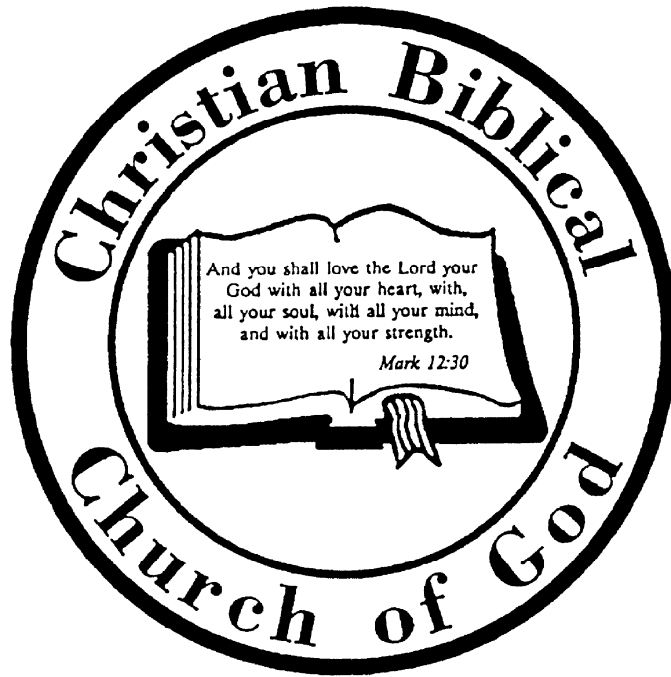


# **General Epistles First & Second Peter and Jude**



**Transcript Book**

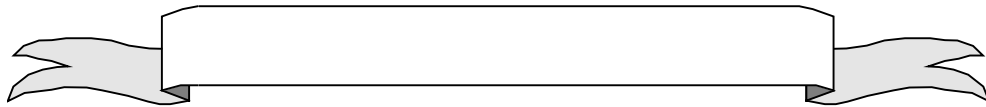
By Fred R. Coulter

© 2016  
Fred R. Coulter  
Christian Biblical Church of God  
P. O. Box 1442  
Hollister, California 95024-1442

*All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.*

# DOCUMENT *of* COMPLETION

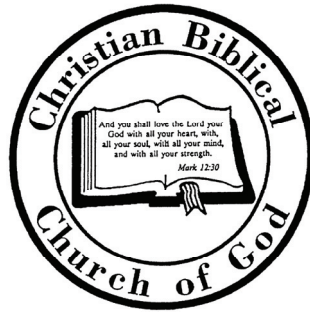
THIS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT, I



HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

## 1st & 2nd Peter & Jude

Series of 23 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #1	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #2	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #3	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #4	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #5	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #6	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #7	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #8	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #9	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #10	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #11	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #12	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #13	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> First Epistle of Peter #14	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter #1	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter #2	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter #3	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter #4	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter and Jude #5	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter and Jude #6	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter and Jude #7	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter and Jude #8	Date completed _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second Epistle of Peter and Jude #9	Date completed _____

# Contents

## Booklet

	PAGE
First Epistle of Peter I -----	1 – 10
First Epistle of Peter II-----	11 – 19
First Epistle of Peter III-----	20 – 27
First Epistle of Peter IV -----	28 – 39
First Epistle of Peter V -----	40 – 51
First Epistle of Peter VI-----	52 – 59
First Epistle of Peter VII-----	60 – 68
First Epistle of Peter VIII -----	69 – 80
First Epistle of Peter IX-----	81 – 91
First Epistle of Peter X -----	92 –101
First Epistle of Peter XI-----	102–112
First Epistle of Peter XII-----	113–124
First Epistle of Peter XIII -----	125–132
First Epistle of Peter XIV-----	133–145
Second Epistle of Peter I-----	146–157
Second Epistle of Peter II-----	158–168
Second Epistle of Peter III-----	169–180
Second Epistle of Peter IV -----	181–190
Second Epistle of Peter and Jude V -----	191–199
Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VI -----	200–211
Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VII-----	212–222
Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VIII-----	223–234
Second Epistle of Peter and Jude IX -----	235–244

## **Compact Disc I**

*[When included]*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Tracks 21 & 22 First Epistle of Peter XI**

**Tracks 23 & 24 First Epistle of Peter XII**

**Tracks 25 & 26 First Epistle of Peter XIII**

## **Compact Disc II**

*[When included]*

**Tracks 1 & 2 First Epistle of Peter XIV**

**Tracks 3 & 4 Second Epistle of Peter I**

**Tracks 5 & 6 Second Epistle of Peter II**

**Tracks 7 & 8 Second Epistle of Peter III**

**Tracks 9 & 10 Second Epistle of Peter IV**

**Tracks 11 & 12 Second Epistle of Peter and Jude V**

**Tracks 13 & 14 Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VI**

**Tracks 15 & 16 Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VII**

**Tracks 17 & 18 Second Epistle of Peter and Jude VIII**

**Tracks 19 & 20 Second Epistle of Peter and Jude IX**

# **General Epistles First & Second Peter and Jude**

## ***Foreword***

This book is composed of 23 sermon transcripts that were given by Mr. Fred R. Coulter, a minister of Jesus Christ for over fifty years, that covers what Peter and Jude taught concerning the Will of God and God's Church. There are many admonitions for those who would belong to Christ and live their lives as much as they can in harmony with the Will of God. There are also stern warnings for those who would take God lightly. The reader will be able to discern, upon finishing this transcript book, what God had said to them through the books of Peter and Jude.

The first transcript, "Epistle of First Peter I," introduces the basic teachings of the first book of Peter. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Warnings are given about the transition from the true religion of God into the false religion that is present in the world today in the books of II Peter, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude.
- Jesus had brothers and sisters, and Catholics are averse to this truth.
- The Apostle Peter was married as well as some of the other Apostles.
- The Apostle Peter had a good understanding of human nature.
- Peter had, among the apostles, a leadership position. James (the son of Zebedee) and John also were leaders.
- Later in the Church the brother of Jesus Christ named James became the central leader of the Jerusalem church. The second brother of Jesus, Jude, authored the Book of Jude.
- There cannot be a situation where nobody is in charge. Peter was a leader, but he tended to be impetuous.
- The three disciples, Peter, John, and James (the son of Zebedee) were used in a more particular and personal way by Christ than the others.
- Luke 16:18 shows that it was not Peter that was going to build the church, but rather it was Christ Who said, "I will build MY church..."
- Peter was not the pope. In Galatians 2:11-12 it is seen that the Apostle Paul withstood the Apostle Peter—correcting him of sinning. No infallibility given here to Peter.
- The world tries to hold out success and riches and wealth and prestige as the greatest things in life all the while downplaying the receiving of the Spirit of God.

The second transcript, "Epistle of First Peter II," covers more of I Peter and how it fits into all the rest of the Gospel and the Word of God. Some of the major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- The two verses of I Peter 1:1-2 is an entire summary of the Gospel. The entire book is on hope—the hope of God.
- Protestants wrongly teach that people are "born again" now in this physical life. God is a spirit and if one is born of the spirit, they are spirit-composed of spirit. Also, what begets one is not just the Word of God alone, but God's Holy Spirit from God the Father.
- What makes people Holy is God's Spirit in them and God's calling.
- God is a personal God.
- If a person is sanctified by the Spirit, they will be led to obey God.

The third transcript, "Epistle of First Peter III," is a continuation of the previous study with more teaching on being born again. Some of the major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Reuben was the firstborn of Israel, but Reuben's birthright was given to the sons of Joseph. Note that Reuben was the firstborn of Leah and Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel.
- Protestants think that they can, once they have accepted Christ, do anything that they want to.

- The entire Epistle of I Peter is meant to get the reader to get their mind on Christ, on serving God, and keeping their mind there.
- Anything that is of the earth, that is physical, is corruptible. Only things in heaven are incorruptible.
- Man, in a physical life, is not made to go out into the heavens. Man does not exist well when away from the earth—man is truly earth-bound. Man can fool himself by playing with his technology, but the truth is that man is simply bound to the earth—cannot live away from it.
- People must choose, upon being called, to be in the Kingdom of God. No one is going to beat anyone into the Kingdom of God against their will.

The fourth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter IV,” gives much attention to hope, faith, grace and obedience. Some of the major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- How amazing it is that the Gospel of Christ in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter and of Paul all agree. There is no conflict one with the other even though, maybe on the surface when you read a verse or two, it may appear that there is a conflict.
- God puts His called into situations that they do not like and relationships that they do not necessarily want, and sometimes with their own family so that they can learn self-control.
- Human nature in mankind is the strongest thing in life.
- Those called of God must never give up on overcoming sin.
- Those called by God, who have accepted the calling, are all brothers and sisters with Christ within the Church. They are not in a brother/sister relationship with people in the world, but they are in a neighbor-to-neighbor relationship. A neighbor-to-neighbor relationship is not a close family relationship.
- Love looks straight at things the way they are and does not pretend things are different. It handles everything the way it really is.
- Christ did not like a lot of people, but He showed His love to them in what He did and how He conducted Himself.

The fifth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter V,” is a continuation of the previous transcript study, with a noting about obedience to God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- The original order of the seven general epistles coming before the writings of Paul was important in that these seven books (James, 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> John, and Jude) provide the reader with the very basics of Christianity which enables understanding the more difficult writings of the Apostle Paul.
- The apostles stated that it is more obligatory to obey God than to obey men.
- The Holy Spirit is given only to those who obey God.
- Understanding about love comes from seeing how bad it is without love.
- Mankind does not want religion to obey God unto salvation but rather so they can live a better life—all the while wanting to be saved by their own way and not God’s way.
- God’s love has three main conditions: (1) Obey God’s Voice! (2) Repent of your rebellion against God! and (3) Believe what God says!
- Satan’s greatest work of deception is not done in the overt things of witchcraft and séances but rather in doctrinal committees. In these committees Satan presses well-founded arguments to discredit the truth.

The sixth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter VI,” is a review of several key verses in Peter chapter 1. Then a continuation of the previous transcript study regarding Peter chapter 2, with a noting about obedience to God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- A person’s absolute, deep, profound and eternal spiritual belief in God and Jesus Christ and to what They have called us for is their faith.
- True servants, true ministers of God point the people of God to God and not to themselves.
- The people of God know that men can take their lives, but God can resurrect them to eternal life.

The seventh transcript, “Epistle of First Peter VII,” is a brief review of the important things previously covered in former transcripts as well as new information on why God leaves the wicked prosper. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- An explanation of the Greek verb called middle voice.
- Spiritual sacrifices include prayer, study, helping the brethren, worshiping God, and meditating on God's Word.
- A reason that discouragement can continue is because one is not praying when they need to pray.
- God is kind to the world. He does not just knock down immediately everybody for everything they do that is wrong. He gives time for repentance.
- If one belongs to God the Father there is nothing that anyone can do to you to take you out of His hands—NOTHING!
- You cannot build anything for God, you cannot make anything to give God because God has made everything. The greatest gift that any man can give God is to love God and believe God!

The eighth transcript, "Epistle of First Peter VIII," does a review of what was covered in I Peter chapter 2 in the previous transcript. A study is then done of the remainder of I Peter chapter 2. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- There are people that wrongly claim that we are now having the experience of the "Kingdom of God" – people are not in the Kingdom of God at this time and cannot until Christ returns.
- The Old Covenant died with the death of Christ---though there was a forty-year overlap between the ending of the Old Covenant and the complete desolation of the temple.
- A warning is given to restrain yourself from indulging in fleshly lusts as these lusts war against the soul. Fulfilling fleshly lusts destroy the soul.
- One loving the world does not have the love of the Father in them. A way to combat fleshly lusts is not to do like the world does, not to be like the world, not to act like the world, not to talk like the world, not to sound like the world, and not to desire the things that are in the world.
- One loving the Father wants to be clothed from above. Let God's Spirit lead one in heart, mind and attitude—live by God's laws and commandments. In this way one will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.
- Those that hate Christ hate the Father also.
- One that loves Christ follow Him on His terms!
- The body of Christ and the blood of Christ are for physical healing and for spiritual healing.

The ninth transcript, "Epistle of First Peter IX," reviews I Peter chapter 2 along with emphasizing what a Christian is called to be. Relationships between men and women are discussed. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Today, within the Churches of God, there are many difficulties and problems. These stem from strange ministers not speaking the voice of God but rather speaking strange teachings that are not from God.
- In marriage women are told to submit unto their husbands. There cannot be two masters in the marriage covenant.
- It is not good for a man to live without a wife because a man will never learn to truly love by living alone.
- The very physical being of women is weaker than men. Women are to be subordinate to the man.
- The very nature of man and woman is in their creation by God. All variant and deviant sex acts are going against the very nature of God and no one is going to inherit the Kingdom of God by going against the creation of God!
- The whole purpose of man is to love God in the way that God wants loved and to love each other in the way that God wants done.

The tenth transcript, "Epistle of First Peter X," is concerned with the instruction by Christ for His brethren to be of one mind, to be sympathetic with each other, loving each other, and not rendering evil for evil. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Satan has a counterfeit way of God's way. God's way is to love and obey God in a personal individualized relationship. Satan teaches that all are to become robots and all join the organization, and all follow the organization's leader all the way, to death itself.

- The teaching of brethren should get guns and be on guard against people and if people come against them to shoot them is NOT a teaching of Jesus Christ—this is opposite of the teachings of the Bible. “Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense,” says Christ. You are to get out of the way.
- When a person says to God that God is to have their whole life and then a man steps in and puts himself between that individual and God, leverages that dedication to God to himself—saying ‘follow me’ under all costs—that is not to be done.
- When does life begin—it begins at the instant of conception?
- Christians are to love people whether they’re called or not called. All people, what they really want, is to be accepted and loved. God has given the freedom of choice to every human being—and there is no law against stupidity.
- God will answer people’s prayers to Him, even if He has not called them, but because they asked in faith, He answered them. Whatever is asked must be legal, it must be lawful, it must be right.

The eleventh transcript, “Epistle of First Peter XI,” explains how God is there to hear, there to help, and there to watch over those seeking Him. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- People need to realize that God is (1) there to hear, (2) there to help, and (3) there to watch over one.
- When the general society does not follow the precepts of the Word of God you end up with many people trying to establish their own righteousness.
- It is not in the very nature of people to love their enemies unless they have the Spirit of God. God requires love of enemy, love of Him, love of neighbor, and love of brethren—God’s Spirit makes all these possible.
- A Christian must not let the world intimidate them. They must not be intimidated by circumstances and they must believe what they believe without the world setting their beliefs for them.
- Because a Christian is relying on Christ, Christ then can rule in their mind and heart.
- The angels who rebelled, who became the demons, were not willing to accept what God had in mind for them. It very well may have happened then as in the Church of God where a hierarchy is set up, the hierarchy says trust me, and those under the hierarchy puts their trust in the hierarchy instead of in God.
- If people are faithful to God, if they love God, if they respond to Him, then they will be approved by God. God will reward them.
- The preaching of there going to be an ‘unseen’ hand from somewhere which is going to save the world is not preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ but rather is the preaching of another gospel.

The twelfth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter XII,” covers how the sacrifice of Christ triumphs over sin. Other books of the Bible are also examined regarding as to how Christ’s sacrifice, with Christ now at the right hand of the Father, enables one to be justified before the Father. The intention of God is for mankind to develop the mind of Jesus Christ in them. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- With Christ shown as being at the right hand of God the Father symbolizes the utilizing and having the very power of God Himself available.
- Christ can understand all sin that mankind commits.
- Christ is ever living to intercede for those of His—there is not one thing that is too difficult for Christ to intervene to help you with and save you to the utmost. To those who are in Christ Jesus, there is now no condemnation! Even the sins not remembered, the blood of Christ, will cleanse those also.
- The Holy Spirit of God goes right down into your heart and mind and soul and spirit and being and it changes your mind.
- God’s plan, before the world even existed, was for everything to transpire to have Christ be the Savior of those who respond to God.
- The term ‘princes of this world’ can refer to the physical human being who is in the office of ruler or leader or it can be the power behind the throne—demonic beings which run this world!
- Only the Spirit of God can understand the things of God. All the theology in the world that all men have ever done concerning God cannot come to the knowledge of the truths of God by their own thoughts and intellect.
- The Law of God is good; It tells one what is right and what is wrong.

- A person of themselves cannot overcome their self. Christ in them, along with ‘bringing every thought into captivity,’ with the Spirit of God, can overcome their self.

The thirteenth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter XIII,” covers the fourth chapter of I Peter. Especially, this study, focuses upon not serving the lusts of the flesh. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Lot’s wife was turned into a pillar of salt because she disobeyed the command not to look back that was given by an angel.
- People, sooner or later, need to come to the realization that for the good of all creation as well as themselves that they need to seek the will of God. He’s the Creator, and His will is what is the most important thing for human beings to accomplish.
- The best and most effective prayer is to go to God and ask God to let the situation be according to His will.
- Law of God proceeds from love, law being itself an expression of love. Love does not come from law. In loving someone you are fulfilling the law of God.
- What is going on in all the Churches of God everywhere today is the judgement regarding if the brethren are going to follow a man or if they are going to follow God, loving and obeying God.

The fourteenth transcript, “Epistle of First Peter XIV,” is a study of the problem of people trying to control the relationship that other people have with God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- People that get involved in religion need to realize that they can’t let anything get to the point where the leader of a church appoints himself as God. If they get involved in a group like that, they need to get out fast.
- There are two types of persecution. One is the persecution that God wants one to go through for their own growth. The other one is persecution that one brings upon one’s self because of their own stupidity.
- If there is one thing that people who are in religion that want to control others do not like is seeing people having joy without them being in control of the people.
- The whole lesson of Simon Magus, a man that was in control of the religion in Samaria, is that you’re not to take the power of God to control people! The Catholic Church has done this in that they created a cultic religion which cuts people off from God using a hierarchy that is in charge of the people’s faith in God. This is where the Nicolaitans started.
- When a person who seeks or already has a personal relationship with God hears a minister saying that they have contact with God or that God speaks to them, they then need to wake up and realize that they are dealing with a false minister. If they are asked what God said to them and how did God do it and what did God’s voice sound like they will be unable to tell.
- Ministers that do not study, do not learn for themselves, and do not apply the Word of God to their own life become an overlord.
- Satan is a roaring lion. His choice is getting a minister, setting up a hierarchy, and then Satan can control many brethren and lead them away into error later.

The fifteenth transcript, “Epistle of Second Peter I,” is an overview of II Peter. It deals with the philosophies of men being brought into the Churches of God. It shows how to recognize Satan at work in a Church of God. Also looked at are the three categories of New Testament Faith. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Christ has given to the Church all things which means that His disciples do not need to go outside of what Christ has given. It is not needed to go to the world and its teachings to discover all things related to life and the knowledge of Christ.
- When a follower of Christ is anointed, they are to claim the promises of Christ. No minister has within an inherent power that can heal anyone.
- When a follower of Christ prays, fasts, and goes before God it is not for them to become some great thing—rather it is to ask God to grant one His faith, His trust, His ability, because all that is to be done is to be done in the name of Jesus Christ.
- If one comes before God to ask of God [with spiritual sacrifices of prayer and fasting and praise and thanksgiving—asking forgiveness] and your brother [someone that is close to you] has something against you, then leave coming before the altar and be reconciled with your brother, and

again come before God to ask of Him. This being reconciled puts one in the right frame of attitude and the right mind and puts you in the right circumstances so that God can bless you.

- There are times that God heals just because of the faith of the elder.
- When one is of two opinions, being right down the middle, halting so to say between the two opinions, then one is unstable and is being a double-minded man. James 1:8 speaks of such a man.

The sixteenth transcript, “Epistle of Second Peter II,” studies the precious promises of God. It gives insight into those promises of God and warns a disciple of Christ to not fall into loving the things of the world over these promises. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- A follower of Christ needs to keep their focus on the promises of God. It does not matter what happens in the world around them. If they have the Spirit of Christ, they are guaranteed an incorruptible inheritance. Look to Christ, He will see one through.
- The three steps to salvation are: (1) having been saved now, (2) being saved currently, and (3) shall be saved at the resurrection.
- It is mandatory to have the right self-control, being controlled by Christ within them, if they are to be an elder.

The seventeenth transcript, “Epistle of Second Peter III,” teaches what one who is following Christ, needs to do in their lives. If one is in a relationship with Christ, they will need to apply themselves in life—not try to just coast through it. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Light does not have fellowship with darkness. If people allow a little bit of darkness to enter, they cannot expect the light to continue because they are yielding themselves to Satan.
- There will not be a temple during the Millennium nor will there be a Levitical priesthood.
- The scribes and the Pharisees were more interested in condemning Jesus and retaining their power and their political authority than the healing of the sick and the demon possessed by Jesus.
- What God did to Jerusalem for their rejection of the Truth of God He will do to the Churches of God that rise in power and arrogance and reject the Truth of God. He will take away what they have.
- God the Father’s involvement in the brethren of Jesus Christ is: (1) God the Father personally called them, (2) God the Father led them to Christ, and (3) God the Father did these things for the people so they could be brethren of Christ.
- God has given His Spirit to those personally chosen for Himself so that they can understand His own personal will and pleasure.

The eighteenth transcript, “Epistle of Second Peter IV,” finishes up chapter 1 of II Peter. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Peter admonished the brethren he was responsible for that he would have a written memorial of things to do for them to be reminded. The Will of God was going to still be known, from his writings, after he died.
- The Holy Spirit in people that want to do God’s Will helps them put the Scriptures together in the correct way so that they can understand things.
- Paul stated that he was writing down commands of God.
- The New Testament was written so that the terms and conditions of the New Covenant would be known.
- Many miracles were done by Jesus that were not written down. What was written down was a copulation of those important things pertaining to the belief that Jesus was the Son of God.
- The veracity of the Word of God shows that it was men, was not God, that lied and deceived the brethren.

The nineteenth transcript, “Epistle of Second Peter & Jude V,” is a study of II Peter along with things that are currently happening in the Churches of God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- One of the great identifying factors of Babylonian religion is any form of the trinity—be it one God with three manifestations or three who are one. Even Judaism takes the letters YHWH and assigns the meaning of “Y” is the Father, “H” is the mother, “V” is the Son, and “H” is these three are one.

- The entire New Testament is full of warnings of false prophets (who are ravening wolves) coming in sheep's clothing.
- Christ is going to reject those who are against His law, who reject commandment-keeping. Christ commands that whatsoever thing that He commands that people are to be careful to do it.
- Peter speaks of false teachers among the Church who personally deny the Lord Who bought them. These false teachers were covered with the blood of Christ at one time.
- Anyone that is in the Church of God who is there because they want to be a better person in the world is in the wrong place. The world hates the children of God.
- Loving God is a choice, it is something that one chooses to do. Loving the structure of church organization is not necessarily loving God—and has been detrimental to the Church of God.
- False prophets speak to seek to turn people from obeying God's Will and cut them off from God.
- Sodom reflects the moral values and Egypt reflects the religious values.
- If you change the nature of God, you are changing who you worship. Anytime a doctrine comes up that changes the nature of God you are denying Christ and the Father.
- All hierarchy is political – it is composed of men, if they are wanting to advance, trying to schmooze those over them.

The twentieth transcript, "Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VI," shows the activity of Catholicism in subverting teachings about God that it does not teach itself. Much coverage is given to how the Worldwide Church of God came to refute its teachings about God. It is shown how false prophets enticed people to depart from the true teachings of God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- There are three key things that Catholics believe. When one sees these gaining acceptance in a congregation one can know that the congregation is entering the teachings of Babylon. These three things are (1) Christmas, (2) Easter, and (3) a day-and-a-half resurrection.
- When a false prophet preaches, the part of the preaching that is true, that part God will uphold. A false prophet will teach that people are to do something because it is what God said is to be done.
- God's Spirit writes the laws and commandments of God in the heart and the mind. Loving God is the keeping of His laws and commandments.
- False prophets do not take all the verses of Scripture in their teaching, they pick and choose and subtract those that does not agree with their teaching.
- In promoting a lie effectively false prophets (1) repeats the lie over and over, (2) mixes the lie with known truth, and (3) use the fear of hierarchical authority so people will embrace the lie.
- False prophets will say that doctrine is not important, but the Apostle Paul three times affirmed the importance of doctrine.
- With a teacher, if they start out teaching the Truth, if they allow unrepented sin to build up in their lives they will come to misapply teachings.
- A true teaching is that wherever there are those who have the Spirit of God, they are part of the Church. A false teaching is that if one is not in a corporate church and supporting what the corporation is doing then you're not in the Body of Christ.
- Any teacher that uses sorcery or witchcraft is a false teacher and is teaching false doctrines.

The twenty-first transcript, "Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VII," is a brief review of the nineteenth transcript along with a study of the goodness of God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- If you have salvation you can lose it by turning your back on God.
- Even an entire nation, if they all sin, is going to be judged of God.
- God is willing to forgive many sins, but don't accuse God!
- Don't confuse physical prosperity as a sign of a good relationship with Christ!
- When one is approaching God ask according to the Will of God because He will do it since He spoke it.
- Profound and important is knowing that when God says, "As I Live" He's basing what He's going to say on His very eternal existence.
- Never put the complaining against a church leader in the same realm as complaining against God. The leader is not God.

- Lucifer wanted to be like God, but it was not Lucifer's right to be like God: God never made Lucifer to be God. These rights movements are all about demanding this or demanding that. What is God's Will in the matter is what needs to be addressed.
- A man who is religious, who says that his work in the Lord is so important that God will overlook any of my sins is an ungodly man.
- A man who teaches that the Laws of God have no validity is an ungodly man.
- Not even angels rebuke Satan. The one rebuke of God is good for all eternity against Satan. If one finds one's self in a spiritual struggle one does not say to Satan "I rebuke you." One is to say, 'The Lord has rebuked you; and this I say in the name of Christ.'
- A true teacher and elder will speak what Christ speak and will do what Christ does. Christ does what is acceptable to the Father and Christ speaks what is acceptable to the Father.

The twenty-second, "Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VIII," focuses upon the righteous judgement of God regarding the angels, the world, the way of Cain, the way of Balaam, and the way of Korah. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- Just because a person sins, and punishment does not immediately occur, that does not mean that punishment will not come.
- Sin is sin and it does not matter who one is, what one is, or how many there are, God is going to hold it all accountable.
- The term reprobate mind in the Bible refers to a condition where the person has a mind totally devoid of any judgement; it just gives itself continually over to evil.
- Angels are not to be worshipped at all.
- Sin, when it becomes willful, becomes a choice that is planned and practiced. It is now a way of life.
- The way of Cain, in short, is setting one's self in the place of God.
- The way of Balaam, in short, is teaching people to sin while calling it 'not sin'.
- The way of Korah, in short, is the demanding of rights that God never gave.
- God has always scattered the Church for its own protection from Satan. Satan always destroys from within and whenever a static hierarchy exists men of Satan can come in and gain power and then subvert the Church.
- False preachers will not truly admit that Jesus Christ had the same kind of flesh and human nature that men have—they will always hedge on it.
- Wherever there are false preachers there are false spirits that come along that inspire them and make them look good and make them sound so good.
- Christians need to be aware that when someone wants to pry into their business, when someone wants to leverage them, they come saying "we are concerned."

The twenty-third transcript, "Epistle of Second Peter & Jude IX," speaks of the way of righteousness and the graciousness of God. Some major points mentioned in this transcript are:

- People, after having escaped the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and again become entangled in corruptions, and are overcome—their end is worse than the beginning. This is the unpardonable sin in that they cannot be revived to repentance because they have crucified Christ.
- In dealing with terrible circumstances pray in the Holy Spirit keeping yourself in the love of God. This is the only thing that helps one to endure when there are troubles.
- God the Father is the most humble being in the universe.
- The way of God is the greatest way to live and the only reason that those living the way of God have so much difficulty is that they are living in a world that is hostile to the way of God and that is contrary to the way of God.
- Even though all people have human nature, for those who are in Christ God imputes to them the righteousness of Christ which is the absolute perfection of Christ.
- With a pure mind people will have to still be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves' because some people will see that as an opportunity to leverage to themselves. This has been a problem in churches of men taking the innocent and naive and leveraging them to accomplish what they want.

- The philosophy of the world is self-esteem, of loving one's self. Added to self-esteem is the getting in touch with a helper—namely witchcraft.
- It is impossible for God to lie; the very existence of everything is depending on the Word and the Truth of Christ.
- God is the One Who reveals the inner sins of your mind and it is one's responsibility to repent of them and get rid of them. The world does not have God's Spirit to reveal the sin within them so usually they just are not bothered by their sin because they are not conscious of it.

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



# Epistle of First Peter I

Fred Coulter

I've been promising for quite a while to start this series in 1-Peter. And in doing so, I want to mention that the translation that I have done here is not some sort of official translation to replace the *King James Version* or to replace the *New King James Version* or whichever version of the Bible you have. But, as a study aid to help us to understand more the message that Peter has for us.

It's really quite a book and I think it's very important for us to realize how it fits in for us today, because we are literally being bombarded on every side by everything. Almost everywhere you go, you feel oppressed by the radio; you feel oppressed by television; you feel oppressed where you're working; you feel oppressed just going shopping.

- 1-Peter is the book of *hope*;
- James is the book of *faith*;
- 1-John is the book of *love*.
- 2-Peter, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude are all the *warnings* about the transition from the true religion of God into the false religion that we see around us today.

So, what was happening then was the background of building things up to what later became the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches, which we now see the end result of that today.

When I get done with 1-Peter, then I'm going to go to 1-John. And then I will come back to 2-Peter and then 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude and work those three together, because, or work those four rather, because 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John are really short and 2-Peter is only three chapters and Jude is only one chapter. And they all pretty well cover the same thing as to what was happening internally within the Church.

Now, let's cover a little bit of background concerning about the book of Peter. The book of Peter was written by the Apostle Peter somewhere around 64 A.D.. We find in the New Testament that Peter actually is identified under four names: Peter, Simon, Simeon and Cephas. His full name is: Simon Peter, the son of Jona or Bar-Jona.

One thing we can clearly establish was that Peter was *not* the first pope. Absolutely *not* the first pope, could not have been the pope. And we're going to see some of the things in this background, before we get into the book of 1-Peter, that Peter never thought of himself as the pope, never treated others as if he were the pope and never had anybody treat him as if he were the pope.

Let's go to Luke 4 and we will see something about Peter that even the Catholic Church does not like to recognize is in the Scriptures. Just

like with Jesus, they *do not* want to recognize the fact that it talks about in Mark 6, where the people said, 'Who is this Jesus, we know Him, and His mother is Mary and He's the son of the carpenter, Joseph. And His brothers: Simon, Jude and James, are they not with us to this day? And the daughters?' Well, the Catholics don't like to admit that Jesus had brothers and sisters—neither do they like to admit what we find here:

Luke 4:38: "Now after going out of the synagogue. He [Jesus] went into Simon's house. And **Simon's mother-in-law** sick... [How are you going to have a mother-in-law unless you're married? So 'Simon's wife's mother' (KJV)] ...and they asked Him *to intervene* for her. Then He stood over her and rebuked the fever... [I thought that was interesting, He just stood over her and said, 'Fever be gone.' Whatever He said, it was gone.] ...and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them" (vs 38-39). So, Peter was married.

We're going to see something here in this statement by the Apostle Paul concerning his particular status and the status of the other apostles. 1-Corinthians 9:3: "My defense to those who are examining me is this... [that is in his apostleship of Christ] ...Do we not have a right... [the *King James* says 'power,' but it should read: 'authority'] ...to eat and to drink? Do we not have a right [authority] to take with us a sister, a wife, as also the other apostles, and the [brethren] brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?" (vs 3-5).

'The brothers of the Lord' here happens to be the brothers of Jesus. Not just brethren as we say: 'Well, we're all brethren, brethren.' But 'the brothers' are the brothers of the Lord 'and Cephas, who is Peter.' Peter's wife followed him around wherever he went. So, Peter didn't have the same kind of ministry that Paul had. It was more of what you would call a *regular* ministry. He took his wife with him.

"Or I only and Barnabas, do we not have a right to refrain from working?" (v 6). He's saying all the others didn't work. Peter came from the city of Bethsaida—we find that in John 1:44.

We're going to see something very interesting here concerning Peter, and concerning those that were with him and we will find that Peter and James and John, and Andrew—now, Andrew was the brother of Peter; and James and John were the sons of Zebedee.

Luke 5:10: "And in like manner also *upon* James and John, *the* sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon..." They were fishing partners

with Simon. Let's look and see what happened here in this particular situation. And of course, this would be one you will know why then when Jesus said, 'Come and follow Me' they followed Him because there's a good chance that they knew Jesus as they were growing up, too.

Verse 5: "Then Simon answered *and* said, 'Master, we have labored though the entire night, *and* we have taken nothing; but at Your word, I will let the net down.' And when they did this, they enclosed a great school of fish; and their net was breaking. Then they signaled to their partners, those in the other ship, that they should come *and* help them; and they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. And when he saw *this*, Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord'" (vs. 5-8).

We find that Peter understood the nature of human beings. He didn't consider himself the next or the first pope or anything like that. He considered himself a "sinful man.... For great astonishment came upon him and all with him, on account of the *miraculous* haul of fish that they had taken... [then it talks about James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were the partners of Simon] ...Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Fear not; from this time forth you shall be catching men. And after bringing their ships to land, they forsook everything and followed Him'" (vs 8-11).

Let's understand that Peter did have certain things in the way of leadership. In certain cases he spoke sort of as the spokesman for all of those who became the apostles. We're going to see certain things here as we come along, concerning the Apostle Peter. I'm not going to cover all of them. We could give an extensive background. I know in most commentaries you can probably pick up three to five pages all about Peter and everything. But, I didn't want to get bogged down into that other than to just have enough of the background here so we can understand a little bit about Peter.

Matthew 16:15: "He said to them, 'But you, whom do you declare Me to be? Then Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God'.... [The other apostles or disciples didn't say that at that particular time. We'll come back and cover this a little bit more when we get to v 18.] ...And Jesus answered *and* said unto him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona... [*son of John*] ...for flesh and blood did not revealed *it* to you, but my Father, who *is* in heaven'" (vs 15-17).

All right, let's go to Mark 1:36, and we will see a little bit more about the leadership of Peter, and he did exert *some* leadership. Now, we need to understand something about Mark. Mark was the one who wrote for Peter and later for Paul; probably also later for John. So, what we have in the book of

Mark, we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ probably as given to Mark *by* Peter. In the book of Mark we have Peter, or Simon, nearly always placed first. And we see that all the way through the Gospels that Peter, whose name is also Simon or Cephas, was always placed first because he did exert *some* leadership. This did not give him authority over everyone, as we'll see a little bit later on—and this didn't make him the first pope.

Mark 1:36: "And Simon, and they that were with him, went out after Him... [That is, Jesus got up real, real early while it was still night and went out and prayed, so they followed Simon...] ...And after finding Him, they said unto Him, 'Everyone is looking for You.' But He said unto them, 'Let us go to the towns and neighboring countryside, so that I may also preach there; because I have come for this *purpose*.' And He preached in all their synagogues in Galilee, and cast out demons. And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him and kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him, 'If You will, You have the power to cleanse me.' Then Jesus, being moved with compassion, stretched out *his* hand *and* touched him, and saying to him, 'I will; be cleansed.' And as soon as He had spoken, the leprosy immediately departed from him, and he was cleansed" (vs 36-42).

Let's look at some more concerning what Peter and John and James. We're going to see that not only did Peter have a leadership position, but also James and John. Luke 9:28: "Now it came to pass about an eight days after these words, that He took Peter and John and James..." Notice the way it is listed there: Peter and John and James. Now, this James was the son of Zebedee. Later, James, the brother of the Lord, was the one who apparently was, you might say, the central leader at Jerusalem. Although, he, in that particular case, did not assume any position anywhere near what people would understand as the office of a pope. Then when we come to the way the epistles are laid out—how are they laid out? We just studied James—right? And he was the brother of the Lord. So, his writing would take preeminence over anybody else's.

Then we have Peter, and then we have 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John. Then we have the second brother of Jesus, Jude. So we find this order pretty much all the way through. So, "...he took with Him, Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And it came to pass that as He prayed, the appearance of His face was changed, and His clothing *became* radiantly white. And suddenly two men *appeared*, talking with Him; they were Moses and Elijah. who appeared in glory *and* spoke of His departure, which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem" (vs 28-31).

All of this then had to be a vision, as we will see. Some people say, 'Well, Moses and Elijah are

going to be the two witnesses and they're going to be resurrected and come in Jerusalem, they're the ones that are going to carry on that work of the two witnesses.' But, we don't see anything in the Bible to substantiate that. We find in the account in the book of Matthew—the parallel account here: “tell the vision to no man.” This was a *vision*.

Verse 32: “But Peter and **those** with Him... [so James and John then were mentioned as ‘those’] ...were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory, and the two men who were standing with Him. And it came to pass *that*, as they were departing from Him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good for us to be here; now let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah’—not realizing what he was saying” (vs 32-33).

And it's pretty true that Peter was what they call ‘impetuous.’ He would say things, put his foot in his mouth. You know, he said to Jesus, ‘Boy, I’ll go to the death, I’ll go to prison, anything with you Lord.’ And Jesus looked at him and said, ‘Peter, before the cock crows you’re going to deny me three times.’ So, here again, he didn’t know what he was saying.

Verse 34: “But as he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they feared as those *three* entered into the cloud. Then the voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him!’ And as the voice ended, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and told no one in those days of anything they had seen” (vs 34-36).

I suspect that this was a special thing that Jesus let Peter and John and James experience so that there would be some **conviction** in them above and beyond, so when it came time for preaching and teaching and leading, that they would have the **conviction** to do so. Because there’s one thing you can never do, if someone **really believes** something, and **knows it for sure**, you’re never ever, ever, ever going to take that belief from them. This is why they had this miraculous vision and why it was not to all of the other disciples. You can’t have a situation where *nobody* is in charge, so Peter obviously was the leader. He didn’t have to get up and say he was in charge, it was by the fact of what was being done and what Jesus was doing with him.

We find that was really quite a thing! And, I’ve often wondered, I wonder how they felt when they were up there? When we get to 1-Peter we’ll see that he mentions it that they were witnesses of His suffering and also that they saw His glory.

Now, let’s come to Mark 14 and we find the same thing again when Jesus prayed. Peter said a couple of things there. Remember the one in Matthew 16 when Peter was beginning, or Jesus was

telling Peter things He was going to suffer, and Peter said, ‘Lord, we’re not going to let those things happen to You.’ Then He turned around and rebuked Peter and said, ‘Get you hence from Me, Satan.’ So, that’s pretty tough language.

All right, let’s pick it up here in Mark 14:29: “Then Peter said to Him, ‘Even if **all shall be offended**, yet I *shall* not.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you, today, in this *very* night, before *the* cock crows twice, you shall deny me three times.’ But he spoke more adamantly, if it were necessary for me to die with You, I would not deny You in any way.’ And they all spoke in the same manner also” (vs 29-31). So, we have here again, Peter taking the initiative, then all the rest of the apostles are mentioned as “they all.”

Verse 32: “Then they came to a place that was *called* Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ And He took Peter and James and John with Him... [so the same three again, He took with Him] ...and He began to be deeply troubled and heavy-hearted. And He said to them, ‘My soul is filled with anguish, even to death; remain here and watch.’ Then He went forward a little, dropped to the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, ‘Abba, Father, all things *are* possible with You. Remove this cup from Me! Yet not what I will, but what You *will*.’ Then He came and found them sleeping. And He said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to watch one hour?.... [After Peter said, ‘Hey, I won’t deny you.’ Jesus comes back and says, ‘Couldn’t you even watch for one hour?’] ...Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak” (vs 32-38).

Let’s look at some other things concerning Peter. When it came time to prepare the Passover who did He send? Luke 22:8: “And He sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go *and* prepare the Passover for us that we may eat.” Jesus used Peter and John, Peter, James and John in a more particular and personal way than He did the others. So, there was some leadership that Peter exerted.

Now then, you know the account, we find this concerning what Jesus told Peter, v 31: “Then the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have you, to sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren.... [That can have the immediate effect of all of those that were with Jesus—the 120 that were there on the Day of Pentecost. It could have also to do with just the immediacy of the apostles as brethren. In this case it’s not talking about the brothers of the Lord. And then we have the same thing here.]: ...And he said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.’” (vs 31-33)—parallel account

of the other one. Then we know in John 21:15-19, we have this in relationship to Peter, where it is, “if you love Me, feed My sheep. If you love Me, feed My lambs.”

Was Peter *the “Rock”* upon which the church was built? Every time you watch anything to do with any of the ceremony of the pope, they always bring this out. Every mass, isn’t it true, don’t they go through Matt. 16? Just the public ones I’ve seen, where the pope is involved, they don’t do it.

Matthew 16:17: “And Jesus answered *and* said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood did not reveal *it* to you, but My Father, Who *is* in heaven. And I say also to you, that you are Peter...” (v 17-18). Now, you probably have it in your notes, if you don’t check your margin, probably there. The word *Peter* is ‘petros’—that is the masculine use of the word.

“...but upon this Rock... [The Greek for *rock* here is ‘petra’—which then is, in that particular sense “feminine”—although it’s referring to Christ. But then it’s sort of a play on words, because it’s also referring to the church and “upon *this* Rock”—and ‘petra’ means *a huge, massive, great, large, craggy stone or cliff.*] ...**I will build My church...**” (v 18). He said, “...I will build **MY** church...”—it’s not Peter’s church. He didn’t say, ‘Peter, you will build *your* church.’ He didn’t say, ‘Peter, you will build My church.’ And obviously it is the Church of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, and it’s built on Him, as we will see—it’s not built upon any man.

