when you receive the Spirit of God, then you're able to see the things that are right, according to the Word of God, and you are able to clearly see the way of the world. *You're not going to be taken in by Satan the devil!*

Verse 5: "**They are of the world**; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them."

Let's see how that when God calls us out of this world, though we live in the world, we're not part of the world. The difference has been the Spirit of God—which is the Spirit of Truth—and now he shows it's going to be the true love of God which then is the dividing line by which those who have the Spirit of God and know God can understand they're His and can understand the world and the way that it is.

Notice how v 6 ties in with v 4: "**You** are of God..."

Verse 6 "**We are of God...**" Who are the 'we'? This would have to refer to John as an apostle, and the other apostles.

"...the one who knows God listens to us... [as we're speaking, teaching and preaching] ...the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception" (v 6)—so that we really understand that God says the world is deceived.

Just living in the world, without understanding the Truth of God's Word, you'd never know that. Oh, you can see lies. You can see things like this take place. You can see hypocrisy in government and arguing back and forth, all those things, yeah, that's true. But if you watch some of these news presentations, all they do is argue back and forth opinions, and they're really not giving you news. They argue back and forth on things that are of non-consequential, so no one learns anything.

Revelation 12:9 says, "...Satan, who is deceiving the whole world..." That's where all the deception comes, because 'no lie comes of the Truth' (1-John 2). So, the way that people, the false prophets, can take the Bible and use parts of the Bible instead of all of it—because Jesus said, 'Man shall live by every Word of God'—what do they do then? *They can create a deception that sounds blessedly true!* Here's 'know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the error' and the Holy Spirit is also called the 'Spirit of the Truth.'

Now we get into another key, which is beyond; 1-John 4:7: "Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and **knows** God." That's how you are able to cut through all of the things of religions of this world.

- Do you really love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being?
- Do you really love your neighbor as yourself?
- Do you really love the brethren, as Christ has loved us?

*I want you to see how this is:*

- God's way exposes the false way
- the Spirit of God brings us the Truth
- the love of God gives us understanding

Verse 8 is a very clear-cut thing: "The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love.**" That's the very nature of God; also:

- God is righteous
- God is a judge
- God is merciful
- God is kind
- God is long-suffering

—and all of those things are involved.

In 1-John we find something that's very important. ***The love of God is what really gives us the relationship with God!*** It brings heart and love into your relationship with God so you can love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being, and with the brethren. If you have religion without love, you end up with hatred; prime example is *radical Jihadists*. They have a demonically dedicated spirit and attitude in *their* religion ***without the love of God.*** So, they have a religion, they have a wrong God. Now, on the other hand, here's what the love of God is to do for us. It starts out right here in 1-John 1. So, let's go back and review that just a little bit.

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..."

Here is what God wants. God is not interested in large numbers; we can just put in there 'the Gideon effect': 30-thousand soldiers came and God chose 300.

"...for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—... [this is what God wants—our relationship] ***...is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ***" (v 3). Here John is introducing what's going to come in the whole rest of the epistle.

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" (vs 4-5)—because the antichrists even believe in many different forms of gods and demigods and they're ranging from light to darkness. That's why he's bringing out that 'God is Light and there's no darkness in Him at all.'

Here is another test, all the way through, what John is doing through the Epistle of 1-John: ***He's giving us the knowledge and spirit and understanding on how to prove ourselves before God, through loving God. And how to understand the dividing line between those who are of the world and those who are of God!***

Notice how this takes place, v 6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth."

Very interesting! The worst kind of deception is to deceive yourself so thoroughly that you cannot allow Truth to enter in. And related to that is that, ***if you're walking in the Truth—practicing the Truth—that means you live by it.*** What is Truth?

- Your Word is the Truth
- Your commandments are the Truth
- Your laws are the Truth
- all your precepts are true from the beginning
  - ✓you practice that
  - ✓that's how you live
  - ✓that's how you think
  - ✓that's what your life is around

Your fellowship and relationship with God the Father—

- through prayer
- through study
- through living
- through loving each other
- through loving God

—*that's all practicing the Truth!* If you have the Spirit of Truth in you, what is that going to lead you to do? *To desire to practice the Truth!*

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the Light... [the Light of God’s Word] ...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.” *This is the whole operation of God!* That you can continually, through repentance and the Spirit of God in you, revealing to you the sin, how that is cleansed from our minds.

Verse 8: “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.**”

John refers to the *Light* again, and shows something very, very important; John 3:18: “The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment...” (vs 18-19). It’s automatic. As I said before, you never get away from God.

“...that the Light has come into the world... [Who was Christ] ... but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil” (v 19).

Here’s another dividing line. You see how John gives us these dividing lines defining points of our behavior so that we can constantly yield to God.

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light... [compare that with ‘practicing the Truth’ (1-John 1)] ...and does not come to the Light... [‘I don’t need religion. I don’t need God’] ...so that his works may not be exposed.”

He doesn’t want to take criticism. Try criticizing and atheist some time. Just think about this: What if we took this kind of operation and lined up all the politicians in congress? *They would run like rats!* They don’t want it exposed. This ties in with 1-John 1.

John 3:21: “But the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light...”

- What for?
- What is the purpose of that?
- Why do you keep coming to God?

“...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (v 21). Christ in you doing the work. You’re constantly coming to God.

Now then, when people have been *living the way of God*, then allow themselves to be deceived

and start going back into the world, *they start walking away from the Light!* The Light is still behind them, so they still have some semblance of knowledge and understanding. But just like if you were out in a pitched-black desert, no moon, and your car stalled and you got out of your car and you had to go find someone. You leave the lights on and you start walking away. Right at first you have light to see where you’re going, then it’s less and less and less and less and less. Then you come to a little rise in the road and you go on the other side and you’re in total darkness. *That’s what happens to people when they turn their backs on God!*

What this also does, in our fellowship and relationship with God, this puts us in a relationship with God that He is wanting to bless us, help us overcome, and that’s expressed right here in the last part of:

1-John 1:7: “...the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, **cleanses** us from all sin.” This is important for us to understand, because once we come to the knowledge of the Truth, there we are, full of sin and deception. We confess and repent of our sins, are baptize and receive the Holy Spirit of God, *now the cleansing begins!* This shows that it’s a process. That’s why it’s called *overcoming*. It’s a cleansing, *‘the washing of the water by the Word’* (Eph. 5).

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin...” I’m a good person. I haven’t done anything wrong. I haven’t killed anybody, I haven’t committed adultery, I haven’t stolen. Well, God requires all those things of *everyone*. But:

- Have you had other gods?
- Have you had wrong understanding of the Bible?
- Have you broken the Sabbath, rejected the Holy Days?

Verse 8: If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves...” That’s one of the things that people say: ‘Well, I’m a good person.’ Maybe in the world you are, but is that goodness enough for God? Or does God want to give you His goodness? *Yes, He wants to give you **His** goodness!*

“...and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins... [here’s the way to overcome that]: ...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse** us from all unrighteousness.... [this shows that it is a process] ...If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 8-10).

This sets the stage for all the rest of the Epistle of 1-John; 1 John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not

sin...” Is this double-talk? What are we talking about here?

John defines it for us. *If anyone does sin*, showing that there are going to be occasions when sin does take place, because in order to overcome human nature, we have to get the sin out. That’s the whole story of Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1-John 5:16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is not unto death* ...”—which Christ defined as that which is not blaspheming the Holy Spirit. *‘All sins and blasphemies whatsoever shall be forgiven men, except the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.’* And any word spoken ‘against the Son of Man shall be forgiven him.’ So, this is what it’s talking about “...a sin *that is not unto death*...” In other words, *a sin that can be repented of!*

If you want to know about the unpardonable sin, then you’ll have to go to our series in the book of Hebrews where we define it very clearly.

“...he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death...” (v 16).

(go to the next track)

John is showing that our Christian walk and repenting and growing in grace and knowledge and so forth *is a process*. Let’s carry this forward so that we can understand how John is setting the whole stage here for chapter four. So he says,

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And yet, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the Righteous*.” *Christ will reveal our sins to us and convict us in conscience so that we may repent*—that’s the whole operation that will take place.

Verse 2: “And He is *the propitiation*...”—*continual source of mercy*. Now, stop and think a minute: what was the most sacred thing in the temple? *The Ark of the Covenant called the Mercy Seat!* That’s where sins were propitiated. And ‘propitiation’ means *to wipe away, do away with*—as we’ve seen ‘removed from us as far as the east is from the west and cast them to the depths of the sea.’ “...He is *the propitiation* for our sins...”

Here’s quite a statement that has yet to be fulfilled. You cannot understand this next statement unless you understand about the meaning of the Holy Days of God; that’s why it’s so very important.

“...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (v 2). How’s He going to do that since the world is under the deception of Satan the devil? Well, that’s why we have the Last

Great Day and the whole meaning of that. You’ll have to go through that to get the rest of the story.

Here becomes the theme of the whole Epistle of 1-John—v 3: “And by this *standard*...” Greek: ‘en toutoo’—*by this*. You have to fill in the word in *italic* once you understand what he’s talking about. Because ‘by this’ what? *Standard!*

“...we know that we know Him...” (v 3). This is the whole thing that He wants us to understand so that we can love Him. If we love God, *we love Him*. And if we *know* Him, He wants us to *know* Him. But notice the conviction that we are to have. Not just say, ‘Do you know the Lord, brother?’ *Yes, I know the Lord*. He says: “...*we know that we know Him*...”—conviction, truth, faith, love altogether: you *know* that you *know*. And what does this result in? He said over here: ‘practice the Truth.’

So, he gives the qualification: “...*if* we are keeping His commandments” (v 3).

Here’s what people don’t like to hear—but since they consider the Apostle John the apostle of love, they’re kind of hard-pressed to reject it:

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments *is a liar*... [that’s pretty definite] ...and the Truth... [the Word of God] ...is not in him.”

You can take this one verse and you can judge righteous judgment concerning who’s of God and who’s not of God. Who is teaching the true Word of God and who is *using it* and *abusing it*—very simple. They don’t like to hear it.

Can you imagine how it would go over if you were down there in the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California—Robert Schuler and his son, who preach nothing but goodness and kindness on Sunday morning—and you stand up and say: ‘*You are a liar; you are not of God!*’ You can apply this to

- the pope
- any religious leader you want
- any Imam that you like with Islam
- any orthodox bishop
- most of the Protestants

—and the Protestants, as you will see, will be led further and further away from what they had, because Jesus said that *even what they have will be taken away from them*. So there it is. “...*is a liar, and the Truth is not in him*.”

Here is the key which sets the tone for the whole rest of the Epistle of John, v 5: “On the other hand, *if anyone is keeping His Word*...”



Notice this ties in with exactly what Jesus said; John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word... [the whole message of Christ, all of it] ...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.’” The dividing line. Isn’t it interesting how John has written to give us understanding and make a clear definition for us?

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.”

John makes it very clear in very simple English and it also is very simple in Greek. That’s quite something! You can take these as major things to gauge your own Christian walk, and to gauge the Truth from the error.

If you have a religious channel just pick some of these verses and sit down some Sunday morning and just listen to them and gauge and judge what they say by these Scriptures. I think it would prove very interesting. Life is a choice because the word ‘if’ is in the middle of the word *life*. ‘If you love Me keep My commandments.’

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...” You grow in it. It is **being** perfected! And we will see how John brings this out in chapter four, here in just a minute.

“...By this *means*... [Greek: ‘en toutoo’—of what we just covered here] ...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). That’s ‘the standard.’ God sets before us *a perfect standard to shoot for!* Would you want anything less than a perfect standard? *No!* This shows the whole, the whole bringing together of the Epistle of 1-John.

Let’s see how he emphasizes the love of God again. Your love is **being perfected** if you are walking in the commandments of God and loving God and practicing the Truth. If you go back and do a summary and kind of do an outline on it, then you will see

- the definition of who a true Christian is
- a definition of how you can understand Truth from error
- a definition of what is right and wrong

1 John 3:1—showing the love of God: “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.**”

How do you know Him? ‘*The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and keeps not His commandments is a liar! And we know that we know Him because we keep His commandments!*’

Verse 2: “Beloved, now we are the children of God...”—because being born again is at the resurrection, not when you have an emotional feeling of being convicted of sin.

It says right here, “...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.... [Amazing!] ...And everyone who has this hope in him... [because we have faith, hope and love; we’re talking about *love in connection with hope*] ...is purifying himself, **even as He is pure**” (vs 2-3)—because you’re meeting the standard that God has set—step-by-step, day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year.