“...and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it” (v 18). Which means *the mouth of the grave shall not overcome the Church*. That’s what it’s talking about. Now, *if* this was referring to Peter as the *rock*, did Peter die? *Yes!* So then, the grave prevailed against Peter. But the grave is not going to prevail against the Church.

Let’s see what kind of ‘rock’ or what kind of ‘stone’ that Peter is called. And here’s where we get one of the other names of Peter. John 1: 43<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “And he led him to Jesus.... [Andrew brought Simon—Andrew is the brother of Peter.] ...And when He saw him, Jesus said, You are Simon the son of Jona. You shall be called Cephas,’ (which is being interpretation, ‘a stone’).” And this one means *a little stone*. This is *not* referring to a ‘petra’—stone, but this is referring to a ‘petros’—stone—a *small* stone. Some translations even translate it *a little stone*.

1-Peter 2:6: “For this reason it says in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I place in Zion the chief Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and one that is believing on Him will never be put to shame.’” Now, the reason that I bring this is because if Peter were considered the head of the Church—the pope

as the Catholics claim—why then would he refer back to here in his own epistle that that is referring to Christ.

Verse 7: “The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who are believing; but to those who are disobeying, *the* Stone that the builders rejected, this one became *the* Head of *the* corner; even a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to those who are stumbling at the Word *and* are disobeying, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed” (vs 7-8). Here he’s directly referring to the Rock *as Christ*, not to himself. Nowhere do we find in any of the sayings of Peter, any of the writings of Peter, that it refers to himself as the “rock” on which Jesus built the Church. ***The Rock is Christ.***

Let’s look at a couple of other Scriptures to see this: 1-Corinthians 10:4—the Greek here is a little bit different word: it is ‘lithos’ but it means *stone* or *rock*. It’s talking about the children of Israel as they were led by God out of Egypt into the wilderness. 1-Corinthians 10:4: “And *they*... [the children of Israel] ...all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ.” Here again you can tie this in with many other Scriptures to show that Jesus was the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament, Who became Jesus Christ of the New Testament and He is called ***“that Rock was Christ.”***

Let’s look at some of the Psalms and see that that is absolutely true and upheld throughout the entirety of the Bible. No man is going to have a Church of God built upon him. We’ll go through several of the Psalms here and see how it refers to God as ‘the Rock’—‘my Rock, my Fortress, my Hightower’—and all of those things.

Why was David considered such an *unusual example* of a king? Say, like if you compare it to Saul. Why was he considered such an unusual example as a king? He wrote all kinds of Psalms. What was the outstanding quality of David? ***Humble—a man after God’s heart.*** Isn’t that correct? *Yes!* A man who, when he was in trouble, and when Absalom was rebelling against him, one of the just the ordinary sinners as David was leaving the castle to get away from the attack of Absalom and the troops, the man came up and shook his finger and cursed the king. One of the soldiers with David said, ‘Boy, you know, we better do him in, you can’t curse the king. Ah, leave him alone, I deserve it.’ So, not only that, he was humble and he was honest. He knew when he was wrong and making the bad mistakes, you see. But, he was also a man who had a great deal of love. Remember what happened when Absalom was chasing him? He wouldn’t fight him! And, unfortunately, when Absalom was being chased by Joab and the troops,

he was going through the thick of the woods and his long, flowing hair got him caught in a tree and so he was hanging in the tree by his hair. And one of the soldiers came by and killed him and said, 'I've done you a good favor, I've killed your son. Ohhh, Absalom, my son, my son!' But, he had the guy who killed him done in. So, the great love that David had, you know, he *really loved* God! That's why he was *a man after God's heart*.

Psalm 61:1: "...Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth I cry unto You, when my heart is overwhelmed: **lead me to the rock higher than me**" (vs 1-2). Knowing that the only salvation is through Christ. It talks about the man who built on the rock, and that Rock is Christ (Matt. 7:24-25).

Verse 3: "For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower against the enemy. I will dwell in Your tabernacle forever; I will take refuge in the hiding place of Your wings" (vs 3-4). There's a lot you can get out of that—can't you? You can talk about the Feast of Tabernacles; you can talk about protection; you can talk about safety; you can talk about letting God fight your battles for you; and so forth.

Psalm 62:2: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my fortress; I shall not be greatly moved..... [v 6]: He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved." Apparently this was some sort of a chorus that went along with the hymn. So, the way that this was sung, that was the chorus: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved." That would make a pretty good hymn.

All the way through the Psalms in these times, David talks about God as his Rock. Now, this ties right in with 1-Cor. 10:4, because this refers right back to the episode there: '...and they followed that Rock, and that Rock was Christ.'

Psalm 78:35: "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer." That is when God slew them, they got in trouble and were sinning, and God corrected them. Then "...they remembered that God was their Rock..."

Psalm 89:26: "He shall cry unto me... [the one looking to God for salvation] ...'My Father, You are my God, and the Rock of my salvation. And I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth'" (vs 26-27). And so, this then goes into a type of Christ again.

All right, let's go to the New Testament now—Ephesians 2. We talk about the stone. We talk about the power of God. We talk about the foundation of the Church. Here Ephesians is really a

tremendous chapter, to show us that Peter did not have the Church built upon *himself*.

Ephesians 2:18: "For through Him we both... [Jews and Gentiles] ...have **direct access by one Spirit to the Father**." And I want to mention here very clearly that that is so very important in relationship to what we are doing, our calling and everything as we get into the book of 1-Peter.

- We're not dealing with a religion.
- We're not dealing with a church.
- We're not dealing with just an organization.

***We have direct access to the Father.***

I've been getting quite a bit of mail here recently about the calendar thing—so I may have to get into that again. It seems like some of these things never, never end. But, the sacred name for the Father, in the New Testament, is *the Father*. That's what it is. Simple! Direct! But, we have that "...access by one Spirit to the Father." Not unto the pope, not unto the priest, but unto the Father. And this is what really needs to be just kept in mind and right in the forefront of our very brains, if we could say. But it's with ***one Spirit***.

I really felt that when I was back there in Atlanta it was really just wonderful. With all of us being there and studying and talking and fellowshiping and it was just great, and that's the way it is when you get together with God's people, that have God's Spirit. Even though you have never met them, that fellowship is there ***because of the Spirit***—and it's the work that God the Father is doing. And everyone has access to God the Father and He's as close as the next prayer: 'Our Father in heaven.'

So remember that when you're in trouble, you have difficulty, whatever your problem may be—and we're going to have plenty of them around. I can guarantee you with this book here, *The New Age Cults and Religions*, and what's happening in the world, there's going to be plenty of problems and difficulties around.

In talking to a woman last night on the phone, back in Georgia, she was saying that it seems as though that God is protecting everyone of us from the things that are in the world by having us in the smaller groups. Now, she's teaching her children at home. She can afford to do so. I said, 'Hey, right on.' If you can afford to do so and it's something you can do, by all means. And she really feels that God is protecting us that way. Well, when I was back in Oklahoma and visited with Don Marshall, he felt the same thing. He said, 'Can you imagine how many people you can help by audio-cassettes and video-cassettes. In this way we can feed the brethren and not have to have a great high profile of some great church out here in the world. We'll truly be

like salt—a little here and a little there. And when salt is in the food you can't see it, can you? So, that very well may be and who knows what's going to happen in the future. Man I tell you—well, we won't get all carried away here.

We have "...access by one Spirit unto the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone" (vs 18-20). The apostles and prophets *have* a place in the church. They were the ones who were the foundation of it—correct? But, they then built the church on whom? Themselves? *No, on Christ!*

"...being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (vs 20-22).

Luke 20:9: "And He began to speak this parable to the people: 'A certain man planted a vineyard, and leased it out to husbandmen ... [to take care of it] ...and left the country for a long time. And in *the* harvest season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, so that they might give him *some* of the fruit from the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him *and* sent him away empty. And after that he sent another servant; but they also beat him and scorned him *and* sent him away empty. And after that he sent a third *servant*; but they also wounded him *and* cast him out.' Then the lord of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps when they see him, they will respect him'" (vs 9-13).

(go to the next track)

Verse 14: "But when they saw him, the husbandmen reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they cast him outside the vineyard *and* killed him. Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others.' Now, after hearing *this*, they said, 'May it never be!' But He looked at them *and* said, 'What then is this that is written: "*The* Stone that the builders rejected, this one has become the head of *the* corner? Everyone who falls on that Stone shall be broken; but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder'" (vs. 14-18). It is true, when you fall upon that Stone in repentance, you are broken. When you accept Jesus as your Savior. But, it is also true that if you *fight against Him* you're going to be ground to powder.

Verse 19: "And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on Him in that hour,

because they knew that He had spoken this parable against them; but they feared the people." They knew what the score was. They knew, they pretty well figured that Jesus, if they didn't get rid of Him, He would soon have all the people following Him—as they viewed it. What He was really doing, was prophesying what was going to happen to them, because of their rejecting of Jesus.

Let's go to the book of Acts and just follow through just a little bit here, just a little bit. Well, yeah, we'll just pick up a few verses as we survey some parts of the book of Acts. I don't want to belabor the point, but this is to show that Peter was, at that particular time, one of the leaders, if not *the* leader of the apostles.

Acts 1:15: "And in those days, Peter stood up in *the* midst of the disciples...*and* said..." That he's the one that went ahead and led the way on getting the replacement for Judas Iscariot, who fell.

Acts 2:37: "Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (vs 37-38) So, Peter was the one who did the leading all the way through.

Acts 3:1: "Now Peter and John..." There we have John included in it. And John was there with him. We find later that Peter was the one who did the speaking after they were arrested.

In Acts 5 we find the account where they were bringing their proceeds of the selling of the land, and we see what happened there with Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5:3: "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why did Satan fill your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...' [v 8]: ...And Peter said to her.... [v 12]: ...And many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles... [so they were all doing things] ...(and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And none of the others dared to join them, but the people magnified them; and believers were added all the more to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women) insomuch *that the people were* bringing out the sick into the streets and putting *them* on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them" (vs 3, 8, 12-15).

Here at this point would be the perfect point to make Peter the pope, but he wasn't. We see no account of Peter being carried around on a chair. We find no account that he exalted himself above the others—he was just merely the leader. Acts 15—I'll just draw your attention to it. Even though Peter was sent of God to Cornelius—you can find that in Acts 10 & 11—Peter was the one who was doing the

leading; but when we come to Acts 15, James, the brother of the Lord, was the one who gave the, who gave the summary of everything, and helped write the letter and they sent it out to all the brethren.

Let's go to Galatians, the second chapter, and let's find out something concerning the ministry of Peter. Then we'll get right into the book of 1-Peter. Let's notice something here very important: *If* Peter *were* the one on whom the Church was built, then *why* would Paul correct him publicly? Now, that's quite a question. Which then is another thing which *disproves* that Peter was the first pope.

Galatians 2:4: "Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we did not yield in subjection, *not* even for one hour, so that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you. But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the* person of a man.)...." (vs. 4-6).

That's a pretty strong statement. He's saying it really doesn't make any difference, if these other men were apostles: 'It really doesn't make any difference to me. God doesn't accept any man's person.' Oh, but people do—don't they? Oh yeah, they love to have the pope. They love to hear the pope.

"...For those who are of repute conferred nothing upon me. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision" (vs 6-7). There you can say that Paul had equal status with Peter. But also, what was involved in the whole situation here?

Verse 8: "(For He Who wrought in Peter for *the* apostleship of the circumcision wrought in me also toward the Gentiles;) and after recognizing the grace that was given to me, James... [brother of the Lord] ...Cephas [Peter], and John, those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the* right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision. *Their only request was* that we remember the poor, which very thing I was also diligent to do. But when Peter came to Antioch..." (vs 8-11). We could put in there: and he was received as the pope. Kissed his ring, kissed his feet and he gave them the keys. I'm being *very facetious* here. That is not what happened.

Paul says, v 11: "...I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned; for before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew

back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party" (vs 11-12).

Here preserved in the pages of the New Testament, is the confrontation that Paul brought against Peter, because Peter *was sinning publicly*. There can be no doubt that Peter was *not* the pope.

Last thing we need to cover, let's go to the last verse in 1-Peter, and we will see just a little notation—not the last verse, the next to the last verse. 1-Peter 5:13: "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; as does Mark, my son"—Mark, the one who wrote the book of Mark. Some people say that that is referring to Rome. Well, I would have to disagree with that. I would have to think that since there were so many Jews in Babylon that's actually where Peter was. He was in Babylon. "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you; as does Mark, my son." I would just have to take it at face value and say that Peter was in Babylon. Because he was the apostle to the Jews or the circumcision.

Now we come to the first part of the Epistle of 1-Peter, and let's begin there with all this background. I'm sure there's a lot more background that could be given, I'm sure there are other things that could be given concerning Peter. But in the very first verse we find a couple things here, which are a little bit different than we may anticipate since he was the apostle to the circumcision.

1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ..." That's a very interesting salutation in itself—isn't it? He didn't say, *the chief apostle*; he didn't say: *the leading apostle*; he said: "*an* apostle—and in the Greek it is: "Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ."

"...to the elect strangers..." (v 1). I'm debating whether to leave that 'called out' (KJV), because the word means: *selected; called out; elected*. I may change that to 'selected' in the final copy. I think it's very important that it's all being edited very, very finely, because it's going to be, in some ways, a very explosive book, because I'm going to totally trash the 15<sup>th</sup> Passover as being just a tradition of men. Some of the comments in there totally trash the Mass, the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper. And then I'm going to have in there about the nature of God, the nature of man and the flesh that Jesus had—and they're going to be some people who are going to be vociferously against the fact that Jesus *really was flesh!* I mean, to us, since we've gone over it, what the last two or three years—we understand it. But, there are going to be people out there, it's going to hit them like a bombshell. And, I'm also going to make it very clear that the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month is the Covenant Day—and if you are not in covenant with God, and *if you don't keep the 14<sup>th</sup> Passover you are not in covenant with God*. It's

going to be pretty hard-hitting. I need to have everything phrased in the right way, so that it's going to get the message across, be strong as can be, but not lay myself open in such a way that I can just be totally wiped out.

I don't know if I'm going to make that 'to the selected ones' or 'called out ones'—*called out ones* really is better.

"...strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia..." (v 1). With the exception of Bithynia, all of that area was the same area that the Apostle Paul preached in. It's very possible that Peter was writing from Babylon, which it says he was, and this letter was sent up into that area, but also included Bethany. And, it's possible that this was written *after* Paul was martyred. Now, some people claim that Peter and Paul were martyred together in Rome. I would have to say this gives evidence that I doubt whether that was so. Because, why would Peter be writing to those areas that **Paul** had his basic ministry in? And write this general letter? And this general letter was written in a time when there was a lot of distress. When, at that time, the brethren were literally being assaulted upon by the world. And he talks in here about the fiery trial. He talks about the difficulties that are in here.

Literally we are the *elect*, we are the *select*—the *called out ones*. And you can put in your notes there, Matt. 22:14, 'Many are called but few are chosen.' It's actually the chosen ones—that might even be better: 'to the chosen ones.' When you're *chosen*, you're *called out*; you answer the calling. Why are many called and few chosen? Because very few repent. Very few are willing to answer the call.

1-Peter 1:2: "...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you." That's telling us an awful, awful lot.

"...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father ..." We have to be called of God. He's got to lead us out of this world.

Let's go to John 6, another basic Scripture. We have to realize that **none of us** can come to the knowledge of the Truth on our own. We cannot go out, and as human beings in this world that's deceived by Satan the devil, with the nature that we have, the heart is what? '*Desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, who can know it.*' So, we can't just take our natural, carnal minds and say, 'Aha, I'm going to discover the Truth in life'; because '*it hasn't entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for him.*' It hasn't gone into his ears.

God has to call us. And He has to lift the veil of deception from our eyes. And, in a sense, it is

very good that it is that way. As a matter of fact, that's the only way that it can be. **God has to call us.** He has to open our minds. And, I tell you, some of the things that people believe about the Bible and the so-called myths in here, you can see that God has to call you to open your mind to it. And when you do, boy, the Bible is just, it's really something! You put it all together. But here, it's absolutely true:

John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, who sent Me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" That's why when we get the address that is given to us by Peter here, according to the pre-determined knowledge of God the Father—and that's something I think we need to emphasized more and really keep in mind. That it is God the Father Who is dealing with us through Jesus Christ. And that's something that should give us a great deal of hope.

I know this last week it was kind of tough for me, all the things going, I had to get out there, after being gone for about four days, come back and everybody's brother, and they had an urgent message and this one needed that and this one needed the other thing and it was really something. So I was out there driving around trying to keep everything going and moving along. And I've got this one difficult Astro, it's been about nine weeks and gradually coming through and getting it done—and finally, finally, finally it's going to be done this Monday. And I've called back three or four times to make sure it was going along.

But I tell you, it really gives us a great deal of **hope**. And this is the whole thing that Peter is talking about. In this world, as evil as it is, and all the problems that assault us, we have our share of them, every one of us do. But it is God the Father Who has called us.

John 6:65 it says the same thing—it reiterates it. "For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father." That's why *we're selected*. That's why we are *the elect*. That's why we are *the called out ones*; because God the Father has done that for us. Now, you see, that helps keep everything in a greater perspective. And realize that "if God is for you, nothing can be against you." Even though it seems like everything in the world, from time-to-time, may be against you. All the things we go through: sickness and health and difficulties and work. Just the pressures of this world. I can understand why we're living in the Laodicea age more than ever before, because it assaults us:

- we're assaulted at work;
- we're assaulted at home;
- we're assaulted on television;
- we're assaulted on radio;

- we're assaulted in the newspaper.

This thing with the New Age set, that is amazing, that is absolutely amazing! If you think that the Noahide Laws and the Jewish Messiah was something, wait till we get this sermon on that. So, that's why I think that it's very important that we really focus in on this special fact: ***that God the Father in His pre-determined fore-knowledge, called you! Called me! Called everyone that God is dealing with whom He has called.*** Now, that is something! That is something! We need to really understand that.

Put in your notes the third verse that goes along with that, John 14:6. Those three all tie together in a package.

Let's see the same thing reiterated when Paul wrote to the Ephesians; Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

Sometimes just trying to get through from day-to-day, many of us are like that. I would have to say *all* of us are like that. And we re-coined another name for our Church—we called it 'The No Hassle Church' for a long time and we've added the word, 'The No Hassle, Recycled Church.' We try and help the brethren get recycled back to God. One of the ways to really understand that and do that is to help them realize that ***God the Father is the One Who has called*** them, Who's dealing in their lives—in every one of our lives.

So, when we can take all of our difficulties and problems, all of our pain and agony and all of the emotions we have all involved in just living and surviving today and understand that. One of the greatest things that can happen is to receive the Spirit of God—that is ***the greatest thing*** in this life. The world tries to hold out success and riches and wealth and prestige, but, you know, all you have to do is pull back the veil a little bit and realize most of their lives are absolutely incredibly miserable and empty.

Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ; according as He has **personally chosen us**... [*'eklektos' or 'eklekto'*—from which we get the English word, *elect* or *select* ] ...for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world... [God determined that He was going to call a certain number of people before They even laid the foundation of the world. Now, I don't know if God knew specifically each one of us, I won't discount that, but I won't say that that is absolutely sure because of just the way that human beings are. But here is what He has chosen us to be:] ...in order that

we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love..." (vs 3-4).

That is the greatest thing, brethren, we can understand. I think we have so much of the difficulty of blaming and condemning ourselves for everything, which is, in many cases, sometimes not wholly our fault or beyond our control, and I know that has happened.

I know that in the visit back to Atlanta, there are so many things that people are going through ***in their every day life***, that they really need to know and understand that God the Father is the One Who has called you, and so for the very purpose that you, that "...we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ..." (v 5).

He's not called *the Father* for any other reason than He *is* our Father, and He's dealing directly with us. Boy, that's something! And we can sit here and talk about it, and I kind of, in my own mind, say, 'Fred, do you **really**, do you **really** grasp that? You know, we can say the words, we can read the words, we can shake our heads and say, 'Ah ha'—now, that's not the Pepsi commercial, please. Yes, that is right, that is true, but one of the things we need to do is **really** ask God to help us comprehend that even more and more. Because that'll give us more hope than anything we could, we could ever think of.

"...for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will... [***God's own will***] ...to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of His grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (vs 5-7). That is something! ***The grace of God is upon every one of us continuously***, we live in it, it is the most important thing in our lives.

Verse 8: "Which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; **having made known to us the mystery of His own will...**" (vs 8-9). How many people in the world have any inkling as to why they are here? Have any inkling as to what God is doing? Have any inkling ***whatsoever*** that God is fully in charge and He's going to take care of everything in His own way, in His own time, in His own plan.

***Christ came and died to save sinners!*** We need to really comprehend that from the point of view: which one of us would like to go out here—the Bay area—and find what we could call the worst sinner in the world and say I give up my life so you can live. Maybe that'll help us get that in perspective—isn't that something? We may drive by and see this person, I don't know. But, our normal, natural reaction is not to say, 'Hey, I'll give my life

up for you.’ Our normal, natural reaction is to say, ‘Yeah, you deserve it. Yeah, you’re a miserable, rotten human being.’ Well, for every sinner there’s hope, too. And since God is the One Who has called us, we didn’t come to this knowledge of ourselves, that makes it really tremendous and fantastic—doesn’t it? That God is making it known unto us the mystery of His will:

“...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9). And yet, as amazing as it is, there’s some people ready, willing to give up the Holy Days and throw away everything that they know to go back and have a religion rather than serve God as a way of life. It is amazing! Let’s not lose sight of what God is doing here.

I just want you, this week, to *focus in* and *think on*—and especially in your prayers and in your study—***what God the Father has done to make this possible for each one of us!*** This is something that I hope can really get across to some of the ministers, especially those who have been in Worldwide, that that being the case, we all really need to take a big turnaround—don’t we? And realize that we’re to preach the Word of God and help and serve, and that there is no big potentate, mucky-muckism that we ought to have over the brethren anywhere.

Just going out and being exposed to some of these people directly in talking to them, boy, I tell you, they need a place, brethren—and most of them need to have this place at home. Most of them have been whipsawed back and forth so much that they don’t even want to go out and go to church anyplace. That they need to get home, they need to get their Bible, they need to get on their knees and they need to pray and study—and if there’s anything we can help them with, by sending them some of these things, by encouraging some of them you don’t see.

We have stories of people who have literally had emotional break-downs and have lost their minds because of what ministers have done to people, because they have not understood what God is doing with each one of us. They’ve taken to themselves that authority and power of God, which is not from God anyway.

They’ve given themselves over to their own vanity and selfishness to rule with a rod of iron over the people of God. That’s why Peter starts out here and shows that it’s by the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, that it’s God the Father Who’s involved in our lives. Then we all back off and we worship God and Jesus Christ, and we realize how fantastic that is, and together we need to ask God, Help us, God:

- over our human nature
- and over our sins and faults
- and our problems and our difficulties
- help us draw close to You

—and maybe we can help some of those brethren out there.

I hope at this coming Feast of Tabernacles, that we’ll have a lot of these people who now get the sermons on CDs or DVDs where they have a little group to get together, and that they’ll be there and that we that we can make this Feast for them—and I ask your prayers for it—be very uplifting and very inspiring and very encouraging to them, that they will have then the spiritual fortitude and strength to go on.

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References

- 1) Luke 4:38-39
- 2) 1-Corinthians 9:3-6
- 3) Luke 5:10, 5-11
- 4) Matthew 16:15-17
- 5) Mark 1:36-42
- 6) Luke 9:28-36
- 7) Mark 14:29-38
- 8) Luke 22:8, 31-33
- 9) Matthew 16:17-18
- 10) John 1:43
- 11) 1-Peter 2:6-8
- 12) 1-Corinthians 10:4
- 13) Psalm 61:1-4
- 14) Psalm 62:2, 6
- 15) Psalm 78:35
- 16) Psalm 89:26-27
- 17) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 18) Luke 20:9-19
- 19) Acts 1:15
- 20) Acts 2:37-38
- 21) Acts 3:1
- 22) Acts 5:3, 8, 12-15
- 23) Galatians 2:4-12
- 24) 1 Peter 5:13
- 25) 1 Peter 1:1-2
- 26) John 6:44, 65

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 6
- John 1:44; 21:15-19
- Matthew 7:24-25
- 1-Corinthians 10:4
- Acts 10, 11, 15
- Matthew 22:14
- John 14:6

#### Also referenced: Book:

*The New Age Cults & Religions* by Texe Marrs

## Epistle of First Peter II

Fred R. Coulter

In First Peter I we essentially covered all of the background that we needed to cover on it. We could have covered more, but I didn't want to get all bogged down in everything in such technical details. I suppose just for the life of Peter and so forth, you could do three or four sermons alone, if you go through the Gospels and everything like that. And that would take us forever to get through 1-Peter; and I don't want to take all that time to take that long to go through it.

Let's go to 1-Peter the first chapter, and what I want you to do as we go through, I want you to see how really tremendously compact and inspired and how it fits in to all of the rest of the Gospel and the Word of God. Let me read on down through to v 6 and then we'll come back and we'll pick it up where we left off at v 2 before.

1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you" (vs 1-2). In those two verses is an **entire summary** of the Gospel. If you would take that and do an exhaustive study on the whole thing, you have an entire summary of the Gospel.

Verse 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living Hope..." I capitalized *hope* because this whole Book is on *hope*—the **hope of God!**

"...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us" (vs 3-4). This becomes very important in relationship to: Are you born again now? *or* Have you been begotten?

Verse 5: "Who are being safeguarded by the power of God through faith, for salvation *that* is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you yourselves are greatly rejoicing; *but* if it is necessary at the present time you have been in distress for a little while by various trials; in order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that is perishing, *even* though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (vs 5-7).

Now we'll go down through each one of these verses, we'll study it out in some detail, and then we will cover a short version of *Have You Been*

*Born Again Now?* And, I think you're going to be surprised as to the very basic premise as to why Protestants believe people are 'born again' now, which we will see **you are not!**

We finished last time, by going through with the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, so let's pick it up here on 'sanctification'—being sanctified by the Spirit. 1-Peter 2:9 has to do with *being called, being chosen*, so forth. This has to do with showing that they were Gentiles and not Jews that he was writing to.

1-Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen [people] stock... [same word for 'elect'] ...a royal priesthood, 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... [whenever you have it referred to someone as *not a people*, that means they were not part of the covenant of Israel or Judah—that means Gentiles] ...but now *are* the people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy" (vs 9-10).

1-Peter 4:3 is the internal evidence that the strangers are not Jews wandering in a strange land, but *strangers* referring to those who were not of the tribe of Judah: "For the past time of our lives is sufficient to have done the desires of the Gentiles, *when* we ourselves were walking in licentiousness and lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference in your behavior*, they are astonished *that* you are not carousing with *them* in the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they are [reviling] slandering you. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge *the* living and the dead" (vs 3-5). So, there again, that shows the strangers.

Now let's go to the one concerning *sanctification*. Sanctified means *to be set aside for a Holy purpose, a Holy use*. We're going to see **how** we are sanctified. We know there's one Scripture we all know (John 17) 'Sanctify them with Your Truth, Your Word is Truth.' What is the Holy Spirit called? *The Holy Spirit is called 'the Spirit of Truth.'*

When we read here in 1-Peter 1:2: "...by sanctification **through** the Spirit" that's what makes you Holy. We all know other than that we aren't Holy.

- God's Spirit makes you Holy
- God's calling that makes you Holy

Lots of times when we judge ourselves and see ourselves, we really see how deficient we are. But

that doesn't mean that God hasn't called you. That just merely means that God is revealing to you more of your nature.

Let's go to Romans 15 and let's see about this sanctification. And again, the whole operation of the *Spirit* of God, the *Plan* of God, the *Gospel* of God, in showing and teaching us these things concerning *calling*, *God's Spirit*, *God working in our lives*.

Romans 15:13: "May the God of **hope**..." In order for us to have **hope** in a society like it is today, we've got to understand that God is going to let it go to its ultimate depth. Because God has given choice—and if you give choice you don't restrict choice—you let them have their choice. God is going to let everything become very depraved, and it's going to create problems for us living in this society. We've got to look to the **hope of God**. Because you can look around, at all sides of you, and the whole world's falling apart.

What does Psalm 91 say? Will a thousand fall at your right hand, or ten thousand at your right hand, thousand at your left hand, God will spare and protect you <sup>[paraphrased]</sup>. Sometimes you feel like that. If you do a lot of driving and commuting you might feel like that almost every day—there are ten thousand on your right hand, ten thousand on your left hand, and so forth. You have to look to the **hope of God**. If you get frustrated and if you get down and miserable and feel rotten, what are you going to **hope in**, except God? That's why God gives us the hope.

He is, Romans 15:13: "...the God of hope fill you now with **all joy** and **peace** in believing..." That's the only thing that's going to give you peace of mind and understanding, nothing else is. You try and fight the world, you're going to be left at the altar, like the Paroteestas were. They were left at the altar by Paro. Anyone who's got a hope in man is going to fail and fall.

Jeremiah 17 shows what's going to happen to those that trust in men. We've already covered this concerning the human mind and how deceitful it is. but, there's some other interesting things here, which are absolutely true.

Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron..." That could apply to anyone who sells themselves to evil. I've got these two books: *In Route to Global Occupation* and *New Age Cults and Religions*. You could say the same thing concerning any one of these religions: the New Age religion, the Hindu religion, the Buddha religion, the, the Muslims, Judaism, Catholicism, all fits into the same thing.

"...engraved with a pen of iron, with the

point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars..." (v 1).

Verse 5: "Thus says the LORD, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited. Blessed...' " (vs 5-7).

Notice the contrast. I think this is really interesting. Whenever you go through some of these prophecies and it talks how bad it's going to be with people who are evil, then there's always encouragement for those who follow God.

Verse 7: "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and **whose hope is in the LORD**." You're hoping in the Lord, you're hoping in God, because God is a **personal** God.

Verse 9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?... [You can't even know your own heart because you lie and deceive your own self.] ... I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. As the quail that hatches eggs it has not laid; in the same way he who gets riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the middle of his days, and in his end he shall be a fool" (vs 9-11).

Verse 13: "O LORD, the Hope of Israel, all who forsake You shall be ashamed. 'Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth because they have forsaken the LORD, the Fountain of living waters.' Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed, save me, and I shall be saved; for You *are* my praise" (13-14). Now, there again is a prophecy of the Gospel, prophecy of salvation. All of these things through:

- the Spirit of God
- the Spirit of Truth
- the Spirit of Righteousness

that God alone does these things. And that's how we are sanctified.

Romans 15:13: "May the God of hope fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope *and* in the power of the Holy Spirit. But I myself am also persuaded concerning you, my brethren, that you are full of goodness, and are being filled with all knowledge, and are able to admonish one another" (vs 13-14).

That's quite a statement, isn't it, when you really think about it. How the brethren grew in grace and knowledge that he could say that they're "full of goodness, full of knowledge and able to admonish one another."

Verse 15: “So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, in order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles to perform the Holy service of teaching the gospel of God; so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 15-16). That’s what *sanctifies* you! We know that Paul said in Rom. 7: ‘...in my flesh dwells no good thing.’ So, if a person doesn’t have the Holy Spirit of God then there’s no way they can be sanctified. God is the One that has to do it!

All right now, there is a process. We all know this. This is very basic. There is a process to being sanctified. We covered part of it.

1. God the Father has to call you—we already covered that—right?

Then what is the next thing that has to happen? After God calls you, what is the next thing that has to happen?

2. ‘Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins *and* you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit [which] sanctifies you.’

That’s what sanctifies you.

If you want a more in-depth study on *sanctification*, get out your handy-dandy concordance and go through *sanctify*, *sanctifying*, *sanctification* and so forth. But, it’s through the Holy Spirit. What does this do? After you are sanctified by the Spirit, **what does this lead you to do?** *Obey God!* You see how the step is? *You obey God!* What did the Apostle Peter say concerning the Holy Spirit? ...the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who **obey Him**’ (Acts 5:32).

Now let’s go to Romans, the first chapter, and let’s see that with obedience there’s what is called, ‘obedience to the faith.’ Of those who say that there’s no obedience and it’s only faith, you’re kind of stuck with a problem.

Romans 1:1: “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart to preach the Gospel of God, which He had promised before through His prophets in *the* Holy Scriptures concerning His Son [Jesus Christ, our Lord]... [notice how each one of these introductions *summarize* the Gospel; *summarize* the process of salvation] ...Who came from *the* seed of David according to *the* flesh, Who was declared *the* Son of God with power, according to *the* spirit of Holiness, by *the* resurrection from *the* dead—Jesus Christ our Lord; through Whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all the nations, in behalf of His name...” (vs 1-5). There again, we could go through all kinds of studies showing: Should you obey? Should you keep the

commandments?—yes, that’s very, very basic. You all know that and you all understand it. All right, so we have the obedience to what? How is that accomplished? Why is that made available? ***By the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ!***

Let’s look at some other Scriptures concerning that: the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.’ I know in just going back, and really, really thinking about this, and just seeing how the Apostle Peter wrote this and just packed all of that in these first verses, it’s really amazing what he’s got in there, really, when you stop and think about it and put all of the rest of the Scriptures together.

Hebrews 9:13: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh... [we are sanctified *to the purifying of the Spirit*—through the Spirit of God—not just the flesh] ...to a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God” (vs 13-14).

It’s through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. I don’t know exactly how that was accomplished. Obviously, when Christ was on the tree (or the cross) when He **bled** to death, His blood spilled on the ground. I don’t know if when He was resurrected He took just a little bit of that blood to the altar in heaven above, with Him. I do not know. There’s some who think that that is probably so. I could not tell you. But, if it’s relating to the sprinkling of the blood of Christ...

Showing what this blood does for us, Hebrews 10:19 “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus.” In *The Christian Passover* book I’ve got a whole chapter: the meaning of the *blood*, the meaning of the *body*, and what all of that means. And, it gets rather detailed and complicated and I cover quite in-depth in that chapter.

Verse 20: “By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water.” (vs 20-22).

In a sense, that blood was symbolically sprinkled to us. I don’t know if there was just a small portion of the blood that Jesus took with Him when He ascended at the resurrection, to be accepted of the Father that there was, indeed, actually some of the literal blood of Jesus sprinkled on the altar of God or not, I can’t tell you, but there are some indications in the Bible that perhaps that could possibly be so.

Let's see a little bit more about what the blood of Jesus Christ has done—because that is a whole important aspect. It's through His blood that we have forgiveness of sins and so forth. Colossians 1:20: "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself... [the whole focal-point of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of the Son of God, the shedding of His blood, the sprinkling of His blood, the blood of the covenant and all of that is a tremendous and magnificent thing. And it's 'to reconcile all things unto Himself.' Now, notice how much:] ...by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven."

Everything that Satan did to disrupt the heavens; everything that Satan did to disrupt God and His plans, is also taken care of through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ. The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ is a *tremendous* statement.

Let's see a little bit more how compact and how really tremendous that these first verses are. You know, too many times when we study the Bible, we just read through and say, 'that's nice, thank you, that's lovely' and you go on and you read it. And you never stop and think how really compact and how inspired all of that is in just these first few verses here.

1-Peter 1:2: "...unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you." We won't go through all—we could go through many sermons on *grace*. We've covered some of that during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We've got the whole series—if you don't have the series on Grace.

Verse 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... [notice how closely this follows along with the writings of the Apostle Paul] ...Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again *into*... [the *King James* says 'unto'—but, *into*. You are put *into that*] ...a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."

Now, why could they not put here, 'born again'? Even the *King James* has 'begotten.' How come they couldn't translate it 'born again'? *Because Jesus Christ—literally speaking as human beings—and God the Father; They 'begat.' They don't give birth. Now, that may sound ridiculously simple, but it is true. We were begotten one time, born of our mother, now we are begotten again! So, let's take a little time here and ask the questions:*

- What do you mean 'born again'?
- Why is it that we are not literally born again now?
- Why have the Protestants missed the boat on that?

Let's first of all look at the Protestant doctrine:

- What happens, according to Protestant doctrine, when you die? *You go to heaven!*
- This does away with what? *The resurrection!*

So, therefore, we know that to be 'born again,' which we will now prove, means *to be born from flesh to spirit or resurrected out of the grave*. It's exactly what it means. If you go to heaven, the only way then you can be 'born again' is to be 'born again' now. That's why the Protestant doctrine of 'born again' *is wrong!* They have *rejected* the knowledge and Truth and doctrine of the *resurrection*.

Let's go through and let's examine this very carefully. Let's look at the different Scriptures concerning 'born again.' Let's do just a little bit right here in, because this gives us a clue that it's *not now*:

1-Peter 1:4: "Into an inheritance incorruptible... [Are we corruptible? *Yes!*] ...and undefiled... [Can we be defiled? *Yes!*] ...and that unfading... [Do we fade? *Yes!*] (Where is it?): ...reserved in heaven for us.... [You don't have it yet. You can't be born again now. Just from the context of the verses here.] ...Who are being safeguarded by the power of God through faith, for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in the last time" (vs 4-5). Has not happened yet!

Let's look at some other Scriptures. Let's go to Ephesians, the first chapter, and let's see about the Spirit. Some of these we've covered, but I want to get it in here just for the record. And again, whenever we start answering some of these questions—oh, and by the way, there are a lot of Churches of God who are now beginning to believe in that you're *born again* now. 'Oh well, that's all right, the Protestants have it.' and I talked to one woman who said, 'Well, the local minister of the Church of God down where they were said you're born again when you're baptized, and then you're born again at the resurrection.' How many times can you be *born again*? Are you *born again*, and then born again and again? Is that what the question is? *No!* See, they get all off.

You have to go back to the basic foundation here, Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Do you have the Holy Spirit? You are *sanctified* as we saw; you are *sealed*. As we saw on Pentecost, this tells us that none of us can be the 144,000, because the 144,000 are not sealed until down into the Great Tribulation, which means they don't have the Holy Spirit of God today.

Verse 14: “Which is *the earnest...* [small portion of the Holy Spirit] ...of our inheritance....” We read in 1-Peter 1:4 that that inheritance is reserved in heaven for us *now!* We’re going to see that *if* you’re ‘born again’ *now* you must have the inheritance *now*. So, if you don’t have the inheritance, you can’t be *born again*, and we’ll see some other things, which will prove that.

2-Corinthians 1:21—Here’s another Scripture, which confirms that: “But He who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, *is* God; Who has also **sealed** us and has given the **earnest** of the Spirit in our hearts” (vs 21-22). That’s what it means to be ‘begotten again.’ Receiving the Holy Spirit as a begettall from God. All right, then that’s then how you begin.

Let’s go to 1-John 5; here again in the *King James* is another place where they could not say ‘born again.’ We’re going to cover a couple of the Scriptures which say ‘born again’ after we get done with John, the third chapter. They did slip in *born of God*. But, if you look at other translations they will show *begotten of God*. If you read the *Interlinear* translation you will see *begotten of God*.

1-John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been **begotten** by God; and everyone who loves Him Who **begat**...” The Father cannot *born*, the Father only *begats*. The mother gives birth, the mother does not *begat*. Who’s the mother of us all? *Jerusalem above, the mother of us all* (Gal. 4). In the past, it’s been made—the mistake in the Church—that the Church is the mother of us all, so therefore, the Church then has full dominion over you—that’s not correct. Jerusalem above is the mother of us all.

“...everyone who loves Him Who begat also loves him who **has been begotten** by Him” (v 1). So, it’s not talking about a birth—we’ll see what the birth is.

Let’s go to the Gospel of John, the third chapter, and let’s see what Jesus said about being ‘born again.’ In this chapter it tells us exactly what a person is like if they have truly been ‘born again.’ And we’ll ask those questions: Are we like that? *or* Can we do that? I’m going into this in a little detail because there have been quite a few people asking me to do something concerning about the doctrine *born again*.

John 3:1: “Now there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher *Who* has come from God... [quite an admission] ...because no one is able... [or has the power] ...to do the miracles that You are doing unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly... [now, in

the Greek that is *Amen, Amen*. Now, that means He is punctuating what He is going to say as absolutely dogmatic fact. Whenever Jesus says, *verily, verily*, that is *double dogmatic fact*. You could almost look at it that way.] ...I say to you, **unless anyone is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God**” (vs 1-3).

If we except exactly what this is telling us, let’s just analyze this a little bit what it’s saying. If you have not been *born again* or *anew* you cannot see the Kingdom of God. And the Greek there is “*ou dunamai*”—means *you have no power to see the Kingdom of God*. How many here have seen the Kingdom of God? *Nobody!* Hasn’t come on the earth. First test: If you’ve been *born again* have you seen the Kingdom of God? *No!* You’ve failed the first test, right there. Next time someone says, ‘I’m born again,’ if you want to have a little play on words, say, ‘Oh, that’s interesting, tell me what the Kingdom of God looks like, you must have seen it.’

Verse 4: “Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man who is old be born? Can he... [return into, or does he have the power to go back into his mother’s womb] ...enter his mother’s womb a second time and be born?’.... [It’s true that’s talking about the process of physical birth. Then it’s talking about that being born then is a process. So, there was no misunderstanding here by Nicodemus as to the fact that it was a literal birth he was talking about. So, Jesus didn’t answer him. Notice every time he brought up a question, Jesus did not answer him *directly*.] (v 5): ...Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, unless anyone has been born of water and of Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God’” (vs 4-5).

Some people say that ‘born of water’ means *by baptism*. This has nothing to do with baptism. He didn’t say, ‘Unless a person be baptized.’ Did He not know what baptism was all about? *Yes*, because you go to chapter four and Jesus was baptizing more disciples than John; yet, He was not baptizing, the disciples were. If it were just a matter of baptism, He said, ‘Unless a person has been baptized.’