Then he starts talking about the very nature of God and His love toward us; 1-John 4:6: “We are of God... [he says that twice: vs 4 & 6 and is reconfirmed all the way through] ...the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception.”

We are to know the right and wrong between the spiritual forces in this world. Who is the one who is deceiving the whole world but Satan the devil. He’s called, ‘the prince of the power of the air that’s now working in all the children of disobedience; appealing to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the mind and the pride of life’ (Eph. 2).

Verse 7: “Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God...” Human beings have emotion and can have a carnal love. But true, deep love that goes beyond emotion and goes beyond just the allegiance to family and the allegiance to city and country and so forth. ***The true love of God, which transcends all of those, comes from God, and is a fruit of the Holy Spirit!*** We just read: ‘and this is the love of God that we keep His commandments.’

“...and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God” (v 7). This also tells us that you must have the begetting of the Holy Spirit of God (Rom. 8), ***and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God!***

- How do we know God? *By keeping His commandments!*
- How do we understand the plan of God? *By His Sabbath and Passover and Holy Days!*

Verse 8: “The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love**.” Think of all of the killing of Christians down through time that was done in the name of religion, thinking they were doing service to God to kill. This tells us:

1. they’re not of God
2. they don’t know God
3. they don’t have the love of God
4. they are of the deception

Let’s see how John then expands this, beginning in v 9: “In this [act] way **the love**...” That’s as literal translation of the Greek as you can get. Now, this is talking about *the life of Jesus Christ ending in His death by crucifixion!*

Verse 10: “In this *act* is **the love**—not that we loved God...” In other words, what happens is not coming *from* us to God, **but coming from God to us**. That’s why John wrote: ‘no one can come to the Father except through Me’—referring to Jesus Christ. And ‘no one can come to Jesus except the Father draw him.’

“...rather, that He loved us... [loved His whole creation] ... and sent His Son *to be the propitiation for our sins*” (v 10).

Romans 5:6 tells us that God did this in pure love to save His greatest creation—that is mankind—from sin.

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us... [coming directly out from God to us] ...because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (vs 6-8).

He made the way possible. And for all of those of us, that is before we were ever born. Now notice the change that is to come because of what God has done—because God is love. And ‘in this act,’ of the very crucifixion of Christ, it’s quite a thing!

Verse 8: “But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies... [of God (Rom. 8)] ...we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*...” (vs 8-10). God has a great plan, a great purpose—to be the children of God. That’s what He’s talking about here.

“...having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life**” (v 10). That’s what John is

talking about here. And that’s why he wrote it this way in 1-John 4:10.

If you want a full real in-depth understanding of the death of Christ you can find that in our books *A Harmony of the Gospels* and *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*. Now let’s see what this does for us. What is it supposed to do for us?

1-John 4:11: “Beloved, if God so loved us, **we also are duty-bound to love one another**.” There it is right there, ‘love one another.’ And, as we pointed out before, love is the greatest tool for overcoming. We are *duty-bound*!

Verse 12: “No one has seen God at any time. Yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and **His own love is perfected in us**.”—made complete. There we have it again. That’s why we have to constantly overcome:

- overcome the pulls of the flesh
- overcome the pulls of the ‘law of sin and death’ within us
- overcome the carnal mind that we are growing out of through the power of God’s Holy Spirit

“...His own love is perfected in us.” That’s what God wants to do. Isn’t that something? Through everything that takes place. Let’s plug in another Scripture here, to bring this out.

Rom. 8:28, so that we have a good spiritual perspective on this, because life in the world, even though we love God, is not a pleasant thing in many cases because of the trials that we go through. But remember this: Think about all the trials that God has gone through. A lot of people like to say that God ‘doesn’t understand what I’ve gone through.’ Well, you need to think about that again.

Here’s a promise; so when you’re going through a difficult time. When you go through your own ‘valley of the shadow of death’—because everyone’s going to go through it—when you come to the point that you feel that you are alone, no one loves you, no one cares for you, no one wants you, and you don’t even know whether God loves you or not. That’s the precise point that you need to come to so that you’re going to cry out to God. Rather than complain, turn yourself to God. Ask Him to help you, cleanse you, give you His Spirit to help you overcome.

In spite of how bad things have been or are or may become, Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.” Because, as you go through the trial, and afterward, He will reveal to you the reason and the

need for that particular trial. That comes down to what? ***Faith, hope and love!***

I want you to just think about your past life, and think about how God has taken every problem and difficulty and has made it work for good in the long run. If you can't see that in some of the things that you have gone through, just remember this: *It's not over till it's over*. So, you need to understand that God is going to work it out that way.

Just think about all the things that you've gone through. I'll think about all the things that I've gone through. Think about the times when you are down and low and discouraged and, and you didn't know what God was doing, how he was doing it and, at that point, you feel totally, absolutely alone and cut off. You think that this is terrible. ***No! It is good!*** Why? ***So that you understand that only God can help you! So that you can understand also what God went through!***

Since God is love, how did God react and respond when the world became so wicked in the days of Noah? *It repented God that He had made man!* He had to, because it was so terrible what men were doing under the influence and power of Satan and the demons, that He had to destroy all flesh—saving Noah, his wife and his sons and their wives and the animals that God sent to him to be in the ark. A total of eight people and eight is *a new beginning*.

- How many times has God suffered?
- How many times have the nations and peoples of this world—under the influence of Satan the devil, because that's what they want—reject God and they accept Satan?
- How much has God suffered?
- How much did Christ have to suffer because He had to bear in His one physical body, God manifested in the flesh, ***all the sins of all mankind?***
- What did He say when He was dying on the cross? ***Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing!***

That's why, when you suffer, that is a time—if you yield to God and trust Him in spite of the facts that may seem like the circumstances present themselves to be—that you are going to have the love of God perfected in you. The love of God being perfected in you is to *understand the difficulties and problems and sufferings that you are going through from the perspective of God*.

That's why it says 1-John 4:12: “...and **His own love is perfected in us.**”

Let's understand something concerning what Jesus experienced and what that did for Him and to Him.

- Is God perfect? ***Yes, God is perfect!***
- Does that mean that He cannot be perfected even more? ***He can be perfected even more!***

Hebrews 5:5 talks about Christ, and it talks about His ministry toward us: “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’***”—and that comes from Psalms 2. That very day that Jesus was begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary, to become God manifested in the flesh.

Verse 6: “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... [Jesus Christ] ...offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death...” (vs 6-7)—which means that ***Christ knew that if He sinned one time***—having sinful human nature within Him, which He had to carry within Him in order to be the sacrifice to cover the sins of all human beings—that ***He would die for His own sins instead of for the sins of the world.***

That's why He cried out to Him “...with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared God.”

Remember ‘God manifested in the flesh’ as we're reading v 8: “Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered.”

Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good...”

Notice how that ties in with what we read in 1-John 4 and *having been perfected*; Hebrews 5:9: “***And having been perfected***, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him.” So yes, ***God was perfected even greater*** by being manifested in the flesh. Isn't that something?

When you read things like this in 1-John 4:12: “...and His own love is perfected in us”—that's what God wants to do. God wants a ***perfected*** product, and God is dealing in eternal life.

Verse 13: “By this *standard*...”—we are to ***know*** and have no doubts or equivocation whatsoever.

“...we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit,

which He has given to us.” Isn’t that something? The Spirit of God, **He’s given to us!**

Verse 14: “And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world.”

So then, this magnifies everything that God has done. In reading and studying this and thinking about this recently, I thought: Since Christ suffered in the flesh—which He did, **greatly**. How many times down through the history of all mankind has God **suffered** and **grieved** because of His creation rebelling against Him? How many times that He would that they would come to Him and do right? What did Jesus say when He saw Jerusalem just in the days before He was arrested and led off to be crucified? He came in on the donkey into Jerusalem, coming off the top of the Mt. of Olives, and He looked down and He saw Jerusalem, **and He wept!** Jesus said: ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that killed the prophets. How many times would I have brought you to me like a mother hen does with her chicks—**and you would not!**’

Yes, God suffers because of the sins of human beings. Not just the crucifixion, but in heart and mind. And that’s why it also says that we’re ‘not to grieve the Holy Spirit’ (Eph. 4).

Verse 15: “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God...”—as the Bible reveals to us that He is the Son of God. You have to put it all together.

“...God dwells in him, and he in God” (v 15). You have the true relationship and the true fellowship and this is what God wants.

Verse 16: “And we have known...” This is through experience, now. John is writing after many years of being an apostle and preaching and teaching. Through our lives, many of us have gone through many years and experienced many things.

“...and have believed the love that God has toward us. **God is love...**” (v 16). That’s the *essential character of God*, and everything else flows from the love of God:

- the grace of God
- the blessing of God
- the faith that He gives to us
- the hope that he gives to us

*and the fruits of the Holy Spirit:*

- ✓ kindness
- ✓ gentleness
- ✓ mercy
- ✓ temperance
- ✓ self-control

All of those things come from the love of God. That’s why the greatest commandment is: ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your being.’ **God is love!**

“...and **the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God**, and God in him” (v 16).

Now, hold your place here and come to John 15. Notice how the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John blend together. It gets down to where we are *living in the love of God*. In other words, **we receive the love of God toward us with His Spirit and we love God in return and our way of life becomes living in love!** That’s how you overcome human nature better than anything else. That’s greater than just the self-discipline of doing something, because it comes from the Spirit of God and the love of God to give you the desire to overcome and live in the love of God.

John 15:7: “If you dwell in Me... [which we’re talking about in 1-John 4] ...and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples” (vs 7-8).

- Does God love you?
- Does Jesus love you?

Christ answers the question right here, v 9: “As the Father has loved Me...” Do you think that there was any greater love between any beings than between God the Father and Jesus Christ? **NO!**

“...I also have loved you...” (v 9). That’s how God loves us. So remember this: whenever you start walking through the ‘valley of the shadow of death’—and we go through many of those in our life time—the Father loves you and Christ loves you.

“...**live in My love...** [then He tells you how to do it]: ...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**. 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 9-14). See how that ties in with:

1-John 4:16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us.... [He gave His life for us] ...**God is love**, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God **is perfected [made complete] within us...**” (vs 16-

17). It's a process as we grow in grace and knowledge and grow in the love of God.

"...so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment..." (v 17). We don't dread. We don't say: 'I wonder if I'm going to make it.' Jesus says, 'Yes, you're going to make it. Live in Me and live in My love and you will make it.' You have confidence. This gives you confidence in your prayers. That 'whatsoever you ask you may receive.'

"...because even as He is, so also are we in this world.... [v 18 is the pinnacle of **love being perfected**]: ...There is **no fear** in the love of God..."(vs 17-18).

***That's the pinnacle of perfection!*** That doesn't mean that if danger is lurking, you don't get afraid so you can take corrective action. It has nothing to do with that. This means, in your spiritual relationship with God, you love God so that you don't **fear** Him. We have to fear God in the sense that we don't want to sin. But we come to the point that we are loving God so we are not concerned about **being fearful**.

"...rather, **perfect love casts out fear**..." (v 18). There again, it's a process, step-by-step. It is the way of overcoming.

"...because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God" (v 18).

Now think about this for a minute: How many churches, who profess Christ—in the world and in the Churches of God—who run things based upon **fear**. We know that terrible things are going to come at the end-time. Yes, there are fearful things. But, Jesus said, 'Look up, lift up your eyes, because your salvation draws near.' ***Because 'perfect love casts out fear' because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God.*** So, if you have a lot of fear, then gradually overcome these with the love of God. Ask God to help you. ***He will!***

Verse 19: "We love Him... [a result of our love to God] ...because **He loved us first**." There we have it. You could go back and say, 'He created us first' whatever it may be.

Verse 20: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar..." If you have a problem with hating someone or despising someone because they've done something to you, then what you need to do is take it to God and ask God to handle the whole matter Himself—and take it out of your hands and let you be relieved of that fear and of that hatred. Because people do hateful things to you,

and it's easy to hate back. Take it to God and say, 'God, I've got hate in my heart for this, this person, and we know that you hate sin, but help me to overcome the hatred. I don't want to hate this person. Help me with it, that I may overcome it and I put it in Your hands and you work it out through me.' God can do that.

"...For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?... [John puts it in very simple, practical terms] ...And this **is** the commandment **that** we have from Him: that **the one who loves God should also love his brother**" (vs 20-21).