So, no, it’s not baptism. How is it that a woman knows when she’s ready to give birth? The water breaks—and it hurts, yes, it hurts! And what is the, besides the contractions of the muscles, what is it that pushes the baby out? *The water!* If there was no water, you could not be born. Every birth would have to be a cesarean. And there are times when the water breaks and the baby’s not born and the must perform a cesarean because they can’t get it out, because the water’s gone.

Well, experience has just told me by fact, that you can lose all the water and still give birth. But I’ve seen all my children born and boy, when they’re born, they come out and it’s like the hot

water tank just broke all over the floor. So, you're born of water, that's true, it doesn't have to do with baptism. And this carries right over—'born of water **and** of Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.'

(go to the next track)

Now, we've got another statement here: you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God—again, 'ou dunamai'—you have no power to enter the Kingdom of God.

Verse 6: "That which has been born of the flesh is flesh... [That is a clear statement. We have been born of the flesh—literally born—and we are flesh.] ...and **that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit**. It does not say, 'the one who is born of the spirit *has* the spirit.' Big difference. It says, the one who is "...born of the Spirit **is** spirit."

Let's see what this says of God: John 4:24—no doubt about this: "God **is** a spirit" If God is spirit—anyone deny that God is Spirit? If you've been *born of the spirit*, **you are spirit—made of spirit, composed of spirit**.

Let's go back to John 3:6: "That which is born of the Spirit **is** spirit." And I don't think there's a human being alive who's presumptuous enough—well, I can think of maybe one or two, but I won't mention their names—to claim that they're spirit. Not one of us. And I remember the first time I was understanding this, I could hear Herbert Armstrong say, 'Now, I want you all to take the hatpin test.' That is if you are spirit, stick it in your leg and you won't bleed. If you don't bleed, you're spirit. **You're not spirit!**

Verse 7: "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'It is necessary for you to be born again.'" What does the *King James* say? *You must be born again*. That's a very weak translation. The word for 'must' comes from the Greek 'dei' which means: *obligatory, mandatory, absolutely necessary*. It is absolutely necessary for you to be born anew—again.

Verse 8—here's the characteristic of someone who **is** spirit: "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; so... [the Greek there is 'hutos' which means: *exactly in the same way as*] ...everyone who has been born of the Spirit." To go where they want to go. When Jesus was resurrected He what? *Walked through walls, walked through doors*. Remember the two disciples were amazed, all of a sudden He disappeared from them, gone!

Boy, you know I would like to be 'born again' right now because there's some times when you just want to get away from people that way—

isn't that true? Wouldn't that be really good, if all of a sudden you're in the middle of an argument with someone and you just disappeared—gone!—couldn't find you! Now, you know you're not born again because you can't do that.

Another test would be: if someone says they're *born again*, say they're talking on the phone, say, 'Fine, come over to my house right now. I mean, you know, just come through the telephone line if you will. Or, you know, just leave your house and fly over here'—because if you're born again you can go anywhere you want to. You can't see the wind, you can only see what it does. When you see smoke blowing, you're only seeing what the wind is doing. Now, Nicodemus saw how amazing this was, and

Verse 9: "Nicodemus answered and said to Him, 'How can these things be?'.... [he couldn't understand it] ... Jesus answered and said to him, 'You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? Truly, truly I say to you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?'" (vs 9-12). So, to be *born of the spirit* means that you must have a spirit body.

Now let's go to 1-Corinthians 15, and see that is absolutely, literally so. *Born anew, born again or born from above*. It can read *from above*. Now, the Church of God Seventh Day explains it this way: you are born again now, and with the Spirit of God in you; you go wherever you want to go and no one knows you have the Spirit of God. That's really a very terribly weak explanation of it, because it says the one who has been *born again* is *born of spirit* and **is spirit!** We have the earnest of it, we don't have the fullness of it. We've got the down-payment of it, but we don't have the purchased possession yet.

Let's go on and see where we are here. Yes, if you're born of spirit you have the Holy Spirit. Not only without measure, you'll be composed of spirit. And that's what He means. 'That which has been born of the spirit **IS SPIRIT!**' You're composed of spirit. "That which is born of the flesh **IS FLESH**' and is composed of flesh.

1-Corinthians 15:20, the *resurrection* chapter. "But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead..." What would have happened if Christ were not raised from the dead? *There's no hope!* It said 'your hope is in vain if Christ be not risen from the dead.' It means His body would have corrupted—right? If anyone had God's Holy Spirit on earth, it was Jesus Christ. If anyone could be, with the receiving of God's Holy Spirit 'born again,' in this

life, it would have been Jesus Christ. But, Jesus was not ‘born again’ until the resurrection. We’ll see this in just a minute.

“...But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep” (v 20).

Colossians, the first chapter, talks about Jesus Christ being ‘born from among the dead.’ And this proves that the resurrection **IS** the spiritual birth. Colossians 1:18 “And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, *the firstborn from among the dead...*” To be ‘born again’ means to be resurrected from the dead. Now we just read that, ‘**By the resurrection of the Christ**’ (1-Cor. 15).

Revelation 1—in the *King James* this is not a correct translation. It says ‘the first begotten from the dead.’ But, the Greek word here is ‘prototokos’—which means *the first born from among the dead*. Revelation 1:5: “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead...” This is not the word from the Greek verb ‘gennao’—which mean *begotten* or *born*. This is ‘prototokos’—which means *an accomplished fact; you have been born*. The first born ‘from’ the dead or ‘of’ the dead.

1-Corinthians 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death [Adam], by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead [Christ]. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ *the* firstfruit; then, those who are Christ’s at His coming” (vs 20-23). What happens when Christ returns? *Those of the firstfruits are resurrected!*

Verse 42: “So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption... [If you are born again now, today as the Protestant’s claim, you should not die. You should not be corruptible—that is, your body disintegrate.] ...It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory... [That is true, the whole process of dying is an agonizing and terrible thing, it’s not pleasant even under the best circumstances.] ...It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body...” (vs 42-44).

*That which has been born of the Spirit is spirit!* It is raised a spiritual body. When are people raised? *At the resurrection, when Christ returns!* That’s when they’re raised, that’s what He’s talking about. It is ‘sown a spiritual body.’ I can guarantee you today, I have enough aches and pains that I know I have a physical body—and I know that it is corruptible. Any Protestant, if he wants to prove that

he is *born again*, must produce himself in a **spiritual** body. That they cannot do because the resurrection hasn’t occurred. Since they don’t believe in the resurrection, therefore, they have the false doctrine of being ‘born again’ now. Because that’s the only time you could be born again if there’s no resurrection—but there is a resurrection.

This follows all right along here, v 45: “Accordingly, it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.’”

- Was Jesus resurrected from the dead? *Yes!*
- Was He made a spirit being when He was resurrected from the dead? *Yes!*

***That which is has been born of the Spirit is spirit.*** He was the firstborn from among the dead.

Verse 46: “However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural... [That’s the way it is. Everyone wants to be spiritual, but you can’t be until the whole natural body has run its course—died, gone to sleep, waits the resurrection.] ...then the spiritual. The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly one, so also *are all* those who are heavenly” (vs 46-48).

If you’re *born again* you must be *heavenly*. We’re not! We haven’t even done and exhaustive, thorough—as we did several years ago—study on *what does it mean to be ‘born again,’* and look at every word in the Greek. We can see how absolutely, utterly false that doctrine is.

Verse 49: “And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, **we shall...** [when will ‘shall’ be fulfilled?] ...also bear the image of the heavenly *one*. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God...” (vs 49-50). Flesh and blood **cannot see** the Kingdom of God. Flesh and blood **cannot enter** into the Kingdom of God. Only that which is born of the Spirit can enter into the Kingdom of God. If you have not been ‘born again’ you cannot **see** the Kingdom of God. If you have not been ‘born again’ you cannot **enter into** the Kingdom of God. Paul says the same thing.

Verse 50: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God... [Where did Peter say our inheritance was? *Reserved in heaven for us to be revealed at the last time!* See how all the Scriptures fit together? See how terrifically they fit together?] ...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and **we shall**

**be changed**” (vs 50-52). When you are “changed” you have what? *A spirit body! You are spirit.* That which has been born of the spirit is spirit. You cannot be born of the spirit until the resurrection.

Verse 53: “For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility... [If you think anyone was *born again* you’d have to say Paul was—right? But he saying, ‘I have a corruptible body, haven’t put on incorruption, yet.’] ...and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (vs 53-55). You’ve got him. If you have been ‘born again’ **you cannot die!** There you go. Now, I don’t know why people get into all these arguments. There are some who get into some arguments about this and so forth.

Let’s go back to 1-Peter again here; let me read it in the *King James*, 1-Peter 1:23: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever.” The Greek means *being begotten*. Because he starts out in v 3 and having been *begotten again*—should not read *born*. This is one of those places that they go to with the mistranslation from the *King James Version* to make it appear that you are now born again. You’re not born again. You’re *begotten* again.

Verse 23 (FV): “For you have been **begotten again**, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*... [Every time you see italic in my translation it is to continue the thought flow, or to put in the automatic reference in the Greek referring to the subject.] ...by the living Word of God, *which* [is abiding] remains forever.” Now, what is it that really begets you? Not just the Word of God alone, but *God’s Holy Spirit from God the Father*.

Those who believe in the ‘born again’ doctrine say, ‘Now I got you.’ 1-Peter 2:2: “As newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk of the word, that by it you may grow *in character*.” You’re obviously not going to grow in body size in spite of the movie—what is the new movie coming out? *I Blew Up the Baby*—it doesn’t mean disintegrated, it made the baby a giant.

“If you yourselves did indeed taste that the Lord is gracious.... [Did you eat the Lord? I mean some of these things are metaphors and similes and they’re spiritually understood.] ...To Whom you are coming, as *to a living Stone*, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and precious*... [Was Jesus a person or a stone? *He was a person!*] ...You also, as living stones, are yourselves being built up *as a spiritual house—a Holy priesthood*...” (vs 2-5).

- Are you born again as newborn babes? Are you newborn babes? *No! You’re full mature adults!*
- Are you living stones? *No, you’re people!*
- Are you a priesthood?
- Are you a spiritual house? *No!*

All these things are describing what God is doing *in* and *through* us. That’s what it’s describing. It’s not saying that you’re born again and you are newborn babes. It is **as newborn babes**; **as living stones**, not that you actually are.

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 [born (KJV)] begotten by God.” Anyone who’s been born of God **cannot** sin. Now, unfortunately, there are two misunderstandings of that. And that is, where the Protestants get the doctrine: once you’ve accepted Christ you’ve been ‘born again,’ you cannot sin after that. *That is not true!* This one here, in reading, who ‘has been born of God cannot sin’ unfortunately does not convey what the whole context is. And it should read: “...he is not able to **practice** sin...”

Verse 4—this gives us the context of it: “Everyone...” The Greek is: ‘*anyone who is practicing sin.*’ In the *King James* it says: ‘Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law.’ But here it is, ‘Everyone who is **PRACTICING** sin.’ That follows all the way through—*practicing sin*. or *Sin is the transgression of the law*. or *Sin is lawlessness*.] ...And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him **does not practice sin**; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him...” (vs 4-6). That means: **not practicing sin**. It’s like with us, we sin because we’re carnal and human, but we are not **practicing** sin. And the word *practice* goes all the way through here.

Verse 7: “Little children, do not allow anyone [lead you astray] to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous...”—it is something you are doing. It’s the comparison between practicing sin on the one hand and practicing righteousness on the other hand.

- Could you *willingly, knowingly*, continue practicing adultery—constantly be **practicing** it?
- Could you, as a Christian, *willingly, knowingly* break the Sabbath and keep church on Sunday?
- Could you, as a Christian, *willingly, knowingly* practice murder? *No!*

- Could you, as a Christian, *willingly, knowingly* take God's name in vain?
- *willingly, knowingly* make an idol and bow down to it? *No!*
- Could you commit momentary idolatry by placing your thoughts above the thoughts of God? *Yes!*
- Can you repent of it? *Yes!*
- Are you *practicing* idolatry? *No!*
- Are you *practicing* sin? *No!*
- Can you see the difference in *practicing* sin and sinning because of weakness?

When we're talking about this going on down through here, he is making the comparison of *practicing*.

Verse 8 "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.**" It says in the *King James* there, 'does not commit sin because His seed... [the seed of God the Father] ...of *begettal* is dwelling within him... [The seed from the Father does the 'begetting'—doesn't it? It does not do the birthing or the, if I could coin a word: *borning* (no such word). The Father's seed is the seed of *begettal* and His seed is remaining in him and he is not able (the verb 'practice' carries down)] ... and he **is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God**" (vs 8-9).

That's the proper and the literal and complete translation of it. That does not support 'born again.' Unfortunately, with the committees of translation with the *King James* you had different committees translating different books. And there are certain doctrines that they had in there. And you can see there's a conflict when you read the different translations, that it's translated a little differently by one, a little differently by another, because they did not understand the *begettal* now and the birth at the resurrection. Some of them may have. But, that's where the confusion comes in and then people come in and read their own doctrine into the Bible and then say, 'Oh, we're born again now.'

If you're born again now—if you take the literal statement, 'you cannot sin.' And I don't know of anyone who can say they cannot sin. I don't know of a single soul who says they cannot sin.

Next time we'll get into some other things and make more progress in 1-Peter. But, when we come to a topic like that—that is very vital for doctrine—we're going to go ahead and go through it.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:1-7
- 2) 1-Peter 2:9-10
- 3) 1-Peter 4:3-5
- 4) 1 Peter 1:2
- 5) Romans 15:13
- 6) Jeremiah 17:1, 5-7, 9-11, 13-14
- 7) Romans 15:13-16
- 8) Romans 1:1-5
- 9) Hebrews 9:13-14
- 10) Hebrews 10:19-22
- 11) Colossians 1:20
- 12) 1-Peter 1:2-5
- 13) Ephesians 1:13-14
- 14) 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- 15) 1 John 5:1
- 16) John 3:1-6
- 17) John 4:24
- 18) John 3:6-12
- 19) 1 Corinthians 15:20
- 20) Colossians 1:18
- 21) Revelation 1:5
- 22) 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 42-55
- 23) 1-Peter 1:23
- 24) 1-Peter 2:2-5
- 25) 1 John 3:9, 4-9

#### Scriptures referenced. not quoted:

- John 17
- Psalm 91
- Romans 7
- Acts 5:32
- Galatians 4

#### Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Grace*
- Books:
  - *En Route to Global Occupation* by Gary H. Kah
  - *New Age Cults & Religions* by Texe Marrs
  - *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
  - *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

# Epistle of First Peter III

Fred R. Coulter

Let's continue in our study of the First Epistle of Peter, and there are just a couple of things I want to cover concerning *born again* that needs to be done to wrap up everything that we did last week concerning it.

First of all, Exo. 13:2 has to do with firstborn has to do with *birth by the mother!* Exodus 13:1: "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Sanctify all the firstborn to Me, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, of man and of beast. It is Mine'" (vs 1-2). Very important to understand, because the whole principle of firstborn follows along with that.

Now let's see another Scripture, Deuteronomy 21. This is something that we don't have to deal with. Poor Jacob did, he had two wives and two concubines and he lived a miserable life. There was a fight every night. Read that, that is definitely recorded there as a thing *not to do!* Not as a thing *to do!*

Can you imagine in this day and age trying to support all of that? Can you imagine trying to feed all the 12 sons of Israel and the four concubines and everything, going down to Lucky's and buying your weekly groceries; you'd have to drive a truck through just to load it up. The society was totally different then.

Deuteronomy 21:15: "If a man has two wives... [What does it say about *two masters*? What does it say when you're interests are divided? *Here's what happens*]: ...one beloved and another hated... [God has a little remedy here]: ...and they have borne him sons, *both* the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son was of her that was hated."

So, there's the firstborn of the *beloved*. There's the firstborn of the *hated*. Being born has to do with giving birth by the mother.

Verse 16: "Then it shall be in the day when he makes his sons to inherit what he has, he may not grant firstborn *status* to the son of the beloved in preference to the son of the hated one—for he *is truly* the firstborn." Being firstborn is counted from birth, *not begettal*.

Verse 17: "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has. For he *is* the beginning of his strength, and the right of the firstborn is his."

Now let's look at another very interesting Scripture, 1-Chronicles 5, here's something very interesting that happened with the sons of Israel. Who was the firstborn of the sons of Jacob whose

name was changed to Israel? *Reuben!* We find an application of this right here:

1-Chronicles 5:1: "And the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel—for he **was the firstborn**; but since he defiled his father's bed, **his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph** the son of Israel... [Why? *Reuben was the firstborn of Leah; Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel!*] ...and the genealogy **is not to be reckoned according to the birthright**... [because each one has their own genealogy. But the birthright transferred to the sons of Joseph.

For those who don't believe in what people mock as *British Israelism* I defy you to read Gen. 49 and take all of those blessings that were given and apply them to the Jews—it won't work!

Then it says concerning Judah, v 2: "For Judah prevailed among his brothers, and from him *came* the chief ruler... [prophecy of the coming Christ and also a prophecy that the kingship or the rulership would be in Judah] ...but **the birthright was Joseph's**." The birthright then is the inheritance of the physical land and the physical places as God has said, according to the promises given to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and down to Joseph; which then reside wholly in Ephraim and Manasseh. You can argue back and forth is England Ephraim or is America Ephraim. They're the sons of Joseph and you could make a case for either one. Rather than argue about it, just look at the sons of Joseph and see where the birthright has been.

Let's go to Matthew, the first chapter, and let's see what it says about Jesus Christ. Now we know where it says that God gave His *only begotten Son*—that is 'mono gennao.' God did not beget any more than just Jesus Christ in the flesh. When it's referring to God the Father, Jesus is not called *the firstborn* but the *first begotten*.

Matthew 1:25: "But he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her son... [and this word here is 'prototokos' which means *firstborn*—a fact that a birth has occurred, a live birth.] ...the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus."

Here's a mistake that the Church made. The Church used to claim that—and some churches still do—that the Church is the mother; because the Church, collectively, is referred to as 'thea-ekklesia' in the female sense. But that doesn't make the Church the mother. Galatians 4:26: "But the Jerusalem above is free, which is *the* mother of us all." Now, when is the birth going to be? We saw last week: at the resurrection.

Let's go to Isaiah 66, and let's see just a couple of other things here concerning that resurrection and the prophecy of it. Now this can be applied to the New Testament Church at its very beginning. This can be applied also for those also who are in the Church of God, that later are kicked out by those who hate you. Remember what Jesus told the apostles: 'They've hated Me, they will hate you, also.'

Isaiah 66:5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, 'Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake...' You go back and look what happened to those Christians who were Jews; who were kicked out of the synagogue; out of their homes.

I've joked with Carl Franklin a couple of times about what would have Paul's life been, if the Jews back then had all the things they had today for spying. They had helicopters to go track him down and all that sort of thing, Paul would have been long gone and dead—and he was hated. Remember when he just tried to speak to the people at the temple. As soon as he mentioned the word *Gentiles* there was riot and he had to be saved and taken to prison to rescue his life. It applies there and to all that fit into that category, obviously.

"...said, 'Let the LORD be glorified.' But He will appear to your joy and they will be ashamed." A sound of noise from the city, a sound from the temple, the sound of the LORD repaying His enemies" (vs 5-6). You can put in there: 1-Cor. 15 where then he is going to reign until 'His enemies be made His footstool.' Many different things. Go ahead and do a little word study on 'enemies.'

- Remember those who didn't accept Jesus?
- Remember those who cast out the servants that were sent?
- What was it said?
- *Bring those My enemies and slay them here before My eyes.*

So God is going to take care of them in the long run.

Verse 7—here's a prophecy of the resurrection of all the Church: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.... [This is directly referring to Jesus, but (as we will see) it flows right into the resurrection of the Church—being born at once.] ...Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?... [and in the Septuagint this the same as giving birth.] ...Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?... [the answer is: *Yes!* So the resurrection's going to occur in one day] ...or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (vs 7-8). Are we not the children of God? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "'Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?' saith the LORD. 'Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb?' says your God. 'Rejoice you with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all you that mourn for her'" (vs 9-10). So there's a prophecy of Jerusalem above as the 'mother of us all.' Now, obviously, that is in symbolism.

Now let's go to Hebrews, the first chapter, because this becomes very important for us to understand. This becomes important because this is the place where the word 'gennao' for *begotten* is used; and also 'prototokos' for *firstborn*—showing that they are two different things. But when it is 'prototokos' referring to Christ as the *firstborn* that is after the fact of the resurrection, because why? *He was firstborn in the flesh when Mary gave birth*—correct? And God begat no others but Jesus. Who is the firstborn from among the dead? *Jesus!*—'prototokos'; we saw that last time (Col. 1).

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being the brightness of His glory and the exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins..." (vs 1-3). That's interesting— isn't it? 'by Himself'—in other words, *alone*. That had to be done. That's why on the cross Jesus said, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' Because He had to have that time absolutely alone.

"...sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'?.... (vs 3-5). That is from the root verb 'gennao'—which means *to engender*. And in the Greek you have the 'gen'—which still carries over to the English. 'Gen' is *ga*, which you have 'gennao' and all of the forms of the verb 'gennao'

"...And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the..." (vs 51-6)—*KJV: first begotten*; but that is not a proper translation, because the word here is not 'proto-gennao'; this is 'prototokos'—the *firstborn*. So when he's 'prototokos' He's resurrected from the dead.

Colossians 1—let's look at that again so we can see how the word 'prototokos' is used. We saw where it was 'prototokos' when He was born, the firstborn of the virgin Mary. He was born of the dead so then, even though the Bible doesn't say so, Jesus was 'born again.' To a Protestant, when they hear that they go absolutely bananas, because to

them that means *answering the call of the preacher and running down and accepting the Lord Jesus, then you're born again*. But because they don't understand it, they don't understand that in order for Him to have been resurrected and be the firstborn—'prototokos'—from among the dead, He had to be born again. If He was the firstborn when He was delivered of by His mother Mary, and He's the firstborn among the dead, then being born again has exactly what we talked about last time: 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'

Colossians 1:18: "And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, **the firstborn from among the dead**... [there it is right there, 'the firstborn from the dead.' The word 'prototokos' is also used in v 15: the first born of 'every creature.' That does not mean creature in the sense of everything that God has created. That means the first born of every creature who is *raised from the dead*, which is referring to Christ.] ...so...[it pleased the Father] ...that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence."

Let's put a couple of more Scriptures here so we can finish that. Romans 8 will fit in with the series we're doing with 1-Peter. This is a true statement when you're going through the difficulties. It doesn't feel like it, but it's still true.

Romans 8:28: "And we know... [We're going to see that's the whole thing concerning *hope*. This is what you've got to know]: ...**that all things work together for good** to those that love God... [Even the unpleasant work together for good in the long-run. In the short-run, maybe not. But in the long-run.] ...to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. Because those whom he did foreknow, He also predestinated... [That's God's plan, predestinated you]: ...*to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that he might be *the* firstborn among many brethren" (vs 28-29).

You put all the Scriptures together and it's very clear that you are not born again until the resurrection. And here this word for *firstborn* is 'prototokos'—referring to Jesus. Doesn't it say back there in 1 Cor. 15, we covered last time? Jesus, the *firstfruits*, Jesus, the *firstborn* from among the dead. So, I will say as I did last week, if there's a Protestant who thinks that he is *born again*, come and produce yourself in a spiritual body and show us so that we may believe. If not, it's false doctrine, it just ain't so!

One other thing in prophecy, let's go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, and see what we are called—we're also *firstborn*. Christ, the *firstfruits*. He was first of the first.

(go to the next track)

Remember what it says 'Blessed and Holy is he that has part in the **first** resurrection' (Rev. 20).

Hebrews 12:22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem... [Which is *the* 'mother of us all.'] ...and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* church of *the* firstborn, registered in *the* book of life in heaven... [They are not *in* heaven, but their names are **written in** heaven—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that* of Abel" (vs 22-24). That ties right back in with what we covered in 1-Peter, the first chapter.

Now you understand a little more clearly why that it had to be translated, even in the *King James*, in 1-Peter 1:3: "...He has begotten us again." It could not be translated: *borned us again*—because the Father begets. There are several things that we need to do here, several things we need to cover. Now, just to show you how all of this ties in together—and I am amazed in just going through and seeing how tremendously that this has been written as far as the original. Not what I've written; I just translated it in a way that I hope is a little easier to read. But what is in these verses, all jammed-packed together in preaching the Gospel—in just those verses—it is amazing! Let's look at some of the words that are here, some of the key words:

- 1-Peter 1:2: "...**predetermined** knowledge of God the Father..." Now we find that throughout the writings of the Apostle Paul, as well.
- Then "...by **sanctification**..."
- "...unto the **obedience**..."—*the obedience*.

We need to understand that because Protestants think they can do anything they want to. They say it is once done, completed in Christ Jesus, and that once you've accepted Him; once you've been born again in your mind, you cannot sin after that and you are bound to be in the Kingdom of God, period—and there's nothing you can do to do it—it's a finished, complete work in Christ. Now yet, because 'we are His workmanship.' God is working in us now to complete it, so there has to be the obedience.

- "...**sprinkling of the blood** of Jesus Christ..."
- "...**grace**..."
- v 3: "...**hope**..."

- v 4: “...**inheritance**...”—very important. Where is it? *In heaven*—we don’t have it now.
- v 5: “...**faith**...”—and I circled *hope* and then *faith* and came down to another verse—so we have *hope and faith and love* or *faith hope and love*.

—*faith hope and love* or *hope, faith and love* or *love, hope and faith*—however you want to list it—the greatest of these is *love*.’

1-Corinthians 13:13: “And now, these three remain... [or that is: ‘now remains living’ or ‘is abiding’] ...**faith, hope and love**... [if you have a King James it says ‘charity’, but the Greek there is ‘agape’ which means *love*.] ...but the greatest of these *is love*.” Now we find exactly the same thing in the Epistle of Peter: **Faith, hope, grace, love!**

Let’s come back here to 1-Peter 1:5—next key word, right after faith:

- “...**salvation**...”
- v 6: “...**trials**”—because 1-Peter says a lot about that.
- v 7—the phrase here: “...**proving of your faith**...”
- v 8: “**Whom, not having seen are loving**...”

So there is ‘**faith, hope and love**.’ We’ll tie in *love* a little bit later on. We’re to have love unfaded.

- v 8: “...**believing**...”
- v 9: “...**faith**...”
- v 10: “...**salvation**...” and “...**grace**...”

Now, we could probably go through the whole book of 1-Peter and pick out these key words all of the way through, so I’ll leave that up to you to do. But I just wanted to do this so that we can see and know that the Gospel is the same—the Gospel that Paul preached, the Gospel that Peter preached, the Gospel that James preached, the Gospel that John preached, the Gospel that all the apostles preached *is the same*.

Let’s come back here to v 4 “Into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us.” The whole purpose, brethren, of the Epistle of 1-Peter is to get your mind on Christ, get your mind on serving God, and keep it there. It’s not going to corrupt, it’s not going to be defiled by anybody, and it’s not going to fade away and *it’s reserved in heaven for us*.

Let’s see how the Apostle Paul preached exactly the same thing. What did Jesus say, the very last thing in the book of Revelation: He said, ‘Behold, I come quickly and My reward is **with Me**, when I come.’

2-Corinthians 5:1: “For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with *human*

hands, eternal in the heavens.... [it’s not here yet] ...For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; if indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked” (vs 1-3). There are many parables you can have in there.

- What is the parable of the wedding feast? *Have on the appropriate garments!*
- What does it say there? ‘*Walk in the white raiment of the saints, lest you be found naked!*’
- What does it say there concerning the Laodiceans? ‘*You’re wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked!*’

Verse 4: “For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened... [the older we get, the more we understand that, how limited we are] ... not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so **that the mortal flesh may be swallowed up by life**.... [there it is, when you are resurrected, you receive eternal life and inheritance] ....Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit” (vs 4-5). There it is again.

When you get into a lot of these strange-sounding doctrines it is because people have a certain knowledge to a certain point and have not really studied the subject through. And that’s why many of these doctrines come up the way that they do. Now I’ve been saying I need to bring a sermon on sacred names. People try and go God one further, because you are complete in Christ.

1-Peter 1:4: “...it’s reserved in heaven for us.” Christ is going to bring it **with Him**. Now what can fade? What can become defiled? What can corrupt? *Well, anything that’s physical is corruptible!* So are our own bodies. That’s why Paul said ‘this corruption must put on incorruption.’ That’s why we need to keep looking toward and for the first resurrection. And how many times does it come along? Look at the example that we saw in our lifetime of what happened when a church leader got overwhelmed with riches and money and set his heart just on that?

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures to go along with that. Let’s go to Matthew, the sixth chapter. And this is true, and you can take this anyway you want to apply it, because it applies in many, many different ways. I’ve seen this used by churches to say, ‘Now brethren, you send in every penny you can.’ I’ve seen this used by people to not even send in even a single penny. So people can apply it anyway they want to! But the fact remains is this, what Jesus said:

Matthew 6:19: “Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust spoil, and where thieves break through and steal...”

I was shocked! I was amazed! I saw on a news report—I forget when it was—but did you know that there were **3-million** burglaries in family residences in the United States last year? [1991] Isn't that amazing? What always happens when you get everything all stored up. How many stories have their been of rich people that have lost everything? Well, even when they had it they still had nothing. Look at the other end of the scale. You know, people are so weird today; it's amazing! There are those you can sell. There is a business now where you can sell 'hoboing.' Just like signing up to go work out with your favorite baseball team in spring training. You pay \$3500 to go down there and do that. You can sign up, for \$1500, and go hoboing—and you go out and catch a freight train. And they were amazed at all the work they had to go through to do it. So you've got the extremes of the rich and poor that are saving up for themselves treasure on the earth, in whatever way it may be.

But Jesus said, v 20: "But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (vs 20-21). So, whatever your treasure is, if your treasure's not in God, that's where your heart will be. It's just a living principle, just an absolute living principle.

Luke 12 is compared then to what God is giving us: an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, reserved in heaven for us. I always got a kick out of these first two verses here—Luke 12:13: "Then one from the multitude said to Him, 'Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me'.... [What did Jesus answer?] ...But He said to him, 'Man, who has appointed Me a judge or a divider over you?'" (vs 13-14).

How many family arguments have been as to who gets what. That's the whole problem with the world today— isn't it? And one of the biggest sources is, which one of the sons of Abraham gets the treasure? Those from Isaac? *or* Those from Ishmael? Look at all the problems it has. Then He gave this parable:

Verse 15: "And He said to them, 'Watch out, and keep yourselves from covetousness, for no one's life is in the abundance of the things that he possesses.' Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, 'The ground of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly. And he was reasoning within himself, saying, "What shall I do, for I have nowhere to lay up my fruit?" And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my granaries and build greater *ones*, and there will I lay up all my produce and my good things.... [That is he's going to store them in there.] ...Then I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your rest, eat,

drink, *and* be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool, this night your soul shall be required of you; and to whom will you leave what you have prepared for yourself?' So *shall it be* to the one who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'" (vs 15-21). And there's nothing that you can compare what God has given to us as an inheritance and the promises to whatever is on the earth. There is absolutely nothing! So that's why Peter is writing this.

Now, let's go back to 1-Peter 1:5: "Who are being safeguarded by the power of God through the power of God through faith, for salvation..." That's the whole operation of what God is going to do. You can think of the Scriptures there, what did Jesus say? 'All that the Father has given Me, none shall be lost. None is able to take them out of the Father's hand.'

"...*that is* ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you yourselves are greatly rejoicing; *but* if it is necessary, at the present time you have been in distress..." (vs 5-6). The *King James* translates that: 'you are in heaviness.' Distressed or depressed or heaviness. That's the way some of these problems come upon you.

"...for a little while by various trials." (v 6). As I've said before, none of the trials that we go through are the trials that we think that we're going to go through. That's why we have to be ready at all times.

Here's why, v 7: "In order that the proving of your faith... [God is going to test our faith. It's interesting that it is the 'proving.' It's an ongoing thing.] ...which is much more precious than gold..." We'd all love to have gold. I've given sermons on gold and attitudes of gold and all that sort of thing. And people are fascinated with gold. They traveled the earth, go here and there, and try and get as much as they can, and so forth.

"...that **is perishing** even though it [your faith] is being tested by fire... [What is the old expression on some of that? 'Boy, I sure got burned! Oh, let me see your flesh where its burnt. No, it's just the trial you're going through. The heat of the trial feels like fire.] ...may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (vs 5-7).

That's the whole goal. That's the whole purpose in it. And that's where we need to constantly be looking to and aiming for. And I know and you know that sometimes during the week when you're down there in the trenches, it's kind of hard to keep your mind on that. But that's why we've got Sabbath. That's why we get together every week, so that we can keep our minds on it. And there is a blessing, there is the blessing that Jesus said. Jesus, when He was praying for the 12 apostles, He said:

‘And Father, I pray not for these also, but also for those who shall believe on Me through their words.’ Now they saw Christ. They handled Christ. They heard Christ. They saw Him resurrected. They saw Him as a spirit being. They saw Him ascend into the heavens. Not us. We haven’t.

Verse 8: “Whom, not having seen, you love... [present tense: *you are loving*.] ...on Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you are believing... [present tense: *loving* and *believing*] ...*and* are rejoicing with unspeakable joy, and are praising Him.” That doesn’t mean we all get up and shout, yell and scream and dance, because it says it’s ‘unspeakable joy.’ This kind of joy is when you are praying to God and you realize the absolute inadequacy of your self as a human being; the utter folly of your own heart and mind when compared to God; and the joy that you have in your mind, spiritually speaking, when you understand what God is offering and giving to live forever. You don’t have this every day. There are times when the inspiration in praying really hits you, and that is what it’s talking about: the joy that is *unspeakable*, and you have been *praising* Him.

Verse 9: “*And are receiving the fulfillment of your faith*... [You take all of these things together, tie all of these verses together, you are receiving the fulfillment of your faith] ...—*even the salvation of your souls*.” Now, how important is this salvation? Brethren,

- it’s the whole reason *why we’re here*
- it’s the whole reason *why the Bible was written*
- it’s the whole reason *for the plan of God*

Verse 10: “Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come to you* have diligently searched out and intently inquired, searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, *and* testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and those glories that would follow” (vs 9-10). The famous account there is of Daniel.

Let’s go back to Daniel, the twelfth chapter. You think of Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Hosea and Amos and Joel and Obadiah and Habakkuk and Zechariah and Micah and all of the prophets, and all of the unnamed prophets that we don’t have writings of, like Nathaniel and Gad the seer, and so forth. But here Daniel is the famous one, where it talks about this because Daniel wanted to know. Here’s one of the greatest prophets of God. What did God say? Though Daniel or Noah or Job in the end-time, Noah, Daniel and Job—or Job, Daniel and Noah—even though they, with their faith, stood before God, ‘they should save none other but their own souls.’ And I imagine Ezekiel, when he

prophesied, and all the things that Ezekiel went through; all the things that Isaiah went through—ended up being sawn in half—all the things that Jeremiah went through, that Daniel went through. So he’s got all these prophecies, used of God to bring these prophecies.

Daniel 12:5: “Then I Daniel looked; and behold, there stood two others, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the one on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river: ‘How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?’ And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, *saying*, ‘It shall be for a time, times, and a half *a time*. And when the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things shall be finished’” (vs 5-7). Daniel’s sitting there watching this going on. So what does he say?

Verse 8: “And I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, ‘O my lord, what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, **but the wise shall understand**’” (vs 8-10).

We’ve always looked at that and said, ‘We’re going to understand prophecy.’ Maybe, maybe, *maybe*! So far, if we were on a baseball team concerning prophecy, we’d all be batting about .0005. When are we going to understand? What’s the first, most important thing we have to understand? ***Faith, hope, love, belief!*** That’s what we have to understand more than anything else—right?

So, anyone that wants to set themselves up as a prophet; how about all the prophecies that David gave concerning Christ, concerning all of the sufferings, concerning the things that he went through. Can you imagine how David felt when he had to go through Psa. 22 and write that? What was the trial he was going through when that happened to him? *I don’t know, it doesn’t tell us*, but that’s a powerful Psalm there.

1-Peter 1:12: “To whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, **but to us** they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven—into which things the angels are desiring to look.”

I don’t think, brethren, that in our wildest imaginations, yet, or in our understanding of the Word of God—and I put myself right in that, too—that we fully comprehend what God is going to do with this inheritance that He has for us. When we get

to the Feast of Tabernacles I hope that God will inspire me enough so that we will be able to have little glimmer of that when we study into New Jerusalem. Can you imagine living in a place that is so fantastically beautiful that the streets are like gold, but as clear as diamonds, and that God has the wealth of the universe for our inheritance. Isn't that something?

Now we know a little more today that man is not made to go out into the heavens. They just discovered that man doesn't exist too well in nine days. They lost 25-percent of the muscle mass of their legs. You remember how interesting it was when you saw how that water forms into a ball—did you see that on the news? And how that when you light a flame it forms into a ball. Where there's no gravity, everything forms into its own little ball.

Now, all those who believe that the earth is flat, listen very carefully: *It's not flat!* But there will be those who believe it because they want to believe it! They don't want the Truth, they want their own deception. Now they're discovering what happens to the blood in weightlessness. It also is subject to the same thing as that drop of water. The blood pressure dropped way down, much lower than they expected, much lower. They're beginning to rethink in terms of this thing—and what does this do to Star Trek? Now, for all you Trekkies out there, who love it, sorry to burst your bubble, as it were. But you're not going to be traveling in space. I don't think that a baby born in space could live very long. That's my own personal opinion after reading that today.

So, man truly is earth-bound—isn't he? Oh, he can go out in space and he can fool himself with all of this sort of good stuff that all the technology they can have, but you know, God is just sitting up there, He's just looking. He knows man isn't going to go anywhere. We brag about our space shuttle and our rockets and all this sort of thing. And God says, 'Look at the heavens, I made those.' Quite a difference!

It's so fantastic! But even the angels are desiring to look into, they want to see, because of what we read in Hebrews, the first chapter: Unto which of the angels did He say at anytime, 'You are My Son this day I have begotten You'? Is that not what God says to us? Have you not been begotten again to a living hope? *Yes!*

Verse 13: "For this reason..." It says in the *King James*: 'gird up the loins of your mind.' And every time I think of that, I think of someone putting on a girdle. Like they used to, years ago, they would get these girdles and they would just squeeze down a woman's waist to about 12-inches around. I don't know how they ever did that. It's just beyond me. So I translated it a little bit differently, which it means in the Greek: 'have your minds prepared for action.'

And that's what it is—spiritual action, spiritual doing, whatever it is.

"...have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (v 13). How do we do this?

Let's go to 2-Corinthians 10, here's how we do this. This is the battle, brethren, that we need to be waging. This is how we keep our minds ready, even though we're in the flesh. We have been given the begetting of God's Holy Spirit. But here's what we're to do, and here's how it should be done.

1-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." That's far preferable. I look back and see all the roaring power I've tried to do in the past and it didn't get me anywhere. *Nowhere!* But you think at the time you're right. 'There is a way that seems right to a man, the ends thereof are the ways of death.'

So, if we can do it with the meekness and gentleness of Christ—and *that's exactly the whole trial that's coming upon the whole Church*. Did you know that? Are we willing, by choice, to follow Christ without someone having to make us do it? And if someone makes me do it, or makes you do it, have you done it? *No!* Because the Bible says, 'not by compulsion' because that's what it is by making you do it. Because of Christ, that's why we need to do it. That's why even though it is better to come to church because someone may threaten you that if you don't come to church dire things are going to happen, it's still better for you to assemble with God's people under that circumstance than to not assemble at all. How much better it is that you assemble together as a church and as a group because you *love Christ and because you want to!* *Because you want to of your own choice!* That's what he's saying here.

Look at what the Apostle Paul thought of himself: "On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you... [in letters that he wrote] ...But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the* flesh.... [that's why the Apostle Paul did what he did.] ...For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh.... [here's the key; here's how to have your minds prepared for action]: ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds" (vs 1-4).

That is *being converted* in your mind and heart. And the hardest thing, the most difficult thing to do is to convert and change the mind. Of course,

that's what God the Father is doing, working and changing our minds—right? *Yes!* What is that saying? *A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.* Isn't that true? *Absolutely!* And I'll tell you what, ***no one is going to beat you into the Kingdom of God against your will.*** That's why we have to *choose*.

And here is why we have to fight, v 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [The most powerful thing you have to fight against is that which you're walking around with between your eyes—*your own carnal mind.*] ...**and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.**... [The Gospel of Peter is the same as the Gospel of Paul.] ...and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.... [Then he gives this; this is interesting.]: ...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).

I found that to be true. My wife could probably recount to you more times than I can remember of where I have been wrong in what I've thought. I go back and see that. You know, it's not easy. Why? *Because it's a stronghold!* Now what is a 'stronghold'? *That's something that's got to come down.* What do they do when they have an old building they want to tear down? *They get the dynamite, that's the easiest way.* They blow it down. So, I guess spiritually speaking, that's what we need to do, through Christ.

1-Peter 1:13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled... [that is with Christ in you] ...***and*** be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **As obedient children...**" (vs 13-14)—and that comes right back to v 2: 'unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood.' And it comes down here to v 22: 'and your souls have been purified by obedience to the Truth.'

So, you have vs 14, 2, 22. We'll talk a little bit more about that next time, because there's some people who think, 'Well, the grace of God delivers us from being obedient to anything other than just a purring in our hearts—which then is love toward God.' Not true!

"...do not be conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in *your former* ignorance. But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all *your* conduct... [You want to mark that down as being 'the goal in life.'] ...For it has been written, 'You be Holy, because I am Holy'" (vs 14-16). And the grace of God is what keeps us in that state of Holiness. That's what does

it. That's what's so fantastic. That's why we need to really call upon the grace of God, live in the grace of God, all of these things as we're going along, brethren.