We'll see that part of the thing that happens here in the Epistle of 1-John is this: When false prophets come in, what do they bring? ***Commandment-breaking, sin, fear and hatred!*** So, commandment-keeping, loving God, walking in the way that Christ walked, your love is perfected because ***God is love*** and ***He loved you first*** and ***that's how you dwell in the love of God!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

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

30) 1-John 4:16-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 13
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- Matthew 24
- Ephesians 5
- Psalm 2
- Ephesians 4

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Holy Spirit*
- *Who was Jesus?*
- *Why God Hates Religion*
- *Hebrews* (#29 The Unpardonable Sin)

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospel* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter

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## Epistle of First John XI

### Witness of the Water, the Blood and the Spirit/Witness of God

Fred R. Coulter

When you get into some of these prolonged studies, it takes a while, but I think it's beneficial and helpful for everyone, and I know it certainly is for all of those people who have been in the Church but not having had the Word of God preached to them.

What we will do for 1-John 5, we will take the last sermon that we did on the *Holy Spirit* series since that one covers *born again* very thoroughly. There's no use going into it here and just repeating it, because sometimes when we go through these things we cross topics so much, we end up with a situation that we can just be 'peat and repeat'—and I don't like to have things just constantly 'peat and repeat' and get stuck in a rut. That's one of the reasons why I think it's good that we go through these in-depth series, so that we don't get stuck in a rut.

1-John 5:1: "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ **has been begotten by God...**" This is telling us *the kind of belief* that it has to be; and it's telling us that it is a profound, spiritually converted point-of-view.

We will find when we come to that extra inserted verse—v 8—the comment that I put in from one of the commentaries as to why it was inserted there. George Ricker Berry, in his *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* translates all of these things 'begotten' even as we saw in 1-Peter 1, rather than 'born.'

I think we can probably understand that when they translated 'born' they were trying to get people into a situation where then they have been saved from the point of view that there's no longer anything for them to do.

1-John 3:9 (KJV): "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin..." If you are *born again* now, then you cannot sin.

- Why is that you sin?
- Is it that everything that you do is not sin?

One person confronted a neighbor concerning that because she was a 'born again' Baptist and she said, 'Well, you know even if I'm in the act of committing adultery, when the cal comes for the *rapture*, I'm going.'

It's kind of an incongruous statement, because adultery is sin. But this woman, who

thought she was 'born again,' was actually saying that whatever she does, does not amount to sin. So, that's why this *should read*:

1-John 3:9 (FV): "**Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin** because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God."

But when you come to 1-John 5 in the *King James* you're going to see that they were kind of *stuck* in translating this:

1-John 5:1 (KJV): "Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is **born** of God: and every one that loves Him that **begat...**" They had to translate that correctly because they were stuck with what you do with the rest of these Greek verbs that are 'gennao.' Can you say: 'which everyone that is born loves him that is also born of Him.' It wouldn't make any sense, so they had to use 'begot' and 'begotten.' That is really the correct translation of it:

"...loves him also that is **begotten** of Him" (v 1, KJV). If you have truly been begotten of God the Father with the Holy Spirit, you **believe** and **are believing** in a faith-saving way that Jesus is the Christ.

1-John 5:1 (FV): "...and everyone who loves Him Who begat... [the Father is the One Who *begat*] ...also loves him who has been begotten by Him. By this *standard...* [or by this *means*] ...we know..." (vs 1-2). You are to **know** that you know. And this 'know' or 'knowing' here is an experiential knowing. Because God wants us to have the love and faith and belief that we **know** that we know.

"...that we love the children of God... [I want you to notice the order of it here]: ...**when we love God and keep His commandments**" (vs 1-2). That ties right in with the things we have also seen concerning the love of God.

Verse 3: "For this is the love of God... [What will the love of God cause you to do?] ...that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."

Many people take this verse and they turn it around the other way. They figure that commandment-keeping is the love of God, rather than the love of God inspires you to keep the commandments and keep them they way that they

ought to be. We've covered that about loving God with all your heart, mind and soul and being.

Let's look at another aspect of this and see. We're going to look at the love that the Father has or Christ, and Christ for the Father.

John 3:25 "Then there arose a question *between* the disciples of John and *some of the Jews* about **purification**"—*cleansings or washings or removal of sin*. But basically 'purifying' by baptism.

Verse 26: "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.'"

We know that in John 4:1 it says that Jesus baptized more than John did, but it was the disciples who did the baptizing. It's interesting that He was making more disciples than John. You stop and think about the ministry of John, though it was to witness and warn and pave the way for the coming of Christ and His ministry, he obviously did not have very many followers—did he?—if Jesus was baptizing more than John was. Now, the reason Jesus did not personally baptize anyone is because: Just think what would happen if someone could say, 'I have a greater baptism than you. I was baptized by the Man Himself, by Jesus Christ.' So that's why He had the disciples do it. If it was done in the name of Christ it's the same as.

Verse 27: "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"..."' (vs 27-28).

One of the first things he said when he sent the committees from Jerusalem and the Sadducees and Pharisees and they came and asked him: 'Who are you?' He said, *I'm not the Christ*. They said, 'Are you Elijah?' *No, I'm not Elijah!* 'Are you that prophet?' *No, I'm not that prophet!* 'Well, who are you.' He said, *Well, I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord*.

So, he said here, reaffirming that: "...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..." (vs 28-29) This is talking about Christ and the coming bride in relationship to John the Baptist, who's a friend to 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. It is ordained that He increase, and that I decrease" (vs 28-30).

That's very interesting. John knew that he had a very short ministry. When you stop and think about the ministry of John, his ministry lasted perhaps no more than a year. *One year!* Jesus was baptizing more disciples than he was. Yet, he witnessed the Christ, and he also knew that he must decrease.

Verse 31: "He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all." We need to really understand that relationship to Christ.

Verse 32: "And what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies..." So, he's also witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ, that Christ is testifying of what He saw in heaven above, the mission that He was to do, the life that He was to lead.

"...but no one receives His testimony.... [that's what John is saying of the testimony of Christ] ...The one who has received His testimony..." (vs 32-33). If you're going to receive the testimony of Christ, and everything that that involves.

"...has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God" (vs 33-34).

He's saying that of Christ. Everything that Christ said was of the Words of God. This also applies to those whom Christ sends; that they speak the Words of God, which means that you put everything else together, all the words of God, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, etc.

"...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*.... [Christ—He has the fullness of the Spirit from the beginning] ...The Father loves the Son... [even John knew this] ...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 quite a testimony coming from John!

After the healing, John 5:16: "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 16-18).

Since we're going along here, there are several versions of this:



1. They say that Jesus transgressed the Law.

We know that transgressing the Law is sin. So if Jesus transgressed the Law, He sinned. Therefore, if He sinned, He could not be our Savior because it required a perfect sacrifice. ***We know He did not transgress the Law and sin!***

2. People say that when He broke the Sabbath He was abolishing it.

But we know that Jesus Himself said, 'Think not that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets—or that is abolish—I have not come to abolish, but to fulfill.'

3. Jesus loosed the Sabbath

—which is a much more accurate translation here. In loosing the Sabbath He was loosing it from one of the requirements that the Pharisees and the Sadducees had imposed upon Sabbath observation.

Now, the reason they accused Him of breaking the Sabbath was that He told the man to carry his little rollup bed and to walk. But we know that Jesus did not break the Sabbath. He also confounded the Jews tremendously by saying, 'My Father works and I work.' And He said this on the Sabbath. It was in present tense if you have a *King James Version*, He says: 'My Father worketh'—which means *is working*. This incensed the Jews. But there are certain things that happen, even on the Sabbath Day, that God does which, as part of His creation, is continual and ongoing, which is part of the work of God in the physical realm. Now, we'll talk about the spiritual realm in just a minute.

**Physical Realm:** He does not stop the earth from turning nor the sun from burning nor the moon from turning. All of those things function automatically by the very power of God, seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day—and how long before the creation of man those things went on we don't know. That's all part of the power of God, which then shows that the Jews who believe that you can't even strike a match on the Sabbath, or believe that you should not have heat going on, on the Sabbath, you freeze to death on the Sabbath. You honor God by freezing to death, but you get so cold you can't study and you can't pray. So, it's kind of a contradiction. How can you honor God that way? But you could have someone else do it.

**The Spiritual aspect is this:** God is doing His greatest spiritual work on the Sabbath, as exemplified by this healing, to loose a man from his sins. And loosing someone from their sins is a greater spiritual work. That's why Jesus said that. So they wanted to kill Him.

"...but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" v 18) That's exactly what 1-John 3 shows that we are going to be: 'We will see Him as He is. We will be like Him.'

Verse 19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do....' What He's really telling them is this:

- He did no sin
- He broke no law
- He did not loose the Sabbath by abolishing it so it no longer exists

What He did was ***get rid of one of the administrations of men*** that they super-imposed upon the Sabbath law which was not correct.

"...For whatever He does... [the Father is doing] ...these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son..." (vs 19-20). I want you to notice the relationship that Christ and the Father always had. It was based on love. As we have seen, you overcome sin, or you put away sin, or you can resist sin a whole lot greater and much more affectively if you're loving God. Now that's how Christ was able to endure with never sinning. The Father is loving 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" (v 20).

Again, we are going to see that the whole relationship between the Father and the Son is based upon love, and between us and Christ is based upon love.

John 10:15: "Just as the Father knows Me..." Part of the whole relationship, part of the whole process of being converted is that ***we know God***. And that this knowing God is an experiential knowledge; same way with the love of God: it is an experiential love.

"...I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 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... [because He's doing these things, Jesus said]: ...the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again" (vs 15-17).

You can imagine the tremendous love They had one for another. When Jesus said, 'I will do it, Father. I will become a human being. I will give up

everything that there is in being God so that I can become a fleshly human being.' So that the whole plan of God could go forward and be continued because of that. *Tremendous love between them!*

Verse 22: "Now it was winter, and the Feast of Dedication was taking place at Jerusalem. And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, 'How long are You going to hold us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered them, 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me'" (vs 22-25).

The reason that I'm mentioning *witness* in relationship to love as we're coming along, because when we come back to 1-John 5 we're going to see *witness* is a very important thing.

Verse 26: "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand" (vs 26-28).

If you're really following and doing what God wants, there is **no way** that you're going to lose salvation. Just like I covered, when we went through the one concerning baptism from the dead, that if you have a physical body, you have God's Spirit, this physical body is a permanent walking guarantee you're going to have a spiritual body. You can't have anything greater or closer to you as a guarantee.

Verse 29: "'My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one.' 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'" (vs 29-33).

- Who was leveling the accusation here? *The religionists!*
- Is this not the same accusation that has always been leveled against the followers of God who say they're going to be the sons of God?
- Is this not the same accusation that has always been leveled against the followers of God who say they're going to be equal to God?

Obviously, not in power, not in strength, but we're going to have the same kind of existence. We're going to be equal with God in existence. Otherwise we wouldn't be His children. So they said, "... 'You, being a man, are making Yourself God.'"

Verse 34: "Jesus answered them... [Jesus always answers the questions with Scripture and with a question] ... 'Is it not written in your law, 'I said, 'You are gods'?'"

Later the Jews changed that because back there in Psa. 82:6, it is: 'are you not Elohim?' Now remember in our study of Elohim we found that it means 'God' in the plural sense. So, He's saying here: 'Did I not say you are Elohim?' The Jews, in order to get rid of this connection with Christ, went back and modified the verse there to say, 'you are judges.' But that's not what it says in the Hebrew. "... You are gods."

Verse 35: "If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)." [that's pretty profound; that's pretty strong] ... *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"?" (vs 35-36).

Did He not tell them straightly, "... I am the Son of God." How many other times He told them we don't know. But Jesus said, 'I told you and believe not.'

Verse 37: "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" (vs 37-38)—the whole relationship there.

We'll just read it into the record, we've covered this many, many times. But I want you to understand and for us to realize that Christ's love makes it possible for the Father to love us (John 14:21).

John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. 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).

The reason He was doing all of these things was v 31: "Yet, *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me. Arise, let us go out."

All the way through this relationship of love between the Father and Son and the Son and the Father, we have also with the Father Himself loves us in many different places. We've covered that.

Let's just review John 15:9: "As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love." This is profound! I think it's interesting that if you would remove from the New Testament the Gospel of John, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John and Revelation—how much of the love of God would we really, really know? *I would have to say very little!* That's why John wrote this, because it hinges on the most important thing that he wants us to know: that is ***the love of God!***

1-John 4:4: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them..." We're going to talk about overcoming, and I want you to understand something that's very important in the relationship between how this is written in 1-John 5, in relationship to overcoming.

Here's how we overcome them—that is the antichrist, the world: "...because greater is He Who is in you than the one who is in the world."

- Satan cannot overcome you!
- People cannot overcome you!

If you have the Spirit of God ***you are going to overcome!*** Now, it may take a great deal of effort, *which it does*. And it may take some very difficult trials, *which it will*. ***But you can overcome it!***

Verse 5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception" (vs 5-6).

1-John 5:4: "Now then..." After he went through and showed the one who's loving God is loving those who have been begotten of God—and we know we're loving God when we love the children of God and are keeping His commandments. 'His commandments are not burdensome.'

Verse 4: "Now then, everyone who is begotten by God... [who is loving God] ...overcomes the world..." The more you understand about God and the more you love God and the more of the Holy Spirit that you have, the more ***you are overcoming the world!***

"...and this is the victory that overcomes the world—***our faith***" (v 4). That faith is based on the belief and the love of God.

I always like the Scripture John 16:33 where Jesus said: "In the world you shall have tribulation. ***But be courageous! I have overcome the world.***" Don't worry about it. If Christ is in you, can you overcome the world? *Yes, you can!*

Rev. 12 is very profound and fits in exactly what we've been learning as we've been going along here. Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world... [it's going to be a *mighty deception!*] ...he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God' (vs 9-10). He's there to point out every little fault and every little mistake. But we have the blood of Christ and the sacrifice of Christ to cover us.

Verse 11: "But they overcame him... [Satan the devil] (How?): ...through the blood of the Lamb..." Where was this blood sprinkled? *Symbolically in heaven above before the throne of God for the forgiveness of our sins!*

"...and through the word of their testimony..." (v 11). So, we're going to have to have some witnessing, and that means witnesses—the very message that they gave.

"...and they loved not their lives unto death" (v 11). If you wanted to add something there, which is Biblical, you could put: —***but loved God more than their own lives!***

- Because if you love God more than your own life, are you not going to be a good witness? *Yes!*
- Are you not going to give a powerful witness? *Yes!*
- Will you not fulfill what Jesus said?

He said: 'When they haul you up before the counsel don't give a thought of what you're going to think or what you're going to speak or what you're going to say. For My Father will give it to you in that hour' (Matt. 10). ***The Holy Spirit will inspire you!***

I don't know how many Stephens there are going to be in the last days, but I imagine there are going to be a lot of them. They're going to give the same kind of witness and the same kind of testimony that Stephen gave. The reason he was able to give that testimony was because he loved God more than his own life. That's how you overcome. What did Jesus say? 'He who hates his life in this world will gain it in the world to come.' Same thing.

Now let's talk a little bit about overcoming. You will notice this is an ongoing thing. **Overcoming!** Now, you love not your own life unto death, what else is it that you don't love? Here's the command:

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

This means then if the love of the Father is in you then you're not going to be loving the world. Everything that is in the world: 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pretentious arrogance of physical life'... That really is the best translation of this. The *King James* has 'pride of life.' But the 'pretentious arrogance of physical life'—and I think you can see this demonstrated more in sports and people who think they are the greatest, the most beautiful, the tallest, the strongest and whatever, ***is not of the Father, but is of the world!*** Now let's notice how that is tied in with overcoming.

Loving God and overcoming are intricately tied hand-to-hand, inner-woven, as it were, together. So, lots of times when you are not overcoming something, that's telling you that you need to grow in love. That's not to say you're ever going to be perfect in the flesh. I'm convinced God will always leave everyone of us with some haunting sin all of our lives, lest we get puffed up. But don't worry. That's covered by the blood of Christ if you're loving God.

Verse 13: "I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*.... [remember that it doesn't touch you; Satan doesn't] ...I am writing to you, little children, because you have known the Father. I wrote to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning...." (vs 13-14). Notice how much overcoming and loving and knowing God are all tied together.

"...I wrote to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*" (v 14). Here's another way to overcome: Let the Word of God dwell in you, as we saw, richly, and you're overcoming the *wicked one*, you're overcoming the world.

In studying this, I was absolutely amazed. I was truly, truly amazed that the Apostle John wrote more—was inspired to write more concerning overcoming than anyone else.

Romans 12:21: **"Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."** Again, how do you overcome?

- by doing the things which are right
- by loving God
- overcoming evil with good

Let's understand the evil that occurs that no one else knows about. Even that you can overcome. What on earth am I talking about? I'm not talking about something that you do overtly—whether known or unknown. I'm talking about the sin that is in the mind that no one knows but you, and how that Christians have that battle and they alone have it. The more you have God's Spirit the more God's Spirit ***convicts*** you of that sin in your mind. That's important. A lot of people get discouraged because they have thoughts that are not right. Some people tend to just give up and let those thoughts overwhelm them and not overcome because they are not understanding how they need to handle this.

2-Corinthians 10:3—this is very important: "For although we walk in *the* flesh...[ we're walking, we're living in the flesh] ...we do not war according to *the* flesh."

We're not using carnal, physical things to war and to overcome. And overcoming is that warring against the sin. Remember what Paul wrote about, that there is a war in his mind because of what he wanted to do and couldn't do. This is what he's talking about here.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds." ***The strongest hold is that invisible idol in your mind.*** {note sermons *Invisible Idol/Visible Man*} That's the strongest hold! If you can, with God's help, get rid of the idols in your mind then you're going to go a long way toward a greater step and greater conversion.

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations..."—that's reasonings; ***every reasoning.*** God knows that in your mind is good and evil. You want to replace the evil with the good. And of course, when you really study about how the mind functions and it becomes very important for you to realize that.

So if you *cast it down*, it says, v 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..." That's the way the carnal mind is: ***exalting itself against God!***

(go to the next track)

Here's the key, here's how to do it: "...and bringing into captivity... [overcoming and conquering] ...every thought into the obedience of Christ" (v 5). That's how you do it! With the Spirit of God, with the Word of God, that because your whole focus is on God and overcoming.

Verse 6: "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled." What does that mean? How do you avenge it?

- you repent of it
- you war against it with the Spirit of God
- you war against it with good
- you war and fight against it with love

*When your obedience is fulfilled* that's how you can overcome. It's not that you do it with any carnal, physical thing. It's from crying out to God and God's Spirit, and repentance, and loving God: ask God to replace that sin with love for Him. Ask God to replace that thought by seeing it for what it is that you want to get rid of it and place in there the Word of God.

- this is done by prayer
- this is done by study
- this is done by the Spirit of God and loving God and knowing that all of these things, then, can overcome

Verse 7: "Are you looking at things according to their appearance?..." Don't judge anything just by the outward appearance. That's why God calls the things that are not to confound the one's who think they are something.

"...If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ's, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ's, so also *are* we Christ's" (v 7).

Now let's see something else that our overcoming will be doing so we can really understand.

1. In order to be overcoming the world you have to be "begotten" of God, which means you have the Spirit of God, Christ in you.
2. You overcome evil with good.
3. You bring every thought into captivity to the obedience to Christ.
4. Then you are loving God. If you are loving God and believing God and begotten of God you are overcoming.

Here's another thing that helps us overcome, too; 1-John 5:4: "...and this is the victory... [here's

how you're going to have the victory]: ...that overcomes the world—**our faith.**" We have studied faith, hope and love; the greatest is love, but you have to have faith, too.

Verse 5: "Who is the one who overcomes the world? Even **the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God**"—ongoing believing. That becomes very important because, I think, in going through the Epistles of John, we are learning that the Church is going through the same thing today that it was doing back then—same thing! There are people who believe, who are going to be believing in all kinds of 'christs'; all kinds of sons of God or messengers from God.

The book of Revelation, believe it or not, has more about overcoming and telling us how to overcome and what we need to overcome than any other book. It has to do with the message to the Churches. Every Church has a message given to it with a special message to overcome. It also has to do with hearing. What did Paul say about hearing or listening? 'How comes faith but by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God'? So, God wants us to hear. This is a particular, special message to all the churches:

Revelation 2:7: "The one who has an ear, let him hear... [the one that is willing to listen] ...what the Spirit says to the Churches...." There's going to be special power that God is giving through His Holy Spirit so that we can overcome.

"...To the one who overcomes... [that is with our faith, with our love, with our belief, with the hope.] ...I will give *the right* to eat of the tree of life that is in *the* midst of the paradise of God" (v 7).

Verse 11: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **The one who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.**"

All this admonition to every one of the Churches. Every one of the Churches has something to overcome. I think one of the greatest mistakes that was made by a very famous person in the Church of God, he one day said, 'Well, you know I've been faithful to God so long I don't think that Satan has any more interest in me.' ***And that's when Satan got him!*** Unfortunately, that's when he got him. So we have to be constantly overcoming.

Notice it is to the Churches, v 17: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes..."—correcting all the faults and mistakes that are brought out in every one of these things: *repenting, loving, growing, overcoming!*

“...I will give *the right* to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives it” (v 17).

Verse 26: “And to the one who overcomes, and keeps **My works** unto *the* end...” There’s another way to overcome, keeping the very works of Christ.

Now, if you want an interesting Bible study sometime, write down this question on the top of a page: ‘**what are the works of Christ that I must be keeping in order to be overcoming.**’ And just study through yourself on that and see what you come up with. I think you will find that really interesting, very helpful and very inspiring, too.

“...I will give authority over the nations; and he shall shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces; as I have also received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star. **The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches**” (vs 26-29).

Revelation 3:5: “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.”

Verse 11: “Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown”—because we’re living right in a time when there’s ‘crown-snatching’ going on everywhere! It is almost unreal.

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.*”

Verse 21: “To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 21-22)—and of course, all the places where Christ says, “...he that has an ear...”

We’ll add something here, because we also have to overcome this temptation:

Revelation 13:10: “**If anyone gathers into captivity**, he shall go into captivity. If anyone kills with *the* sword, he must be killed with *the* sword...” I think that’s a warning to the church people.

Verse 9 “**If any man have an ear, let him hear.**” In other words, Christ is telling us in the end-time, when this beast power comes, don’t try and take the power in your hand to fight it, because if you do you’re going to die and maybe your death will not be the kind that Christ wants you to have.

“...Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints” (v 10)—that is they do what God says.

Let’s come to the final overcoming. And I think it’s **very significant** that John is the one who wrote about overcoming more than anything else, anyone else.

Revelation 21:7: “**The one who overcomes shall inherit all things**; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.” So, this overcoming then is based on many factors, many facets, many means, many methods, but it all gets back to spiritual warfare and overcoming the mind and overcoming those things.

### **Witness of the water, blood and Spirit**

1-John 5:6—here we come to a very controversial part of the Bible, because we have a direct insertion of Scripture, which should not have been inserted there. Now, you will notice the text of the Epistle of 1-John, I have quite a lengthy footnote. But before we get to that footnote

1 John 5:6: “This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by **water and blood**. And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is the Truth” (vs 6-7).

You’ll notice I have a double asterisk there with a footnote. I’m going to read the footnote. Now you’ll notice as you’re reading and following along with it, that there are certain abbreviations which I’ll tried to clarify as we go along.

Note: Between vv 7 and 8...six Greek MSS [MSS is an abbreviation for manuscripts]...introduce a gloss [an addition to the text not found in other manuscripts] which the AV [KJV of 1611AD] translates as, “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy {Spirit} Ghost: and these three are one.”

Now this we will see is a deliberate attempt to insert the doctrine of the ‘trinity’ within the Scriptures.

The earliest of these Greek witnesses, all of which depend on an earlier Latin tradition, can be dated to the twelfth century {1200 years}. The OL [Old Latin] is the only ancient version to include the words, and then with variations between

the MSS; but, although the evidence is not entirely clear, the passage seems to be unknown in these texts before the eighth century.

Now, that's an awful long time— isn't it? Especially when you consider that the *King James Version* of the Bible is not even 500-years old. So we're talking about 800 here.

It does not appear in Jerome's definitive edition of the Vg [the Latin Vulgate] (circa <sup>{current era}</sup> A.D. 404), even if some other MSS of the Vg contain the addition. The earliest extra-biblical writer to show knowledge of the section is the Spanish heretic Priscillian (who died circa A.D. 385), when quoting from this part of John in his Latin 'Book of Apology' (Liber Apologeticus). None of the Greek Fathers quote the words. Despite this slight MSS attestation the inclusion remained in the Vg. And also survived in the AV [KJV]. In most modern translations the words have disappeared from the text altogether.