Verse 17: "And if you call upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in *the* fear of God."

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 13:1-2
- 2) Deuteronomy 21:15-17
- 3) 1 Chronicles 5:1-2
- 4) Matthew 1:25
- 5) Galatians 4:26
- 6) Isaiah 66:5-10
- 7) Hebrews 1:1-6
- 8) Colossians 1:18
- 9) Romans 8:28-29
- 10) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 11) 1 Peter 1:3, 2-5
- 12) 1 Corinthians 13:13
- 13) 1-Peter 1:5-10, 4
- 14) 2-Corinthians 5:1-5
- 15) 1-Peter 1:4
- 16) Matthew 6:19-21
- 17) Luke 12:13-21
- 18) 1 Peter 1:5-10
- 19) Daniel 12:5-10
- 20) 1 Peter 1:12-13
- 21) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7
- 22) 1 Peter 1:13-17

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 49
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Colossians 1:15
- Revelation 20
- Psalm 22
- Revelation 1
- 1-Peter 1:22

## Epistle of First Peter IV

Fred R. Coulter

Last time we came down through 1-Peter 1:12. And let me mention that there is so much in here. When we get done with the series and I get everything all finalized the way that I hope to do. What I want to do is—remember how I did *A Harmony of the Gospels*, putting certain things together in parallel columns; I want to do that. I also want to do a topical study. I am finding, and this is the reason why a minister needs to do it—and I would admonish every minister to do so and honestly do so with the Word of God—to really get in and study it so they understand it.

The more I get into it, the more I realize how great the Word of God is, how absolutely fantastic that it's put together, how that the Gospel of Christ and of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and of Paul and of Peter all agree. ***They all agree!*** There is no conflict one with the other even though, maybe on the surface when you read a verse or two, it may appear that there is a conflict.

It is so absolutely amazing how all of these things come together. And I think one of the biggest problems and disservices that has been done to the people of God has been that the emphasis has shifted from loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being to serving an organization. Now while organization is good, because you don't want confusion. Organization should never take the place of God. The end result is the Catholic Church, as an example.

Now let's pick it up here in 1-Peter 1:13. There's an awful lot to cover and there's an awful lot to do, and I want to finish chapter one and get into chapter two today. However, we're not going to rush through it just for the sake of rushing through it so that we become superficial in what we are studying.

1-Peter 1:13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace... [we'll have a lot to say about that as we go through here] ...that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conforming yourselves to your former lusts, *as in your former* ignorance. But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves be Holy in all *your* conduct. For it is written, 'You be Holy as I am Holy.' And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in *the fear of God*; knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers; but by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without

blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for your sakes; *even for you* who through Him are believing in God, Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, **so that your faith and hope might be in God.** Having purified your lives by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible *seed*, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever. For all flesh is like grass, and the glory of man is like the flower of the field; the grass withered, and its flower fell away. But the Word of God remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel" (vs 13-25). You'll notice the last couple of verses here how it ties in with James: *that all flesh is like the grass of the field.*

Let's go back here beginning in v 13 and let's begin to study a couple of things that are important for us to realize. There are certain commands that we have. Right here there are three commands. In the Greek it is in the aorist imperative, which means that it then becomes a directive for the Church. Verse 15 is one of them: "But according as He Who has called you is Holy, you yourselves also **be Holy in all your conduct.**" So that is a command. And we'll study today: How can you be Holy in conduct?

The next command we find here, which goes right along with it—v 17: "**...be conducting the time of your life's journey in the fear of God.**" Now I added to it '*life's* journey' because the original Greek is: "...be conducting the time of your journey in fear." Obviously, you're not to be in fear of men. Obviously, your *journey* represents what your life is, so it's proper to insert in italics: "...*life's* journey in *the fear of God*." That's Who you are to fear. So, there is the second command.

The third command is v 22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth to unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit... [here's the command]: **...be loving one another fervently** with a pure heart." And I think over the years that's exactly what we have done, in loving each other; in growing in knowledge; and focusing in on what God wants us to have and to do and to be.

What commandment can we think of that Jesus gave—we'll just start here in v 22—because again we're going to see ***faith, hope and love***. Faith, hope and love all the way through. We saw that in James' epistle. We're seeing it in Peter's epistle, we

will see it in John's epistles. We saw it in the Gospel of Christ. We have seen it in all the writings of the Apostle Paul. Why? *Because it's the same Spirit inspiring the same message so that we can all know and understand God's way!* Can anyone think of the base commandment, the commandment where this comes from? There are a couple of places where it says, 'Jesus said'

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." That is the whole basis for this. Is Peter preaching the *same* doctrine as Jesus taught? *Yes!*

1-Peter 1:25—I think this is also important for us to realize: "But the Word of God [is abiding] remains forever..." That ties right in with v 23: "*For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever."

We are to have the Word of God abiding in us. Therefore, when that is happening and when that is being taught and our whole focus is on Christ and God the Father, you see how many problems drop by the wayside. It also creates certain problems in a way, because then you're not relying on the structure of an organization to bring you salvation, and some people can't take that. Some people have not grown to the point that they cannot rely on God alone. And then you also have another problem that this develops, which is that some people then, instead of really doing this, run on down the road, in the name of God, preaching another Gospel. So, you've got both sides of this coin here.

Verse 25: "But the Word of God remains forever..." Let's add a couple of Scriptures there. What is the most important, several important things, that Jesus said? One of the first ones is, you find in three places in the Bible: Matt. 4:4, Luke 4:4 and Deut. 8:3. Which is: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every Word of God.**' And one of those says, '...by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live.'

Now there's another Scripture which gives us the Word of God in personification—doesn't it? Which is Christ! Now you know these Scriptures by heart—don't you? John 1:1: "In the beginning was [?] **the Word.** And the Word was [?] **with God.** And the Word **was** [?] **God....** And **the Word became flesh...**" (vs 1, 14). That's the whole key thing of the Passover book.

Let's look at another Scripture concerning 'loving each other.' Let's go to John 15, and I'll tell you what, between the book of Ephesians and John 14, 15, 16 & 17, those perhaps are the most used portions of my Bible. This ties right in with those verses right in at the end of 1-Peter. And the reason

I'm going through this is so we can really fully appreciate the tremendous inspiration of the Bible. And how it all fits together so wonderfully. I mean it is absolutely magnificent the way it all fits and comes together.

John 15:7: "If you [abide] dwell in Me... [the word 'abide' (KJV) here means, *to live and remain in Me*] ...and My words dwell in you..." This is how we're to live by every Word of God. Let the Word of God be living in your mind, be guiding and directing you through the power of God's Holy Spirit in love and understanding.

Just like when we were going through the Epistle of James, remember how the little daggers of against the way you are living and doing, and me, too. You know, I got a lot of correction out of James. I tell you, I'm getting a lot of correction out of 1-Peter, too—an awful lot. Here's the key, v 7: "If you dwell [are living and remaining] in Me, and My words dwell... [are living and remaining] ...in you, you shall ask what you desire, and it shall come to pass for you."

That helps us really increase in faith. Claim this as a promise, brethren. What is the most important, overall goal that we really desire? *That we be in the Kingdom of God!* Isn't that correct? Everything else is subordinate to that—isn't it? *Yes, In varying degrees!* As long as we remember that then we understand what He's talking about here.

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciple.... [If you're not bearing fruit, then in degree you may not be His disciples.] ...As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you... [There cannot be any greater superlative of love. Absolutely there cannot be.] ...[continue] live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love" (vs 8-10). That ties right in with these last few verses that we have in 1-Peter, the first chapter.

Let's go back to 1-Peter again, and we'll do just a little bit more surveying. I would like you to write down these following words so below each one of these words you will have enough space to write down a verse or two—and these we all find in chapter one:

1. Hope
2. Faith
3. Grace
4. Obedience
5. Holiness
6. Love

We will do this in all of the chapters as we go through. And the reason for doing this is to show you how wonderfully how God inspired this to be written. It is amazing! Since Peter gives hope, but

not without faith, and not without love, and not without obedience, and not without grace.

### 1-Peter 1

#### I. Hope

- v 3: "...[He] has begotten us again into a **living hope**... [how?] ...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
- v 13: "For this reason, have your minds ready, be self-controlled, *and* be fully **hoping** in the grace..."
- v 21: "*Even for you* who through Him are believing in God, Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and **hope** might be in God."

Let's look at this *hope* again in these three verses: 3, 13 & 21.

- v 3: "...into a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." So it's *connected with the resurrection* from the dead. Christ is the firstfruits. Afterward, those that are His, at His coming.

See how beautifully all of this ties together.

- v 13: "...be fully [completely] **hoping** in the grace..."

Now this is a different aspect of grace than just the forgiveness of sin. Be *hoping in the grace* that is being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, which is telling us what? What is the final grace that God is going to give us? *At the resurrection, a completely Holy body and mind!* This is **the** grace, the final grace of the resurrection that God gives. If there's anything we don't deserve, that's it! That's why it fits into the grace.

- v 21: "[To those who] are believing in God through Him, Who raised Him up from the dead... [Again referring back to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which then gives us **the hope**, and this **hope** then gives us **faith**.] ...and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God." And that means going right out until the time of the resurrection.

#### II. Faith

- v 5: "Who *are* being safeguarded by the power of God through **faith**, for salvation..." Again, I want you to see the emphasis of that. Unto the salvation, when? *The resurrection.*
- v 7: "In order that the proving of your **faith**..."

Now you see how all of that ties in. I'm trying to help give you a little different view on how to study. Sometimes we read and study and we go through things or we go through a topic and we don't take

the time to look at the whole structure of it and then put it together and go back and systematize it like we're doing here.

- v 8: "Whom, not having seen, you love; on Whom, though at the present time you do not see Him, you **are believing**..." I included 'believing' because root word for *faith* is for *belief*—you are believing. You can't write 'in whom you are faithizing,' but that would be a literal translation of it.
- v 9: "*And are* receiving the fulfillment of your **faith**—*even* the salvation of your souls."
- v 21: "...Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your **faith** and hope might be in God."

#### III. Grace

- v 2: [notice the last sentence]: "...**Grace** and peace be multiplied to you." Which means the grace of God given to you. The grace of God continues through your whole life. The final act of the grace of God—no, it isn't the final act, but it is in a sense; because what is the principle in the Bible? *Jesus said, "I am the Beginning and the Ending."* So whenever there's an ending, there's also a beginning, right? So the final act of that grace is your resurrection, but it is also the beginning of what? *The beginning of your whole new life in living in God's Kingdom in eternity forever and ever and ever.*

So, this is what really struck me when I was going through and really preparing this and studying it. How it all comes together so beautifully, so wonderfully. Then there are people out there today who are just so blinded. They say, 'the Bible's a myth. You ought to investigate Hinduism. You ought to investigate Buddhism.' It's amazing!

- v 10: "Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of **the grace** that would come to you..."
- v 13: "...*and* be fully hoping in the **grace**..."

So, under "grace" you have verses 2, 10, 13.

#### IV. Obedience

That's interesting, because a lot of people don't like to obey God. They hate that little word. They hate what it means. They want the love; they want the hope; they want eternal life, but they don't want obedience. Let's look at that; we see how everything all ties together.

- v 2: "...according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification... [and you can also put that down under 'Holiness'—because

‘sanctified’ means *to be made Holy*.]  
...through the Spirit, unto the **obedience**...”

There it is. What is the opposite of ‘obedience’? *Sin*! Isn’t it? *Sin is the opposite of obedience*—right? Sin is what? *Transgression of the Law*! You see how when you get the Word of God in your mind, and you let the Word of God in your mind lead you, then you can understand the Word of God, because it all fits together.

“...and *the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*: Grace and peace be multiplied to you” (v 2).

Hebrews 10:19: “Therefore, brethren, having [boldness] confidence to enter into the *true* holiest by the blood of Jesus.” And that boldness means *full confidence*. If I can express to you one of the things which I’m sure you’re going through, the more that you understand what God has done and what He’s doing and what He’s offering, and the salvation that God is holding out to us and the great grace that He gives to us.

I tell you one thing, it’s very important for us to understand. We have a lot of seniors in our congregation and on our mailing list. I tell you one thing that is so absolutely important and that is that the older we get the more dilapidated we become. That’s just the way it is. Those of us who are approaching that are also understanding that. That’s why Jesus said, ‘The flesh prophets nothing.’

But it also does one other thing that’s very important: It makes you realize the great and fantastic magnitude of God’s blessing. That we, by praying, ‘Our Father,’ have direct access to God the Father in heaven above. That should be a continuous source of inspiration and love and also profound humility. And the more you think on that and the more you understand that, and the more you realize how fantastic God is, the greater that this becomes. All of that, brethren, if you’re going through that—which I’m sure that you are—are experiencing a deeper degree of conversion, which then puts all doctrine into proper perspective—doesn’t it? Because unless you love God and have access this way, all the doctrine in the world isn’t going to do you a bit of good. But we have access to the Holiest, into the most sacrosanct Holy place in the universe.

That’s why he says, v 20: “By a new and **living way**, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with **full conviction of faith**...” (vs 20-22). Notice how that ties right in with what Peter’s teaching here. When you look at your sins and you look at your shortcomings, you think, ‘Oh, man, how can I ever do that?’ But, what you can realize is that God is there. Ready, willing, able and

waiting to forgive. And that’s what’s so absolutely profound and important.

“...our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water” (v 22).

I was thinking the other night, I was watching some TV. You know, we’re all so callused and numb to TV. I don’t know about you, but in some ways I am, and I’m sure everybody else is. There is killing! There is murder! All mayhem, all over! And I thought the other night: here we are, just filling our minds with the natural course of events in this world with the murder of Cain. Cain’s murder of Abel. And we watch it as if it’s nothing! And I thought, boy, what are we as human beings, living in this end-time? It’s amazing! And I thought how evil our conscience is and so forth!

Verse 23: “Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful... [That promised salvation. That promised eternal life.] ...And let us be concerned about one another ... [which we need to] ...and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works.... [It’s interesting, all of those who love the word “love”—and we’ve got to have love, but we don’t need works—how are they going to get around it? Here’s ‘to provoke and to love unto good works.’] ...Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do” (vs 23-25).

That becomes a problem when we’re all scattered as we are, and many on the mailing list as they are—scattered. You have to keep your Sabbath at home because you’ve been so battered and bruised by others that that’s the only place of safety you can go to, as it were, in keeping the Sabbath. Well, let’s hope that God will work things out that there will be a time of the ‘assembling of yourselves together.’

“...but rather, encouraging *one another*... [not brow-beating and gossiping each other] ...and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near.... [How much more today than then?] ...For if we sin willfully... [is planned and pre-determined, unrepentant sin] ...go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*. *Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses.... [Here’s what Paul wants us to think on.]: ...How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, ‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’ says *the* Lord. And again, ‘*The*

Lord will judge His people.' *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*" (vs 25–31).

That's why God gives us repentance, brethren. And that's why God gives us a tender heart. So that in spite of our weakness of the 'law of sin and death'" within us, in anyone of us, that God sends us repentance so that we can avoid that. It says in another place: 'for our God is a fire.'

Now let's go back to 1-Peter—under obedience. How much should that obedience be? Well, you judge it, based upon what we read there in Heb. 10.

- 1-Peter 1:2: "...unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ."
- v 14: "As obedient children..." Does this mean we're to become like teeny little babes? We can put in there about 'bring the children to Me' (Matt. 18)—He laid hands on them and said, 'Unless you come as these children, you shall in no wise see the Kingdom of God.' But, whose children are we when we receive the Spirit of God? *We're the children of God.* So that's how we are to obey. Be as obedient children of God.
- v 17—and tie that right together: "And if you are calling upon the Father..." So, there it is, right there. We're to be children of the Father.
- v 22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth..." And immediately, if you know the Scripture, what comes into mind? 'Sanctify them with Your Word. Your Word is Truth.' Then we go to Psa. 119: 'Your commandments are Truth. Your laws are true. You're Holy and righteous' altogether.

#### V. Holiness

- v 2: "...according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto the obedience..."
- v 15: "But according as He Who called you is Holy... [that is the full, perfect measure.] ...you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct." How can you be Holy in all your conduct? *By having the Spirit of God motivate you! By having the Holy Spirit of God lead you!* What does the Scripture say?

Romans 8:14: "As many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. For the Spirit itself... [the Holy Spirit of God] ...bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs." So there we have *obedient children*—Holiness, sanctified.

- v 16: "...You be Holy because I am Holy."

#### VI. Love

- v 8: "Whom, not having seen, you love [are loving]..." Now, that's very interesting in the translation, because it's present tense. You "are loving"—on an ongoing basis, which really has a much more profound meaning—*much more profound meaning*—because it's something that you are doing. We've covered part of that already in John 14 & 15.
- v 22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart."

Now you see how beautifully and nicely all of these things tie together. And how many times we have said that the Word of God is like a sphere. It's not like a circle. It's not like a string. But it's like a sphere or a ball. That it intersects in an infinite number of ways to reveal the Truth of God. Which also means that the more we study the Word of God, the more that we learn, which also means that the more that there is for us to learn. That's what's so wonderful about it, and that's what's so exciting about it. There are some people who get kind of dull and turned off and aren't excited about the Word of God. But I tell you what, brethren, the more that we study it, the more excited we ought to be, because the more it really proves itself to be true, and the more we know that it's from God, and the more that we ought to love God and love Christ, and all of these things together.

Let's go back and we'll study the verses. But I thought that that was absolutely important for us to know and to do and to realize. Just to take the first chapter of Peter alone, and to show how fantastically it has been inspired and written. My translation, just taken from the Greek. And by the way, I just recently got some other commentary things, which I will have to say that confirms the translation that I have here. As I've said, this is for the purposes of study. It's not for the purpose of having a new, authorized version. When I put it all together, I'm going to include in it, the Greek *Interlinear* text, which then has the Greek, it has the English below it, and it has the *King James* translation so that people can compare it back and forth, so that no one is going to say that I'm trying to create a translation of the Bible.

(go to the next track)

1-Peter 1:13: "For this reason, have your minds ready... [The *King James* says, 'gird up the loins of your mind' and it's kind of an awkward saying. But it fully means *be prepared for action.*] ...be self-controlled..." I tell you, if there's any one thing in life that is really, really, really the key, and

that is being self-controlled!

Normally we react—don't we? *Yes, oh we react!* We have many ways to react: temper, anger, righteousness, self-defense—all this sort of thing. I'm beginning to see that God puts you in situations that you don't like and relationships that you don't necessarily want, and sometimes with your own family, so that you can learn self-control; so that you can learn love. It's easy to love someone when they love you. It's harder to love someone when they don't love you. Much harder! That's why we have to have the self-control.

"...and be fully hoping in the grace... [In other words, this ties right in with the Scripture: 'where there is no vision the people fail.' This is why Christ has given us this goal of completely hoping] ...in the grace that will be brought to you at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ" (v 13)—or at the resurrection.

Let's see then how we're to 'gird up the loins of our minds.' 2-Corinthians 10 tells us then how we're to have our minds prepared for action—or 'gird up the loins of your mind'—because each one of these, brethren, the more you know the Word of God, the more each one of these verses becomes profound.

2-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you **by the meekness and gentleness of Christ**..." That's how our obedience to Christ is to be, that by the very meekness and the gentleness of Christ.

How many times have we been in a situation where the ministers have been arrogant and self-serving and harsh? How many times have WE—you notice who the finger's pointed to? *Me!* Even in those own, personal relationships that we have, our very closest relations that we have, have we used the arrogance and the harshness in a way that has been destructive? I can speak from experience on that myself, of which I am not very pleased or happy about.

But notice how the Apostle Paul approaches this. He says, "...I Paul am personally exhorting you **by the meekness and gentleness of Christ**..." (v 1). What does this tell you about Christ? He was as a lamb led to the slaughter, and 'He opened not *His mouth*' and He 'uttered not *a word*' in contradiction or anger. But what did He say? What did He say when He was hanging there dying? To the very people that did it? That to the very people that, in judgment, deserved death? Is that not correct? He said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.' I'll let you think on that in relationship to what Christ can and will do.

Paul said, "...On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base... [That could have reference to several things: the way he looked, the way he talked, whatever.] ...but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you" (v 1). He could write. That's what they said, 'Oh, in presence he's weak, but oh, his letters are heavy!' **Weighty!**

Verse 2: "But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the* flesh." If there's any one man who could say that, that was Paul and all the things that he went through in his life.

Verse 3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh... [here's how to have our minds 'girded up' or have our minds ready for action]: ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds" (vs 3-4). What is the strongest thing in your life? **Human nature!** Where is it stored? *Right there in the ole cranium!*

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself... [That is every thought that comes along in your mind, or imagination—which it will!] ...against the knowledge of God..."

This can be applied in many ways. Any thought: whether it be thought of sin; whether it be thought of arrogance and self-aggrandizement, that you know better than God. That you're going to instruct God. Or that your anger is going to work out the righteousness of God. What did James say? '*The wrath of man does not work the righteousness of God.*' And boy, you know, since we've studied that, I've been trying to apply that, brethren, in my life, more and more. So pray for me that I can do it.

Verse 5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself ... [And here's how to have your mind ready for action:] ...and bringing into captivity... [that is, bring under control] ...**every thought to the obedience of Christ.**"

To have a thought come along, that's not sin. To have temptation come along, that is not sin. But when your lust gets involved, and you don't cast the thought down, then you're leading to sin. And when it has conceived, the whole process then brings forth sin. And I just bring to your attention, the whole thing concerning David and Bathsheba. Perfect process of that because David was not doing what he should have been doing here as related here in 2-Cor. 10:5—and he knew better.

"...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your

obedience has been fulfilled.... [It shows what you have to do. Take your disobedience and turn it into obedience. And it all starts right here in the mind.] ...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 how to have your mind prepared for action.

Your mind prepared for action and self-controlled. Here's another example of it spoken by Christ—the same word in the Greek—Luke 12:35 "Let your loins be girded about..." That means, prepared for action. It's hard for us to figure, because most of us, when we think of that, we think of wearing a girdle or a corset. But that's not what it's talking about. When they wore the longer robes, when you're ready for action, you're going to be greatly limited if all these robes are draped all around you.

Do this sometime: Try doing exercise and running in a long, flowing gown. I'll tell you, about the third step out, you're on your face—it'll never happen. So what they did was this: They had a wide belt that they kept around their middle. So when they needed to get out and go for action, they would take and unhook this belt and gird or pull up and bring up out of the way of walking and running the long robe so they could move. So that's what it means.

Verse 35: "Let your loins be girded about and *your* lights burning." Your example, you're a light unto the world. You can put in there Matt. 5: 'You're the light of the world, the salt of the earth.'

Let's add one more Scripture to this; Ephesians 6:14: "Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth..." So, instead of just a leather belt, you have the Word of God as such a very part of your being. Now notice how wonderfully all of God's Word ties together. Isn't that something? That is amazing! It just amazes me!

Now let's go on back here to 1-Peter 1:13: "...fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, **do not be conforming yourselves to the your former lusts**, as in *your former* ignorance" (vs 13-14). We're not to be doing that. Now, put in your margin: 1-John 3:1-2, concerning children. Which says, 'Behold, what manner of love (or what glorious love) the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God.'

Let's focus in on the last part of this, 1-Peter 1:14: "...**do not be conforming yourselves to the your former lusts**, as in *your former* ignorance." Let's go to Romans, the sixth chapter. Here he starts out with what you do with your mind. Don't be

conforming yourselves in the way that you used to live. How do you do that? *Well, you do don't yield yourselves to your former lusts!* But what if you slip and make a mistake? What if you have a problem that it plagues you, that is almost a life-long problem? How then are you going to take care of that? *Whenever it comes up then you repent of it and you go back to God!* And you say, 'Oh God, what a miserable mess.'

I know a man who had a terrible, terrible, terrible time overcoming smoking—which is just one small example. We can take smoking. We can take temper. We can take whatever it may be. And he came to me when I was up in Boise, because he heard that one of the ministers said, "If you are smoking you cannot take the Passover." He came up to me all afraid—my first Passover there. He said, 'Oh, I really don't want to do it, but I'm still smoking. Oh, I shouldn't take the Passover.' I said, *No, you should! You should take the Passover. What you need to do is to continue to repent of that.* And it's a terrible thing.

Here's a man who's smoking, and every time he smokes he hates it. And every time he lights that thing and puffs on it and drags in the smoke he hates himself, his conscience is whipped, his attitude toward God is just laid flat on the ground. Well, that man needs to take the Passover. And the second Passover we were there, he said, 'Ah, I'm still smoking.' I said, *Well, have you cut down?* He said, 'Yeah, I've cut down, but I'm still smoking and it's awfully hard for me to get over this habit.' I said, *What we're going to do is really ask God to help you this time. You go ahead and take the Passover. The Passover's to cover your sins. Do you want this sin covered?* 'Yes' I said, *Take the Passover.* So then he came up the third Passover and he said, 'Guess what? I've quit!' I said, *Good!*

So it's the same way in any one of the sins that we have to overcome. NEVER GIVE UP! It doesn't matter. Sin does matter! Don't take me wrong; but what I'm saying is that **God hasn't given up on you** because of that. So, repent and stay close to God and here's how to do it. Now we have the goal and focus on the resurrection—right? And the Kingdom of God—correct? But what else are we also to do?

Romans 6:11: "In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin... [You're dead to that, though it's a lust pulling you down. Though there is something there going against you, you're still dead to it.] ...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, **do not let sin rule**... [or to have control over you; don't let it rule] ...in your mortal body... [as you're overcoming sin, let Christ in you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, give you more power. 'Bring

every thought into the captivity of the obedience of Jesus Christ,' **and don't let the sin rule!** Cast down that thought.] ...by obeying it in the lusts thereof." That ties right in with what we just covered here. Don't fashion yourself according to your former lusts.

Verse 13: "Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, **yield yourselves to God** as those who are alive from *the* dead... [Notice how, again, everything fits into the resurrection, and how to have that focused right in on your mind continuously.] ...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you..." (vs 13-14).

- As long as you are *overcoming*.
- As long as you are *loving God*.
- As long as you are *serving Him*.

Though you sin because of the 'law of sin and death'—very important for us to know and understand and really realize this, because as long as there is repentance there is hope. As long there is hope there is forgiveness. As long as there is forgiveness there is a way to overcome.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." That's what the grace of God is all about. It doesn't condemn you. But what do you have to do?

Let's go back to Romans 6:13: "...rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you because you are not **under law**..." (vs 13-14). The word 'the' is not there in the Greek. It is: "...you are not **under law**..." Why? *Because you are under grace!* God has called you to His grace, and it is His grace and the whole relationship of it.

"...but under grace. What then?..." (vs 14-15)—because He doesn't want anyone to be misled. Because you're not under law you could put there: *under the penalty of law*—that would be okay, but you're not under the penalty of grace. So, you can't make that an exactly correct parallel there. You're under grace.

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**.... [Don't let the thought even enter your mind.] ...Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?... [there's that word again, *obedience*] ...But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you

have obeyed... [there it is again] ...from *the* heart... [that's what God wants: *from the heart*] ...that form of doctrine which was delivered you. And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness..." (vs 15-19). You know, some of those that God has called have really given themselves over to it, and yet, God calls them.

I saw last night on the Family Channel, which is the only one we get with religion on it, and here was a man telling about his life where a 12-year-old kid would come up to the fence of the prison in which he was confined. And he told that man, 'You're my friend.' And at 12-years-old he witnessed to him about Jesus Christ. Well, to make a long story short, the man finally became converted, gave his life to Christ, and I can see the tremendous value in the approach that was used there in talking to this whole assembly of young people. And his motto was: *Twice Pardoned*. That's the name of his organization: *Twice Pardoned*. Pardoned by the governor so he could go out and do this work, be released from prison.

This young 12-year-old boy is now 25, and was there in the audience—and is was really very powerful how that this man had shown exactly what it was like to be in prison and all the experience of those prisoners and bringing the young people in to have the prisoners talk to them and really shake them up about what's going on in prison; and how it is true that there are many people who have taken drugs, who have been in illicit sex, who have gone iniquity onto iniquity. And you know, for those of us who have not gone through that, we ought not harden our hearts toward any of them, because

- God calls them
- God forgives them
- God leads them

They needed to go the next step further, and I just wish he would say after that, 'give your heart to the Lord: now come on over here and we'll be baptized. But at least they're making an effort. At least they're making an attempt. And at least they're moving people away from sin and toward Christ. And at least that was good, very good.

And I could not help but think of it, as "...you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now... [turn your whole life around, turn your whole mind around, be prepared for action, gird up the loins of your mind] ...yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto [Holiness] sanctification.... [See how that ties right in with 'be

you Holy because I am Holy'?] ...For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." (vs 19–23).

So again, see how the Gospel is the same: what Peter preaches, what Paul preaches, what they wrote, and the Holy Spirit of God that inspires it. Let's go back to 1-Peter, the first chapter. I was hoping to get through this today, but we'll see what we can do. There are many other Scriptures we can add to this, but we obviously can't take the time because you could almost take two or three verses and just go through the whole Bible and tie it all together.

1-Peter 1:15: "But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct." And that means your conduct today.

This is another way of expressing the whole thing. You might ask: How can I be Holy as God is Holy? That's a tough commandment, isn't it? *Sure it is!* Well, we'll answer that question. Here's another one that's tough, just like it. You can ask the same question: 'How can I do this?' What is the answer: '**All things are possible through Christ which strengthens me**'—correct? *Yes!*

Matthew 5:48—here's what Jesus said: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." Now, that's a tall order! That's a tall command! And it *is* a command. 'Be you therefore'—that is a command. How's that accomplished? *Well, that is accomplished by the Spirit of God.*

Let's see where this comes from. And for all those anti-Old Testament people, let's go back to Leviticus 19. This is where it comes from. There are some people who say, 'Well, if I don't see it in the New Testament I ain't a gonna do it.' Well, maybe, maybe not. Here's some Old Testament doctrine in the New Testament, and I'll just bet you that outside of the animal sacrifices that are here, that all of this is New Testament doctrine, we'll survey just a little bit of it because it shows how to be Holy"

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). How?

1. have the Holy Spirit of God

2. have the Word of God
3. obey the commandments of God.

If you're following the commandments of God, which are Holy and just and true, are you not being Holy in your conduct? *Yes!* What is the final Holiness that is going to take place, which we focused in today? *The resurrection! Yes!*

Notice what He says, v 3: "You shall each man revere his mother and his father... [Are we to do that today? *Yes*] ...and keep My Sabbaths.... [plural—no distinction between weekly and annual] ...I *am* the LORD, your God. Do not turn to idols..." That's New Testament doctrine, too—isn't it? *Yes!* You might want to put in your notes right there, you can put in there Rev. 2 about eating things sacrificed unto idols. There are several verses there. The Church of Pergamos and the Church of Thyatira were corrected for and warned that they would lose their salvation.

"...nor make molten gods to yourselves. **I am the LORD your God**" (v 4). Basing it on Himself, on His existence, not just to have you do it as a burden upon you.

Now notice the command for sacrifice—I want you to understand something here because this is New Testament doctrine as well, when we understand it, v 5: "And if you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD... [any offering that you offer, anything that you give to the Lord] ...**you shall offer it of your own free will**.... [Because you choose to and desire to—New Testament doctrine. You love God because you choose to. You keep His commandments because you choose to.] ...It shall be eaten the same day you offer it..." (vs 5-6), and so forth and so on.

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. 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).

What is one of the things they do right here in this county?—and I saw it on the news—right here, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek. They have this special group of people who give to the poor and the homeless and do you know what they do? They have volunteers that go around and they pick the oranges, they pick the apples, they pick the lemons and the plums from the trees that are just decorative trees in people's yards and they give it to the poor. Today, because people go in and thief and take away crops, you can't even let the poor get in and glean your field because most of them will come the night before, because they're not truly poor—they're really thieves—and steal your crop,

unfortunately. But this what God intended and this is what it should be.

Verse 11—some more New Testament doctrine: “You shall not steal, nor lie, nor be deceitful to one another....” If you want a more in-depth Bible study, go ahead and take these verses as a springboard and go and use your concordance and look in the New Testament and look and see where these are also in the New Testament.

“...And you shall not swear by My name falsely; nor shall you profane the name of your God. **I am the LORD.** You shall not defraud your neighbor nor rob *him*.... [is that not New Testament doctrine today? *Yes!*] ...The wages of him who is hired shall not stay with you all night until the morning.... [In other words, when it's due, pay him.] ...You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God. **I am the LORD**” (vs 11-14). So when God says, ‘I am the Lord,’ do you think He means business? *Yes!* He's giving this commandment based on what? *On His very existence and being!*

Verse 15: “‘You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment....” That's what they're trying to do right now in Los Angeles. They're trying to find a jury that's going to convict these policemen, whether they're guilty or innocent.

“...You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty...” (v 15). In other words, the poor man who is a sinner is not to be accorded any more respect than the rich man who's a sinner. But you know what happens when people have money? You know this is true. When there's money, people just somehow lose all perspective. But God says we're not to be impressed with money and we're not to be impressed with poverty, neither one.

It's like the Apostle Paul said to the elders there in Acts 20, ‘You bear me witness that I coveted and lust not after any of your goods.’ And that's a fulfillment of this here. But some people are. You treat people differently because they're rich or treat them differently because they're poor. God doesn't do that.

“...*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.** You shall not hate your brother in your heart.... [that's as New Testament as you can get] ...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 15-18) Well now, it sounds just like I was reading out of the New Testament—right?

*Buried right there in the Old Testament!*

Let's go to 1-John, the second chapter, and we'll see a verse about you should not hate your brother in your heart—and let's see the New Testament example of this here. 1-John 2:9: “Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light... [that is the light of Christ] ...but hates his brother, is 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. 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). If there's any one thing that blinds your eyes to any truth, that is hatred. All I say is witness Yugoslavia today; and the war there, just based on hatred.

What do you do if someone killed one of your children? That's a difficult question. You're sure not going to run out and hug them and kiss them. But what did Jesus say? ‘Pray for those that hate you, despitefully use you.’ That is a tremendous example. Sure, you should let the law run its course. Yes, you should. I suppose the epitome of the best example of that would be, if you had enough love in your heart, after you've put away all the trauma and everything, knowing that your child would be resurrected anyway in the second resurrection, that you could actually lead that person to Christ. That would be a challenge wouldn't it? Wouldn't that be a challenge? That's what God did with Paul. Did you know that? He took the one who was killing church members and made him an apostle.

What about where it says ‘a sin unto death’ and the ‘sin not unto death’? Let's go to 1-John 5:16: “If any one see his **brother**... [we're not talking about neighbor—we're talking about brother, in the Church] ...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...”

We're talking about **eternal death**, committing the unpardonable sin here in this case, so it doesn't exactly fit in what we're talking about here—unless one of the church members would deliberately, premeditatedly kill one of your children. But if it's just someone out in the world, God hasn't called, it's a different circumstance. But what you're saying is true.

Verse 16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask... [in other words, pray for that individual] ...and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death.... [A good example would be: the man I talked about with a smoking problem.] ...There is a sin unto death... [in other words, they have committed the unpardonable sin] ...concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*.”

In other words, I'm not saying that you're under obligation to pray. You can. You can say, 'God, lead this person out of it.' But if they committed the *unpardonable sin, which is a sin unto death*, there remains no more sacrifice of Christ. There are circumstances where it could be that. But this is not talking about where there is a sin that is done that it results just in murder. This is talking about a sin that is done, that's the *unpardonable sin, which is going to result in eternal death*.

Sin is sin, that is correct. If a brother, in other words, if a Christian go out and do premeditated murder, that's it! We're all spiritual brothers, yes, yes. Being spiritual brothers in Christ is because what Christ has done, and we're brothers and sisters with Christ within the Church, that is true.

Does this mean that we are also in a physical brother/sister relationship with people in the world? Is that the question you're asking? You are not in a brother/sister relationship with people in the world, you are in a neighbor-to-neighbor relationship, which is not a close family relationship. That is different.

However, there are some people in the world that can be close as a brother or close as a sister in some cases. But the relationship is not quite that close. We should love our neighbor as our self, absolutely right. Oh, we can to a certain degree. That's the whole goal that we are strive for. There are some neighbors that in loving them, you want to avoid them—but that's still loving them. That is still loving them; and you pray for them. Like in the movie, *Fiddler on Roof*, this guy came up to the Rabbi and said, 'Rabbi, is there a prayer for the Czar?' That's the Czar of Russia—the great hated object of the Jews in Russia. And he says, 'Yes, may God bless him and keep him *far* away from us'—which is true.

My prayer for Charles Manson would be that he does not get out of jail. I will love him as my neighbor as my self, because the best thing for him is to stay in jail. It would've been better if they would have executed him, to spare other people all the problems. Because God can take care of him at the second resurrection. And it's the same way with any of these other things.

That's why God chose the Apostle Paul for doing what he did. And there were some people, and I've thought about this, and I've had people bring it up to me: How would you feel if the Apostle Paul came into the synagogue where you were and you were sitting there in a synagogue and Paul comes in to preach. And Paul had ordered the death of one of your children, or your wife, or something. How would you feel?

- You talk about a test of brotherly love.
- You talk about a test of neighborly love.
- You talk about a test of Godly love.

That would be the ultimate test to me. I mean it really would. And for the one who did the murder to stand up there and preach about the love of God. I mean, without Christ that would be the most hypocritical thing in the world. So that's why Paul said, 'Look brethren, I am the least of all the apostles and I am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church.' The persecution was murder. God has to work out a lot of those things. We can't solve all the problems in all the world, and even many problems in our own life, we can't solve all of those. Sometimes we just have to go to God and say, 'God, I don't know, help me out of this thing.'

You certainly can't like everyone. And even Christ didn't like a lot of people. But He showed His love to them in what He did and how He conducted Himself. And in some cases, His love was so great He got away from them. When they were ready to nab Him and throw Him down over the cliff. When they were ready to go ahead and stone Him, He disappeared and got out of the way. Was that not love toward them? *Yes, it was!* Even correction is love. You see, *in love* looks straight at things the way they are and doesn't sugarcoat them. But it handles everything the way it really is.

1-Peter 1:16: "For it has been written, 'You be Holy, because I am Holy.' And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons..." (vs 16-17). We just covered that, we'll pick up a little more there next time and finish off the chapter next time. I didn't want to necessarily take this much time, but I think it's been productive regardless.

Are there times when we can be angry? *Yes, even Jesus healed in anger!* There's righteous anger. Yes, and truth sometimes—love and truth—it doesn't rejoice in iniquity.

New Testament Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural references:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:13-25, 15-22
- 2) John 13:34
- 3) 1 Peter 1:25, 23
- 4) John 1:1, 14
- 5) John 15:7-10
- 6) Hebrews 10:19-31
- 7) Romans 8:14
- 8) 1-Peter 1:13
- 9) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7

- 10) Luke 12:35
- 11) Ephesians 6:14
- 12) 1-Peter 1:13-14
- 13) Romans 6:11-14
- 14) Romans 8:1
- 15) Romans 6:13-23
- 16) 1-Peter 1:15
- 17) Matthew 5:48
- 18) Leviticus 19:1-6, 9-18
- 19) 1 John 2:9-11
- 20) 1-John 5:16
- 21) 1-Peter 1:16-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 4:4
- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Matthew 18
- Psalm 119
- 1-John 3:1-2
- Revelation 2
- Acts 20

Also referenced: Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

# Epistle of First Peter V

Fred R. Coulter

Let's continue on in the series in the First Epistle of Peter, and these seven general epistles are perhaps the most neglected books in the New Testament. The reason we're going through and studying them in depth is to show how vitally important that these are for understanding the Gospel. And let me remind you once again that the original, inspired order of the New Testament runs this way:

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- James
- 1 & 2 Peter
- 1, 2 & 3 John
- Jude

Then comes Romans and goes all the way on out to Hebrews and then after that comes the book of Revelation. Now if people had the proper order of the Bible, James, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude would be right there after the book of Acts. These are very basic epistles, which then would help people understand the Epistles of Paul.

But the Roman Church, in order to make Rome have the preeminence, put these seven general epistles *after* the book of Hebrews instead of before the book of Romans. So that's why even in the *King James* you have: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans. But that's the improper order. So, when people start reading the book of Romans, which is quite complicated, and they haven't read and studied James; 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Peter; 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude, then they assume the things that Paul is talking about is doing away with the commandments of God. But as we will see, it does not.

In going through these, one of the main things that I want to do is to show the basis of the Gospel, especially here in 1-Peter, as we're getting into it. And we know it's a book of *hope*. James is the book of *faith*. 1-John is the book of *love*. So we have *faith, hope and love*—the same sequence that we have as Paul wrote of those things in 1-Cor. 13.

Now let's come down here, let's finish off chapter one—we got through v 21 last time. [transcriber's note: the tape (#4) was cut off for verses 17-20] So, let's pick it up in v 22 and we'll read all the rest of it and then we'll go back and show how all of this ties in with the rest of the Scriptures and the New Testament.

1-Peter 1:22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love

through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by *the* living Word of God, *which* remains forever. For all flesh is like grass, and the glory of man is like the flower of the field; the grass has withered, and its flower fell away. But the Word of God remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel" (vs 22-25).

Let's take these verses and let's get into them just little bit more. Let's see also some of the other preachings of Peter, how this ties in and really brings the Gospels all together for us to understand them. Let's go back to v 2 about "obedience." We'll focus in on *obedience*. 1-Peter 1:2: "*Who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto the obedience..."—not lawlessness.

When I was talking to this girl who called on the telemarketing for Pat Robertson and she was wanting money for Pat Robertson and all this sort of thing, when I sprung on her saying, 'Well, you know, I wouldn't mind contributing to Pat Robertson if he would preach the ^Truth of the Sabbath.' *Oh, you mean the seventh day?* I said, 'Yes, why does he preach Sunday? Doesn't he know that Christmas and Easter are also pagan. Why does he preach that?' So she said, *Oh, that's not important for Christians.* 'Well, if obedience is not important, why do we find it here in the book of 1-Peter?'

Now let's look at some of the other preachings of Peter; let's go to Acts 5, and we will see that Peter is consistent all the way through. And this becomes the heart and core and the central thing concerning the Gospel, and also concerning the Holy Spirit. We'll see how all of these things just tie together so absolutely wonderfully.

Acts 5:28—this was after they were arrested and brought before the priests and the Sadducees and Pharisees: "Saying, 'Did we not order... [severely command] ...you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man's blood upon us.' 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 28-32). Here we have:

- *obey God rather than men*

- *the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey*
- Peter writing in v 2, *sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience*
- the same thing back here in 1-Peter 1:22—“...your souls have been purified by obedience to the Truth...”

Of course, we know the Truth is the Word of God.

What are we to do with every thought?—speaking of obedience. We covered this just recently. How are we to overcome mentally? *By bringing every thought into obedience unto Christ!* That’s the tough challenge—isn’t it? We have obedience; we have obedience to the Truth.

Let’s look at some other things concerning obedience and obedience to the Truth. Let’s go to Romans, the first chapter, and here’s a very interesting verse for those who like to say, ‘Well, you don’t have to obey.’ Just like this woman said of the Sabbath: ‘Oh, that’s not important for Christians today.’ And I said, ‘Well, if you consider murder of unborn babies important; if you consider homosexuality is an invasion of breaking the commandments of God is important; why don’t you consider the Sabbath important? That’s part of the Ten Commandments.’

Romans 1:5: “Through Whom we have received... [Now, he’s talking about his preaching and so forth] ...grace and apostleship... [to do anything we want to because the laws are no longer important. **No!**] ...**for obedience to the faith...**”

Compare that with *obedience* (1-Peter 1:22) *to the Truth*; and *obedience to the faith* and, what is **the** faith? *Yes, faith in Christ*—that’s correct. But in this sense, what is **the** faith? It’s a broader term. Not only having faith in God, that’s part of it—you have to be obedient to that. But **obedient to the faith** then it’s really saying **all of the Truth of the Gospel**—that’s what it’s saying. What did Jesus say? ‘*When the Son of man comes, will He find faith?*’ **The faith** ‘in the earth.’ And I tell you, as quickly as some of these Churches of God are getting rid of doctrine, it’s scary. It is scary how quickly they’re getting rid of things and calling it ‘new truth,’ but it isn’t!

What if Jesus were not obedient? In other words, what if Jesus sinned? *We wouldn’t have any salvation, there wouldn’t be any faith*—correct? How important was His obedience? Well, it shows us right here:

Romans 5:19: “For even as by the disobedience of the one man [Adam] many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* [Jesus Christ] shall many be made righteous.” That’s how important the *obedience* is.

How far did Jesus have to go? What did Jesus have to be obedient unto? *He had to be*

*obedient to His Father!* And what else? *To the laws!* How far did this obedience have to go? *To death!* *He had to be obedient to death!* What death? It says, Philippians 2:8: “...[He] became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross.” That’s pretty obedient. None of us have been obedient to that point, yet. Oh, we’ve had our own troubles and difficulties, but not like that.

How does our obedience have to be? Romans 6:16: “Don’t you realize... [in other words, don’t you know; isn’t this a basic thing that you know?] ...that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

And, of course, there’s the contrast: Sin is what? *Transgression of the law!* The wages of sin is what? Verse 23: “For the wages of sin *is* death...” We find the same Gospel being preached by Peter, being preached by Paul, all the way through.

1-Peter 1:22: “Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth... [which is the Word of God] ...unto unfeigned brotherly love...” That is the *new commandment* that Jesus gave: ‘A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you.’ That is a very high pinnacle to reach for, brethren. And it’s very difficult. I tell you what. One of these days you pray that God will give you more love. And I guarantee you’re going to end up with more trouble. And I’ll tell you why: because **the only way you understand love is to see how bad it is without it.** The first thing you have to come to know is how bad things are without it. And I’ll tell you what, having this kind of love and love to God is really a struggle (as we will see) because there are a lot of things that interfere with it.

But how is that accomplished? “...through the Spirit... [That’s the only way it’s going to be accomplished.] ...be loving one another fervently [unremittingly] with a pure heart.... [Not a political heart. Not a one-sided heart. Not to serve yourself.] ...*For* you have been begotten again... [Which is the earnest of the Holy Spirit, as we have seen.] ...not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever” (vs 22-23).

Now we’re going to cover a couple of things here concerning this, and see some things. Let’s go to Luke, the eighth chapter. Here’s a parable; it tells us what the Word of God is; it tells us what happens in people’s lives; and it tells us just how things are in the world, too.

Luke 8:4: “And *as* a great multitude was assembling, and those who were coming to Him from every city, He spoke a parable: ‘The sower went out to

sow his seed; and as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the road; and it was trampled upon, and the birds of heaven devoured it. And other *seed* fell upon the rock; and after it had sprung up it withered because it did not have *any* moisture.... [or as it said in Matt. 13: 'It had no root.'] ...And other *seed* fell among the thorns; and after springing up together, the thorns choked it. And other *seed* fell upon the good ground, and after springing up produced fruit a hundredfold.'...." (vs 4-8). That means *as much as a hundredfold*. The account there in Matt. 13 says: 'Some some 40-fold, some 60-fold, some 100-fold.'

"...And when He had said these things, He cried aloud... [spoke loudly] ...saying, '**The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.**' Then His disciples asked Him, saying, 'What might this parable be?' And He said, 'To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to the rest *it is given* in parables, so that *in* seeing they may not see, and *in* hearing they may not understand'" (vs 8-10). And boy, that is sure true.

That poor little gal that called me on that Pat Robertson telemarketing was so flustered. I just said a couple of innocent, little things, a couple of real, basic truths. She couldn't see it. She couldn't understand it. Now granted, a little bit of Truth is better than no Truth. A little more than a little bit is better than a little bit. But salvation requires ALL of the Truth—not part of it. What's the best way to sell a lie? *Tell as much Truth as possible.*

Verse 11: "Now this is the parable: The seed is the Word of God... [Doesn't that tie right in with what we read here? That you are 'begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible by the living Word of God, which is abiding forever'? *Yes!*] ...The seed is the Word of God; and those *that fell* by the road are the ones who hear, but the devil comes and takes away the Word from their heart, lest they should believe *and* be saved" (vs 11-12).

I had another interesting thing happen. I had to take the car up and get some service. On that gray car we have 15,000 on it already, because of the commuting that Delores is doing. So, at 15,000 you have to take it up and get it looked over; but I took care of all the servicing before it got there and it had a couple of things that needed to be done to it. While I was spending the four hours there, I said, well I didn't bring a book. I should have brought a book, because I would have just sat down and read a book—I didn't have a book to read. John—the fellow we bought the gray car from—introduced me to Greg, who is a salesman. Because maybe in the future, if things go real well, because Rachelle is going to confiscate the red one—I had the gray one confiscated. Then if Rachelle confiscates the red one, then I may be looking for another car down the

road. So, he said, 'three cars.' I said, 'Yeah, we're taking care of our auto transportation for the rest of our lives—at least the next ten years.' So, we went out and was test-driving. So, we test-drove one that had the next engine up from this red one. And man that thing had so much power the speedometer went up to a 150 miles an hour. You step on the gas and you go VARoooooom! Boy, I don't need that! I mean it was something! It would take your breath away. So he said, 'We're going to sell these Stanzas and we're changing model, so you can really buy one of these Stanzas really cheap—like a \$16,000 car for somewhere around \$9,000.' So I said, 'Let me drive that.' I took it out and test-drove it. It had a lot of road noise in it.

I said, 'You probably want to know why we have so many miles.' He said, *Yes!* I said, 'Well, my wife commutes and I commute and also just doing church work takes 1600 miles a month.' So, he says, *Oh, I've been reading the Bible* and all this sort of thing. I told him that I wrote this book and I'm writing this one and I do cassette tapes. *Oh, send me some.* So I'm going to send him some! But I know what's going to happen!

The comment was made—when I said I know what's going to happen—he's going to raise the price on the car. Yeah, probably. But I know what's going to happen, and it isn't in raising the price on the car. I know what's going to happen! People want 'religion' to live a better life—which is commendable. ***They don't want religion to obey God unto salvation.*** They want to be saved *their* way. But God says, 'You're going to be saved ***My way.***' When he gets that he's probably going to say, 'Oh, this is good.' But if he really had to quit his job, from the best sales day of a car salesman being Saturday, to obey God—it'll be interesting to see what'll happen.

Too many are like this: "...lest they should believe..." (v 12). There's an article in the *San Jose Mercury News* this morning about they're building a big homosexual, gay and lesbian church, for guess how many people, in Dallas, Texas? *Three thousand!* They're going to build a huge, gigantic thing. And they are going to have love with no strings attached. Now, you think about that. That sounds like a wonderful statement—doesn't it? But the Protestants are the ones who have planted the seeds for that because they say that God's love is without condition! Wrong, *wrong*, **WRONG!** What are the conditions of God's love? ***Obey My voice!*** What are some other conditions? ***Repent!*** What are some other conditions? ***Belief!***

John 3:16—let's read this because they quoted this, saying, 'We're going to have love with no strings attached.' No conditions! "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,

so that everyone who **believes** in... [*into: is that not a condition? Yes! And what does belief require? It requires a lot of effort! Doesn't it? Yes, indeed! So it IS conditional! Now God knows we all sin, but there has to be repentance. There has to be belief.*] ...that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." The thing is

- you cannot have the love of God unless you believe in Jesus
- you cannot believe in Jesus unless you believe in the Truth
- you cannot have salvation unless you believe the Word and obey it

Luke 8:12: "And those *that fell* by the road are the ones who hear, but the devil..." How's the devil going to come? He's going to come and say, 'Well, that's not important. Oh, that's really not necessary.'

"...but the devil comes and takes away the Word from their heart, lest they should believe *and* be saved. And those *that fell* upon the rock *are* the ones who, when they hear, receive the Word with joy... [Like our car salesman there. He was happy to hear it. 'Oh, wonderful, send me this.'] ...but these do not have any root, who believe *only* for a while, and in time of trial fall away. And those that fell into the thorns are the ones who have heard, but are choked *while* pursuing *the* cares and riches and pleasures of life, and do not bring *any* fruit to [perfection] maturity" (vs 12-14). Notice, they bear some fruit, but 'bring no fruit to perfection.'

Verse 15: "And those that *fell* on the good ground are the ones who, in a right and good heart, hear the Word *and* keep it... [which is: *obey it*—right?] ...and bring forth fruit with [patience] endurance" (v 15)—obviously, fruit that is ripened. As you all know, green fruit is miserable. Try a green cantaloupe some time. Try a green apricot some time. Green apples are okay if you cut them up and put a lot of sugar and honey in it and make apple pie. That's sort of like the re-shod Christian—at least we get something out of it. So it has some consequences to it.

The living Word of God—living and abiding in us—has an awful lot to do with how we respond to the Word of God. And I'll tell you this, brethren, right now—and I'll just say it straight out, straight forward for whatever it is—those who are staying in the Worldwide Church of God are having someone steal their crowns, because they are taking away the Word of God out of their heart, and it's the doctrines of Satan getting in there to change it. I mean, you won't believe it! **You won't believe it!** And the first thing they did to start changing the Passover was to plant the seed by saying the new day does not begin until dark. It's not true. You shall keep your

Sabbaths from what? *Sunset to sunset!* Not from dark.

Revelation 3:7—we need to go through this. We're not proclaiming that we are this, because this is a message to **all** of the churches. "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia... [the 'brotherly love' church, because that's indeed what Philadelphia means.] ...write: These things says the Holy One, the one Who *is* true; the one Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word... [keeping, obedience] ...and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan..." (vs 7-9).

We're living in a time unique in history that the synagogue of Satan is there, through everything that there is in the world. This New World Order that's coming. *And it's coming!* It's closer than we think. What do you think this 'trade pack' between Canada, Mexico and the United States is? That's part of the regionalizing to bring the whole world together.

I'm reading a book now which ties in everything—the Federal Reserve, the Trilateralists, the Bilderbergers, the Club of Rome, the Rockefellers—all together. Anyone who says they don't believe in a conspiracy is daft in the head. The name of the book is *En Route to Global Occupation*. We're all being told now we need to be 'citizens of the world'—correct? *Yes, indeed!* Who's the one that is making war? *The United Nations!* Yes, indeed!

One of the next steps that's going to happen is taxation on a worldwide basis. You wait and see! And how are they doing all of these things? Bring in the religion last. You bring in the economics first. Get them all dependent in a non-religious, secular way on the vitals of life and you've got 'em! And right at the same time that that is happening, the Churches of God are:

- running around throwing away doctrine
- throwing away belief
- throwing away faith
- getting rid of Christ
- blending into the world

No wonder Jesus said that when He returns, will He find faith in the earth? The synagogue of Satan is busy—busy, *busy, busy!* That includes more than the Jews. That includes everything under the umbrella of the operation of Satan. All of those who come together to do Satan's work.

"...who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie..." (v 9). A Jew is the one who's supposed to have the way. A Jew is the one who's to

be circumcised in the heart. A Jew is the one whom Christ is to have the way to God. And Jew is one who is one inwardly so these are those who say they have the way, but don't. And they're lying.

"...—behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. **Because you have kept the word** of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation [trial or tribulation] which *is* about to come upon **the whole world**... [this is happening at a time when there is globalism] ...to try those who dwell on the earth.... [the Greek there is the *whole earth*] ...Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so **that no one may take away your crown**" (vs 9-11). Believe me there are a lot of people out there wanting to take it from you. Wanting you to believe things that are not true. Wanting you to accept doctrines that are not right. Any way, *any way* to get the wedge in! *or* The seed in to change you!

I know some of these people out there who are sitting in the Churches of God wanting to know, 'Can this be real? That I'm hearing all of these things? Is this true?' Well, just like we read in *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies*, that **Satan's greatest work** is done not in witchcraft, it is not done in séances, it's not done in those overt things, but **it is done on the doctrinal committees**, where Satan presses well-founded arguments upon the minds of reasonable men—and then is able to take away the Truth that people have. So when it warns here, **"...hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown"**—brethren, that is happening right now in the Churches of God. And I hear from more than just Worldwide Church of God Seventh Day, as I mentioned, a Sunday-keeping movement in the Church of God Seventh Day. I mean, how blatant can you get? That is unreal! And they start out with clever, little arguments.

- it's not required for salvation to tithe
- this thing of clean and unclean meats is really not so
- the Passover really doesn't mean that
- the wine doesn't mean wine; the wine means grape juice
- the 14<sup>th</sup> doesn't mean the 14<sup>th</sup>, it means the 15<sup>th</sup>

Try it with a pair of shoes. You wear size eight, you go in and have a salesman try and sell you a pair of seven. Squeeze them on your feet and say, 'Oh, that's just nice that these are size eight. Well, they're a little tight, they don't fit right.' Okay, so then instead of an eight, he brings nine and they're like gun-boats and you're slopping all over the place. If shoes are supposed to be the right fit, with the right number, how about the right day for the Passover?

That's how it starts, because if you destroy

the covenant relationship, you destroy your contact with God—and that's what's happening. They are even having socials and boatings and outings *on the Sabbath*! Once you start, once you start down that road of giving up the living Truth of God, someone's going to take your crown, and someone is going to undress you, and someone is then going to have to declare your nakedness, and that's exactly what's happening.

1-Peter 1:24: "For all flesh *is* like grass..." Now you think about it for a minute. That is literally true, literally true. What is wheat? *It's a grass*. But out of it, we get what? *Bread, the staff of life*. What is oats? but a grass; barley? but a grass. What are your vegetables? but just another form of vegetation—right? *Yes!* What about all the meat that you eat from the animals, what do they eat? *Grass!* What are animals made of? *Grass!* What are we made of? *Grass!* All flesh is as grass.

"...and all *the* glory of man *is* like *the* flower of *the* field; the grass has withered..." (v 24)—and it sure is around here—we were commenting coming up here, Delores said, 'Look at that grass, can't get any dryer.' Well, it could, it could burn and be really dry. All of these eco-freaks: 'Let's keep the forest as it is.' It's going to burn! You either use it or it's going to burn. We have big fires going around here in California again, just burning up. Terrible!

Yes, they are now realizing they should have small fires burn. My theory is they should have all kinds of goats. Run them through the forests, clean it out there, and then have the teenagers follow behind and get all the broken branches and things like this and clean it up. And then every once in a while cut everything down, start all over again. Yeah, that's something! And just think of all that good goat meat. We'll have to get some goats and try that. We had goats meat once, oh it is good! Like lambs, lambs will do the same thing. Get sheep and go out and do the same thing. That would take care of all that.

"...and its flower has fallen away" (v 24). In the spring you get out there and see all these beautiful flowers and what did Jesus say to of the lily of the field? *That even Solomon and all of his glory was not arrayed as God arrayed the lily of the field!* They're beautiful! They're gorgeous! But BAM! they're gone!

Verse 25: "But **the Word of the Lord endures forever**; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel."

Let's see some things concerning *grass*. Since we're right here in 1-Peter, let's go to James, the first chapter, because what I want to do is show how James ties right in with 1-Peter. And the final production of this book, with James; 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter;

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, I'm going to try and make it in parallels like the *Harmony*. And I think it will really be interesting how that is.

James, the first chapter, talks about the flower. James 1:9: "But let the brother who is in humble circumstances rejoice in his elevation... [God calls the rich, He calls the poor, He calls the high, He calls the low] ...and *let* the one who is rich *rejoice* in his humble condition... [in the congregation, they're all equal before God] ...because, as *the* flower of *the* field, he himself will pass away; For the sun rises with *its* burning heat and dries up the grass, and its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way also shall the rich man wither in his pursuits" (vs 9-11).

Let's see where they get this; let's go back to Psalm 37:1—now, this so true for us today, because this is so easy to do: "Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb" (vs 1-2). Of course, it's always there to cut, and it always grows. You put some water on it and it grows, you got to cut it. Keeps the house cleaner than having all that dirt and everything around, but boy, there's a lot of work in a lawn. And that's the way the evil-doers are going to be—they're going to be cut down like the grass.

Here's what we are to do, 3: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness.... [you have to live by faith and trust God to provide.] ...Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart" (vs 3-4). What should be the greatest desire of our heart? What should that be? *To make it into the Kingdom of God*—shouldn't it?

We would all like to have nice, wonderful, pleasant things today—correct? But what does the Bible say? *The last shall be first, and the first shall be last!* If you store up treasure in heaven, that's where your reward is—right? That should be the desire of our heart.

Verse 5: "Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.... [What happens when God brings it to pass? *It's not necessarily the way that you would bring it to pass.*] ...And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way; because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil, for evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. It is but a little while, and the wicked shall be no more; yea, you shall diligently consider his place, *but* he shall

not be *there*" (vs 5–10). That's what's going to happen to the wicked.

(go to the next track)

Psalm 92:5 "O LORD, how great are Your works; Your thoughts are very deep. A brutish man does not know, nor does a fool understand this. When the wicked spring forth as the grass... [when there's wickedness on every side] ...and when all the workers of iniquity blossom, it is that they shall be destroyed forever" (vs 5-7).

That's what makes it so hard. What is the parable of the tares? *You have the wheat which was sown*—right? The tares are sown in among it. And angel came along and said, 'Lord, should we take up the tares right now with it?' He said, 'No, lest you root up some of the wheat. Let them all come to the harvest. And then we'll harvest the wheat. We can put it in my barn and the tares you can throw to be burned.' So that is the wicked that's going to be cut down.

Verse 7: "When the wicked spring forth as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity blossom, it is that they shall be destroyed forever; but You, O LORD, are on high forever. For, lo, Your enemies, O LORD, for lo, Your enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered" (vs 7-9).

Now, let's go to Isaiah 40—and here's exactly where Peter is quoting from. I often wondered in compiling of the New Testament—I can see and understand why it had to be done quickly, and it had to be done by the apostles, and it had to be finalized in a very short period of time and then given to John. Then John would preserve it and watch over it until the books of the Gospel of John, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, the book of Revelation to finish it. Can you imagine what would happen to the Word of God if it took 300 years to be compiled and put together? It would look just like a Catholic Catechism.

Isaiah 40:4—the *Messiah* is straight out of this: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low... [Is God going to destroy this society when He returns? *Absolutely!* He's not going to repair it.] ...and the crooked places shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry!' And he said, 'What shall I cry? .... [What's the main message of all humanity?] ..."All flesh is grass, and all the beauty of it *is* as the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people *are* grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand forever.'"" (vs 4-8).

Notice that is almost word for word what Peter wrote back here—1-Peter 1:25: “But the Word of the Lord endures forever...”—living forever—it’s the *living Word of God*. Now, how important is the Word of God? What did Jesus say of the Word of God? *How long would it live and last*. What did Jesus say about the Word of God? To show you how sure the Word of God is; how sure the words of Jesus are:

- all the *good* words of God
- all the *warning* words of God
- all the *prophetic* words of God
- all the *words* of Jesus Christ

Matthew 24:35 “The heaven and the earth shall pass away, **but** My words shall never pass away.” It’s the living Word of God which abides forever.

Here the other two parallel columns with it. Mark 14:31—says the same thing. If you’ve got a marginal reference in your Bible you probably have a little a, b, c, d or a number 1, 2, 3, whatever it is, that’ll refer you to it—and Luke 21:33. That’s how long the Word of God is going to be. This will burn in my brain for a long time: that telemarketer from Pat Robertson’s said, ‘Oh well, that’s not important for Christians today.’ That’s part of the Word of God—isn’t it? Isn’t the Sabbath part of the Word of God? *Yes, sure it is!* I just couldn’t believe it when I heard it.

Let’s look a little bit about the Word of God here that’s important for us to understand. We know, as we’ve covered before, the Word of God is manifest how? *‘In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, the Word was God.’* Jesus is the living Word of God. That’s why it’s important that we have the Word of God in us—abiding in us! Because if don’t, if we don’t constantly add the Word of God to us and if we don’t do it in such a way that we grow thereby, what’s going to happen? *The devil’s going to come along and take it out!* Is that not happening in the Church today? That once used to be staunch for the Word of God? *Yes, indeed it is!*

John 5:39: “You search the Scriptures... [the Bereans did—didn’t they? (Acts 17:11). They ‘searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so.’] ...for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.... [Because Jesus is what? ‘I am the way, and the Truth, and the life.’] ...I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him” (vs 39-43). That was a prophecy. They rejected Christ, but when Bar Kockhba came along, Rabbi Akiva said, ‘this is the Messiah.’ They all followed

him. They did chase away the Romans for a short period of time, and then it ended up in the total, absolute destruction and the scattering of the Jews with the infamous Masada. God sent the Romans to crush them. In absolutely rejecting Christ and accepting that, that was the disaster that caused the Jews to be scattered and so painfully treated this last 2000 years or 1900 years.

Verse 44: “How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have [believe] hope” (vs 44-45).

The reason I’m doing this is because there’s a movement again, it’s nothing new under the sun—is there? A movement again what? *That you don’t have to keep any of the laws that Moses gave!* What did Jesus say?

Verse 46: “But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings... [first five books of the Bible: Gen., Exo., Lev., Num. and Deut.] ...how shall you believe My words?” (vs 46-47). So, it is the living Word of God. Absolutely, the living Word of God.

Revelation 19:11—and this carries right on down to the second return of Jesus Christ: “And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him” (vs 11-12). So there’s a special name for Christ—which we don’t know!

Now, just as an aside. If you want to use a sacred name for Jesus Christ, would this not be the most sacred name? Because God the Father gave it to Him—right? But no one knew but Himself.

Verse 13: “And *He* was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God.” *The Word of God abides forever. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God.* Ties it all together.

Let’s go right into 1-Peter 2—let’s begin with the first three verses. And this is what is so good and so exciting about the Word of God. When you constantly put it together, it builds a beautiful, beautiful picture—doesn’t it? Remember: Before any composer composed beautiful music, before *The Messiah* was composed, all the notes of the scale were already in existence—correct? *Yes, indeed!* Before we understood the Word of Truth, the Word of Truth was already here—wasn’t it? When we put it together, rightly do so, it builds a beautiful,

beautiful picture—doesn't it?

1-Peter 2:1: "Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow... [I added the words] *...in character...* [because obviously, you're not going to grow in body. Obviously, your head is not going to get any bigger. And we won't do as Rush Limbaugh and 'tie half our brain behind our back' and put it up on a shelf to gather dust. That won't work either.] ...If you yourselves... [This is that middle verb: *you, yourself*—so it's a self experience with the Word of God. You can't have someone else do it for you.] ...have indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious" (vs 1-3).

Now we're going to focus in on those first three verses. Back to verse one: **"Therefore..."** It's an interesting word, right there. Because it means *the light of everything I've said up to this point*—all of the first chapter. 'Consequently, in the light of everything I've said up to this point.' How are we supposed to act on the Word of God?

**"...having put away all wickedness..."** Wickedness could also be translated *malice*. I think in the *King James* it's translated *malice* and *guile*. Those are deliberate things. **"...and all deceit..."** (v 1)—so we have to put out. In the Bible, you have two things you do. You put out the way of human nature and you put in the way of God. Let's see how this works:

Let's go to James, the first chapter, let's see how this ties right in with it. James 1:21—the same thing; the same Greek word. "Therefore, having rid... [set aside, put out, put away] ...yourselves of all filthiness [superfluity of haughtiness or naughtiness] ...and *all the* abounding of wickedness around you, then in meekness accept for yourselves the implanted Word, which *is* able to save your lives." Agrees a hundred percent with Peter—no conflict at all.

We will see this whole operation of the put out and the put on; or remove the clothing of sin and put on the clothing of righteousness, because the word *put off/put on* has to do with the same word which is used for garments. Let's see the motivation behind it, and it's a constant thing. We all wish we were perfect. I wished I was! So does my wife. I wish she were perfect. And isn't it true? Whenever we try and want to do something good, what happens? *We don't do it*—isn't that right? I was thinking this morning—I was going over this sermon—I would like to have it in such a way that I'd never have to say I'm sorry, or that I would do things where I would never have any regrets, that I could hold my tongue perfectly, that I would not snap back with a sharp word or do something stupid

at the worst possible time. Right? *Right!* So, we all have to re-group all the time—don't we?

Here's how to regroup, because you've got to have a goal. Remember what they were saying about the Republican nominating convention for Bush? *He didn't give us a vision!* Well, he can't because he's got the wrong vision. The vision is Christ and we all have to have that goal. And we don't realize how important that is unless we have this human nature—which is here, where we do things we don't want to do. So that we understand how good the good things are and how great God's way is. We have to have this focus.

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ... [and that is obviously through the operation of baptism] ...seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God." Brethren, you can't have any higher goal! You cannot have any greater vision in your life than this. This is what it needs to be. What did Jesus say of the way? He didn't say it's wonderful, it's easy, it's nice. He said, 'Straight is the way (which is difficult) and narrow is the gate (which leads to life) and few there be that find it.' But how do we find it?

Because of this—where Christ sits at the right hand of God, v 2: "Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died... [through the operation of baptism] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory" (vs 2-4).

What a day that's going to be! I tell you, when all the saints are resurrected, be raised out of that grave, that's going to be absolutely something! One of the first ones I want to see is Christ, but I know I won't be the first one, so aside from that, one of the first ones I want to see is going to be Esther Grisinger. That's one of the first ones I want to see and meet.

Verse 4: "When Christ, *Who is* our life... [that's the very reason for being. That's the very reason for living, because of Christ shall appear] ...is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory.... [With that vision, with that goal, with that oversight, let's get down to the nitty-gritty, nasty little work of working on human nature.] ...Therefore, [mortify] put to death... [slay, crucify, kill, mow down; get rid of, therefore] ...your members which *are* on earth—[fornication] sexual immorality... [they had problems and difficulties with that—didn't they? Now, he's talking to Christians, mind you. He's not talking to the world] ...uncleanness, inordinate affection... [in that he's probably referring to converted people who, in the past, were homosexuals.] ...evil desires [concupiscence, licentiousness]... [Those evil things

which make you transgress the law of God] ...and covetousness, which is idolatry” (vs 4-5).

He’s talking to Christians. Oh, how nice it would be if all Christians were perfect. But we’re not; we’re imperfect. That’s why God has called us. But that doesn’t mean that we go out and sin. ‘What, should we sin that grace may abound?’ Paul said. ‘God forbid.’

Verse 6: “Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.” Who are the children of disobedience led by? *Satan the devil—the ‘prince of the power of the air!’* That spirit which is inner-working in the children of disobedience’ among whom also we all had our conduct in the lust of the flesh and the lust of the mind and the pride of life, etc.

Verse 7: “Among whom you also once walked...” Notice how tactfully that Paul corrects them. He showed them first what they needed to do. He showed them second what they ought not be doing and putting these things to death. And then he tactfully says, ‘In these things you walked in them sometimes—that is before you were converted.’

“...when you were living in these things.... [he’s saying that you’ve done all of that] ...But now, you should also put off... [The same word that’s used there in 1-Peter 2] ...all *these* things: **wrath**...” (vs 7-8). That’s the first one—isn’t it? **Anger!** Just like when we were going through James: the daggers and self-inflicted wounds of correction. There it is right there.

“...indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another...” (vs 8-9). That’s hypocrisies and deceptions. Christians lying to each other! Paul said, ‘Lie not to one another.’ If they were perfect and weren’t lying to each other, why would he have to say it? So it’s there.

“...seeing that you have put off the old man together with his deeds... [the old self, the old person]: ...and have put on the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him; Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision *nor* uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ is all things, and in all” (vs 9-10).

Everyone gets all excited about that and says, ‘Look at the liberation that Christ gave us.’ No, He’s saying you’re all responsible—male and female. Under the Old Testament, if the husband did it, the wife could say, ‘See, God is going to hold you responsible.’ If she made a vow and the husband didn’t approve of it, God would not bind her to it. So, this elevates women up to a level of responsibility, too—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!* So it

means far more than a lot of people think.

Here’s what we’re to do, v 12: “Put on then... [be clothed with these]: ...as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another... [That’s the hardest thing to do. Hardest thing in the world is to say ‘I’m sorry.’ It is, I know from experience, I can tell you.] ...if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should* forgive. And above all these things *put on* love... [It says ‘charity’ in the *King James*, but it should read *love*—‘agape.’] ...which is *the* bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... [notice how that comes full circle back to the last verse in 1-Peter] ...in all wisdom...” (vs 12-16).

Let’s go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, and see what else we are to put aside. Again same thing, ‘put aside and keep your vision on Christ.’ Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us [put] lay aside... [put off, put out, put away] ...every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance... [Who are we to look to?]: .....having *our* minds fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds” (vs 1-3). That’s exactly what’s happening with people in the Church of God today. They’re getting weary and fainting in their minds.

Let’s put a couple of other Scriptures here for you. Put in there, Eph. 4:24-31—that shows the whole same thing: put out/put on, put out/put on; the new man renewed inwardly.

Romans 13:12—here again we have the same thing. “The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near... [that’s sure more true today than ever before] ...therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.... [it’s all the way through: put off/put on, put off/put on] ...Let us walk decently, as in *the* day: not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and emulation.... [the ultimate]: ...But *let us* put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not make any allowance for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts” (vs 12-14).

1-Peter 2:2: “**As newborn babes...**” now this is not a condition of fact. Nor is this a statement of reality. This is an analogy or a metaphor, and in

some cases it might be a simile, but it's more of an analogy and a metaphor. Who are to be the newborn babes, as it were? *New Christians*—as newborn babes—in other words this is a comparison.

As I showed before, v 5 says: "...as living stones..." So, if you're a newborn babe in fact, then you're also a stone in fact, so then you are carved little baby cherubs—is that correct? *No! No! No!* It is a comparison.

Here's the thing, v 2: "...**yearn after... milk...**" Guess what they found out—just came out what, two weeks ago—about breast-feeding *vs* bottle-feeding. That those babies who have been bottle-fed are more pre-disposed to diabetes when they get in their teens and early twenties, than those who are breast-fed. Breast milk is *for babies*. The pure, perfect nutrition for the baby aside from the pollutions that come. So it's the proper thing. What is breast milk the best for? *You have proper digestion; you have proper assimilation; you have proper building of bone; of flesh; of fat; of mind!* All of those come from breast-feeding. And how does a baby crave? Well, all those mothers who have breast-fed their babies know how long does it last from feeding to feeding. It's very easily digested and assimilated. So all of these things are true. So, it's for new converts.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians, the third chapter, and we will see that we are not to continuously be on milk. But I'll tell you what, brethren, we're going to see that the prophecy in Heb. 5 is sure true.

1-Corinthians 3:1—showing that this is for new Christians: "And I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now" (vs 1-2). This is sure true. There are so many Christians going backwards. Instead saying, 'Pass the meat and the potatoes'"—the strong meat and strong doctrine and loving God—they're saying, 'Pass the bottle. Let's have some milk. Don't tell me these hard things. Don't tell me God says I got to do this. Oh, No!'

Verse 3: "For you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human ways?"

Let's look a couple of other Scriptures that go along with this. We're not to continue on the breast milk. You can take that analogy and draw whatever you would like with it. But I tell you one thing, it sure would be a terrible sight to see a teenager and ask his mother to be breast-fed because it's time to eat—let alone an adult. Isa. 28 shows us

how we are to be taught the true doctrines of God beyond the basics. That's what he's talking about here—this ties right in with 1-Cor. 3.

Isaiah 28:9: "Whom shall He teach knowledge?... [the true knowledge of God, the deep knowledge of God, the true understanding of God] ...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk... [They have all the basics down. They understand all of those things.] ...*Those* who are weaned from the milk... [able to *eat strong meat*] ...and drawn from the breasts, for precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little" (vs 9-10).

In this whole thing, the way you get a lie across is tell enough of the truth to make it sound plausible. But when you go ahead and compare truth with truth, and word for word, and line upon line and line upon line, precept upon precept, the lie won't stand up!

Now, let's go to Hebrews, the fifth chapter, which is not only a correction, but also you could say a prophecy—and it is happening today. I tell you what, there's some people who have been in the Church of God for years and years and years and years and then they walk away from the Holy Days, they walk away from clean and unclean meats, they're just walking away from everything—can't believe it!

Hebrews 5:7—talking about Christ Who's after the order of Melchizedek: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*." There's a whole section in *The Christian Passover* book about the nature of the flesh that Jesus had, which I cover that very thoroughly.

Verse 8: "Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, After He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing" (vs 8-11).

That is sure true today. There are so many people that are dull of hearing, not only do they not want to hear, but they're dull of hearing and when you tell them these things, they say, 'Oh, I've heard that before! Give me something new.' That's when the slip of new, false doctrine comes in just so cleverly and they gobble it up.

Verse 12: "For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers... [and that has sure happened] ...*but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again

what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food.... [going back to the status of babes] ...For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* word of righteousness because he is an infant. But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil” (vs 12-14). That’s pretty powerful, brethren.

One of the reasons we’ve sent out so many tapes is because we’re getting pretty close to the time where the bridegroom is going to call. And they’re going to say, ‘Give us oil.’ And I think that’s what we’re trying to do with these care packages we’re sending out. They’re people who have been in the Church 20-30 years who are almost back to the stage of needing milk to start again. And ***they ought to be the teachers***. When they get some of these care packages, it helps them. It’s like a tremendous infusion. It’s like sending food to all these starving people in Somalia.

How many have been watching that on the news. Those poor, pitiful little kids and people over there. What a sad thing that is. Do you know what it’s a result of? *Warring, fighting men that have come along and have destroyed the crops and plugged up the wells*. Then they send them food and what do they do? *They fight over it like ravening wolves*. Terrible, terrible, pitiful! I tell you, we can be thankful for the second resurrection—God is going to undo all of that. Unfortunately, there are a lot of brethren of Christ who are out there, they are walking skeletons, ready to die, because they haven’t been eating the Word of God. They haven’t tasted to see that the Lord is good. They haven’t been drinking the milk, let alone eating any of the meat. There in Heb. 5 is really quite a chapter there.

1-Peter 2:3: “If you yourselves have indeed... [It’s a self-experience that you have to go through] ...tasted that **the Lord is gracious.**”

To show that this is an analogy, we talk about milk here—*taste the Lord*. You’re not going to eat the Lord! Are you? *No, you’re not*. How do you do it? Let’s go to John, the sixth chapter; showing how it is done, and showing all the analogies of Christ. God is likened to milk, to bread, to meat, to food, to drink. All of those are analogies, metaphors or similes.

John 6:35: “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life... [Here Jesus is likened unto bread. And bread is called? *The staff of life!*] ...the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time’—because he’s constantly eating and drinking of Christ.

Verse 48: “I am the bread of life. Your

fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread... [it is the *living word*, the *living bread*] ...which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh... [That ties right in with the Passover—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!*] ...which I will give for the life of the world” (vs 48-51). And you know what the Jews said? They didn’t know about what He was saying there.

Verse 53: “Therefore, Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood... [Now we’re drinking blood. It’s an analogy, a simile. But it shows that what it is. Your life must be so bound up and intrinsic with Christ that it’s just like flesh and blood is to your own body.] ...you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food... [true meat] ...and My blood is truly drink.... [true drink that leads to eternal life] ...The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me” (vs 53-57).

There’s a tremendous amount to this, but I think it’s really important that we’ve gone into detail in many of these things. I know we haven’t made the progress that we wanted to, but I tell you what, it really brings home the importance of the Gospel and how it is so well put together. ***It’s just incredible!***

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural references:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:22-25
- 2) 1-Peter 1:2
- 3) Acts 5:28-32
- 4) 1 Peter 1:22
- 5) Romans 1:5
- 6) Romans 5:19
- 7) Philippians 2:8
- 8) Romans 6:16, 23
- 9) 1-Peter 1:22-23
- 10) Luke 8:4-12
- 11) John 3:16
- 12) Luke 8:12-15
- 13) Revelation 3:7-11
- 14) 1-Peter 1:24-25
- 15) James 1:9-11
- 16) Psalm 37:1-10
- 17) Psalm 92:5-9

- 18) Isaiah 40:4-8
- 19) 1-Peter 1:25
- 20) Matthew 24:35
- 21) John 5:39-47
- 22) Revelation 19:11-13
- 23) 1-Peter 2:1-3
- 24) James 1:21
- 25) Colossians 3:1-16
- 26) Hebrews 12:1-3
- 27) Romans 13:12-14
- 28) 1-Peter 2:2, 5, 2
- 29) 1-Corinthians 3:1
- 30) Isaiah 28:9-10
- 31) Hebrews 5:7-14
- 32) 1-Peter 2:3
- 33) John 6:35, 48-51, 53-57

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 13
- Matthew 13
- Mark 14:31
- Luke 21:33
- Acts 17:11
- Ephesians 4:24-31

Also referenced: Books:

- *Enroute to Global Occupation* by Gary H. Kah
- *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies* by David Breese
- *Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

# Epistle of First Peter VI

Fred R. Coulter

Let's just review a few things. Let's go back and cover several key verses that we have in chapter one before we get on into chapter two again. 1-Peter 1:2: "*Who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father...*" God has a plan. He has a purpose and He's called us for that. We're going to see how absolutely tremendous this is when we get into more in 1-Peter.

Peter said right here in v 1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ..." No pope, no supremacy, no over other ministers at all—no one. And when we get into 2-Peter you're going to see that he had a perfect opportunity to make it known what he would be if he would have been pope.

This is 1-Peter 1:2—so God has called us and we're going to learn something interesting about that calling, even more than we've understood in the past. "...by sanctification through *the Spirit, unto obedience...* [Let's understand something about keeping the laws and commandments of God in relationship to how they should be kept.] ...and sprinkling of *the blood of Jesus Christ...* [which gets right down into the Passover, and the whole meaning of the New Covenant] ...Grace and peace be multiplied to you."

What does grace do for obedience? *and* Law-keeping? What does grace do? *Quite the opposite as to what people think!* Grace is not license to sin—we all know that. Let's see what *grace* does.

- Grace gives us life!
- Grace gives us God's Spirit!
- Grace gives us access to God!
- Grace is what gives us the relationship to God the Father!

and believe it or not

- grace gives us the capacity to keep the laws and commandments of God properly.

Not many people have really understood that. That's why we have obedience and grace and the sprinkling of blood of Jesus Christ altogether in the same place.

Romans 3:31 "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." The Greek word for *establish* is 'histemi'—which means *to make stand*. Quite different— isn't it? Not just establish but *to make stand firm* the law. That's something— isn't it?

Then let's answer the other question here. Here's the whole key, brethren. We are going see that Peter preaches the Gospel of grace and growth as intensely as does Paul. Paul writes here: Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in

sin, so that grace may abound?... [They were saying, if you sin you've got grace and it's automatic and so go sin the more; since God is glorified in grace, go sin more so that we have more grace.] ...He says, "[God forbid!] MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?" (vs 1-2). That's the whole point.

I'm going to bring a sermon before Passover: *What Does it Mean, Dead?* I think you're going to be amazed. Based upon the statement that Jesus made, 'Let the dead bury their dead.' What does it mean?

1-Peter 1:2: "...Grace and peace be multiplied to you." I'm going to bring a sermon on the *Covenant of Peace*.

- What is the New Covenant anyway?
- How does it operate anyhow?
- What are we to do?
- What does this do with the relationship between us and God?

When you get *The Christian Passover* book you can read the chapter in there: *The Superiority of the New Covenant*.