The section, which in any case interrupts the thought of the passage, is clearly an interpolation [an addition to the original text]. Presumably it represents an attempt on the part of those who, in the third and fourth centuries, were preoccupied with understanding the doctrine of the Trinity... {that's what they were doing with all of these councils weren't they} ...to explain this text in a trinitarian manner. What may have begun...as a marginal gloss [a notation in the margin of the text] in a Latin MSS then became incorporated in the text, and was eventually translated back into the Greek in some Greek MSS" (footnote from *FV*, pg. 576). (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 51, p 273, *Word Book Publishers*, Waco, Texas, 1984).

Well, the reason this was done is because I am sure the translators of the *King James Version* of the Bible believed in the trinity. This also helps us explain the problems, as we explained going through the series of the Holy Spirit in the Bible—why they translate the Holy Spirit 'he'/'him' throughout all the *New King James Version* and the *King James Version* itself.

1-John 5:7 the way it should be: "And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is the Truth."

Here's what should follow—this is the true v 8—those words which have 'in heaven, the Father, the Word, the Holy Spirit, these three are one' is not in the text, should not be there and should be removed.

The proper v 8: "For there that three that bear **witness** on the earth..." I will then show you why I translated it the way I did. We have

v 7: bearing witness

v 8: which are bearing witness on the earth

"...**the Spirit, and the water, and the blood**; and these three... [combined] ...**witness** unto the one Truth" (vs 7-8).

I have added 'combined' and 'witness.' I'll show you why I did that.

Verse 9: "If we accept the **witness** of men, the **witness of God** is superior..."—**the Spirit, the water and the blood**.

"...For this is the **witness of God**, which He has witnessed concerning His Son" (v 9). We've got

v 7: "...the Spirit that bears **witness**..."

v 8: "...these three **witness** unto the one Truth"

v 9: "...**witness** of men, the **witness of God** is superior. For this is the **witness of God**, which He has witnessed..."

When I was pondering how to translate this, it came to me that we're talking about **witness**!

Verse 8 (*Interlinear*): "And three there are who **bear witness** on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three to the one are." That's a literal translation—and you read that and you wonder: the three are to the one what? Doesn't tell us!

Now notice, let's come to that phrase: "and the three to"—see where we are with the English word 'to'?

1-John 5:8 (*Int*)—the last phrase: "...and the three to the one [point] are..." You will notice *point* is in parentheses, and 'eis' if you look at it over the English word 'to' means *into the one point*—and the point of the whole topic is what? **witness are!** So that's why I translated it, "**...are combined into the one witness.**" I think that's the best translation that you can come up with, because that's exactly what it's talking about: *witness, witness, witness*, and it's all one witness.

Now let's look at the 'water and the blood' witness—1-John 19:34—because it talks about water and blood there.

John 19:34: “But one of the soldiers had pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water had come out.”

A lot of people say, ‘Well, that’s what it’s talking about.’ No, the water here is bodily fluid. That’s not the water it’s talking about because here we have blood and water and back here the witness is *the Spirit, the water and the blood*. It’s not talking about the bodily fluids of Jesus Christ. It’s talking about the blood of Christ, that’s for sure. But what is associated with water and Christ as a witness? *Baptism!*

John 1:29 is talking about the baptism of Jesus Christ. Now remember, John was sent to *bear witness!* The baptism of Jesus Christ *was a witness!*

John 1:29: “On the next day, John sees Jesus coming to him, and he says, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world. He is the One concerning Whom I said, “After me comes a Man Who has precedence over me, because He was before me.”.... [that actually means *existed before John*] ...And I did not know Him; but that He might be manifested to Israel...” (vs 29-31).

Now it’s interesting, some people like to say, ‘Well, Jesus and John were cousins, grew up knowing each other and played with each other.’ *Nonsense!* That is only historical fiction in the mind of the writer or speaker because he said, ‘I knew Him not.’

“...therefore, I came baptizing with water.’ And John testified, saying, ‘I myself beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon Him. And I did not know Him *before*; but He Who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, He is the one Who baptizes with *the Holy Spirit*.” And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God” (vs 31-34).

Now let’s complete the picture of the witness of the water being the baptism of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 3:13: “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I have need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?’ Then Jesus answered and said to him, ‘You must permit *it* at this time; for in this manner it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he permitted Him *to be baptized*. And after He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And lo,

a voice from heaven said, ‘**This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I have great delight**’” (vs 13-17).

I think that we overlooked the fact that God *delights* in His people. God delights in us. *God loves us!* He’s not there to run us down, to run us over, to accuse us of every sin under the sun. Who’s there trying to accuse us? *Satan is!* We’re to overcome.

- Christ is there to fight for us
- Christ is in us
- That is the **witness of the water**

What is the witness of the blood? *The blood of Jesus Christ poured out and then sprinkled, as it were, symbolically in heaven above!* But His blood pouring out on the ground was the witness that this was the Son of God. We’ll see how this was a witness when His blood poured out. What happened when He died? *Here’s part of the witness that He was the Son of God.* All of these things are to witness that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. *None other! There can be none other!*

Matthew 27:54: “Then the centurion and those with him who had been keeping guard over Jesus, after seeing the earthquake and the things that took place... [and that included the soldier who ran the spear clear up into Jesus’ innards] ...were filled with fear, *and* said ‘Truly this was the Son of God!’” *Tremendous witness!*

What is the ‘**witness of the Spirit**’? Acts 1:8—Jesus told them: “But you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the ends of the earth*.”

Verse 21: “Therefore, it is obligatory *that* from those men who have accompanied us during all *the* time in which the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John... [notice how the witness comes right back to John and then right on with Christ] ...until the day in which He was taken up from us, one of these shall become a witness with us of His resurrection” (vs 21-22).

That’s how Matthias was chosen to be a witness—and a witness is one who bears testimony, and that’s what they did. What happened on the day of Pentecost? *The witness of the Holy Spirit!* Coming to cause them to speak in the languages of those who were there to hear the wonderful works of God.

Acts 2:32: “This Jesus has God raised up, whereof **we all are witnesses**.” All the way through



they were witnessing of the resurrection. And they were doing so with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 3:13: “The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Son Jesus, Whom you delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, after he had judged to release *Him*. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and requested that a man *who was* a murderer be granted to you; and you killed the Author of life Whom God has raised from *the* dead, whereof we are witnesses. And through faith in His name, this *man* whom you see and know...” (vs 13-16).

Acts 5:29—after they were questioned to what they were doing: “But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, ‘We are obligated to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him’” (vs 29-32).

- we have the **witness of the water**
- We have the **witness of the blood**
- We have the **witness of the Spirit**

These three combine into **one witness** that Jesus is the Christ! That needs to be witnessed on earth, not in heaven.

- Does God need a witness that Christ is the Son of God? **NO! God sent Him!**
- Does Jesus need a witness? **NO!**
- Do the angels need a witness? **No, they saw what was going on, on the earth!**

So that’s why I translated this. Now, let’s go back to 1-John 5:8: “For there are three that bear witness on the earth: the **Spirit, and the water, and the blood**; and these three... [combined into one] **witness** unto the one *Truth*.... [notice how it flows right along from there] ...If we accept the witness of men...” (vs 8-9)—which was from John. Didn’t John witness and testify? If we receive the witness of the apostles, are they not men? **Yes!**

“...the witness of God is superior....” (v 9). The **witness of God** is *the Spirit, the water and the blood!*

“...For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed concerning His Son. The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself...” (vs 9-10)—that Christ is the Son of God.

How does he have the witness in himself. Because he himself has gone through the same

thing! ***Baptism for the remission of sins through the blood of Christ and you shall receive the Holy Spirit!*** So, you have Christ in you and you have the witness in you.

“...the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the witness that God has witnessed concerning His Son” (v 10). That tells you an awful lot about the religionists of this world and the other religions of the world.

Verse 11: “And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has *eternal* life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life” (vs 10-12)—in the Greek it is **the life** referring to *eternal life*. That ties in with:

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, “I am **the Way, the Truth and the Life**...”

- there is no life without Christ
- there is no salvation without Christ
- there is no salvation without *the witness of the Spirit, and the water, and the blood*

—which then we all participate in! Have we not gone through, concerning the baptism, that you’re conjoined into His death, you’re conjoined into His life, you’ve had the blood of Christ applied to you, so you have the witness within yourself.

1-John 5:13: “These things I have written to you who believe in[to] the name of the Son of God...” Now, *into* is from the Greek word ‘eis.’ And in every place where it has to do with *believing* I’ve translated it that way because our belief comes from us out into Christ and from Christ back into us—*on going, into*. When you really grasp and understand that and ask God to help you understand it and believe that way, I’m telling you, your belief and conviction will be so much more profound.

“...in order that you may **know** that you have eternal life...” (v 13).

God wants us to know this, not be in doubt. How can we be a witness to God and the resurrection of Christ if we do not **know** this? If we are in doubt? And furthermore, I also want to make it very clear that too many ministers—so I’ll put them all on notice; people accuse me of ‘minister bashing’—that’s okay, let them accuse me. I’m tired of *brethren bashing*. How dare you stand up there and threaten to take away the eternal life, **which God alone has given**, when you say that if they don’t do what you say that they’ll lose their salvation. God’s judgment is going to be upon your head. God wants us to **know**.

“...and that you may *continue to believe* in the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (vs 13-14).

Now, we like to read: *if we ask anything He hears us!* But look at that: ‘according to His will.’ Everything has to be according to His will. And God’s will is always better and greater than our will.

Verse 15: “And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, 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*. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death. We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God **keeps himself**...” (vs 15-18).

As we said about overcoming. That’s what it means: *keeping*. That means *guarding, watching over, taking care of*.

“...*by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and *that* the whole world lies in *the power of* the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, so that we may know Him Who *is* true; and we are in Him Who *is* true, *and* in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life. Little children, **keep yourselves from idols**” (vs 17-21). *Quite an ending!*

I want you to think about: ***What is a sin which is a sin unto death, that you shall not pray for?***

- 13) 1-John 2:15, 13-14
- 14) Romans 12:21
- 15) 2-Corinthians 10:3-7
- 16) 1-John 5:4-5
- 17) Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26-29
- 18) Revelation 3:5, 11-12, 21-22
- 19) Revelation 13:10, 9, 10
- 20) Revelation 21:7
- 21) 1-John 5:6-9
- 22) John 19:34
- 23) 1-John 5:8
- 24) John 5:34
- 25) John 1:29-34
- 26) Matthew 3:13-17
- 27) Matthew 27:54
- 28) Acts 1:8, 21-22
- 29) Acts 2:32
- 30) Acts 3:13-16
- 31) Acts 5:29-32
- 32) 1-John 5:8-12
- 33) John 14:6
- 34) 1-John 5:13-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 4:1
- Psalm 82:6
- John 14:21
- Matthew 10

Also Referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Holy Spirit*
- *Invisible Idol, Visible God*

Book: *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

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

Scriptural References

- 1) 1-John 5:1
- 2) 1-John 3:9
- 3) 1-John 5:1-3
- 4) John 3:25-36
- 5) John 5:16-20
- 6) John 10:15-17, 22-38
- 7) John 14:23-24, 31
- 8) John 15:9
- 9) 1-John 4:4-6
- 10) 1-John 5:4
- 11) John 16:33
- 12) Revelation 12:9-11

## Epistles of Second & Third John XII

### Confidence in Prayer & Deceivers in the Church of God

Fred R. Coulter

I hope to finish all the rest of the epistles today because 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John are not very long and the message there is kind of a recapitulation of the other, but there's some interesting things we can add to it.

We want to know, we want to understand, we want to realize *exactly* what the message is that John is telling us and that we have seen the parallels between John's time and the events in the Church and our time and the events in the Church today.

1-John 5:13: "These things I have written to you who believe..."—present tense participle—*you who are believing into*, because it's more than just 'on'; it is *into*. A relationship that God wants us to have spiritually is from your innermost being *into* Christ and back to you.

This is what is so important, and unfortunately, the *King James* translates it *unto* rather than *into*. The Greek word for *into* is 'eis'—when it's *into*; and when I come to the Greek word 'eis' I most generally translated it *into* because the relationship is not just, 'Oh, I recognize that Christ is the Son of God.' But your relationship is an involved relationship *into* Him and back to you.

Romans 1:17—and this is the whole purpose of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans: "For therein the righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith..." Faith is a gift of God that comes from God *into* you, which goes back from you *into* God, as it were. So, your relationship is a *deep, spiritual, continuous, ongoing thing* that God has given you. And that's what's important.