Verse 3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again into a living hope..." That's the whole thing that Peter is expressing here: *living hope!* What kind of hope? What kind of time was it in? *It was in a time much like we are in today.* We are being battered and bruised on every side! Tried and tested and, in some points, to the almost the extreme breaking point!

We have a *living hope* so that regardless of the difficulties that we have to go through. Remember the Church at Smyrna? They had an organized synagogue of Satan against them to chase them; to persecute them; to throw them in jail and kill them! And as I've said sarcastically before, all of these arrogant ministers that want to go out and proclaim whatever church they are in, let's have someone stand up and say, 'I'm from Smyrna.' I haven't heard anybody say that yet; because now they want all the blessings. They want all the goodness; but they don't want the work, they don't want the faith and they don't want the hope, and they don't want the death.

So, we have a *living hope*: "...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." [What do we get our minds on when we're in these times of troubles and difficulties?] ...into an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us... [As Christ said, 'where thieves

can't break through and steal.' Where it doesn't rot. Where it doesn't corrupt.] ...who are being safeguarded by the power of God through faith, for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in the last time..." (vs 3-5)—that's referring to the resurrection. We're safeguarded by the power of God through faith.

Verse 6: "In this you yourselves are greatly rejoicing; *but* if it is necessary, at the present time you have been in distress for a little while by various trials." I know, you know, that we have varying degrees of trials that come up before the Passover. And I pray for God's mercy on everyone. But life goes on. For what purpose?

Verse 7: "In order that the proving of your faith... [that's what it is—**faith**, brethren—**your belief**, your absolute and deep and profound and eternal, spiritual belief in God and Jesus Christ and what They have called us for.] ...which is much more precious than gold that is perishing... [we can add all kinds of stories there, but we won't] ...*even* though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

I want you to understand something: **Even Jesus Christ, to overcome death, died for us!** We need to really let that sink in, deeply. And I want you to read, before the Passover, about the foot-washing, the full meaning of the foot-washing; the full meaning of the body of Christ; and the full meaning of the blood of Christ.

Verse 8: "Whom, not having seen, you love... [How are we to be loving God? With all our heart and mind and soul and being—aren't we?] ...on Whom, though at the present time you do not see Him, you are believing, *and* are rejoicing with unspeakable joy..." No one can take that away! Remember what Jesus said the Passover night, to His disciples? He said, '**My joy I give you**, not as the world gives it, give I it to you.'

The whole thing is, even in a time of trial and difficulty and absolute, almost overbearing oppressive things that come upon us, **God is there!** What did Paul say? He said, 'I rejoice that I am weak, because when I am weak, then I am strong in Christ.' That's what it's all about, brethren.

So, even though we go through all of this, v 9: "And are receiving the fulfillment of your faith—even the salvation of your souls; concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come to you...*" (vs 9-10). How profound is this that God has called us to? It's not some exercise in 'religion' that we go to church on Saturday, because we're better people than those who go to church on Sunday. He hasn't called us to play religion. He has called us to everlasting life! I'll

repeat that: **God has not called us to 'play religion,' but He has called us to everlasting life!** It's so profound that He didn't even let the prophets—that He inspired—know what exactly that was. Isn't that something! He could not let it be known until Christ came.

"...prophesied of the grace *that would come to you* have diligently searched out and intently inquired, searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, *and* testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and those glories that would follow... [Isn't that something? So great is salvation that it could not be revealed until the Author of salvation came and gave His life. That's something! Absolutely powerful!] ...to whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the Gospel to you by the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven—into which things the angels are desiring to look" (vs 10-12).

Think of that, brethren! I mean, if you get down and discouraged sometime, you just go read this first chapter of Peter. So profound and so marvelous and so great and so awesome is what God is going to give to us that the angels want to know what it is.

Verse 13: "For this reason, have your minds ready... [Yes, spiritual action!] ...be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children... [children of God, obedient to God] ...do not be conforming yourselves to your former lusts, *as in your former* ignorance. But according as He Who has called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct; for it has been written, 'You be Holy because I am Holy.' And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in the fear of God; knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, your futile way of living, inherited by *tradition* from your forefathers; but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for your sake; *even for you* who through Him are believing in God, Who raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God" (vs 13-21).

That's what it needs to be. Not in any man, not in any minister. As I've said before, it is time for the ministers of God to be pointing the people of God to **God** and not to themselves.

Verse 22: "Having purified your souls by

obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible seed, by the living Word of God..." (vs 22-23). We've got

- a living hope
- a living God
- the living Word
- the living Christ
- the living Savior

—who what? ***Gives us life!*** Aren't we glad that we know about the second resurrection. Not just the first resurrection. We're happy and glad because of the first resurrection and hopefully that we will be there.

But as the Apostle Paul said, 'I keep myself and beat myself under control that lest I preach to others, I myself would be a castaway.' So we will say, 'Ok, we will make it there because Christ said, 'I will not lose one, save the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' So, we'll conclude, yes, we will make it to the first resurrection. But aren't you glad you know about the second resurrection? Just think of the accidents; just think of the death; just think of the mayhem. It is something, brethren, that God is so great and His plan is so marvelous that all of those who died who never had an opportunity for salvation—because He didn't call them—He's going to resurrect them back to a second physical life for an opportunity for salvation. That is marvelous! You talk about grace and mercy and love—incredible! Absolutely incredible!

"...by the living Word of God *which* remains forever. For all flesh is like grass, and the glory of man *is* like the flower of the field; the grass withered, and its flower fell away.... [That is proper translation: punctiliar-aorist tense—fell off; fell away.] ...But the Word of God remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel" (vs 23-25).

We'll come down through v 3, because that's as far as we got last time. 2-Peter 2:3: "Therefore... [That is light of all this which was said before] ...having put away all wickedness, and all deceit... [and that could also be translated *guile*—the little hypocritical, nit-picking things that people do to one another] ...and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes..." (vs 1-2). That is let your mind be as clean as a newborn babe. Why? *Because it hasn't been exercised in evil, yet!* That's why. Not that you are newborn babes—we went through *born again* several times.

"...yearn after..." (v 2). Be as hungry as a newborn babe. And I tell you what, all you mothers know and all you fathers know, too—don't you?—that when the newborns are ready to eat they want to

eat and eat NOW! And if you don't do it NOW—whether it's two in the morning, one in the morning, four in the afternoon, they're going to let you know and they're not going to quit crying until you feed them. And the best food is? *Mama's!*

"...the pure spiritual milk..." (v 2). To have what? *Strong meat!* (Heb. 5).] ...that by it you may grow... [and I inserted the two words]: ...*in character*... [You might want to put *Godliness*, because that's what it's for.] ...If you yourselves did indeed taste that the Lord is gracious" (vs 2-3). And everything that God does is by His grace. Everything you do for God you do because of God's grace.

Let's go to Romans, the second chapter, and here's the same word—*God is gracious*. What does that do? What is that supposed to do for us? *That's supposed to lead us to repentance*. Romans 2:1: "Therefore, you are without excuse, O man..." This just means any human. In the Greek this is what is called the *vocatives*—wherever you see the 'o' that's a vocative tense, which means 'Oh' human being or man or person.

"...everyone who judges *another*; for in that in which you judge the other, you are condemning your own self; for you who judge *another* are doing the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth upon those who commit such things" (vs 1-2). Yes, we can stand up and condemn for these sins—right? *Right!*

But he says, v 3: "Now do you think yourself, O man, whoever is judging those who commit such things, and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of His [graciousness] kindness and forbearance and long-suffering... [Why does God put up with so many things for so long? *Hopefully, that the people will repent!*] ...not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you... [notice the 'eth' (KJV)—is leading you] ...to repentance?" (vs 3-4).

Maybe we can set our spiritual goal, come to deeper conversion and deeper repentance. Not that we go to God and say, 'Oh God, now I'm so good that I'm going to be more deeply converted this year.' No, you ask God, by His mercy and grace, that you can be—and let it be merciful.

Verse 5: "But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God's righteous judgment, Who will render to each one according to his own works: On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance... [patiently doing the things in well-doing] ...in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality—...[those are the ones He's going to give] ...eternal life" (vs 5-7).

Now that's why Peter wrote and said—1-Peter 2:3: "If you yourselves did indeed taste that the Lord is gracious." Because what is it we deserve? We have earned? *Death!* The 'wages of sin is death.'

I know that's a little long review, but let's pick it up here in 1-Peter 2:4—let's read on down here to v 8 and then we'll come back and study these four verses: "To Whom coming [present tense] *as to* a living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, *and* precious. You also, as living stones, are yourselves being built up *as* a spiritual house—a holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this reason it says in the Scripture, 'Behold, I place in Zion the chief Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who is believing on Him... [active, ongoing faithizing as it were] ...will never be put to shame'.... [which means it doesn't matter what people think or do or say—it's how you stand before God.] ...The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who are believing; but to those [of you] who are disobeying, *the* Stone that the builders rejected, this one became *the* Head of the corner; even a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to those who are stumbling at the Word, *and* are disobeying, unto which [destruction] *unbelief* also they were appointed" (vs 4-8).

What he's doing here, he's making some very distinct contrasts. We're going to see that he's contrasting us and our calling and we are people of God and the world. And he's going to show us that there's friction and confrontation and trials that you go through. So he wants us to really understand what we need to do.

Verse 4: "**To Whom you are coming as to a living Stone...**"—Christ is the living Stone.

Now let's go back to the book of Isaiah and let's look at some of the Scriptures from whence this comes. Isaiah 8:11: "For thus the LORD spoke to me with a strong hand, and warned me against walking in the way of this people... [Isn't that the same way that God has called us? We're not to walk in the way of this people.] ...saying, 'Do not say, "A conspiracy!" to everything of which this people says, "A conspiracy!"...' (vs 11-12). That's exactly what we're seeing politically, today. Oh, we've got the Rainbow Coalition—that's a confederacy.

"...And do not fear their fear, nor be afraid. The LORD of hosts, Him shall you sanctify, and let Him *be* your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be a sanctuary *for you*—but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to **both the houses of Israel**... [Both—not just the Jews, but BOTH! Is that not a true prophecy? *Yes, it is.*] ...and for a trap and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (vs 12-14). So much so, that the rabbis,

Supreme Court of so-called Israel and Judah, ordered Messianic Jews out of the country—they are not welcome in Israel. Is that not a stumbling stone—see what happens?

Verse 15: "And many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among My disciples.'... [Which is what? *It is a prophecy of the writing of the New Testament!* It's exactly what it is.] ...And I will wait upon the LORD, who hides His face from the house of Jacob; and I will trust in Him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion" (vs 15-18). That's exactly what it is.

Then it goes on talking about the demonism there, what we're confronted with today, v 19: "And when they shall say to you, 'Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and to wizards who peep and mutter'... [then this is a parenthetical thought that is in there]: ...—*but* should not a people seek unto their God? *Should* the dead *be sought* on behalf of the living?.... [That's a reason for doing what they are doing.] (So here's the answer to it): ...To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them" (vs 19-20). What is the testimony—the greatest testimony on earth? *Jesus Christ!* That is the testimony it's talking about. It's talking about here 'the Stone of Stumbling, the Rock of offense.' To us, we are to be coming—on an ongoing basis.

Now back to 1-Peter 2:4: "**...coming... [on an ongoing basis] ...as to a living Stone...**" It's very interesting what a stone is. We are also called 'stones'—right? *Yes!* Notice, we have:

- the living hope
- the living word
- the living God
- now, living stone

What are we to reflect? We'll see here in just a minute. "**...rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, *and* precious**" (v 4) What does chosen mean? Very interesting.

How many of you can remember the Greek word for *church* or *assembly*? 'ekklesia'—right?—some of you knew that right off—which means *the called out* or *the chosen ones*. Christ was the 'eklektos' of God. So it's no wonder that we are called the 'ekklesia' or the 'ekkleto' of God—*chosen ones of God*. In what way? *The same way as Christ!* Think on that!

He says the Father loves you with the same love that He loved Me. I think, brethren—and I hope and pray that, obviously we can't until the resurrection; but between now and then because it says, "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord

and Savior”—that we can come to a full and deep and profound understanding of God’s way and what He’s done.

“...chosen [by God] *and* precious as **living stones**... [Isn’t that something! It’s what we are to be—*living stones*. You yourselves] ...are being built up *as* a spiritual house—a Holy priesthood...” (vs 4-5). All right, let’s see how all of this fits together: *Jesus is the living Stone*—right?

Now, let’s look at some things referring to Christ. I will refer you to it because you know the Scriptures: Matt. 16:18, Jesus said to Peter: ‘On this Rock [which is Christ] I will build My church.’ But what did He say to Peter just before that? He said, ‘You are Peter’—which is ‘petros,’ *little stone*. Here’s a perfect place for Peter to say, ‘I am the stone to build the Church on and I am the first pope’—right? So, if it were in fact so, there’s where it should be in Scripture. If anyone challenges you on that, just remember 1-Pet. 2; Matt. 16:18.

One more Scripture to write down and remember: John 1:43<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>—when Jesus first saw Peter, He said, ‘You are Cephus—which is being interpreted: *a stone*.’ Peter did not claim to be anymore than a part of the living stones.

Let’s go to Ephesians, the second chapter, and let’s see how this is to be built up; and how it is all in Christ. Then we will look at some of the other Scriptures again in the Old Testament referring to Christ again. We’re learning the same thing out of Peter that we did out of James—there’s a whole lot more here than we figured.

Ephesians 2:18—we see the same thing: “For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but you *are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of **the household of God**.... [that’s what’s important] ...You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing... [grows—so as living stones; we are to grow] ....into a Holy temple in *the* Lord... [So what God is doing in our lives is something—isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*] ...In Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 18-22).

Ephesians 4:12—here’s the whole purpose of everything we have. I’m going to give a sermon on the Government of God here somewhere down the road, not to far distant future, which really will be eye-opening, but we’ll save it for then. “For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying [up-building] of the body of Christ.”

Verse 16: “From Whom all the body, fitly

framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies... [We’re going to see, brethren, that that is not, as we have been told before, tithes and offerings. That is what you supply, what God gives you and what you do in spiritual sacrifices. And I think the only way that we’re going to grow is that we start tending to those spiritual sacrifices—and we’ll get into that a little later.] ...according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love.”

So, we see that we have here: We’ve got Christ, Who is the Chief Stone. We are the living stones. He is the ‘eklektos’ and we are the eklekto’—the plural, chosen, precious.

- We see that Christ is the Rock
- We see that Peter is a stone—Cephus
- We see that we are stones—and it is a living stone; and we are to be living stones.

Now let’s look at what happens when people again reject Christ. Just put down in your notes, or if you’re listening to this, go ahead and read all the way through the whole Psalm, because it shows the relationship that you have with God.

Psalm 118:6: “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?.... [It’s interesting how then Peter is talking about the stone of stumbling and the trials we go through.] ...The LORD is for me as my helper; therefore I will look in triumph upon those who hate me. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to trust in princes” (vs 6-9).

Verse 21: “I will praise You, for You have answered me and have become my salvation. The Stone which the builders rejected has become the Head Stone of the corner. This is the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (vs 21-24).

One more Old Testament Scripture, and then we’ll go to the New Testament. Isaiah 28:14: “Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD, you scornful men who rule this people in Jerusalem. Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and we have made an agreement...’” (vs 14-15). Sounds like the New Covenant that was made—right? Remember the election? Yeah, people would rather stick to their ways of death than to turn to God.

“...with the grave; when the overwhelming rod shall pass through, it shall not come to us... [That’s what they’re saying: ‘Oh yes, we’ll bypass all this stuff.’] ...for we have made lies our refuge,

and we have hidden ourselves under falsehood.’.... [directly referring to rejecting Jesus Christ] ...Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I place in Zion a Stone for a foundation, a tried Stone, a precious Cornerstone, a sure Foundation...’” (vs 15-16).

We can go through the New Testament and find all kinds of Scriptures relating to this. What is the foundation upon which we are to build? *No other foundation can any man lay other than that which is been laid, which is Christ Jesus!* Right? Yes!

(go to track the next track)

Matthew 21:33: “Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and put a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country. Now, when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits” (vs 33-34). Which then, obviously, the fruit of it was the wine—right? *Because he dug the winepress!*

The only thing that you’re going to get out of a harvest of grapes is wine and raisins. That’s it! Today we can get grape juice because we have bottling, pasteurizing and hermetically sealing which keeps the grape juice from turning into wine. So, when he came back for the fruits of it, it has to be because he has a wine-tower, and then the only other fruit would be what? *Raisins*—because he was far off.

Verse 35: “But the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first *time*; and they did the same thing to them. Then at last he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will have respect for my son.’ But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us murder him and gain possession of his inheritance’” (vs 35-38). To steal a kingdom—right?

Verse 39: “Then they took him, *and cast him* out of the vineyard, and murdered *him*.... [Christ was slain where? *Without the camp!*] ...Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen? They said to Him, ‘*Evil men!* He will utterly destroy them, and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons’” (vs 39-41).

I want you think about what we are to do then, brethren. Are we not in the vine of Christ? *Yes, we are!* Jesus said, ‘I am the vine; My Father is the husbandman; and you are the branches’—bring forth fruit.

Verse 42: “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you

never read in the Scriptures... [Isn’t that true of all religionists? *Yes!* Do they read the Scriptures? *No!* *They use them and manipulate them for their own end.*] ...“*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes*”? Because of this, I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that produces the fruits of it*” (vs 42-43). That’s *us*, brethren!

Verse 44: “And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken... [in repentance, you might add there.] ...but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.’ Now after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them.... [Now you know why Jesus warned them about the unpardonable sin. Did they know? Here, brethren, is the greatest manifestation of God to His entire creation. God in the flesh! ‘Jesus Christ in person came to His own, and His own received Him not’—right?] ...And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet” (vs 44-46).

I’ll have to bring a little sermon on the intrigue of the arrest of Jesus; and who was Judas? Very interesting! One sermon I want to give somewhere down the road (I don’t know when it will be): what a church of the Pharisees be like? I’ve been reading this book while I was doing the copies for the special edition of the book; I would sit there while the copies were going through (because I have a slow copier), and I’ve been reading this book: *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*. It showed what a Pharisee community was like. And I think you will be amazed! How that that’s how the Church of God was run for many years. I’ll just wet your appetite with that.

Let’s go to Luke 20<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>—here’s another similar parable given; only this time in the way of talents. It’s the same parallel one there; it begins in v 9 and it follows right on down through the same one—read the verses from 9-16.

Luke 20:17: “But He looked at them *and* said, ‘What then is this that is written: “*The Stone that the builders rejected, this one has become the head of the corner*?”’”

We have a similar one over here in Luke 19:14: “But his citizens hated him... [Brethren, it is true that the biggest problem the Jews have today is Jesus Christ. He’s been their biggest problem for 1900 years.] ...and sent an ambassador after him, saying, ‘We are not willing to have this man reign over us.’”

So, when He comes to His Kingdom; after He gives the reward to those who had the pounds

and did what they should have, v 27 “Moreover, bring my enemies, those who were not willing *for* me to reign over them, and slay *them* here before me.” When it talks about a *Stone of Offense* going to grind them to powder, it’s exactly what’s going to happen.

1-Peter 2:5: “**You also, as living stones...**” That means we are to be living this way of life. Now, let’s put just a couple of other Scriptures in here to show how this will work together. That ties into ‘offer up spiritual sacrifices.

Romans 12 tells us how we are to be *living stones*. What is it that gives us life? It’s the Spirit that gives life—right? And how are we to worship God? *In Spirit and in Truth!*

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice... [and as Paul said, ‘those who are alive from the dead.’] ...Holy *and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed... [that’s where conversion takes place; that’s how you are a living stone.] ...by the renewing of your mind... [through the Spirit of God] ...in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God” (vs 1-2). That’s how we are to be, having our lives conducted as a living sacrifices.

Let’s go to John, the sixth chapter, and let’s see where all of this comes from.

- We have a *living stone*
- We have the *living Word*
- We have the *living Christ*
- We have the *living Father*

John 6:51—It’s interesting because the Greek there for *living* is the same word for *eternal life*. Jesus said, “I am the **living bread**... [that’s why it’s so important that we keep the Passover the way that God shows.] ...which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” He’s the *living bread*—He gives *life*!

Verse 57: “As the living Father has sent Me... [That’s why we are to have a *living faith* with *living works*, with *living belief*! That’s what it is that God gives to us.] ...and **I live by the Father**; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.” That ties in exactly with what Peter is writing here and is showing us what to do and how to do and how to live.

Let’s go to Hebrews, the thirteenth chapter, and let’s see some more of these spiritual sacrifices, which we are to offer up. Now this, after Paul writes

all about the animal sacrifices and everything in the book of Hebrews, this becomes very important, and there’s quite a bit of material in here to show that what some of these Jews were doing: they were giving up on Christ, they were giving up on the New Testament Passover, they were going back to circumcision, going back to sacrifices—and everything—rejecting Christ because Jesus didn’t come when they wanted Him to. So they went back to what they had, and were rejecting Christ.

Hebrews 13:15: “Accordingly, let us offer *the* sacrifice of praise continually to God through Him; that is, *with the* fruit of *our* lips openly professing *our faith* in His name. Now do not forget to do good and to fellowship, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (vs 15-16).

So, it gets right down into our daily conduct. We have Jesus Christ, Who is the living Stone—right? We are to be *living stones*. We then are to follow Christ’s way. When you read that, it does just like it did with the book of James, it puts a little dagger in the heart—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!* Why? *You find yourself falling short!* *Yes!* So do I. Everyone does. And that’s why we have the Sabbath. That’s why we can be inspired on the Sabbath, because probably on Monday it’s going to be a downer! Maybe it will and maybe it won’t! But if it is, we’re not to go ahead and be like the world. So those are pleasing to God.

Let’s see some other things that are also pleasing to God. Just put in your notes: Gal. 5:22 (you should have that memorized) ‘For the fruit of the Spirit is love and faith and hope and meekness and temperance and patience; against such there is no law.’ Those are spiritual sacrifices to God.

What is the hardest thing in the world to do? I’ll tell you what the hardest thing in the world to do is: *to be nice when you’ve been wronged!* And I would have to say that I think I’ve failed that test more than anybody I know. Maybe that’s why we have such tough times once in while; so we can learn that lesson. I always remember what Christ said when He was dying—He said: ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing.’ Amazing! I mean, **amazing!** When you think about that; and you think, boy, some of the situations that you’ve been put in, that I’ve been put in, where we’ve been much more short, much quicker, and haven’t even thought of that. That thought was so far from us we couldn’t even understand it—right? While we’re still yet Christians—right? *Right!*

Let’s go to Colossians, the first chapter, because these spiritual sacrifices and these things are to perfect us through Christ. And that’s the only perfection there’s going to be, and that’s the only way we’re going to have the

- living faith
- the living hope
- the living Word
- the living Christ
- the living Father

Colossians 1:26: “*Even* the mystery... [secret of God] ...that has been hidden from ages and from generations...”—not even the prophets; not even the angels. *It sure is true!* Now you know why the Laodiceans get rich and increased with goods; because they have the Word of God, they’ve got everything; they’ve got it comfortable, they have all of this and they lose site of the tremendous thing that God has done; that there would have been people who would have willingly *given their lives* to know what we know. And then we go, ‘Oh hum!’ No wonder God is about ready to spit some out.

“...but has now been revealed to His saints... [God has revealed it though His Spirit] ...to whom God did will to make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (vs 26-27). Amazing, brethren!

We talk about the resurrection kind of as an off-handed thing. But I tell you what, when you see death, or you’re staring death in the face, or when one of your relatives dies, and you go by yourself in your little-ole corner or closet and you really realize how a little an infinitesimal thing that we are. Then the resurrection means a lot—doesn’t it? I mean, think about it, ***God is going to resurrect us from the dead!*** Or change us “in the moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump”—if we make it alive ’til then. And He is going to ‘change this vile body made like unto His glorious body.’ Boy, that’s something!

And I will tell you one thing: I don’t think the times around us are going to get much better. So we’ve got to keep that focus right in mind—right there! And the next time some difficult thing comes upon you, put that right there—right smack between your forehead; deep in your heart, let Christ in you, because He’s the “hope of glory.”

Verse 28: “Whom we preach, [warning] admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.... [Isn’t that what Peter’s preaching over here: as ‘living stones’; ‘spiritual sacrifices’; as ‘spiritual house unto God’? *Yes, indeed!*] ...For this cause I also labor, striving according to His inner working, which works in me with power” (vs 28-29). It would be wonderful, brethren, if we had 10,000 Apostle Pauls around to preach today—wouldn’t it? *Yes, it would!*

Now, let’s go back to 1-Peter, the second chapter, and we’ll talk a little bit about Zion next time, but we’ll finish here with 1-Peter 2:6—for this reason: “Wherefore, also it is contained in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I lay in Sion a Chief Corner Stone, [chosen] elect, precious: and he that believes on Him shall not be [put to shame] confounded’”—and that means before God; maybe before men, in a trial.

But before God, *no!* What is it that men can do to you, anyway? Well, they can take your life; but ***God’s going to resurrect you!*** You know, sometimes that sound a little fatalistic. But I tell you what, when we stare the jaws of death right down the throat, and see those teeth opening up, that means a lot—doesn’t it? *Yes, it does!*

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:2, 1
- 2) Romans 3:31
- 3) Romans 6:1-2
- 4) 1 Peter 1:2-25
- 5) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 6) Romans 2:1-7
- 7) 1-Peter 2:3-8
- 8) Isaiah 8:11-20
- 9) 1-Peter 2:4-5
- 10) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 11) Ephesians 4:12, 16
- 12) Psalm 118:6-9, 21-24
- 13) Isaiah 28:14-16
- 14) Matthew 21:33-46
- 15) Luke 20:17
- 16) Luke 19:14, 27
- 17) 1-Peter 2:5
- 18) Romans 12:1-2
- 19) John 6:51, 57
- 20) Hebrews 13:15-16
- 21) Colossians 1:26-29
- 22) 1-Peter 2:6

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 5
- Matt. 16:18
- John 1:43
- Luke 20:9-16
- Galatians 5:22

#### Also referenced:

#### Sermons:

- *What Does it Mean, Dead?*
- *Covenant of Peace*

#### Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* by Joachim Jeremias

# Epistle of First Peter VII

Fred R. Coulter

We finished off last time down through 1-Peter 2:6 <sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>, so let's just review and go on and then we'll add quite a few other things—some of which I neglected to go over last week. 1-Peter 2:4: “To Whom you are coming...” There again, we have a present tense verb—you are coming—showing that our whole relationship with Christ is one continually coming to Him. What did Jesus say? ‘All ye who are heavy laden’—what? ‘Come to Me.’ We need to keep coming to Him on an on-going basis in prayer and study and the way we live, and everything.

“...as to a living Stone...” (v 4). As we go through here, I'll give you some things you can do as on-going Bible studies. Maybe do a concordance study of ‘stone’ in the Bible. Remember the stone, Jacob's Pillar stone, which was supposedly the stone that they took with Jacob's bones when they left the land of Egypt. And that was supposedly the stone in which water came out of to give water to the children of Israel. It's interesting that you have a living stone. Jesus said that when you receive the Holy Spirit that out of your belly shall what? *Flow rivers of living water!* So, tie in *living*, tie in *stone*, tie in *water*, tie in all those things.

“...rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious. You also, as living stones, are yourselves...” (vs 4-5). This is an interesting translation because there is a particular type of verb in the Greek that is called *middle voice*. We don't have it in English. The *middle voice* is this: that you do something for yourself. Here is the *middle voice*—and I think it gives it a little bit more authority

“...[that you] yourselves [are] being built up as a spiritual house... [Who's doing the building? Christ is. He will build His Church, His House. We covered that last time.] ...a Holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this reason, it says in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I place in Zion the chief Cornerstone...’ (vs 5-6). Now, a lot of people have said it means a capstone, that it goes on top of the building. No, it's the other way around, because a *cornerstone* is a foundational stone.

“...chosen *and* precious... [*chosen* is ‘eklektos’; we are the ‘eklekto’, the chosen of God] ...and the one who is believing on Him... [We have the on-going present tense verb—or actually, present tense participle in this case.] ...will never be put to shame.’ The preciousness *is* to you therefore who are believing; but to those who are disobeying, the Stone that the builders rejected, this one became *the* Head of the corner; even a Stone of stumbling and a

Rock of offense to those who are stumbling at the Word *and* are disobeying, unto which *unbelief* also they were appointed” (vs 6-8). Very interesting. You go back and tie in

- v 4—*rejected by men*
- v 7—*rejected by those*
- v 8—*a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of offense*

And then what I did, I tied that in with “...those who are stumbling at the Word [of God]” (v 8).

Let's look at what we are actually replacing; Luke 21:1 ties in with it. I may do just an entirely separate sermon on *spiritual sacrifices*; because there's an awful lot to them. It includes:

- prayer
- study
- helping the brethren
- worshiping God
- meditating on God's Word, and so forth

I'll cover just a little bit about that today, but I want to do a whole sermon on it.

Luke 21:1: “When He looked up, He saw the rich men tossing their offerings into the treasury.... [This was a form of what? *Sacrificing worship*—supposedly—right?—in addition to the animal sacrifices.] ...Then He also saw a certain poor widow drop in two [mites] small coins.... [That was a real sacrifice on her part.] ...And He said, ‘Of a truth, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all *of them*; for all these have from their abundance cast into the offerings to God; but she, out of her poverty, did put *in* all the livelihood that she had’” (vs 1-4).

This is why God has come to call those who are *rich in faith*—maybe poor in circumstances. You see how this ties right in with:

- our character
- our attitude
- our viewpoint

being ‘living stones’; because Christ is *the* living Stone in which we go to. We are ‘living stones’ Now notice what He says of the temple; and this is important because the temple was the place where God chose to put His name. This was the place where God was centered on earth. And this will show you how powerful the New Covenant is, when you really understand it.

Verse 5: “And while some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and consecrated gifts, He said, ‘As for these things that you now see, *the* days will come in which

*there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down”* (vs 5-6). Very interesting when you compare the stones of the building. The stones of the wall. And that’s where God placed His name.

We are to be ‘living stones’ with the attitude of Christ. Let’s go back to Isaiah 66—we’ll just plug this Scripture in because this is very important. I know in the book I have quite a bit to say about that in the section on the superiority of the New Covenant, which it is; and that’s going to make some people really upset. But nevertheless, it is a ‘stone of stumbling’—so we can’t help that. And here’s what God really wants anyway. That’s why it gets down to the *spiritual sacrifices*, and this ties in somewhat with it.

Isaiah 66:1: “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where, then, *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,’ says the LORD....” (vs 1-2). What are you going to build for God? I mean, He created the universe!

- Are we going to build a house?
- Are we going to build a building?
- Are we going to make an idol?
- An idol is made out of what?
- *Out of wood or stone!*

So, we’re not to be like those. We’re not to be like dumb idols.

But here’s what we’re to be like—and this is part of the spiritual sacrifices, which we’re to offer: ...‘**But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word**’” (v 2). Therefore, as we’re going to see, *the duty of every minister is to point people to Christ*. Always, always, *always*, *always*! Then it says what happened, even with those physical sacrifices if they didn’t do what they were supposed to.

Now, 1-Kings 18 is referring to Elijah and all the prophets of Baal. These represented all the idol gods—didn’t they? All the prophets screamed out to the Baal day and night—and boy, that could make one funny movie. All day cut themselves, lashed themselves, and Elijah said, ‘Well, maybe you better do it a little louder, guys. Maybe he’s sleeping or on a journey. You gotta arouse Baal up.’ How many have heard *Elijah* by Handle? Well, if you haven’t get that. That song to Baal is really something! ‘Hear us O’Baal, O hear us O’Baal....’ Really, that is something! He does a good job on that.

Let’s go to Isaiah, the 40<sup>th</sup> chapter, and let’s look at some of these idols to Baal, and what people will do. It’s very interesting because when you sit down and go through all that God has—everything

that God has said—it’s exactly what every person wants. Everything that God has said is what every person wants and desires. And yet, they don’t want to do it God’s way. So, God is not honored by making things out of what He’s created to honor Him.

Isaiah 40:18: “To whom then will you compare God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him? The workman melts a graven image... [made out of the metal that comes out of the ground] ...and the goldsmith spreads it over with gold, and casts silver chains. He who is too poor...” (vs 18-20). In other words, the ones that are down in the New Guinea jungles, or the ones that are like the Indians that were up in the Northwest prior to it being taken over by the white man

“...for *that* offering... [that is he doesn’t have the means to go ahead and make a graven idol or make it out of stone] chooses a tree that will not rot; he seeks for a skillful workman for himself to prepare a graven image that will not totter” (v 20). This is an interesting comparison when you compare it with what we are to do as living stones. When you compare that to idols of stones and idols of metal and idles of wood and so forth.

He goes on to say here, v 21: “Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood *from* the foundations of the earth? *It is* He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers; *It is* He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in; Who brings the rulers to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth as vanity. No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, then He shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away like stubble. ‘To whom then will you compare Me, or who is My equal?’ says the Holy One” (vs 21-25).

Whenever you get down or discouraged or thinking, as I mentioned there concerning some of those who are almost like the living dead—they’re so mesmerized in their religion. They have a social club and practice ‘religion’ and they don’t worship God. So if you’re in a situation where then you’re not as zealous as you ought to be, or you’re going through a trial or difficulty and wondering how it’s going to come out, do this, go outside and do this:

Verse 26: “Lift up your eyes on high...” That’s always humbling. You go out at night, some night when it’s real clear, and you look up and you see the stars. That’s what David said, ‘Oh Lord God, what is man that You’re mindful of him? When I see the heavens, which Your hand has created, and the sun and the moon and the stars and everything that You have done, what is man that You have made him?’

Verse 26: “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold, Who has created these *things*... [awesome and wonderful] ...who brings out their host by number? He calls them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power; not one fails” (v 26). That is really magnificent! That’s really where the source of strength and help and being living stones really comes from.

Let’s go over here to Isaiah 41:21: “‘Draw near *with* your cause,’ says the LORD. ‘Bring out your strong *reasons*,’ says the King of Jacob. ‘Let them bring *them* out, and declare to us the things that shall happen; let them reveal the former things, what they *are*, that we may consider them and know the final end of them; or declare to us things to come” (vs 21-22). I tell you, that’s where so many ministers have failed—haven’t they? Tell us things to come. They don’t happen.

Verse 26—compared to God: “Who has declared from the beginning, that we may know? And beforetime, that we may say, “*He is right*”? Yea, no one declares; yea, no one proclaims; yea, no one hears your words.”

Verse 28: “For I looked, and *there was* no man; and there was no counselor among them, that I might ask and be given an answer. Behold, they *are* all false; their works *are* nothing; their images *are* wind and vanity” (vs 28-29). Completely the opposite of what we are to be, brethren, is living stones of God.

Now let’s look at a couple of these things concerning the *spiritual sacrifices*. Let’s just go to Revelation, the fifth chapter for a minute; and let’s understand that when we pray, our prayers are heard. God hears them. He answers them. Sometimes we have to keep going back and be persistent in it, but God answers them. God is able to provide for us. When we just look at our own circumstances around us, well you know, human life is that way. In the idealistic sense, there’s something perverse about a human mind, which is this: We like to think of everything as perfect; which then, in order to have everything perfect, you must be spiritual—right? We try and have a perfect life in the flesh; but life is not perfected in the flesh. That’s why when a trial comes we may tend to get discouraged; because some of these things may be more than we really had bargained for. But God is able to see us through them.

Revelation 5: 8 talks about the four living creatures and the 24 elders: “And when He took the book, the four living creatures... [not beasts—‘beasts’ sounds a little barbaric] ...and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having harps and golden bowls full of [odors] incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” That’s part of our spiritual sacrifices we’re to offer to God—in

prayer—and they go to God. It says ‘they’re full’ of the prayers of the saints.

Now, let’s go to Revelation 8; we’ll see something very similar to it. The truth is, in the New Covenant—that’s why the New Covenant is so superior to the Old Covenant—you had to go to Jerusalem. The Old Covenant you had to offer an animal sacrifice. The New Covenant, you’re given access to God the Father, in heaven above, directly, by saying, ‘Father.’

When you think of how many men try and place themselves between you and God, and how God doesn’t care for that; because those prayers go right up to God. Sometimes we neglect to pray the way that we should. Or we’re discouraged and don’t pray. Well, maybe the reason discouragement continues is because you haven’t prayed when you know you should pray, and need to be praying when you’re not praying, and you know that you need to; but you’re not. It’s sort of a ‘catch-22’ You get like this chipmunk on the cage and just keep running and running and running—the faster you run, the faster it goes, the faster you’ve got to run. And then it goes too fast, and finally it throws you out and you land on the ground kind of dazed and you’re wondering what’s going on. God’s telling you to get off the treadmill—now you can pray.

Right in the middle of all of this that’s going on, the beginning of the trumpet plagues, just before they sound, Revelation 8:3: “And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar...” Your prayers go straight up. We’re going to see that we are a priesthood.

How many know the difference between a Levite and a priest? *A priest was of the house of Aaron, he was from Levi!* Only the descendants of Aaron had the right of the priesthood. All of the other Levites were like assistant priests. None of those Levites could offer at the altar. When they had difficulties because there were not enough priests, then the Levites could assist at the altar of burnt offerings. But only the house of Aaron could go into the Holy place to offer incense daily. And the incense daily is likened unto our prayers. Inside the Holy place you have the incense altar. You have the labor for the bathing. You also have the golden candlestick with the seven candles in it, symbolizing the seven churches.

The priest could only go into that. And this is where the incense then was offered every day. They were to offer nothing on that incense altar but incense. And it was a special mixture of spices that to this day they don’t know what it is. And that ascended up to God, symbolically, into the Holy of Holies, which was the next part of the inside of the temple. And in the Holy of Holies was the symbolic place where God was with the Ark of the Covenant.

Well, you see, now we come—not to just Mt. Zion on the earth, but Mt. Sion in heaven above.

And here's what happens, v 3: "And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar; and much incense was given to him, so that he might offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that *was* before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up before God from *the* hand of the angel..." So, our prayers go directly to God. This is a type of the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let's go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter. We need to rehearse another Scripture, which is in James, the fifth chapter, which says that 'the effectual prayer of a righteous man avails much.' Then it gives the example of Elijah. Let's see the difference.

Hebrews 12:14: "Pursue peace with everyone... [and that's the whole situation concerning the New Covenant, brethren. We have peace with God, because God has called us unto peace. The rest of the world is at war with God.] ...and Holiness... [so this is part of our spiritual growth and character] ...without which no one will see the Lord; looking diligently, lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and through this many be defiled; 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... [he's drawing a comparison between that and what we are to receive] ...*and* he found no room for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears" (vs 14-17).

It's a very interesting thing. It shows that there comes a time when repentance will no longer prevail because it's too late. That's what 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' is all about at the Lake of Fire—it is too late! But he says:

Verse 18: "For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched..." Remember, we started out with the mount there, with the temple as they were going away from the temple and they looked at the stones and how beautiful they were. Jesus said, 'They're all going to be torn down.' So you're not coming to that mount, which might be touched.

"...and that burned with fire... [that is, Mt. Sinai where they received the Ten Commandments] ...nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind; and to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them. (For they could not endure what was being commanded: 'And if even an animal touches the

mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow'; and so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, 'I am greatly afraid and trembling.')

 (vs 18-21).

You go back and read that in Exo. 20, how that when God descended on the mountain it was just like a volcano had exploding. Dark clouds, the mountain was altogether on fire, and of course, all the people backed away—no one went up to the mountain. The earth quaked all around. And after that's all done, here comes a voice: 'Moses, come up here to Me.' Moses exceedingly feared and quaked. Now, it had to be something spectacular, because later the people said, when he was gone for 40 days, 'We don't know what's happened to this Moses.' So you're not coming to that.

Verse 22: "But you have come to Mount Sion... [That is in heaven above; Jerusalem in heaven above, brethren!] ...and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels... [who are sent forth to minister to those who are as of salvation.] ...to *the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* church of *the* firstborn, registered in *the* book of life in heaven..." (vs 22-23). That's where all the honor's going to come from. It's all going to come from God! *Not from man*. It's all going to come through Christ! *Not from man*.

"...and to God, *the* Judge of all..." (v 23). That's why every epistle starts out: 'Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord, Jesus Christ.' Because when you are under grace, your judgment is the acceptance of Christ in your stead. Now, that's something to really consider. And that's what grace is all about. Very profound!

"...and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that* of Abel" (vs 23-24). That's a tremendous calling, brethren; that we have been called to be a spiritual priesthood.

Now let's go back to Revelation 5 and get another view of what the scene is like when we go to pray—when we go before God to pray. And remember, the Holy Spirit itself what? *Makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered!* Because the angel then is the one who takes all the prayers of God—and I don't know how he does it, but somehow spiritually works it in such a way that it comes up before God as a sweet incense; all the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 5:8—after "...which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did

redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and did make us unto our God kings and priests..." (vs 8-10). Our royal priesthood is here now in the spiritual sacrifices, but it is going to be, in reality, in the office when Christ returns.

"...and we shall reign on the earth.' And I saw and I heard *the* voices of many angels around the throne, and *the* voices of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands" (vs 10-11). That's a magnificent scene. And yet, God—because He's called you and given His Holy Spirit allows you to come before His presence with 'Our Father in heaven, Holy is your name.' Isn't that something! That is amazing, brethren, when you really understand it.

Verse 12: "Saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.' And every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying, 'To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity'" (vs 12-13).

What is going to happen with all this power and riches and honor and glory? Put in your notes, Rev. 20:4-6—that we're going to be in the first resurrection as kings and priests. Just put that in your notes, because I want you to go to Romans, the eighth chapter. And showing this tremendous privilege that God has given us; it's an absolute blessing. That's why God has to choose us. God has to call us. God has to open our minds to understand this. That's why we are called *chosen*!