"...according as it is written: 'The just shall live by faith'" (v 17). That is *the righteousness* (#2), whereas the *righteousness of the Law* (#1) is the one who does them shall live in them.

1-John 5:13—you: "...who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know..." I want us to understand: how many times you find in the Epistles of John *knowing, knowing, knowing*.

"...know that you have eternal life..." (v 13). That's why it's a damnable thing for a minister to come along and try and threaten you out of eternal life. There's going to be a time when that may be a possibility that you need to be warned unto the loss of eternal life. But to continually hold people in fear that way is not right. We are to be 'knowing' on a

constant, ongoing basis that we have eternal life because of the begetting, which is the *earnest* (Eph. 1:13), which is the Holy Spirit (2-Cor. 1:22); it is the earnest of the Holy Spirit. If we have that then we know that *we have life*.

"...and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God" (v 13).

Now, let's look at some things that we need to *believe into, believe upon* and *understand* concerning the things that God has given us so that we can really understand this as we're going along. Were going to show that not only believing *into* the name of the Son of God, we are believe *into* the Father and also *into* the Son.

John 5:24: "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears My Word..."—*listening to!* As Jesus said, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.'

"...and believes Him Who sent Me..." (v 24). It's a little different in the Greek here. It means that you are actually *believing the Father*, not just upon, but you are *believing* Him. "...believes Him Who sent Me..."

So, you have to believe in the Son, you have to believe on the Father, you have to believe in the name of Christ.

"...has everlasting life and does not come into judgment; for he has passed from death into life" (v 24).

This is why a lot of the philosophers think that John is writing at their level. *He is not!* because not all of the facts are given here. You have to have the rest of the Scripture to put it together. If you have the Spirit of Life, you have the Son—*you have life!* You have passed from condemnation into the righteousness of God.

John 6:29: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God...' If anyone wants to get out and say, 'this is the work of God,' here's what Christ said it is:

"...that you believe in Him Whom He has sent" (v 29). In other words, on Christ. The Greek here is 'eis'—*into*—our relationship is *into*. Very important; that helps make it deeper. I know that just helped me a whole lot when I first understood that concept. Because you can ask a Catholic, 'Do you believe on Jesus?' *Yes!* 'But do you have a

relationship from you into Him?' *Oh no! We can't understand God. He's a trinity. It's a strict mystery.*

1-John 5:14—concerning answered prayer: “And this is the confidence...” God wants us to have confidence always: *boldness, courage, understanding!* That doesn't mean we lack in humility. That doesn't mean we think we're the greatest thing in the world, because we're not. ***But confidence in Him!***

Verse 14: “And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything **according to His will...**”

Everything we do must be according to the will of God. Sometimes the things we experience, which are according to the will of God we don't think that that's good for us. But it is in the long run, meaning you have patience and faith, and in hindsight you understand it clearly. You don't understand at first. I know some of the things we've suffered and gone through, we did not understand that, yes, God was answering our prayer. But He was answering it *according to His will*, the way He wanted it answered.

“...if we ask anything according to His will, **He hears us**” (v 14).

We also have this promise from Jesus Christ. I think that lots of times, because we have not had that real relationship *into* Christ, that many things that we have asked for have not been answered because we haven't had the confidence or go boldly before the throne of God or be willing to wait patiently for God.

John 14:13, here are the words of Christ: “And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*” (vs 13-14).

Sometimes we have to ask in such a way according to His will, and it all has to be based upon that, and sometimes in our asking we end up ***telling***—‘O God, do this. O God, do that. O God, do the other thing.’ Rather than: ‘O God, would You please.’ I know in relationship in dealing with people, lots of times what we have to do is just completely put it in God's hands and ask God to work it out the way that *He wants* it worked out. And that's what's going to have to happen. Now also notice what asking the prayer is based upon:

Verse 15: “***If*** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” It all ties together. This is really, really some good stuff.

John 15:7: “If you dwell in Me...”—which means to ***dwell and live in Christ***. That's a pretty

profound statement. You might do that, if you want a Bible study sometime—what does it mean to dwell in Christ:

- How do you live?
- What do you do?
- How is your life?

If you're dwelling in Christ: “...and **My words** dwell in you...” (v 7)—or live in you. Oh now this makes a whole different story in relationship to answered prayer. Because if the words of God are dwelling in you, that means ***the Scriptures***, and that's the thing that's so important. We must come to the independent expertise of knowing God's will so we live by it.

***The entire purpose of any ministry is to teach the brethren to become independently competent in the Word of God.*** That's what the ministry is to do. It is not to have people around to be his little followers that he can use and dictate and manipulate, because he is to teach them to have this: ***To dwell in Christ and have the words of Christ in them!***

Now we've got the ***whole*** Bible and all the tools and things we've never ever had before, to where that can be. That's my whole goal as a minister. This is what I want to do. One of my long-term goals is to make sure that we go through and study the entire New Testament in depth so that we fully understand that. That's why I do the things like this translation, so that we can really get into it. It's not that I'm trying to say that I know more than anybody else. I'm just trying to do what I feel what it is that God wants me to do in helping to really teach the brethren.

Christ says, v 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.”

God will do that! You take your worst, most terrible problem that is hanging and lingering for which you have not had an answered prayer yet, and just lay it before God and say: ‘*God, it's all in Your hands.*’ Ask God to perform ***His will***. And especially if it's involving another person, it may take a little time, but you're going to find that ***God will work it out***. We ***know*** that He hears us.

1-John 5:15: “And ***if we know that He hears us...***” That's pretty profound!

- When you pray are you sure that God hears you?
- Do you know that God hears you?
- *We should!*

*If* we're having this relationship *into* Christ, and if we have this kind of deep, spiritual relationship of loving God and loving the Father, *then* we know that He hears us. Our prayers are so much more profound. And really, when you get down to it, our prayers reveal a greater amount of helplessness on our part, because we know that only God can do it. "...we **know** that He hears us..."

"...whatever we may ask, **we know**..." (v 15). We are knowing; that's profound! We're not to guess. **We know!**

"...that we have the requests that we have asked of Him" (v 15)—*if it's according to His will!* I tell you, if you want to be guaranteed of not having a prayer answered, you pray and then get up from that prayer and say to yourself: 'Well, I wonder if God heard me?' Forget it! It's over with!

- Was that a prayer in faith? *No!*
- Was that a prayer in belief? *No!*
- Was that a prayer in confidence? *No!*

Rom. 8 tells us something about prayer. I tell you what, when you're praying and you really understand the love of God and let the Spirit of God stir you up, let God's love inspire and just uplift you, then you're prayers are going to be so much more effective. You're going to have this kind of confidence that John is talking about. God wants us to know. God wants us to have this confidence.

Romans 8:23—about us and the Spirit of God groaning in us: "And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies. For by hope we were saved..." (vs 23-24). This hope is what gives us the overcoming, and hope comes from love. **Love hopes all things!**

"...but hope that is seen is not hope..." (v 24). That's why you cannot be 'born again' now, because then you have no hope of the redemption of the body. Did you know the pagans have a 'born again' status in the flesh? Did you know that? *They do!* I'm going to cover that here in a little bit. That's why when Christ told Nicodemus, who was a *Pharisee*; who studied *philosophy*; when he was talking about *born again* there, he was directly going against the *born again* doctrine of the philosophers. I mean we have not really understood John.

"...for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience. Now, in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses..." (vs 24-26). It doesn't mean sickness,

but *weaknesses*:

- the weakness of the flesh
- the weakness of the spirit
- the weakness that we succumb to in temptation

"...because we do not fully understand what we should pray for..." (v 26). Many times, you know, that's maybe the place to start with our prayer. 'God, I really don't know what I really ought to ask for.

- help me to love You
- thank You for loving me
- please grant me Your Spirit
- give me Your strength
- help me to really pray in a way that I ought to

—we don't know how to pray—

"...but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groaning that cannot be expressed *by us*" (v 26). This is not speaking in tongues, because speaking in tongues is something that is *uttered*.

This is the spiritual communication between you and God. With this groaning that cannot be uttered is the spiritual communication that goes to God. What language do our prayers come to God in? *We don't know because the Spirit converts it into what God receives and the Spirit then makes the intercession!*

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*." Yes, so *it* makes intercession for us.

Do you really think that the fleeting thoughts about your burning cake in the oven really gets to the throne of God? Do you really think that the fleeting thought—and sometimes when you're praying you actually may have a thought in overcoming sin that you have to put down right while you're praying (and don't tell me you've never had that happen), because if you don't then you haven't been praying—that does not go to God. How do our prayers go to God?

Revelation 5:8: "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."

So, it goes to God in a spiritual form. That's why we can have that confidence. If you have the Spirit of God—which you do—you can have that

confidence. May we grow in that, and may we grow in the Spirit of God even more than we've even had an idea that we need to grow into. This is tremendous, brethren. God shows that He will intervene; ***we know!***

1-John 5:15: "...we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him."

- because it's according to His will
- the Spirit is making intercession in it
- we have Christ living in us
- we are living in Christ
- we have His Word living in us

This shows again, over and over again this is exactly what He's talking about, because it flows right along:

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." It says in the *King James* 'deed,' but the word there is 'ergon': *work, deed, endeavor or labor*, whatever. So, there is 'work' to love.

"...and in Truth..." We're going to find, especially in 2-John, he reiterates the Truth, ***the Truth, the Truth*** so much.

Verse 19: "And in this *way* we know that we are of ***the Truth***, and shall assure our hearts before Him." God doesn't want us to go around with a 'kicked in the head' feeling; a 'kicked in the stomach' feeling; a discouraged feeling, thinking God is against us, Christ is against us, the world is against us, it's all hopeless. ***Nonsense! He wants us to have confidence!***

Verse 20: "That if our hearts condemn us..." It does when you sin. Now when you sin, and know you sin, you feel bad, and your heart is condemning you. ***That's when to pray!*** I know I've done this too much, I figure, well, I'll pray about this and repent when I get straightened around. ***You're not going to get straightened around until you repent!***

- Does God know that you've sinned? ***Yes!***
- If you know, do you think God knows? ***Yes! Sure!***

All this stuff we're just kidding ourselves. And you end up with a condemnation. So God even covers this. And he says:

"...God is greater than our hearts, and ***knows all things....*** [even when you sin] ...Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God" (vs 20-21).

I want you to understand something very profound. This is what needs to be preached more

often and which has been lacking for years in our relationship in the Church and the teachings. I'll just draw your attention to the spiritual battle that Paul was relating to in Rom. 7, and the 'law of sin and death' within him. He was fighting to overcome. You do that. I do that.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is now no condemnation...*" This does not give us license to sin. ***No way!***

- because we have the battle
- because we are overcoming
- because we are yielding to God
- because we are trying to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ

***"...there is now no condemnation..."*** Why?

- Christ is our Sacrifice
- Christ is our Savior
- Christ is our Justifier

That's why there's *no condemnation!* That's why when you do sin, ***repent!*** Don't figure, 'I'll get right.' How can you get right without Christ? How can you get rid of condemnation of heart when only Christ can remove it? He tells you there is no condemnation. That's something!

- that's to uplift us
- that's to encourage us
- that's to inspire us
- that's for us to understand that in spite of the 'law of sin and death' in us:
  - ✓ God is for us
  - ✓ God wants us converted
  - ✓ God wants us to love Him more
  - ✓ God wants us to grow in grace and knowledge

That's what this is all about.

Verse 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; because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death. For what *was* impossible for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; in order that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit" (vs 1-4).

That's why we have this right here, 1-John 3:21: "Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God."

We need to understand: God does not want

us to have that condemnation. That's why going to Church and having a 'guilt trip' put on you every week is against Christ! *Absolutely and totally against Christ!* Should not be!

Verse 22: "And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight."

- Can we please God? *Yes!*
- What did Christ tell the man who gained five talents with the five? *Well done good and faithful servant!*

*Pleased with him—yes!*

- What pleases God more than anything else?
  - ✓loving Him
  - ✓believing Him
  - ✓loving Christ

*Then everything else will flow from that!*

- commandment-keeping
- getting along with each other
- overcoming

That doesn't mean you aren't going to have any problems, *you will!* You may have a passel full of them. I do!

1-John 5:16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death..." What is a sin that is sin "...not unto death..."? *The wages of sin is death!*

Verse 17: "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death." What is a sin "...not unto death..."?