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God" (vs 14-16).

I want you to look at Rev. 5 again. Look at that at the same time that I read these next Scriptures. Revelation 5:12: "Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness...that we are *the* children of God. Now if *we* are children, *we* are also heirs—truly, heirs of God... [to power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.] ...**and joint heirs with Christ**—if indeed we suffer together with Him.... [Not the suffering that we

don't like. That's why Paul went through so many things. I don't like it. I still have not come to the point when I can run into Sabbath services and smile and jump up and down with joy and say, 'Hooray! brethren, I had the most disastrous week I've ever had in my life.' But I think if it keeps up that may happen! Paul sure did!] ...For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (vs 16-18).

What happens when we get down and out? What happens when we get down and out? And you might put in there: flat and run over! And you might also add to it: stabbed and crushed! This is a good one to go to when you're in trouble—Psalm 73—notice how this starts out. This is the Psalm of Asaph, this is not of David, but this is of Asaph—one of the priests.

Psalm 73:1: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to those who are pure of heart." This statement is made in kind of a rote thing to remind God. Why? *Because he was trying to have a clean heart*—but things weren't going so good for him, so he was reminding God.

"But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped... [Then he got into a real attitude problem—didn't he?] ...**for I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked**... [There's the 'Fairness Doctrine.' This must be 'Willy's' problem, here.] ...For there are no pangs in their death... [everything seems to go right with them] ...and their strength is firm.... [You can't get them out—can you?] ...They are not in trouble like other men..." (vs 2-5). I'm going to put it in there this time; I've been meaning to put it in there several times: 'like me.' Because that's the inference here.

"...neither are they plagued like *other* men.... [like me] ...Therefore, pride is as a chain about their neck.... [You might put there: Michael Jackson and some others. You can add whatever name you want there.] ...Violence covers them like a garment" (vs 1-6). In other words, doesn't make any difference what they do, they get everything by taking and beating and looting and stealing and bad deals.

Verse 7: "Their eyes stand out with fatness..." Kind of like this big glob in Star Wars. There's this big oval with these huge eyes standing out. It's pretty funny because he's the big glutton there—and he is just like that.

"...they have more than the heart could wish for... [I don't. Sometimes we feel that way.] ...They scoff and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the

earth” (vs 7-9). These people have prospered wherever they go—right? *Yes!* You wonder how some of these people get into some of these offices. I mean, we’re seeing some of them put in the Cabinet here in the U.S. right now—it’s amazing!

Verse 10: “Therefore, waters of abundance are drunk by them. And they say, ‘How does God know?... [look at all I’m getting away with] ...And is there knowledge in the Most High?’ Behold, these are the wicked, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches” (vs 10-12).

- What does it say in John 17? “*We’re not of the world.*”
- What does it say in Rev. 18—concerning God’s people and Babylon the Great? “*Come out of her My people.*”

You can tie v 1 with v 13: “Surely **I have made my heart pure in vain** and washed my hands in innocence.” Compared to them, the washing of my hands is just like washing innocent hands—not guilty hands. I’ve been overcoming, trying to get rid of this thing, and changing all this sort of thing. Haven’t seen much results yet. Wait until the resurrection; boy, then you’ll see the results—final results!

Verse 14: “For all the day long I have been plagued and chastened every morning.... [and had it—everything] ...If I say, ‘I will speak thus;’ behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me” (vs 14-16). He was really having it.

Have you’ve ever been in this position? *Everybody’s been that way.* I have! I have! You come to a situation and a problem that is so overwhelming, it is painful to even think about it—isn’t it? *Yes!* What do you get? *You get a migraine! You get a headache!* Your brain goes BING! There’s nothing in it. It’s just sort of blank! And all of these wicked people are running around doing whatever they want, and getting whatever they want, and here you are struggling and frustrated and trying and it seems like nothing goes right.

Here’s the solution—v 17: “**Until I went into the sanctuary of God...**” Asaph was a priest. In order to get away from the wicked, what did he do? *He went into the Holy place*, and when he offered the incense and prayed to God, he said, ‘Yeah, God, I understand.’ We have the opportunity, brethren, to come before God the Father in heaven above, in the sanctuary that’s in heaven above. What you need to do is take it to God. You know, there were some enemies that I was praying about; that I was asking God: ‘Get ’em God. Take care of my enemies.’ And I was getting in a real bad attitude. ‘Yeah, God, get ’em!’ And I got to thinking, what if

someone was praying that on my behalf, because I maybe was one of their enemies. Would I want God to answer that prayer. Well *no*, because it involved me! Of course not, see! But I wanted God to get them because they were my enemies. So I learned the lesson that is in Rom. 12; that’s in Matt. 5.

(go to the next track)

This is the toughest commandment in the world; especially when you have been wronged! And especially when you know you are right! Matthew 5:43: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’.... [Right on, Lord!] ...But I say to you, love your enemies...” (vs 43-44)—mumble, mumble. That’s our reaction—right? Isn’t it? *Yes!*

When was the last time you prayed for your enemy. Well, it’s like this Rabbi in *The Fiddler on the Roof*. This guy came up to the Rabbi as they were being oppressed by the Russians, and he came up and he said, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi, is there a blessing for the Czar.’ And he thought for a minute and (you know, this beard and this funny little hat and everything) he pensively looked up and he said, ‘Yes, may the Lord bless him and keep him FAR away from us!’ But remember what Jesus said when He was on the cross of crucifixion: He said, ‘Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.’ Did He keep His own commandments? *Yes, indeed!*

“...love your enemies, bless those who curse you...” (v 44). That is the hardest thing to do when you know you are right! When it’s between husband and wife, and instead of being a lovey-dovey couple, you’re both enemies, and you both know you’re right! It’s hard to pray—isn’t it? ‘Oh, God, open her mind so she’ll understand what I’m trying to say to her.’ ‘Oh God, help him so that he will see that I’m right!’ It’s awfully hard to say, ‘God, forgive me for my attitude. And please bless my husband, or bless my wife—and if there’s any mind-changing to be done, my arguments can’t do it, God—but Your Spirit can! In the mean time help me to bite my tongue and do what is good.’

“...do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who **despitefully** use you and **persecute** you... [Why?] ...So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven...” (vs 44-45). You think you had abuse? How much abuse has God taken? I mean, and we’re not counting taking God’s name in vain on the golf course! And in the factories! Or in the home! Just the abuse that God has taken—everything is against God!

Now, what if God just knocked down everybody for everything they did that was wrong—BAM! Get ’em! just like that! There would be nobody left! Now, **God is kind to the world.**

He says: “...for He causes His sun to rise on

*the evil and on the good*, and sends rain on *the just and on the unjust*. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is extraordinary*? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect” (vs 45-48). That’s a tall order!

In other words, knowing you can’t be perfect in the flesh, what is He telling you? What is the message here? We’re to be perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect. But before you go around praying for curses on your enemies, praying for God to correct those who spitefully use you; understand what God the Father and Christ have gone through from the hand of every man, woman and child on the face of this earth. Who knows, maybe that person you’re fighting and struggling against could end up being an Apostle Paul. Have you ever thought of praying for their conversion! That’s an unusual thought— isn’t it? Well, from that prayer, don’t get up and throw a Bible in front of their face either. You may not be the instrument. God has to call them.

Now, let’s go back to Psalm 73 and we’ll see the end of it here. And I know some people have said, ‘Oh, we know the Passover is coming. We have all these trials. There always seems to be some.’ And, as I said last week, ask God: ***please be merciful.***

Psalm 73:13: “Surely I have made my heart pure in vain...” What profit is it to be a Christian if you have to suffer all of this—some might say. Some might even say, since they understand the second resurrection: Why didn’t God call me in the second resurrection instead of now! Well, who knows, maybe your suffering would have been worse in the world than what you’ve gone through in the Church. You don’t know!

“...and chastened every morning.... [nothing seems to go right] ...If I say, ‘I will speak thus;’ behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end” (vs 14-17). Why? *Because as long as you belong to God the Father, there is nothing, there is nothing, there is nothing* that anyone can do to you to take you out of His hands—NOTHING!

That’s why when he went into the sanctuary, and being there, as it were, in what is called the ‘shekinah’: the presence or glory of God, because the glory of God filled the temple—didn’t it? *Yes, indeed!* So, when he went in there in the presence of God, he understood. So that’s how we need to understand these things.

“...then I understood their end.... [What is the end? *The wages of sin is death!* God has called us to what? *Life!* We’re to be living stones, not dead stones.] ...Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down into destruction. How have they been brought into desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors” (vs 17-19).

Why does God let the wicked prosper for so long? Who knows, ***they may repent!*** You need to understand that! Then when it comes upon them, it’s going to be just like it’s happening to the Mafia over in Sicily today. The Mafia struck back and they killed judges and all kinds of people, and finally they made everybody really mad and concerned. So, they just recently just nabbed the two top Mafia people who have eluded them for 25-years. And they came back on the population so bad that the population finally said, ***enough!*** No more fear and intimidation from the Mafia. Now their destruction has come. So that day always comes; it always comes. Just like you have a trial come upon you, you don’t expect, so with the wicked when their day of reckoning comes and God says ‘enough!’—then their day has come.

Verse 20: “Like a dream when one awakens; so, O LORD, when You awake, You shall despise their image, for thus my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was like a beast before You” (vs 20-22). The God of love and grace and mercy and goodness; and we go to God and say, ‘Destroy our enemies’ and all this sort of thing. It’s a hard lesson to learn, especially if you’re combative. I am combative! I’ll be the first to say it. Don’t cast any stones, I’ll throw my own out, engraved on it: ***Combative!*** It’s difficult, but nevertheless it’s accomplishable.

Verse 23: “Nevertheless, I am always with You... [In spite of all of that! I want you to remember that.] ...You have held me by my right hand. You shall guide me with Your counsel, and ***afterward*** receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You I desire none upon earth. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever, for lo, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all who go a whoring from You. And me, it is good for me to draw near to God... [There it is, right there, that’s the solution.] ...I have made the LORD God my refuge, that I may declare all Your works. (vs 23-28). That’s really tremendous, brethren. That’s how we are to be living stones.

Let’s go to Romans, the eighth chapter; let’s understand that God went through all of this Himself—***for us!*** God went through everything. Now think of it for a minute, how much Christ gave up in giving up being God to become a human being, where all the angels worshiped Him and all of

that sort of thing. To come on the earth and be despised, to be rejected, and then to die an ignominious death as He did.

Romans 8:24: “For by hope we were saved... [that’s the hope we just went through and showed it to you] ...but hope that is seen is not hope; 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 because we do not fully understand what we should pray for, according as it is necessary, but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed *by us*. And the one Who searches the hearts comprehends what the strivings of the Spirit *are* because it makes intercession for *the* saints according to *the will of* God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose” (vs 24-28).

Verse 37: “But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which *is* in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 37-39).

Now let’s come back to 1-Peter, the second chapter. So, there it is, brethren. That’s something! Isn’t it? My week, this week, was not too bad. I hope yours wasn’t too bad, but if it was, well that’s why we have the Sabbath; so we can be inspired on the Sabbath. Like I said last week, who knows what Monday will bring.

1-Peter 2:6: “...and the one who is believing on Him will never be put to shame.” That *shame* it’s talking about here is like the shame of defeat. Why? *Because with Christ, we are more than conquerors, because we’re going to win!* Every year the poor American Football League never makes it in the Superbowl. They have shame, *shame, shame!* Why? *Because they lost!* But we’re in a situation, brethren, where we’re NEVER going to be ashamed. ***We are going to win!*** Why? *Through Christ!* Never be put to shame. Why? *Because we are* ‘believing on Him.’

Let’s go to John 6; here’s the whole key thing. We’ll look at a couple of Scriptures concerning *believing*. That’s the whole point to what we’re doing, and how we’re doing it. Why God has called us: *to believe!* And this is as true today as it was then. Since God made the universe, since God created everything that there is, and God even says, “What are you going to build for Me? What is it that you’re going to build for Me? ***I’ve made everything!***” What is the greatest thing you can do for God then? *Love God and believe Him!*

John 6:28: “Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God...’” (vs 28-29). Every minister who has an idol that they call ‘the work’—and it is an idol!—that is put between you and God, and that you put between God and the people. ‘What is the work that we may work the works of God?’ Now, there is a work to do, that is true.

But here is the primary work: “...Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God: **that you believe in**... [The Greek there is ‘ice’ which means *into*] ...**Him Whom He has sent**’” (v 29). *You believe Christ!* What is that going to do for you?

Let’s come back here to John 5:46: “But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?” (vs 46-47).

Verse 21—here’s what believing on Christ does; and this is the only solution: “For even as the Father [quickens (KJV)] raises the dead and gives life, in the same way also, the Son gives life to whom He will.... [Now, ‘quicken’ means *to give life*. That’s like seeing a corpse lying there and say, ‘Rise and walk.’] ...For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son... [Why? *Because He’s gone through every bit of it.*] ...So that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him Who sent Me, **has everlasting life**... [because you receive the Holy Spirit] ...and does not come into judgment... [because of the grace of God] ...for he has passed from death into life” (vs 21-24). That’s why we’re to be living stones. “...passed from death to life”; and that all ties in with being the living stones.

I still am going to give this sermon—I think I’ll title it: *Let the Dead Bury Their Dead*; those are the words of Christ. Let’s come back here to 1-Peter, the second chapter, and we’ll be done here in just a little bit. We didn’t get very far today, sorry about that—there will be days like that.

1-Peter 2:7: “The preciousness *is* to you therefore who are believing; but to those who are [disbelieving] disobeying, the Stone that the builders rejected... [that is the Jews who were doing the building then] ...this one became *the* Head of the corner; even a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to those who are stumbling **at the Word**... [Anyone who’s offended at the Word of God, you’re stumbling at Christ] ...and are disobeying, unto which [destruction] *unbelief* also they were

appointed” (vs 7-8).

If you *stumble* on that Stone, if you *fall* on the Stone you’ll be broken—***broken in repentance; broken of your vanity and your lust and your greed and your self***—when you *fall* on that Stone. But those who *stumble* on the Stone, Jesus said, ‘It will grind him to powder.’ That’s the destruction unto which they were appointed.

All Scriptures from The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A *Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter  
Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Peter 2:4-8
- 2) Luke 21:1-6
- 3) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 4) Isaiah 40:18-26
- 5) Isaiah 41:21-22, 26, 28-29
- 6) Revelation 5: 8
- 7) Revelation 8:3
- 8) Hebrews 12:14-24
- 9) Revelation 5:9-13
- 10) Romans 8:14-16
- 11) Revelation 5:12
- 12) Romans 8:16-18
- 13) Psalm 73:1-17
- 14) Matthew 5:43-48
- 15) Psalm 73:13-28
- 16) Romans 8:24-28, 37-39
- 17) 1-Peter 2:6
- 18) John 6:28-29
- 19) John 5:46-47, 21-24
- 20) 1-Peter 2:7-8

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-Kings 18
- James 5
- Exodus 20
- Revelation 20:4-6
- John 17
- Revelation 18
- Romans 12

# Epistle of First Peter VIII

Fred R. Coulter

This will be 1-Peter, the second chapter, in the series. We came down through 2-Peter 2:8 last time, so let's just review—and I want to finish all of chapter two today—rather than string it out a little bit further. I think it's interesting, and when we get done I will go back and compile a listing of all the imperative commands in 1-Peter. I think we are going to be amazed the amount of commandments that are there, instructing us exactly what to do.

1-Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen [people] stock, a royal priesthood, 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.”

Let's put one Scripture there that we didn't have last time—let's go to Colossian, the first chapter. There are some people who say that now we have the kingdom experience and we're actually in the Kingdom of God now. It's amazing how people do that with this. We'll just use two Scriptures to disprove that, but also show exactly what is meant here: ‘He's called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.’

Colossians 1:12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness...” (vs 12-13). That's the power, of course, who rules the world; and that's the power that holds sway over everything there is.

“...and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love. [They are telling everyone in the Church of God that you are now in the Kingdom of God, and that you now have been *born again*. We covered that thoroughly with going through the series on the Holy Spirit.] ...In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins; Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* firstborn of all creation” (vs 13-15)—of those who are born from the dead.

Now let's go to Acts, the twenty-sixth chapter, and we will see that Paul and that Peter and that James, and everyone preached exactly the same Gospel. Acts 26:16—he's talking about the time when he was knocked off his donkey, or horse, or camel going up to Damascus to persecute the Christians.

Acts 26:16: “Now arise, and stand on your feet; for I [Christ] have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you *as* a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you. I am personally selecting you from among

the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you” (vs 16-17). Here was one of the greatest enemies of the Church of God turned into one of the prolific writers and apostles to the Gentiles. He had to turn around and do the exact opposite that he was doing—which was persecuting the Christians; killing them; hauling them off to jail; bringing them before judgments with the high priest. As he said, ‘led in darkness.’ He was going to turn around and do exactly the same thing—which is the opposite.

Verse 18: “To open their eyes, that *they* may turn from darkness to light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God, so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me” (vs 16-18). That was really quite a calling.

Sometimes God will let things go to a point where they're really terrible and miserable like it was with the Apostle Paul and then turn them around completely from the other. So, we are not *in* the Kingdom of God now. Rather, we are *under the jurisdiction* of the Kingdom of God. We live by which laws? *The laws of God!* We are led by which King? *The King of the Kingdom, Jesus Christ!* We submit to the laws of the land for the sake of Christ; but we are not of this world, we have been called ‘out of this world’ and called into what it says here, ‘His glorious light.’ But we are not yet *in* the Kingdom, and we won't be in the Kingdom until such time that the Kingdom comes.

Philippians 3:20: “But for us, the... [conduct or conversation (*KJV*)—or the motive for our conduct or ‘politeuo’] ...commonwealth *of God* exists in *the* heavens...” In other words, we are looking to Christ at the right hand of God and God the Father to guide us with His Spirit, to lead us in what we need to do, to help us grow in character and grace and knowledge—but we are not yet in the Kingdom. And I'll prove that with one other Scripture here in just a minute.

“...from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ... [He hasn't come yet] ...Who will transform our vile bodies... [change there in the Greek is ‘metamorphous’] ...that they may be conformed to His glorious body... [the older we get and the more things kind of slip out of hand, the more we're looking for that—trade in this old model for a new one] ...according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (vs 20-21).

Now let's go to Revelation 11, and we will prove that when the Kingdom of God is on the earth, we will be *in* it, because that will take place at the

resurrection; but *now* we are ***governed*** by the Kingdom of God. When they say that the Kingdom of God is here now, then sooner or later that you get to the same conclusion that the Catholic Church had. The Catholic Church has concluded that *it* is the Kingdom of God on earth, and the pope is the vicar of Christ, and Christ is not returning and you're not going to be resurrected—you're going to heaven. They have everything totally discombobbled and way out of line with what the Bible teaches.

Revelation 11:15: "Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.'" Now, what did Jesus say when Pilate asked Him, 'Are you a king?' Anybody remember the answer? 'To this end was I born, but My Kingdom is' what? '*Not of this world.*' So don't be fooled by anyone who's saying, 'Well, now we have the kingdom experience' and all of this sort of thing. So we've been called 'out of darkness into His marvelous light.'

2-Peter 2:10: "Who once were not a people... [This statement is made as a differentiation between those people who were of Israel, who said, 'We are the people of God.' Of course, now that Christ has come, they are ***not*** the people of God—and I'll show you that in just a little bit back in the book of Hosea.] ...but now *are* the people of God... [In the New Testament, the most important thing is that you belong to God. All of the other things are secondary. All of the other things have no standing before God. But the fact that we are God's people.] ...who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy."

Let's add a couple of Scriptures to this so we can see exactly how Peter's teaching the same thing as Paul. Let's go to Ephesians, the second chapter, and we will see what the important thing is for us here. And, of course, the book of Ephesians is the book, which I think is the best and the highest pinnacle of whatever has been written in the New Testament as far as the Church and being together and the whole plan of God.

Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved..." The Greek there is *having been saved*—past tense; because when you are called and are baptized and receive God's Holy Spirit, you have been saved from the power of Satan and darkness. Just put in your notes here: 1-Cor. 15:1-2—talks about the Gospel in which you are standing. While you are doing that, you are *being saved*. Then we know that it talks about those who endure to the end, 'the same *shall be* saved.' So, salvation actually has three parts:

1. *having been saved* from Satan and the

power of darkness

2. *we are being saved*; if we stand in the Gospel and walk in it.
3. *shall be saved* when Christ returns—but it is through grace.

That seems to be one of the things that is missing in too many of the Churches of God. They do not understand grace. Some of them almost get up to it, but they don't understand grace at all. So I am going to, sometime here within the next two months, give the sermon that I said I would give: *What Would a Church of the Pharisees Be Like?* {see sermon series: *Judaism vs Scripturalism*} And I think you will be absolutely amazed. It was too much like the church that you were in at one time. I mean, *incredible!*

So it's "...by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves..." (v 8). It's interesting, where it is 'not of your own selves' the word *of* in the Greek is 'ek' and it means *it doesn't come forth out from within you*. When people look for salvation within themselves, it isn't going to come. And, as we've said before, that's the whole story of Job. I've mentioned many times, but I still remember when I was first reading and studying Job, I really thought God was unfair. I really thought God was wrong. Look at this man! Look at all he did! He really, really was good—I mean, compared to me/compared to all of us, Job was so righteous. We couldn't come within ten miles of him, and yet, God let all this come upon him so that he could realize that salvation doesn't come from within him or any of his own actions—but it comes from God!

"...it is the gift of God..." (v 8). What also is a 'gift of God'?

- grace
- faith
- salvation
- the Holy Spirit

Remember Simon Magus? He thought he could what? *Buy the gift of God!* So it's ALL the gift of God.

Verse 9: "Not of works... [It's not going to be like an athletic contest: who's the fastest, who's the strongest, who's the tallest, all this sort of thing] ...so that no one may boast."

Do you think that if Job would have won that battle with God that we would have ever heard the end of it. I mean, think of it! Even Job couldn't boast! He said at the end, 'Oh, I spoke of those things I know not. I repent in sackcloth and ashes.'

Here's the whole reason for our calling and our whole purpose as to what we are doing, so it

doesn't matter what people we were before God called us, because if we are God's people, we are all God's people, v 10: "For we are His workmanship..." Not our own, not what our mother and father did, not what our parents did. And it doesn't matter what country we are in, or whatever. We are 'His workmanship' because God is dealing with us.

"...created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [which then are the 'good works' which we're going to cover in much of 1-Peter 2] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10).

Now, let's notice how Paul and Peter agree here, v 11: "Therefore, remember that you were once Gentiles in *the* flesh, who are called uncircumcision by those who are called circumcision in *the* flesh made by hands; *and* that you were without Christ at that time, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (vs 11-12). That's why Peter said, 'Who are not a people before, but are now the people of God.' We're going to see in a little bit, those people who *were* the people of God are now *not* the people of God.

When I was in Los Angeles, I did a sermon: *The Passover of the Rejected*—which was an extension of the book. It didn't come to me. The book was already at the printers and the pages were already shot and you're not going to make any additions there unless you make all kinds of costs. So, I'm glad it's not in the book, because it gets pretty strong. The long and short of it is that those people who keep the 15<sup>th</sup> Passover are keeping *the Passover of the rejected*.

Only those who are God's people can keep the 14<sup>th</sup>, because that is the Covenant Day. Just remember this: *there is no such thing as an 'on-going' Old Covenant*. It ended with the death of Christ. Granted there was a 40-year overlap between the ending of the Old Covenant and the complete desolation of the temple and everything. That 40-year overlap was a time that God allowed things in the transition. But there's no such thing as an *on-going* Old Covenant. It died with Christ.

So, anything that people do as far as trying to revive an Old Covenant, or trying to live solely by the Old Testament without Christ—because Paul said, 'Remember, the Holy Scriptures, which you have known from a child, are able to make you wise unto salvation'—what? *Through Jesus Christ!* I pointed out how that the fifteenth Passover is symbolic of those people who have been cut off from God, yet, want to claim that they are still of and part of God, and that we are not of God. We're also working on some research—Carl Franklin and I

are working on that—to really narrow down what happened between the crucifixion of Christ and the death of John.

Verse 13: "But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, having annulled in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in *the* decrees of men..." (vs 13-15). Those are all of the Jewish codes of law of Judaism, which bared Jews from associating with anyone other than their own race.

"...so that in Himself He might create both into one new man, making peace... [and that 'one man' is the Body of Christ.] ...and *that* He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. Now, when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father" (vs 15-18).

So much for *exclusivist religion*—right? If you have access to God the Father, you have no need for all kinds of physical things; you have no need of permission from a priest to pray, or to study, or to do anything that God wants you to do.

Notice how this ties right in with what we're doing in 1-Pet. 2. Verse 19: "So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens [people of God] with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone [foundational stone]" (vs 19-20).

Of course then, you can think of a Scripture right there: 1-Cor. 3:12: *that no other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*. I still keep getting all these tapes of all these ministers who are turning back to the foundation of Herbert Armstrong. They've got to get back to the foundation of Christ, because they're going to find out that if they just get back to the foundation of Herbert Armstrong, what they're going to end up with is a vessel about half full. Whereas if we build on the foundation of Christ and let His Spirit come through us and in us, and we grow in grace and knowledge, then we will end up with a vessel *full*—because that's what God wants us to have.

Hosea 1:1—if anyone wants to be a prophet, let's try this on for size. Is this what you want to do? You say you're going to do whatever God tells you to do. Myself, I would have a hard time doing this. This is not quite as tough as what God had Ezekiel do, but this is still pretty tough.

Hosea 1:1: "The Word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of

Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. The beginning of the Word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, ‘Go, take to yourself **a wife of whoredoms...**’” (vs 1-2). That would be pretty hard to do! Yep, go down to the red-light district there, Hosea, and you get yourself one of those women down there.

“...and children of whoredoms, for the land has utterly committed great whoredoms, departing from the LORD.’ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, who conceived and bore him a son” (vs 2-3). How would you like to have your children named this way—you’re going to name them, names that mean something

Verse 4: “And the LORD said to him, ‘Call his name Jezreel, for yet a little *while*, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, and will cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease. And it shall be, in that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.’ And she conceived again and bore a daughter. And *God* said to him, ‘Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no more have mercy *on* the house of Israel...’” (vs 4-6). So, God put the house of Israel in the same category as all nations have been put in from time-to-time, that they have no mercy. And that’s what the Apostle Paul said, ‘You had no mercy at one time—without the knowledge of God, at one time.’

“...But I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen” (vs 6-7). Of course, you know then what Judah did. Judah said, ‘Hooray! God is with us now. Look, we got rid of all these other tribes of Israel, now we’ve got the whole bailiwick ourselves.’ So they turned around and did worse than God.

Verse 8: “And when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah she conceived and bore a son. And He said, ‘Call his name Lo-Ammi, **for you are not My people, and I will not be your God**’” (vs 8-9). That’s pretty strong language, for God to say, ‘I’m no longer going to be your God, you aren’t even My people.’ How’d you like it if you walked into your beloved father’s house and He said, ‘Who are you?’ *Well, I’m your son or I’m your daughter.* ‘I don’t even know you, get out of my house. Be gone from the territory.’

Verse 10: “‘Yet, the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered. And it shall be in the place where it was said to them, “You are not My people,” there it shall be said to them, **“You are the sons of the living God.”**’” What Israel is this talking about? *This is talking about the*

*new Israel, the Church.* Because it applies to all people—all people have been in the category of not being the people of God. So when it says ‘you shall be the sons of the living God’ that is talking about us and the new Israel.

Verse 11: “Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together...”—which is the same thing that’s going to happen when Christ returns—He’s going to gather Israel and Judah together. We will be the sons of the living God resurrected—right? Then He’s going to gather them together and He’s going to reconcile everything at the return of Jesus Christ. So, the long and short of it is, is that God has put all people through the same situation.

Now, let’s come back to 1-Peter 2:11: “Beloved, I am exhorting you, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts, which are warring against the soul.” The reason is: to fulfill them it destroys the soul. Let’s tie some Scriptures in with this. We won’t turn here, but put in your notes: Rom. 7—it talks all about the ‘law of sin and death’ and while you try and do the things you want to do, you can’t do because of the ‘law of sin and death.’

Let’s turn now to 1-John 2:15 and let’s see how we can best combat all of the fleshly lusts that are warring against the soul. Here’s how then we can best abstain from fleshly lusts. “Do not love the world... [Because if we love the world then we’re going to do like the world, be like the world, act like the world, talk like the world, sound like the world.] ...nor the things *that are* in the world.... [and of course, this is obviously then a love which replaces the love of God, or the total absence of the love of God.] ...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him...” Why? *Because we should grow earnestly, waiting to be clothed from above* because of all of the sins and difficulties going on in the world—and there certainly are plenty of them.

I’m very thankful that I wasn’t back in New York City when that bomb went off. [Note: in reference to the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993] That is something! They said there’s a huge crater on the inside of that building that only a bomb could do—amazing! And I didn’t know it, but in that one building, guess how many people work there? *A hundred and thirty thousand people* work in the one building! That’s incredible! I mean, in Hollister with a population in the whole county of nearly 40,000, we feel as though we’re getting crowded out. And I don’t know about you, but how you would like to work in that building...just say, way up on the top floor. Now what if they figure out how to smuggle in enough explosives—because you’ve seen these buildings that they have destroyed—right? *Yes!*

What if they figure out how to smuggle in

enough explosives to make a whole building collapse! I mean, we ain't seen anything, yet! But that was awful! That was terrible! And I tell you, in emergencies like that, everything about what people have pride in, or who they think they are—whatever—all goes by the wayside; because everybody's out to help one another, save their own skin, or stop from dying. And I haven't heard how many people were still alive that were stuck in the elevators, but the elevators stopped and there you were, stuck! No air, no nothing! They finally opened some of them, and there were people just lying on the floor in a comatose position. In other words, they were just nearly dead.

So, it's really something! You get out there and love the world, you're going to eat at the world's table. And that's true, what is New York City called? *The Big Apple!* Referring to what? *The sin of Adam and Eve and eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* Amazing— isn't it?! That's amazing!

Verse 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, 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). Now, that's the best way to avoid the lust of the flesh.

Let's go back here to Galatians, the fifth chapter, now. Here again, it shows the struggle that is always on-going. It's an inner battle; it's an inner war; it's always on-going, but if you truly love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being—and you're not loving the world—then the inner battle is not quite as voracious.

Galatians 5:16: "Now, *this* I say, walk by the Spirit... [and that means *let God's Spirit lead you in your living; let God's Spirit lead you in heart, mind and attitude; live by God's laws and commandments*] (notice): **...and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**" That's how to avoid from fleshly lusts, which destroy the soul. Put in your notes: 1-Cor. 6, which says, 'flee fornication, for the one who commits fornication sins against his own body.' So the way that you not get entrapped with the lust of the flesh is to walk in the Spirit.

Verse 17: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do. But if you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under law" (vs 17-18). And that means you are not under the judgment of the law. Why? *Because you have God's grace!* Not grace to sin, but God's Spirit and God's law to be accepted of God.

Now, let's go to one other Scripture here: 1-

Corinthians 15:58: "So then, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord... [and the 'work of the Lord' is what? *God working in you!* The 'work of the Lord' is not necessarily what a man is doing. It can be, but too many have erected their own idols of the 'work of the Lord'—and he's not talking here about what many ministers conceive as the 'work of the Lord'—what they are doing—and then everyone else has to send their money in so he can do his work. This is you all are]: ...abounding in the work of the Lord... [which is in you] ...knowing that your labor is not in vain in *the* Lord."

Now, let's put down a couple of other Scriptures—we won't turn there, so just put this in your notes: Philippians. 4:1; James 2:5—and those tie in exactly what we're talking about here, as far as keeping your mind on what you are doing.

1-Peter 2:12: "Having your way of life honest among the Gentiles, that even though they are **speaking against you** as evil doers..." Has more to do with gossip and slander, such as: 'Well, I don't know who these people are. Here we're out here trying to be real nice and we have all of our neighborhood decorated up with all of these Christmas lights, and these nice Santa Clauses and the reindeer; but this house over here, why it's even dark on Halloween, and they don't even have a Christmas tree. These people must not have any family love.' That's the kind of thing it's talking about here.

"...yet through having witnessed your good works... [which is the workmanship that God is doing in you—and your good works. Because Christians do *do* those things that other people don't do.] ...they may glorify God in the day of visitation." Which then may even have reference to 'what is the day of visitation' for them? Well, the 'day of visitation' will be the second resurrection. but they may say, 'Oh, yeah! I remember that!'

Verse 13: "Therefore, submit yourselves..." Let's just clarify something here on the word 'submit.' That is a proper translation, but this 'submit' in the Greek is weaker than 'humble subjection to every whim.' And it is a little stronger than 'deferring to'; and a little stronger than 'respect.' But not 'submitting yourself to every whim that they have. If you do that the bureaucracy's going to run and ruin your life.

"...to every human institution for the sake of the Lord... [that's the reason why we do it] ...whether to the king, as supreme, or to governors..." (vs 13-14). We're to do this because of the sake of the Lord, and we have the human institution, and then we have, in this case, the king as supreme—and it could be overall as the emperor, rather than the king is supreme before God. It

doesn't have that implication at all. So, you're to have respect; you're to choose to have respect and cooperate—and we'll see in a minute that we do this because we are free and *free in Christ*.

Verse 14: “Or to governors... [Which also includes magistrates, such as we might say *the civil judges*. So, if you get a ticket and you go to the judge and he says you pay so much, and you say, ‘Oh Judge, I don’t want to pay that much.’ And he bangs the gavel down and says pay it. Well, go pay it! Or whatever it may be.] ...as sent by him—to execute vengeance against evil doers... [on the one hand; that’s supposed to be their job] ...and to praise those who are doing well.”

Put in your notes Rom. 13, how that the powers that be are there, established by God, and they are to execute vengeance against the evil doers. They do that on the one hand, or on the other hand, to praise those who are doing well. And we will notice that all the way through, the Apostle Peter talks an awful lot about well-doing or doing well in the actual—for all of those who do not like this term because of the do-gooders are around—in the Greek it actually means *do-gooders*! It actually means that.

Verse 15: “For so is the will of God, that by doing well yourselves... [that is your own personal conduct—and ‘yourselves’ there is the middle voice in the Greek, which means *you are doing this yourself*] ...you *may* put to silence *the* ignorance of senseless men.” In other words, they don’t know anything about what you’re doing or why you do what you do; but they look at what you’re doing and they can only conclude that what you’re doing is right. And in the long run, so-and-so can be trusted. In the long run, this person turned out to be better than someone else I ever had.

I don’t know what it’s like where you are, but it’s getting tough to find anyone to work for in the world that’s halfway decent anymore. I don’t know about your situation, but boy, that’s sure happens so many times. As you know, I’m a broker of record for a couple of offices and one of the loan officers decided she wanted to start her own business and she created a lot of havoc and stole a loan, so I had to go settle it, negotiate—‘well, you can’t do that’; whose name is on the appraisal; and the name of the person I worked for previously is on the appraisal; well, by law they own it; ‘Oh, I didn’t know that.’ I said, ‘Yes, they do own it, that’s what it’s there for.’ And so being broker of record of that office, he was very happy to have me broker, because any other broker would not have had gone out and settled the issue and got some money back. So the long and short of it is that I saved him three thousand dollars. Sometimes you have to do it that way so that you ‘put to silence the ignorance of senseless men.’

Here is how we do it, v 16: “As free persons...” In other words, we do it by our own free moral agency. We **choose** to do it. I tell you, with the human nature welling up in you, *get ‘em!*—it is hard to choose not to. That’s part of the lust that **wars** against the flesh—right? It is hard! I know, every once in a while myself, when something goes wrong, I just turn around and mutter to myself. Someone says, ‘What are you saying.’ *I’m just muttering to myself*. So that I don’t get myself in trouble; because generally I end up with two feet in my mouth—it’s a little crowded for eating.

“...and not using *your* freedom as a covering for evil... [That’s very interesting phraseology, isn’t it. How many people use a good office as a covering for evil? We could add all kinds of people that we know to that list—so we won’t add it to them or whatever, but we will look at some Scriptures to show what we are to do. And **as free persons**, we are free from sin, free before God] ...**but as a bond-slave of God.**” These are actual qualities of our existence—right?

- We are free to choose
- We are free in this world
- We are free from sin
- And at the same time, we are bond-slaves of God

Now, let’s look at some Scriptures and we’ll put all this together. Let’s go to John 8:31.

(go to the next track)

This freedom that we have from God is really fantastic, because think how many people are enslaved to evil; enslaved to lusts; enslaved to their own passions—and they can’t ‘hep it.’

John 8:31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him... [Now, these were Jews coming along and saying, ‘Oh, You’re a good Master; we like You; we’ll follow You; we believe what You’re saying.’ Now, notice what He said and we’ll see how long their belief lasted.] ...‘If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And **you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free**’” (vs 31-32).

- We’re free from lies
- We’re free from sin.
- We’re free from a guilty conscious.

And all of this through God’s *free grace*!

Verse 33: “They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, “You shall become free”?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin’” (vs 33-34). We are to be *the opposite*. We’re to be the servant of righteousness. That servant of

righteousness then is free from sin.

Now let's go to Romans, the fifth chapter, and here it talks about the same thing. This talks about the grace. This is a little complicated subject in here, so I just want to pick out one verse to show the difference between sin and grace is what then brings us the freedom before God that we need.

Romans 5:15: "But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*?... [that is the sin of Adam and all the sin that human beings commit.] ...For if by the transgression of the one man many died, how much more did the grace of God, and the gift of grace... [and that gift (as we will see) is being put in right standing with God and having the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His righteousness imputed to you, **as a gift!** And this is why we are to be free.] ...which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?"

Verse 21: "So that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace *of God* reign through **righteousness** unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say?..." Let's use this grace as a covering for sin. Let's use this grace as a pretext for sin. Let's use this grace to continue in sin, that God is going to be obligated to give more grace. That's not what it means at all. But that's what a lot of people think.

"...Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE!... [In other words, don't even count that thought as worthy of existence.] ...We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?" (vs 1-2)—because we've been released from the servitude to sin.

And this is a tremendous freedom, brethren. A lot of people get down and discouraged and fighting their own human nature and trying to overcome, and they look at themselves and they think of all the unworthiness that they are, and they look at their flesh and they think, oh, this is terrible and miserable and I've got this warring and struggling going on in me. I'm never going to make it. I'm never going to overcome. How can God even think of me as anything?

Listen, **God's grace covers you**—that's what it's talking about; because God knows you're going to have that war and struggle; and God knows you're going to have that fight. What you need to do is **yield to God** even more. And what's going to happen? You're going to find, just like it says, 'Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh' (Gal 5).

Verse 16: "Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?..."

[We are to be *the bond-slaves of God*—correct? *Yes!*] ...But thanks *be* to God, that you were [past tense] *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart... [that's what God is interested in] ...that form of doctrine... [there's that nasty word again—doctrine—people don't like *doctrine*; but it's there. 'Doctrine' means *teachings*.] ...which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin..." (vs. 16-18).

1. Did Christ die? *Yes!*
2. Was He resurrected? *Yes!*
3. Is He at the right hand of God? *Yes!*
4. Did you repent of your sins? *Yes!*
5. Were you baptized; did you die the death in a watery grave? *Yes!*
6. Were you raised out of that watery grave? *Yes!*
7. Did you received the Spirit of God? *Yes!*

If you answered *yes* to all seven of those questions, then ***you have been freed from sin*** in the presence of God. There is no such thing as a scorecard before God. He did this many *good things* today—check, *check, check!* He did these *bad things* over here—check, *check, check!* I don't know, I wonder what kind did he have today; I don't know if he's...let's count him a sinner today. That isn't how God looks at it. That's the way we think. No, 'you *were* the servants of sin.'

Verse 18: "And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness." In becoming the *servants of righteousness*, to struggle against human nature, there's going to be that war. Other people running around, lying and cheating and all this sort of thing, they have no conscious of it. Some of them are so bad, kind of like some people we know in high offices they can't tell the difference between one lie and the other—let alone even discover the Truth anywhere, and think nothing of it. But when you become the servants of righteousness there is that struggle that is in.

Verse 19: "I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh... [not 'infirmary'—not that you are sick or infirm, but the *weakness*.] ...for just as you *once* yielded your members... [that is your whole body] ...in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members... [or every fiber of your being] ...in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification. For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you **have been delivered from sin** and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life.... [then comes the often repeated and well-memorized verse]: ...For the

wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 19-23).

So, we’re to be the bond-slaves of God, and we’re told in 1-Cor. 6:18 that you are “bought with a price and you are not your own.” You belong to God. And if you belong to God, you’re His.

There are four direct commands in 1-Peter 2:17:

1. “Show honor to everyone ...”—that is respect
2. “...love the brotherhood...”
3. “...revere [fearing] God...”
4. “...honor the king.”

Notice what we have here:

- we have to everyone in general
- then all of those in the Church
- then we have fearing God
- and then honor the king.

Very interesting how that is laid out.

He wants to bring an example for us that we need to understand very, very importantly, v 18: “Servants... [*slaves*—that is what the Greek is: ‘*doulos*’] ...*be* submitting yourselves to your masters with all fear—not only to the good and gentle ones, but also to the harsh and *unjust* ones.”

There may be some of us who have employers that can well speak on the experience of that. And it’s real nice if they’re all nice and good and kind and gentle, but all the ones who are miserable and harsh and unjust and demanding all this sort of thing, it’s hard to submit to them—right? *Yes!* It doesn’t mean that you lay down and get run over like a steamroller and you’re flattened out on the pavement. But then, if we—for the sake of Christ—and we are free of sin, yet, we are the bond-slaves of God, we then are to have this kind of attitude toward people. And sometimes it’s difficult. Sometimes you have to run out and mutter to yourself. That’s the way it goes. In the long run, they will respect you more; they will think more highly of you; plus, more importantly, God will bless you.