- there are sins which *are eligible* for repentance
- there are sins which *are not eligible* for repentance

Did you know that? *That's right!* You go back and read the life of King Manasseh in 2-Chron. 35. My, all the stuff he did, he repented. He could repent of that; he did repent of that. I think we'll find the book of Hebrews very enlightening, and let's follow this through, because this becomes very important. We need to understand this.

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."

Sin easily besets you. Those are sins that are 'sins not unto death.' You can repent of them. Maybe it will take you some time to even recognize it, but you can repent of it; it's eligible for

repentance. We're going to see that there are sins that are not eligible for repentance.

Here's how we repent of it, 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" (vs 2-3).

- it is a battle
- it is a process
- it is a difficulty
- it does take effort

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin." *Not yet!* I have yet to anoint someone who says, 'I got this wound fighting against sin.' No we haven't!

Verse 5: "And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him.'"

So, it has to do also a sin that God is going to correct you for, and you *yield to the correction!* That is a sin, which is a 'sin not unto death.'

Verse 6: "'For whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives.' If you endure chastening... [for the repentance of sin] ...God is dealing with you as a *Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*? For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days... [our fathers in the flesh] ...in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness" (vs 6-10). That's the whole purpose of it.

Verse 11: "Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous..." I have yet to enjoy a trial. I don't! Sometimes I try to avoid it and hide from it. But you can't, because it will follow you 'wither thou goest'! *God wants you to be partakers of His Holiness!*

"...nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it" (v 11).

That means God leads you to repentance with His graciousness; it says that the ‘goodness which is the graciousness of God **leads you to repentance**’ (Rom. 2:4). And that’s part of the correction process that takes place. I’ll tell you what, the best and easiest correction is this: You yield to God and let His Word and let His Spirit correct you. **That is the easiest correction!** When He has to use trials and difficulties and other people and circumstances that are very upsetting, that is the hard way! The hardest way is to be so defiant that He must take you to the nth degree of your life. That is the hardest way, which He equates into the tribulation.

Verse 12: “Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down... [if your heart condemn you, He’s greater than your heart] ...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).

That’s what a lot of people need to do spiritually, today, with all that’s going on in the Church. When you first find out about some of these things, you get mad, you get angry, some people get bitter, some get upset, but **let it be healed!** There has to come a time of healing.

Verse 14: “Pursue peace with everyone, and Holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking diligently...” (vs 14-15).

Here’s the reason I went through all of these verses is because we have covered all the sins which are eligible for repentance—that is all the sins that you repent of and yes, even unto the heavy hand of the correction of God you repent of—and that’s what King Manasseh did, he was sent off in captivity.

“...lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and through this many be defiled... [now comes the *unpardonable sin*]: ...lest *there* be any fornicator or godless person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright; 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 15-17). For the Lake of Fire that is called ‘weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

That is the difference. 1-John 5:16. “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin **that is not unto death**...”—which we should pray for. If you see a brother sin *not unto death*, it doesn’t say he shall run to the minister and report it. **NO!** He should go to the deacon and tell him and work up his brownie points for the next ordination. **NO!** Now, I’m speaking of things we’re all familiar with.

What should you do? **If you see him do it doesn’t even say go to him. You quietly go pray. Ask God to work it out!** I know that when I sin I don’t want someone coming to me and saying, ‘Fred, guess what?’ Neither does anybody else. But I’m sure glad when someone prays. I’m sure happy when God leads me to repentance. Then you’re willing to change and repent. If you run up to the person, if you do the spy trip and report them, it will never be solved. If you run up and tell them when it’s none of your business, because sometimes the sin is just the person’s own individual business and not yours. You ask God to intervene and help, then you see God intervene and do that, that’s fine.

“...he shall ask, and He will give him life... [for the ‘wages of sin is death’] ... for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death...” (v 16)—which is the unpardonable sin, that does not qualify for repentance {see Hebrews series #29—*The Unpardonable Sin*}

“...concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication to God” (v 16).

There comes a time when God says **don’t pray**. Now, that’s pretty tough! That’s tough! God told Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 7:16: “Therefore, do not pray for this people, nor lift up cry nor prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for **I will not hear you.**”

Now, those are tough words! We’re going to see who and what that applies to with the unpardonable sin. And believe me, there are some people who are deliberately edging close to it and causing God’s people to sin, that are in danger of committing the *unpardonable sin*. When we understand that, I hope you will likewise help all the brethren you know who are being fed all of this Satanic garbage that is not true!

1-John 5:17: “All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.” This is given as encouragement:

- that we can repent
- that we can have a pure heart
- that we can have a tender heart
- that we can have an honest heart before God

Verse 18: “We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin...” Doesn’t mean you’re incapable of sinning. How do we know it means you’re not practicing sin? Let’s see exactly the whole formula that we have here with it:

1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the



darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not **practicing** the Truth”—present tense participle ‘practicing’ or ‘doing’

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the Light... [and Christ is 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”—present tense, **cleansing** from *every sin! All unrighteousness!*

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins... [which are the sins ‘not unto death’] ...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

That’s why he’s saying in 1-John 5:18: “We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God...” The *King James* says, ‘born of’ but it should be ‘begotten.’

“...keeps himself... [overcoming, guarding himself, letting the Spirit lead him] ...*by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him” (v 18).

Remember what Satan asked Christ of Peter? Christ told Peter, He said: ‘***Satan has asked for you that he may sift you [Peter] like wheat. But I pray that your faith fail not.***’ Now, Satan may come around and cause us problems, but he can’t touch us! Look at Job: Did Satan touch him? Wooo, yes, sure did!

(go to the next track)

“...and the wicked one does not touch him” (v 18). In other words, we are put in this covenant, into a state that God will—all these factors combined—give us the overcoming.

We know Satan is after us. We know Satan will persecute us. ***But he can’t touch us to take away eternal life!*** That’s what it’s talking about.

Revelation 12:10: “And I heard a great voice in heaven say, ‘Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb... [through the forgiveness of sin] ...and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death’ (vs 10-11).

So, even though you die! If you die or as martyr or testifying or if you die resisting sin, Satan is going to be right there and say, ‘Look what I did.’ But Christ is going to say, *Oh, no! You didn’t even lay a hand on him!* ‘The wicked one touches us not!’

1-John 5:19 is very important and does tie in, which is a sin, which is ‘a sin unto death,’ which you should not pray for.

1-John 5:19: “We know that we are of God...” Part of the sin, which is the ‘sin unto death’ is to come to the people of God and say: ‘You don’t know God. He is a mystery, you can’t find Him out.’

Verse 20: “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding...” This means the spiritual comprehension and insight that we can experience no other way but by His Spirit.

“...so that we may know Him Who *is* true... [the Father] ...and we are in Him Who *is* true...” (v 20).

Notice all the way through here: ***knowing, true, truth.*** When we get to 2-John we will see that repeated in a very profound way because it’s important. That’s why with the Word of God and the Truth of God we need to know this as never before. “...and we are in Him Who *is* true...”

“...and in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life” (v 20).

- ***No other way!***
- ***No other person!***
- ***No other means!***
- ***No other method!***
- ***No other doctrine!***

John 20:30: “Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book.” I’ve often wondered what they are.

John 21:25 “But there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I do not suppose that even the world itself could contain the books that would be written. Amen.”

What Jesus did was most profound, that was something! So, He says many other things.

John 20:31: “But **these have been written so that you may believe...**” That ties right in with 1-John 5:

- we are to believe
- we are to know
- we are to act upon that
  - ✓ in faith
  - ✓ in confidence
  - ✓ in strength
  - ✓ in every way of God

“...that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name” (v 31).

Now that’s exactly what we are seeing right here in 1-John 5:

- v 13: “...that you may know...believe in the name of the Son of God...”
- v 14: “And this is the confidence...”
- v 15: “...we know that He hears us...”
- v 19: “We know that we are of God, and *that* the whole world lies in *the power of* the wicked one.” ***The whole world!***

*note these verses:*

- Eph. 2:1-3—the prince of the power of the air; the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one
- Rev. 12:9: deceiving the whole world
- Eph. 6:11-16: that there are wicked spirits in high places

They run this world. That’s why any political reform is doomed to failure, because ***Christ alone can reform it***. The return of Christ alone can do it and bring it.

1-John 5:20: “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, so that we may know Him Who *is* true; and we are in Him Who *is* true, *and* in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life.”

Now, if anyone wants to know is Christ God, yes there it is right there, without a doubt! He is the true God!

Verse 21: “Little children, keep... [that is guard] ...yourselves from idols. Amen.”

Of course, he wrote this from Ephesus, which was the capital city for the goddess Diana. The goddess Diana was double sexed—male and female. And when you look at the Statue of Liberty you will look at her and you will see very masculine features. The one who did that and gave it to us knew exactly what he was doing; the double-sexed goddess, who is holding the light. We have been Babylonianized. Just like Solomon Babylonianized Israel of old.

## **Second Epistle of John**

We can go through this a little quickly. Then we’ll see if we can finish up with 3-John, which is even just about the same length. They say that the length of this epistle was about the length of a sheet of papyrus. Let’s notice that in 1-John we are told

that there were the *antichrists who were leaving*. Now we are talking about antichrists in the

The Church is further disintegrating—it’s reach another stage of disintegration. When we come to 3-John we find that the Church is literally exploding and rejecting John and whatever the other apostles may have been living.

2-John 1: “The elder...” Now notice he doesn’t make any great to-do over his apostleship. He doesn’t make any great to-do over the fact that Jesus Christ was the One that loved him, other than an oblique passing statement two times in the Gospel of John, that’s it. Other people I know would brag about it—right? *Yes!*

He doesn’t say what a great age he was. He doesn’t say how faithful he was to God all of his life. He just simply says, “The elder...” All elders are elders. All functions they do vary from being:

- apostles sent
- evangelizing evangelists
- pastoring pastor
- teaching teacher
- just a help

But they are all elders. I think if we really understood that and applied it the way that it should be, then we would have much greater peace and understanding within the Church. *Rather than leading to a disrespect of ministers, it would lead to a greater respect of ministers* because the ministers are not putting themselves in high, exalted positions. Rather they are relying on the Spirit of God and the love of God and the knowledge of the Word of God to teach the brethren to grow. That way then there is the true love and true respect. I see it here in John and writing this.

“...to *the* chosen lady...” Some people say this may have been the aged Mary, the mother of Jesus—possible. But I think it’s to the Church in general.

“...and her children, whom I love in Truth, and not I alone, but also all those who have known the Truth; for *the* sake of the Truth that is dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever” (vs 1-2).

Notice how he finishes the Epistle of 1-John 5:20:

- so that we may know Him Who *is* true
- we are in Him Who *is* true
- He is the true God

Now notice what he starts out 2-John 1-2:

- the Truth

- in the Truth
- have known the Truth
- of the Truth which is dwelling in us

So, we get the Truth from the true God! If you don't have the true God or you don't have the true nature of God, *you don't have the Truth!* That's what he's emphasizing. This is what he's combating here.

2-John 3: "Grace, mercy, *and* peace shall be with us from God *the* Father, and from *the* Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, *in truth and love.*" He's emphasizing this *truth* all the way through. This is profound!

"...and love..." (v 3). ***God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son!*** And that is Truth! All of this ties together; this is really something here.

Verse 4: I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking in Truth..."—***living*** in the Truth.

1-John 1:7: "...we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light..." Truth, Light, life and true God all together vs hatred, lies and deceivers.

From vs 3-7 John is talking to the Church to keep them together in a time when the Church is disintegrating and there are antichrists out there.

That's why he's saying 2-John 4: "I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking in Truth, exactly as we received commandment from the Father." That means everything that the Father has commanded. You can go back and tie in John 14-17—those are the words of the covenant, those are the words from God the Father, from Christ to us.

Verse 5: "And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have *observed* from *the* beginning, that we love one another." Again, *loving, walking, commandments, truth* and should be *loving one another*. Go back and see how many times John says we should be loving one another.

When we're loving one another—and it's not the kind of razzmatazz club of love (if you understand what I mean). If you belong to the Elks, they love you as long as you belong to the Elks and bow down to their horned idol in the middle of their services. This love is because you have the Spirit of God, because you love God and this is ***true*** love.

1-John 2:7: "Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment, which you had from *the* beginning; the old commandment is the message that you have heard from *the* beginning." Which is:

- the love of God
- the Truth of God
- Christ died for our sins
- the whole Gospel

That's the whole Gospel message.

Verse 8: "Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining." So that we *may be walking in the Light; walking in the Truth!*

Verse 9: "Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now.... [the opposite of love, which is hate] ...The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes" (vs 9-11).

You put that together back here with what he says in 2-John about walking in the Truth, walking in the commandment, in order that you may be walking in it.

2-John 7, comes the warning: "Because many deceivers have entered into the world..." Not just a few antichrists who have left us, now ***many*** deceivers have entered into the world. What do you mean, 'entered into the world'? Where did they come from? *They came from the Church of God!* Now you think on that for a minute. They are part of the *tares* (Matt. 13).

"...those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is *the spirit* of the deceiver and the antichrist" (v 7).

Have you not heard things that Jesus was not in the flesh as we're in the flesh? ***That is antichrist!*** To be believing the Truth and believing the Father and believing that Christ came in the flesh means you believe the Truth concerning that Jesus was God before He became flesh.

- He was not the thought of God incarnated in the flesh
- He was not the first created being of God in the flesh
- ***He was God in the flesh***—as much as the flesh can handle God in the flesh

That's what it means here: "...that Christ has come in the flesh..." if they're not confessing that. Now, when someone says, 'Oh I believe He came in the flesh as a human being'—you need to ask them, 'Now what kind of flesh are you talking about? Like

you and me?' *Oh, no!* Well, then he's not confessing that Christ has come in the flesh.

Verse 8: "Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished... [we need to be diligently building up in love, faith and service] ...but *that* we may receive a full reward."

How do you receive the full reward? *Paul tells us very clearly that we are to build on the foundation of Jesus Christ!*

1-Corinthians 3:12: "Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones..."

We would have to equate love with gold; silver with hope; precious stone with faith. 'Faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.' But if we build with gold, silver and precious stone.

Verse 13: "The work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of *trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is. If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward (vs 13-14).

John says 'the full reward.' The **full** reward, the complete thing! That's what's important. 2-John 8: "...but *that* we may receive a full reward. Anyone who transgresses... ['sin is the transgression of the law'] ...and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ **does not have God**..." (vs 8-9).

They may know about His name, they may use His name, but do they have God **in them**? That's another whole story. Given enough time and given enough space and given enough experience **it will become evident**. We have a guarantee that it will. It's called: '**out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks**.' Sooner or later the lie will come!

Verse 9: "Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."

You've got to have both. We'll talk about denying the Father and denying the Son and how that is an unpardonable sin when it's taught.

Verse 10: "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine..."—doctrine/teaching is important. The true teachings of Truth and love and faith and hope and obedience and commandment-keeping and all of that is important!

"...do not receive him into *your* house..." (v 10). He had to now give some instructions that there were people who had gone so far out, don't even have them in your house and don't even say greetings because if you do, you're partaking of their evil deeds.

I'll give you a nice, interesting quote. Someone said to those who were on the doctrinal board of a rather large Church of God: What do you believe concerning the nature of God? 'Oh, that's not important now, we will tackle that in January.' **He who has ear to hear—you better hear!** Because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth is going to speak and the lie is going to come—guaranteed! All of those of you who follow that, you're going to hoodwinked again. So you better watch out!

Verse 11: "For anyone who says, 'Welcome!' to him is partaking in his evil works. I have many things to write, but I do not wish to *convey these things to you*... [that is right now] ...with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face..." (vs 11-12). The Greek there is 'mouth-to-mouth'—I'm going to sit down and I'm going to eye-ball you; face-to-face, mouth-to-mouth. So we know what it's all about.

"...in order that our joy may be **completely full**" (v 12).

Let's show how that ties right in with what he was writing. God wants us to have the joy of the Holy Spirit. Look the world's bad enough; times are bad enough, and overcoming is tough enough. Why not have some joy in this—huh? *Yes!* And that comes from knowing the Truth, knowing the peace of God, knowing the mercy of God, the love of God and the Spirit of God in you. That brings you the joy, but here's what really brings the joy:

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... [this is the way it is in the Greek] ...—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ. These things we are also writing to you, so **that your joy may be completely full**" (vs 3-4)—all of us together have the joy of God. That's something!

2-John 13: "The children of your chosen sister salute you. Amen."

### **Third Epistle of John**

3-John shows where the Church is disintegrating and they're even fighting in the pulpit. Fights in the pulpit? *Yes*, someone's going to get up and speak but they cut off the sound system so he can't speak. That's what's happening here. Here the Church is literally exploding! Now he's conveying his information from visits and so forth.

3-John 1: "The elder to Gaius..." John is writing to an individual minister in this particular case. Gaius means *joy in the Lord*.

“...the beloved, whom I love in Truth” (v 1). That’s what’s so good about the Truth. You don’t have to have an agenda. You don’t have to have a front to block off what people are doing. Save that for the world. But for the brethren:

- God wants us to be open
- God wants us to be loving
- God wants us to be unassuming
  - ✓thinking no evil
  - ✓speaking no evil
  - ✓hearing no evil

and if you’re loving God and doing that, you will.

That’s why it such a joy. Wait until you get to the Feast of Tabernacles. Last year was *such a joy!* I mean that last day you could just feel God’s Spirit right there in the whole auditorium. If there was ever one time that we were filled with the Spirit of God, the mind of God, the happiness of God, the joy of God *that was it!* I have never experienced anything like that in all the years I’ve been a minister. But God wants us to experience that. *In the Truth!*

Verse 2. “Beloved, I [John] personally am praying for you [Gaius], that in all respects you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul is prospering.” That is spiritually speaking, and he better with all the fighting and battles going on.

Verse 3: “For I rejoiced exceedingly at the coming of *the* brethren *who* testified of you in the Truth...” How you are walking in the Truth—and that means ‘living’ in the walk of life, the way of the Lord. It’s called ‘the way of the Lord,’ so you’re walking in the Truth. Notice again: *Truth!*

Let’s look at 2-John:

- v 1: Truth
- v 2: Truth
- v 3: Truth
- v 4: walking in the Truth

and then we have:

- love
- walking in the commandments

Then again he reiterates it over here that you’re

- walking in the Truth
- whom I love in the Truth

By time you circle all of those and connect those together, it’s something—isn’t it?

Verse 4: “...I am hearing—that my children are walking in the Truth.”

Someone just mentioned that Truth is mentioned 80 times between Acts and Revelation—

that’s profound! That is profound! Get out your handy-dandy concordance and study it, if you haven’t. *It is profound!*

That’s why, brethren, when you take the Truth of God and exchange it and turn it into a lie—once you have known the Truth—that is damnable! Damnable! *Damnable! Damnable!* I said it three times; Paul only said anathema twice. So, you know.

- Do we think that we’re going to get into the Kingdom of God without Truth?
- Do we think that we’re going to support the Truth of God with lies?
- Fables?
- Mysteries?
- Philosophies?

*that aren’t true!*

Listen, every one of these philosophers admit they were demon inspired. No wonder they ended up worshipping Satan the devil.

3-John 5: “Beloved, you are faithfully practicing...”

Philippians 2:12, Paul says: “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.”

God is not going to give you salvation just because you’re good in the presence of a minister. Trust me, it won’t work! You’ve got to be faithfully practicing it as a way of life, living and walking in it.

3 John 5: “...whatever you have been doing for the brethren and for strangers... [it’s an all inclusive statement here] ...who have testified of your love before *the* Church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God” (vs 5-6). Those are the ones who are traveling and carrying the messages and bringing the epistles and so forth.

Verse 7: “Because for the *sake of His* name they went forth *preaching*, taking nothing from the Gentiles. For this cause, we are personally obligated to receive *those who do such service*, in order that we may be **fellow workers in the Truth**” (vs 7-8).

Now then, the second half of this epistle is another warning—which is quite astonishing.

Verse 9: “I wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes, the one who loves to be chief among them, does not accept us.” Did they actually end up kicking out the Apostle John? *Sounds like it!*

Remember what Jesus said? *The time is coming when they’re going to kick you out of the*

*synagogues. They're going to beat you. The time is coming when they kill you. They are going to think they are doing service to God!*

Unfortunately, a lot of brethren have been killed via the disfellowshipment—by political means. What we're seeing here with Diotrephes is a political action, which is not of God.

Isaiah 66:5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word..." That ties right in with:

- walking in the Truth
- keeping the Truth
- loving the Truth
- keeping the commandments

"...‘Your brethren who hated you...’" (v 5)—which are as John said, ‘the brethren that hate you are not the true brethren of God.’

"...who cast you out for My name's sake, said, "Let the LORD be glorified."... [they did it in the name of God] ...But He will appear to your joy... [you who have been kicked out] ...and **they will be ashamed**!" (v 5). Have you experience that? *Yes, indeed!*

3-John 10: "Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account... [bring to remembrance] ...for the actions... [he's going to come and confront him face-to-face] ...that he is practicing with evil words..."—**bringing unjustified charges against us!** Why they're not accepting this 'new truth' of this great new philosophy—**which is of the antichrist!**

"...maliciously berating us; and he is not satisfied with these things, *for* he himself neither receives the brethren, *nor does he permit* those who wish to receive the brethren, *but* he forbids *them* and casts *them* out of the Church" (v 10).

Standing up there in the name of God saying: 'Brethren, you are not to talk to this person. I have disfellowshipped this person. Don't ask me why I disfellowshipped him, but I did.' *A political disfellowshipment!* Sure enough, as dutiful little brethren, what do they do, they avoid that person and turn their discouragement into overwhelming sorrow, that if you even pass by on the street you don't even say, 'Hello, how are you?' I know there may be many, many, many brethren that way. If you know any, you pick up the phone and you ask them, 'How are you?' See if you can help bring them back to Christ. You can do that because you know better. We'll do what we can here to help them and inspire them.

Verse 11: "Beloved, do not imitate that which *is* evil; rather, *imitate* that which *is* good. The

one who practices good is of God; but **the one who practices evil has not seen God.**"

Now, that's quite a statement there because I assume that many of them were saying, 'Well, I've seen the Lord, I've seen God, in bringing these doctrines.' But if they're practicing evil they haven't seen God.

Verse 12: "We have received testimony from everyone on behalf of Demetrius..." Here you have a minister who is following the Truth in Gaius, you had one that wasn't in Diotrephes, and then you had another one who was in Demetrius.

"...and from the Truth itself..." (v 12). That's how you're going to know—*by the Truth!*

- Do they love the Truth?
- Do they believe the Truth?
- Do they preach the Truth?
- Do they walk in the Truth?

That's how you're going to know!

"...and we also bear witness, and you know that our witness is true. I had many things to write, but *now* I will not write *them* with ink and pen" (vs 12-13).

He must have had a lot of his letters censored. He must have. To do these short, one pagers and say, 'I've got a lot of things to write, but I'm not going to.'

So they must have the 'King Jehoiakim knife,' when the message of Jeremiah came to Jehoiakim he was sitting in his winter house before the fireplace and took his knife and cut it out and burned it. And so God told Jeremiah, He says, 'You get Baruch and you tell Baruch those same words and you write a special message for Jehoiakim. He has had it. He's going to die because he didn't believe these words.'

Verse 13. "I had many things to write, but *now* I will not write *them* with ink and pen; for I hope to see you shortly, and I will speak with you face to face. Peace *be* to you. *Our* friends salute you. Salute the friends by name" (vs 13-15)—and **no 'Amen'**

We've never been able to figure out why no 'Amen.' There is in 1-John. There is in 2-John. And we find there are a total of three books in the New Testament, which do not have an 'Amen': Acts, James and this one. I think we have plausible explanation for James, which Carl Franklin reiterated, which I think is undoubtedly true. He feels that the Epistle of James was a cover letter for the book of Hebrews, because no one in Jerusalem would accept any writing of Paul. If any writing

were known to have come from Paul it would have been burned on sight without even being opened.

That's why there is no indication as to who wrote Hebrews. That's why it is that the theology of Paul, but the writing of Luke, because Paul dictated it to Luke and I think Carl is right that that was sent then to James and James put the cover letter on it and sent it out to all of them. Now that's the only rational explanation I can find for no 'Amen' in James. I can't tell you with Acts except that it was deliberately left out. And this one I don't have a clue.

One possible explanation is that Acts wasn't finished with 'Amen' because the acts of the saints is not done, yet. However, those who thought they were going to write in it, I don't think they're going to have much writing in it myself. Wait until the whole history is done from then until the return of Christ.

Maybe there was no 'Amen' here because John wanted us to know that this would be a continuing problem all down through history. When you get to the book of Romans there are three 'Amens'—because he edited that so much that he had three 'Amens' on the end of it. I can tell where he added phrases into it, to make it clearer.

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

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#### Also referenced: Sermon Series:

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