Verse 19: “Because this is **acceptable**...” It’s interesting: for the word *acceptable*—v 19 and the last part of v 20—the Greek word there comes from *grace*. In other words, because this is an action of grace—that’s what it is. You think about it, when you have to put up with people like that, it is only through the grace of God that you can do it. Normally, it would be fist in the face; nose in the air and stomp out the door. But if you submit to God because you’re the slave of God, that is an action of *grace*.

“...if, for the sake of conscience toward God... [the motivation] ...anyone is enduring sorrows, suffering unjustly.... [This then is acceptable and an action of grace toward God.]

...For what commendation is there if, sinning and being beaten [punished]...” (vs 19-20). That’s what happened to slaves. That’s why he’s using the example of slaves. Because if they didn’t do right, strip the back—Whack! Whack! Whack!; with a whip or a rod you get beaten.

“...you endure it?... [He said, ‘What credit is it?’ And he’s talking about credit to God, credit to righteousness, credit to Christ, credit to Christianity.] ...But if *while* doing good and suffering, you endure it, this is acceptable... [the *action of grace*] ...with God” (v 20). He’s going to take care of it all in the long run. I know, and you know, that we’ve all tried to extract our own vengeance upon someone, and what do we end up being? *Miserable and rotten and angry and accusative, and all of those things!*

I have a ticket to go take care of, too, and I’m going to try and persuade the judge. I was driving along—I wasn’t speeding in this case—and they have diamond lanes out here in California. Now diamond lanes are those lanes that you’d better not drive in unless you have two in the car—dogs don’t count, manikins don’t count. I had neither, just me. So, I’m driving along and it was just after—so I’ll have to get my justification in here, excuse me—we switched over to regular time from daylight savings time, and it was dark at five minutes to six—which would have normally been five minutes to seven.

So, I swing over into the diamond lane. I saw this highway patrolman sitting off there on the inner shoulder, didn’t think anything of it. I go on past and I look up and utt-ho, there’s that amber and blue light. He pulled me over. Out here in California they’re very nasty with the fines—so I got it delayed sixty days. They want \$335—no speeding ticket. I’m not going to go in and say to the judge: ‘Judge, don’t you know that God rules the heaven and I’m one of His ministers, you better treat me right’—and all this sort of thing. I’m going in and say, ‘Don’t you think \$335 is a little steep?’ So if I pay my fine, that’s acceptable with God—ok, I’ll do that.

We’ll read vs 21-24, and we’re going to see there are nine major parts of this which are very important for us to cover: “For to this you were called...”—because being in world and not of the world, it makes it very, very difficult sometimes.

1. “...because Christ also suffered for us...”
2. “...leaving us an example...”
3. “...that you should follow after *Him* in His footsteps...”
4. “...Who committed no sin...”
5. “...neither was guile found in His mouth...”
6. “...Who, *while* He was being reviled, did not revile in return...”
7. “...*when* suffering, He threatened not...”

8. "...but gave Himself over to Him Who judges righteously..."
9. "...Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness..."
10. "...by Whose stripes you were healed."

Let's go back and we'll just review that again. Let's look at some Scriptures in this, and let's first of all, go back to Isaiah 53. This is good that we're covering this before the Passover.

1. Isaiah 53 is talking about the prophecy of what is commonly called by many theologians as 'the suffering servant.' What it is: **Christ, Who has suffered for us.**

And it's interesting, that even in their own Scriptures, it says—and remember how many times Jesus said, 'Have you never read in the law? Have you never read in the Word of God?'—well here it is, right in the Word:

Isaiah 53:1: "Who has believed our report?... [that's the first thing they did was not believe them] ...And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ... [totally spiritless society] ... He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him. *He is* despised and rejected of men..." (vs 1-3). Remember, it said 'He came to His own and His own received Him not.

"...a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief..." (v 3). I guess so. If you had perfect righteousness and full of the Holy Spirit of God, and you were doing all of these things for all human beings, and seeing all of your enemies all around you; and how many times did it say that Jesus really experienced some feelings that way.

"...and we hid as it were our faces from Him..." (v 3). We didn't want to look at it. Just consider now, if you were the Apostle John and the woman who stood before the cross of crucifixion, it was so bad that it fulfilled what it was here, that we hid, as it were, our eyes from Him.

"...He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities... [and that can mean sickness and disease] ...and carried our sorrows..." (vs 3-4). Boy! You talk about someone having the total extreme, being filled with the Holy Spirit of God and yet, seeing the whole world out here all deceived and led astray by Satan the devil.

"...yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.... [Yes, he deserves what he gets.] ...But He *was* wounded for **our transgressions**, *He was* crushed for **our iniquities**; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and **with His stripes we ourselves are healed**...

[healing is part of Christianity and belief in God] ...All we like sheep have gone astray... [Just blithering out there—baaa!—going wherever we go] ...we have turned each one to his own way... [even Peter said, before Christ cornered him and said, 'Peter, do you love Me'—three times. Peter said, 'I'm going fishing.'] ...and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (vs 4-6). And that's what I explained in the chapter concerning the Body of Christ: How was it that Christ was able to bear the sins of the whole world? So, you read that chapter.

Verse 7: "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken?" (vs 7-8). All of these have to do with the whole life and the sacrifice of Christ.

Verse 9: "And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; although He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth. Yet the LORD willed to crush Him and He has put Him to grief: You shall make His life an offering for sin.... [That's what Christ was: *the sin offering to God for the sins of the whole world.*] ... He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days, and that the purpose of the LORD might prosper in His hand.... [that's all because of the resurrection] ... He shall see of the travail of His soul. He shall be fully satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; and He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will divide to Him *a portion* with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He has poured out His soul to death; and He was counted among the transgressors; and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for transgressors" (vs 9-12).

There is one of the most powerful and dynamic verses in all of the Old Testament referring to the whole life and everything of Christ.

## **2. He is an example**

John 15:20: "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. 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; but now they have nothing to cover their sin. The one who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done, they would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. 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. Then you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from *the* beginning.” (vs 20-27).

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; 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). All of this has to do with “leaving us an example”—*that in spite of all of the circumstances we still follow the way of God.*

{Put in your notes there: 1-Cor. 11:1-2: ‘...follow me as I follow Christ.’}

### **3. 1-Peter 2:21: “...that you shall follow after Him in His own footsteps...”**

Sometimes in following Christ, it’s not going to be easy. How are we to follow Christ? That’s an important thing to remember. We don’t follow Christ on *our* terms, ***but His terms!***

Luke 9:57: “Now, it came to pass *that* as they were going along the road, someone said to Him, ‘I will follow You wherever You may go, Lord.’” Jesus didn’t say, ‘That’s nice, come over here young man, I really appreciate that. That’s sure good to hear.’ NO! What did He say? It wasn’t on Jesus’ terms. It has to be on Jesus’ terms—not ours. We don’t go to God and do it ***our way***. We go to God and do it ***HIS way***.

Verse 58: “But Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man does not have *any* place to lay *His* head.’ Then He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’...” (vs 58-59). Here’s the one with the excuse. The other one was gun-ho and zealous, he was going to do it *his* way. So then, He came to another person and said, ‘Follow Me.’

“...And he said, ‘Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father.’... [And Jesus said, ‘Yes, go bury your father, it’s a wonderful gesture on your part. I know that going to a funeral is always important. NO!] ...But Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the Kingdom of God.’ And another also said, ‘I will follow You, Lord, but allow me first to bid farewell to those who are at my house.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘No one who sets his hand to *the* plow, and looks back at the things behind, is fit for the Kingdom of God’” (vs 59-62).

All of these things teach the lesson that ***we***

***are to follow Christ on His terms***—no other terms. {Put down in your notes: Luke 14:26-29—that we are to deny everything and follow Him, and pick up our cross and follow Him.}

### **4. 1-Peter 2:22: “...He committed no sin...”**

That’s self-explanatory. We don’t have a lot of Scriptures to go to cover that. That’s the whole Gospel. He committed no sin! One thing I do want us to understand out of this—in committing no sin—is that that state of justification ***is imputed to us***. That’s the important thing to remember. This is not given so that we sin more, or that we become self-righteous to condemn others. But this is given to us to inspire us that we likewise do not want to sin.

Romans 4:20: “And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief... [whatever it was that God said, he believed Him.] ...rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God; for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do” (vs 21-21).

Let’s keep that in remembrance of *our calling*. Let’s keep that in remembrance of *the resurrection*. That’s the whole lesson of Isaac. The whole lesson that he couldn’t have his own son until God said so—and it was a son that was born of death, because of the deadness of Sarah’s womb and he being a hundred years old. So the whole lesson there is that’s why we’re the children of Isaac, because we are called out of death into life. And just as it was a miracle that Isaac was born and the promises be fulfilled, so it is with us who are called and we have our sins forgiven, and we are going to be in the resurrection. Now, we ought to have full confidence that what God has said, He can do!

Verse 22: “As a result, it **was also imputed to him for righteousness**.” You might just put in your margin there: ‘righteousness’ is *right standing with God!* The only right standing with God is the sinlessness of Jesus Christ imputed to each one of us.

- We don’t deserve it
- We can’t earn it
- We can’t work for it
- We can’t buy it
- We can’t be born into it
- We can’t inherit it
- ***It is a gift of God!—righteousness***

Verse 23: “But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead; Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification” (vs 23-25).

So, the fact that *He did no sin*, and that you

have that imputed to you, is the most important thing that we can really comprehend and understand. We don't take advantage of it and go out and sin, obviously.

**5. 1-Peter 2:22: "...neither was guile found in His mouth..."—**

**6. Verse 23: "...Who, while He was being reviled, did not revile in return..."**

Of course, Jesus had to do it under most trying circumstances—didn't He? This was when He was being accused of everything at His trial:

Matthew 26:59 "Now, the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin sought false evidence against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death; but *they* did not find *any*. Although many false witnesses came forward, they did not find *any* evidence. Then at *the* last, two false witnesses came forward *and* said, 'This *man* said, "I have the power to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days."' And the high priest rose up *and* said to Him, 'Have You no answer for what these are testifying against You?' But Jesus was silent...." (vs 59-63). That means *He did not revile back again*—did He? *He didn't talk back again*—did He? *No!*

"...And the high priest answered *and* said to Him, 'I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.' Jesus said to him, 'You have said *it*. Moreover, I say to you, in the future you shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments..." (vs 63-65). That was forbidden for the high priest to rip his clothes. So this shows you the extreme anguish that the Jews were in when this took place.

"...saying, 'He has blasphemed! Why do we need any more witnesses? Behold, you have just now heard His blasphemy. What do you think?' They answered *and* said, 'He is deserving of death!' Then they spit in His face and hit Him with their fists; and some struck *Him* with rods, saying, 'Prophecy to us, Christ. Who is the one that struck You?'" (vs 65-68).

Then the pressure got going on Peter. They were watching this go on, and then they came out and said, 'You're one them.' *No, I'm not! No, I'm not!* So you know it must have been pretty bad going on there. Christ did not answer a single word.

Matthew 27:39<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>—here He was on the cross, ready to die: "Then those who were passing by *railed* at Him, shaking their heads, and saying, 'You Who *would* destroy the temple and rebuild *it* in three days, save Yourself. If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross'" (vs 39-40). Jesus didn't answer back and say, 'You just wait, in

three and a half days you're going to see something!' No He didn't; didn't answer back.

Verse 41: "And in the same way also the chief priests were mocking, with the scribes and elders, saying, 'He saved others, *but* He does not have the power to save Himself. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will *have* Him. For He said, "I am *the* Son of God"'" (vs 41-43). It got so bad that even the two thieves who were crucified with Him cast the same in His teeth. So Jesus didn't answer back a single word.

Luke 23:34—here's the example that Jesus gave to us which is very profound: "Then Jesus said... [right when this was taking place; right when the thieves were saying, 'Yeah! Why can't You save us too?'] ...**'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'**..." That is absolutely fantastic! It is so great! It is so marvelous! that God had that love and that spirit and that attitude; that when He was going through it in the most agonizing circumstances, He said, 'Father, forgive them they know not what they do.' *He didn't revile back and there was no guile found in His mouth.*

**7. 1-Peter 2:23: "...when suffering, He threatened not..."** {covers the same verses as #s 5 & 6}

**8. "...but gave Himself over to Him Who judges righteously..."** (v 23)

Luke 23:44: "Now it was about *the* sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until *the* ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was split down *the* middle. And after crying out with a loud voice, Jesus said, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.' And when He had said these things, He expired" (vs 43-46). So He gave over to Him Who is judging righteously.

**9. 1-Pet. 2:24: "...Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree..."**

Again, I call your attention to the whole chapter—the full meaning of the Body of Christ; how that He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh; He took within His own body the 'law of sin and death'—the same that we have—to carry the sins of all the world, represented in the 'law of sin and death' that He had within His flesh. And He bore it within His own body and carried it to the tree; which then is the 'stauros' *or the stake or the pole* that came from a tree.

**10. 1-Pet. 2:24: "...that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness..."**

Just put in your notes there, because we covered a good part of it already: Rom. 6—that we are no

longer to live unto sin, but we are to live unto God.

**11. 1-Pet. 2:24: “...by Whose stripes you were healed.”**—and that brings us full-circle right back to where we began: Isa. 53.

That’s the thing that’s important for us to do, for us to remember. Let’s cover 1-Peter 2:25: “For you were a sheep going astray, but you *have* now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.”

I want to go ahead and make one other quote here, about healing. Let’s go to Matthew, the eighth chapter, to show the disciples knew and understood exactly what this was all about. And remember, Matthew 8 & 9 are Matthew’s chapters which then bring together all the different, outstanding healings that Jesus did during His ministry.

Matthew 8:16: “Now when evening had come, they brought to Him many possessed with demons, and He cast out the spirits by *His* word, **and healed all who were sick**; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, **‘He Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases’**” (vs 16-17). So, they showed that there was absolutely having to do with the physical healing.

Now, there is a doctrine that is out there by some people who are saying, ‘Well, it’s not for physical healing that this is for, but this is for spiritual healing.’ ***It’s for physical healing, for spiritual healing—that’s what the body and the blood of Christ is all about.***

- 19) John 15:20-27
- 20) John 16:1-3
- 21) 1 Peter 2:21
- 22) Luke 9:57-62
- 23) 1 Peter 2:22
- 24) Romans 4:20-25
- 25) Matthew 26:59-68
- 26) Matthew 27:39-43
- 27) Luke 23:34
- 28) 1 Peter 2:23
- 29) Luke 23:44-46
- 30) 1 Peter 2:24
- 31) 1 Peter 2:25
- 32) Matthew 8:16-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-2; 3:12
- Romans 7
- 1 Corinthians 6
- Philippians 4:1
- James 2:5
- Romans 13
- Galatians 5
- 1 Corinthians 6:18; 11:1-2
- Luke 14:26-29
- Romans 6
- Matthew 9

Also referenced: Sermon & Sermon Series:

- *What Would a Church of the Pharisees Be Like (Judaism vs Scripturalism series)*
- *The Passover of the Rejected*

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

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 2:9
- 2) Colossians 1:12-15
- 3) Acts 26:16-18
- 4) Philippians 3:20-21
- 5) Revelations 11:15
- 6) 2 Peter 2:10
- 7) Ephesians 2:8-20
- 8) Hosea 1:1-11
- 9) 1 Peter 2:11
- 10) 1 John 2:15-17
- 11) Galatians 5:16-18
- 12) 1 Corinthians 15:58
- 13) 1 Peter 2:12-16
- 14) John 8:31-34
- 15) Romans 5:15, 21
- 16) Romans 6:1-2, 16-23
- 17) 2 Peter 2:17-24
- 18) Isaiah 53:1-12

# Epistle of First Peter IX

Fred R. Coulter

I want to go ahead and review just a little bit what we covered last time, because I made some mistakes in numbering some of the categories relating to Jesus' example, and His crucifixion and all of the different categories that it covers and some very important things for us. So let's go ahead and let's go to 1-Peter, the second chapter, vs 21-25. Let me just go ahead and read it again and we'll go back and we will re-number these properly.

1-Peter 2:21: "For to this you were called..." Now here all the things that we were called to:

1. "...because Christ also suffered for us..."
2. "...leaving us an example..."—and of course, that example is in every bit of His conduct.
3. "...that you should follow after *Him* in His [own] footsteps."
4. "Who committed no sin..." (v 22)
5. "...neither was guile found in His mouth..."
6. "Who, *while* He was being reviled, did not revile in return..." (v 23)
7. "...*when* suffering, He threatened not..."
8. "...but gave Himself over to Him Who judges righteously..."
9. "Who Himself bore our [own] sins within His own body on the tree..." (v 24)
10. "...that we, being dead to sins..."—and we went through Rom. 6—which is through the operation of baptism
11. "...may live unto righteousness..."—which is a very important thing. Not only are the commandments of God righteousness, but that righteousness then is freestanding before God, which then God is accepting us as He accepted Christ.
12. "...by Whose stripes you were healed..."—now that's an interesting statement there, because when God does something it is as good as done; and in the past tense.

Now, let's look at just a couple of Scriptures here—let's go back and see some Scriptures concerning following Jesus Christ. We are to follow Him. Let's go to John, the tenth chapter, because this is the most important section for that. This is the way we are to follow Christ. This is the way we are to minister to the people as ministers—because here's the whole situation concerning sheep, concerning the sheepfold, concerning following Christ, concerning understanding what He is saying, and so forth.

John 10:1: "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who does not enter the sheepfold through the door..." There's a proper way to come. You can't get

into the Church of God by some *other way*. What are the ways to enter into the 'sheepfold'?

- God has to call you
- you have to repent
- you have to be baptized
- you have to receive the Holy Spirit
- you have to keep the commandments of God
- you have to live in the grace of God
- you've got to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being
- you've got to love the brethren as Jesus loved us
- You have to love your neighbor as yourself

All of those things then constitutes entering into the sheepfold. This is just another way of saying that if you don't do it God's way, you're not going to do it.

Now remember last time I pointed out how the man said, 'Lord, I'll follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the field have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay His head." You can get all kinds of people to follow people on their own terms—their own 'Rah! Rah! Yes, Lord.' But that's not coming from God. That's one of those *other ways*. "...but climbs up some other way..." (v 1)—and we can say: *every false doctrine*:

- Sunday
- Christmas
- Easter
- Halloween
- The wrong Passover
- The wrong Passover symbols

All of those things are *another way*, where people come up to God and say, 'God, I want all the blessings, but now, I don't like this over here. I'm going to do it my way.' So everyone needs to think about: are they really doing things God's way?

"...but climbs up some other way, that one is a thief and a robber. But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.... [and that's referring to Christ. Christ is going to let them enter in through the door] ...To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice... [this is the most important thing of all]" (vs 1-3). Remember what we're told, that 'if they do not speak according to this Word there is no light in them.' *They hear His voice*. What will Jesus' voice always say? Well, read the Gospel—all of the four Gospels—that tells you.

Let's notice something else here: "...and he calls his own sheep by name..." (v 3 Christ knows

each one of us. He knows every hair on our head—many or few. And He calls us by name. Not only that. We find in Rev. 2 that He is going to give us a new name, which ‘no one knows but the one who receives it’—and that’s part of our spiritual inheritance forever.

“...and leads them out” (v 3). Now, that’s very interesting, if we are to follow Christ, He is to lead us—correct? How does He lead us? Well, *He leads us with His Spirit!* Remember what it says there in Rom. 8, that ‘as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the children of God.’ So, it is going to lead you. Where is it going to lead you? *It’s going to lead you to grow in grace and knowledge and understanding and love and strength and commandment-keeping*—and all of those things.

“...they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger...” (vs 4-5). That’s why there’s so many difficulties and problems within the Church of God today, because there are too many *strange doctrines, strange ministers* not speaking the voice of God.

“...for they will flee from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them. Therefore, Jesus again said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep....’” (vs 5-7). You can tie that in with John 14:6—where He says: ‘I am *the Way* and *the Truth* and *the Life*.’ You can tie this in with the sermon that I gave: *I AM*; and go ahead and add all of those ‘I AMs’ in there.

“...I am the door of the sheep.... [and all the sheep have to come through there. And all of the sheep are counted, and all of the sheep are named.] ...All who ever came before Me... [as *saviors*, as *messiahs*, as *benefactors*, as *rulers* before God] ...are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. **I am the door**.... [there’s only *one way* to come to Christ] ...If anyone enters through Me, **he shall be saved**, and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture” (vs 7-9). This is what the ministers of God are to do: *to teach the brethren; to feed the flock*. Remember the challenge that Jesus gave to Peter when He said, ‘Simon Peter, do you love Me?’ He said, ‘Feed My sheep. Feed My flock.’

Verse 10: “The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy....” You can do that spiritually. You can do that physically. And there are many ways to have things stolen. You can have your money stolen. You can have your tithes stolen. You can have your life stolen; or killed; or your emotions destroyed, because someone comes in who is not from God! He’s a thief!

He says just the opposite here, of Himself: “...I have come so that they may have life, and may

have *it* more abundantly” (v 10). In some cases, in this life, it isn’t more abundantly in the physical sense. But then, on the other hand, we’re not satisfied with just the physical things, but we’re to have ‘life more abundantly’ spiritually.

Verse 11: “I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. But the one who is a hireling, and who is not *the* shepherd... [and that’s something that there have been entirely too many of—hirelings!] ...whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep, and flees. And the wolf seizes the sheep and scatters them” (vs 11-12). Sometimes those wolves enter right in and the hirelings enter right in to the ‘inner sanctum’ as it were of the Church, and then all the false doctrine starts coming down from on high.

Verse 13: “Now, the hireling flees because he is a hireling and has no concern for the sheep.... [That is sure true. You stop and ask: Where have all the ministers gone? (Kind of like the song.) Where have all the ministers gone? Where have all the sheep gone? Well, God says He’s not going to lose any. In the end run, there’s going to be some people saved under some very difficult circumstances.] ...I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine” (vs 13-14). That’s why it’s very important that every Christian know Jesus Christ.

Let’s go to 1-John, the second chapter, and let’s tie in something here. One of the outward, visible signs; as well as loving each other—here’s one of the visible signs that we have about knowing Christ. 1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him...” It’s really a convicting knowledge, understanding of Him. And it says we know Him—right? That’s what Jesus said. And ‘am known of My own sheep, and I know them.’ If we say that we know Him, here’s the way that we really comprehend that we do—and express that we do:

“...if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one **the love of God** is being perfected....” (vs 3-5). I’m reading what the Greek really expresses. In the series in 1-John, I make that a major study of *love* in the Bible and we have the Scriptures to go along with it.

“...By this *means* ... [in this manner because of what was just spoken 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 is how we are to follow Jesus Christ. So, ‘to follow in His own footsteps’ includes everything that Christ may have gone through; could apply to us at any one time. That’s why the Apostle

Paul said that as he followed Christ he learned to be abased; he learned to abound; and that whatever state he was in he was content therewith. Why? *Because as he said in another place, 'The grace of God is sufficient for me.'*

John 10:14: "I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine. Just as the Father knows Me... [on a continuous on-going basis.] ...I also know the Father... [here's what Jesus did]: ...and I lay down My life for the sheep" (vs 14-15). That fits right in there with 1-Peter, the second chapter, right at the end.

Verse 16: "And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd. On account of this, the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father" (vs 16-18). This gives us a complete, well-rounded understanding of the Scriptures on how we are to follow Christ.

1-Peter 2:25: "For you were as sheep going astray..." He's talking to Gentiles who are converted. So, when Jesus says 'I have other sheep' He's talking about the Gentiles. Now, some people say that refers to the ten tribes of Israel—it's possible that it could refer to the ten tribes of Israel, but please understand that the Jews looked upon the so-called lost ten tribes of Israel as Gentiles at that particular point; because they usurp all of the blessings as it were—they took to themselves all of the claims that went to all the 12 tribes of Israel.

Verse 25: "For you were as sheep going astray, but you *have* now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls." That shows how we're to follow after Christ.

Now, let's get into 1-Peter 3, and this continues right on. I want to call your attention to a couple of things here; but first of all let's read all the verses down through v 7 before we try and dissect it apart and do a more in-depth study on it.

1-Peter 3:1: "Likewise [in the same manner], wives, be submitting yourselves to your own husbands; so that, even if any are not obedient to the Word, through the behavior of the wives they may be gained without a word... [that is by your conduct rather than your speaking] ...having witnessed your pure behavior *carried out* with reverence; whose adorning, let it not be the external *adornment* of braiding the hair, wearing gold *jewelry*, or dressing in *fashionable* clothing; but *let your adornment be* the inward person of the heart, *manifested* in the

incorruptible *jewel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value in God's sight. For in this way also the Holy women of the past who were hoping in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; *and* you have become her children, *if* you are doing what is right, and are not frightened *by* any intimidation. Likewise, you husbands, be dwelling with *your wives* according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel; since she is a woman, *be* giving her honor, as also *being* joint heirs of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be cut off" (vs 1-7).

There's an awful lot in all of these verses. Let's go back and let's begin a little bit more in-depth study on this and begin analyzing and how this carries right on. We need to understand something that's very important for us to know and realize. First of all, God is not picking on women! I'll repeat that: ***God is not picking on women!*** Of course, the Bible is not to be used as a bludgeon against women. This is going right along with what it's telling everyone. And just for women who think they've been picked on, when you really read the Bible, you'll see it says a whole lot more to men all the way through the Bible than it does to women. Let's go back to 1-Peter 2 for a minute and let's just see something here. Let's see the whole theme as we're coming along.

1-Peter 2:13: "Therefore, submit yourselves to every human institution... [that is, have deference or honor or respect for every human institution] ..for the sake of the Lord..."

Verse 18: "Servants, *be* submitting yourselves to your masters with all fear..." So we're coming right along with the whole overall theme.

1-Peter 3:1: "Likewise, wives, be submitting yourselves..." We're talking about a whole theme of things that God is bringing out and talking about here. And inner mixed in that, we're told that we're to follow Christ, in His footsteps. We are, in so many words, *to be humble, to be giving*—and that's for ALL of us.

Now, when it comes here to v 1, we're talking about wives basically with unbelieving husbands—in the very first part. Where it's talking about submitting yourselves unto your own husbands, this is not to be a bludgeon against women, this is not to make them a non-person. This is not take away their thinking capacity or say that they have less brains than a man, because frankly, I know a lot of women who are a whole lot smarter than some men I know. I also know some men who are a whole lot smarter than some women I know. That's not the case; and too many people who don't understand the Bible tend to take that view of it. But, nevertheless, this is what the wives are to do. And

the reason is: you can't have two masters! That's why God did not make women equal to men.

Let's go over here to Matthew, the sixth chapter, and here's a principle that is true. We will see how that in the very creation God made this difference. And you know, lo and behold, some women are even admitting now that they think differently than men. Why, God knew that from the first. He made him that way! But what if God made men and women entirely equal? Then you'd have the problem as to who's in charge here.

Matthew 6:24: "No one is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." So, the same principle applies. You cannot have two people in charge. God, by creation, made the man the head. We'll see that here in just a little bit. And there's a reason for it.

Let's go to Genesis, the first chapter, and let's see something. God has not slighted women in any way. He could just not express all of Himself and did not express all of Himself just in men or just in women. He gave parts of His personality and characteristics; and remember that, there in Psa. 8 where it says they've been made a little lower than the angels, that actually means that mankind has been made a little lower than Elohim, or God.

Genesis 1:26—this gives us the whole reason for our creation and our existence: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female" (vs 26-27). But there was a difference in the creation.

We find Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man *of the* dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." Well here, God made a separate and special creation of man out of the dust of the ground. Now, when it became time to create woman. God gave a special lesson to Adam. And He did it this way:

Verse 18: "And the LORD God said, '*It is* not good that the man should be alone....'" Of course then, it's an axiom that it's not good for a woman to be alone. But at this particular place there weren't any women. And it is a truism: generally when you find men who have been alone all their lives, they're greatly missing so many, many things; and that's why so some of the old-stayed bachelors get a little kooky, because it's not good that a man be alone. And I'll tell you one other thing why it is

not good for man to be alone, because he never learns to truly love when he's alone. He can't because he doesn't have a wife to love; he doesn't have children to love or to be responsible for; or go through all of the difficulties that are involved in marriage and having a wife—and with all of the good and the bad and the ugly that comes along with it; because there is all the good and the bad and the ugly, and you have to admit that it's so.

So God, being concerned for man, He said, "...'*It is* not good that the man should be alone. I will make a helper compatible for him.'.... [That is going to be *emotionally* compatible; *intellectually* compatible; *physically* compatible; *spiritually* compatible.] (Then he gives him an object lesson): ...And out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every animal of the field and every fowl of the air—and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called *each* living creature, that *became* its name. And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field..." (vs 18-20).

After all of that, here's Adam, he's doing all this naming and talking, so it shows he had intelligence, he had a language, he had ability to choose, to distinguish, to make judgments, to categorize and to analyze and all this sort of thing.

Here's the lesson: "...but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam" (v 20). He saw all the horses go by, all the monkeys, all the elephants, all the giraffes, all of the reptiles, all the birds and everything that there was; and all the sheep and all the goats and all the bears and whatever animal you want to name—thousands and thousands of them as it were, and there was nothing. And I imagine that God said, 'Well now, do you see anything in there that, you know...you see, these are all different from you; they're all different from you, Adam.'

So He said, 'Okay Adam, I'm going to make a help for you'; so here's what He did, v 21: "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man" (vs 20-22).

There's an awful lot involved in this. There's an awful lot of actual meaning and symbolism—first of all, God did not make women exactly equal to men. He says they are the 'weaker vessel.' I do know there are some women who are stronger than some men—that is true. But as a rule, most women are a weaker vessel. They have a different purpose in life than men do. God didn't go out and take another clump of soil or sod or dust and make Eve. So the very way that she was created shows that she is to be subordinate to the man. And that's just the way it is

by creation. All the feminist—and some people say femi-nazies—they don't like it. They don't love men; they hate men. We're not going to get into a discussion of all of the weirdo perversions of the minds of people with all of their political, sexual and immoral causes. Now He made her compatible in every way: physically, mentally, emotionally and made in the image of God.

Now we have our first marriage, v 23: "And Adam said, 'This *is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh....'" What does this tell you? *This tells you that Adam understood what God did!* He understood how she was created. He understood why she was created. Of nearly all of the creation that there is, in the intimate act of sexual love, only human beings face each other—and that is a tremendous and wonderful blessing; so that there is going to be that closeness, there's going to be that love; there's going to be that understanding. It's a very particular way that God has made man and woman so that that is going to be that way. Of all the other animals He did not make it that way.

So he said: "...'*This is* now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. *She* shall be called Woman because *she* was taken out of Man.'" (v 23). He understood it. She understood it. God, therefore, instructed them. They had full knowledge. Now, I'm sure this was written in when the instruction was given by God. It shows the very basic reason for the creation of man and woman on the physical plane.

Verse 24: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh." There are great and tremendous lessons in that for us. He's to leave his father and mother—why? *Because they were to replenish, multiply and replenish the earth!* To be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth. So mankind was given a part in the creation of the Family of God by having the capacity to produce children. Every human being is made in the image of God by the fact of reproduction.

Let's also understand something that is very, very important here. This is why all homosexuality, all variant and deviant sex acts—as we find listed in Lev. 18-22—are absolutely wrong! And this is why there can be no such thing as a 'practicing Christian homosexual'; because he's going against the very nature of God; or she is going against the very nature of God—the very nature of their creation. And ***no one is going to inherit the Kingdom of God by going against the creation of God!*** Because man and woman were created for this physical relationship and each one created with the spirit of man in them, so they could what? *Receive the Spirit of God and be born into the Kingdom of God!*

I'm not going to go through here and show all the sins of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3, but

sufficient to say what happened was that they both sinned. ***They both sinned!*** I'm not going to go into that in great detail, except to say that He [God] reinforced that the husband is going to rule over his wife.

Now let's go to the New Testament and see this parallel here. There's some things in here people may not necessarily like, but that's just the way it is; and none of us are going to walk up to God and say, 'God what are you creating? I don't like what You're creating. I want You to do it different. Yes, God, I want to be taller. Yes, God, why did You make me this way?

Well, you go back and read what God says there in Jer. 18, when He sent Jeremiah down to the potter's house. Then He said, 'You go down to the potter's house and you watch what he does. He makes a vessel out of the clay and he does whatever he wants to with it—doesn't he? *Yes!* Then if he doesn't like it then he crumples it all up and redoes it again—makes something else.' And God said then, the lesson concerning Israel: 'Oh, Israel, can't I even do to you like the potter does to his vessel; that I can make you into what you should be? But no, you want to rebel. So, I've got to go ahead and correct you and stomp on you and send you off into captivity because you disagree with Me.'

1-Corinthians 11:1: "Be imitators of me, exactly as I also *am* of Christ." And that's how every minister is to follow Christ. And every person is to follow the minister as he follows Christ; and this also shows the situation that when there's a minister who's not following Christ then there's a responsibility placed upon the members.

Verse 2: "Now I praise you, brethren, because you have remembered me in all things, and you are keeping the ordinances... [or traditions; and these are teachings of the Church] ...in the way that I delivered *them* to you. But I want you to understand that the Head of every man is Christ..." (vs 2-3). So, men are under subjection, too. Men are under subjection sometimes in greater difficulties than women are in subjection to their husbands; because they're under bosses, they are under department heads, they work for someone, and if you have your own business, every one of your customers then is, in a way, over you if you're going to reach out and serve your customers—right?

So, this thing, and complaint, by some women who don't like God's way—'Well, God should not have made the man the head'—with the implication because there's no such thing as a perfect man. Well, there's no such thing as a perfect woman, either.

"...the Head of every man is Christ... [we have to all be submissive to Christ—to love God, to

follow God, and all of the things that God says that husbands are to be to their wives] ...and *the* head of *the* woman is the man... [that's the way God made it by creation] ...and... [even Christ is under subjection—isn't He? *Yes, He is!*] ...*the* Head of Christ is God" (v 3).

What did Jesus say of the Father? *He said, 'My Father is greater than I am.'* So even in the whole structure of everything that there is, only **one** can truly be the head. And everyone who is the head of the family—being the husband—also has a Head, Who is Christ; Who also has a Head, Who is God the Father. So, he [Paul] put this in here because of some of the things that he's going to say. Let's read them:

Verse 4: "Every man who has a *covering* on *his* head when he is praying or prophesying puts his Head to shame.... [and yet, what happens today, all the Jews wear their little hats—don't they?] ...But every woman who has *her* head uncovered when she is praying or prophesying puts her head [husband] to shame."

Now, the question comes up: Is she praying and prophesying publicly in church? *No*, because we find in 1-Cor. 14—let's go there, let's just answer that question right now. I want you to remember the example of Aquila and Pricilla, his wife, that Pricilla and Aquila both taught Apollos. So in a private setting, when it's not preaching to a congregation, or if it's a small, intimate study, then we have a situation when women can add to the teaching of it. And of course, we're going to see that women are teaching other women, too, as well.

1-Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let your women be silent in the churches..." (vs 33-34). So, this praying and prophesying would obviously not be in the church. Where would it be then? *At home!* You can put in your notes there: Acts 2, where it talks about where Peter said, quoting Joel, that in the 'last days your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions, and your handmaids have dreams and visions, too.'

Those things then occur at home or in dealing on a one-to-one situation. I've had my wife prophesy—how? She's told me about things that she knew that I wasn't doing what I should be and she told me what was going to happen. Was that not a prophecy? *Yes, it was!* Did it not come to pass? *Yes, it did!*

"...for they are not allowed to speak..." (v 34). Where? *In the churches!* This doesn't mean it's not permitted for them to speak ever. It's not as these cloistered nuns have, that go into these cloistered nunneries and they never speak to anyone

in the outside world again. Take of vow of silence. That's not what it means.

"...but they are to be in subjection, exactly as the law says.... [and that's the whole lesson of the Old Testament.] ...And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home...." (vs 34-35). That has to be, obviously, standing up and asking all kinds of questions in church where there are lot of people. Now, we have small Bible studies. And everyone there asks questions. The women ask questions. But they're not taking over the service to talk. They are not in there in a cantankerous attitude trying to do something. And that's what this is talking about here.

"...For it is a shame for a woman to speak in church" (v 35). That is to get up and to teach and to preach. That's what it's talking about.

We've got this great movement today, having women preachers. Well, I'll tell you one thing. In the business I'm in I have an awful lot to do with women, because in the financial services area, in banks and in lending institutions and mortgage companies, generally there are far more women than there are men. But I'll tell you one thing I've learned by experience, which is true: When there are only men around and there's no designation as to who's in charge, then you have a problem as to who's in charge and you end up with a lot of difficulties. Well, it's the same way when there are women and only women. And women know this as well as anyone else, they operate off emotions, off of intuitions and hunches and feelings, and they get just down right cantankerous over the smallest, little, tiniest, rottenest thing that there is, and stop the earth, as it were, until that little thing is done.

So it is called, in modern colloquial language, as being 'bitchy.' And I've seen offices completely torn apart where there are too many women and that allows itself to take over and reign! I remember one time, going into the First Interstate Bank, and I went in there and I was teasing the woman a little bit...

(go to the next track)

So, in this First Interstate Bank there was not one male employee. So I walked up to the manager of the bank, I knew her, and I said, 'Hey, you better be careful you're not discriminating against men. I don't see any here.' Well, needless to say in about three months there was a man working in the bank. But that bank had a lot of problems. That's not to say that men don't have problems. Men have all kinds of problems, too. So it's not a matter of finger-pointing and blaming. It's just a matter that 'a spade is a spade'; a man is a man; and a woman is a woman—and that's just the way it is.

Let's go back to 1-Corinthians 11:6: "For if a woman is not covered, let her be shorn.... [he's just

using an example here of an extreme] ...But if *it be* shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.” Today, we have shaved heads of women going out and they just glorify in that. Well, that is absolutely defiance against God. Does God let them do it? *Sure He let's them do it!* Will they be able to do it if Christ had the Kingdom here on earth? Well, I don't know how long that they would do it, but *Christ is not here on earth!* The Kingdom of God is not here on earth.

Verse 7: “For, on the one hand, a man ought not to cover *his* head, since he is *the* image and glory of God; but, on the other hand, *the* woman is *the* glory of man. For *the* man is not of *the* woman... [and the Greek is ‘ek’—that means *out from*. God did not take a rib of a woman and create a man. God took a rib of man and created a woman.] ...but *the* woman is of *the* man” (vs 7-8).

There's also one thing that is important, we need to understand in that, v 9: “And also, *the* man was not created for the sake of the woman, but *the* woman for the sake of the man.” That's why God gave women a more adaptive personality.

One other thing that is important to understand, which is this: Only men can engender life. Only men determine the sex of the children. Women do not determine the sex of the children. It is well known, scientifically, that the sex genes are called: XX for women, and XY for men—Y being the male gene; X being the female gene. So within the man he carries both man and woman. Within the woman, she only carries the woman, because she's XX. God made it that way. Some people get all upset. Some people shake their fist at God. They don't like that kind of thing. Well, so be it. You're not going to change the creation of God—that's the way that God made everything.

Even these ‘feminazis’—these hard-core lesbians who hate men—some of them still want children; so what do they have to do? They have to go to the in vitro-fertilization bank. And what do they have to get? *They have to get the seed from a man!*

Now then, he goes on to say—unless the men get carried away with their own feelings here—he says, v 11: “Nevertheless, neither *is the* man separate from *the* woman... [because we all have mothers] ...nor *the* woman separate from *the* man in *the* Lord. For as the woman *is* of the man, so also the man *is* by the woman; but all things *are* of God” (vs 11-12)—because God made it that way! I don't care what women do to try and change their sex, or men do to try and change their sex, they can't do it because you are what God made you.

Now let's see some other things concerning marriage, concerning husbands and wives,

concerning what we need to do, v 10: “For this reason, it is necessary for the woman... [she is obligated] ...to have *a sign of being under* authority on *her* head because of the angels.” The margin says a covering is *a sign that she is under the authority of her husband* because of the angels—which gives us an indication that women have angels watching out for them more than men do. Not that men don't need them. In many ways we need them more than women, because we get out and we get ourselves in worse problems and difficulties, because women have more of a (what they like to call) nurturing nature—which by the way, God put in them. That's just the way it is. They're more protective and all of this sort of thing. So, that's not to say that men don't need angels.

Verse 13: “You judge for yourselves.... [In other words, you should be able to judge this yourselves] ...Is it becoming for a woman to pray to God uncovered?.... [Does that mean she has to wear a hat? *No!* We find that her hair is given to her for a covering. This is where we let Scripture interpret Scripture. However, if her hair is really short-short, shorn, clipped real short or if for some reason or other she has no hair, then she should put something on her head.] ...Or does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a shame to him?” (vs 13-14). That is true. People today, the acceptance of things... Well, you're a *nice* person if you accept every deviant thing that comes along, including this concerning hair length.

The question comes up: how long is long hair for a man; and you'd have to say that when it gets to the point that you can't tell whether it is.... Let's put it this way: if your hair gets to the point that it is looking long, then it's too long. Right now, the style is the ‘lion's mane’ hanging down the back of the head. Well, we're not going to get into hairstyles, and we're not going to say that every man has to have his hair cut exactly as a Marine recruit. But nevertheless, when it gets long, it says that ‘doesn't even nature’—you don't even have to go to the Word of God, can't you even see that it's not right for a man to have long hair?

Verse 15: “But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; because the long hair has been given to her instead of a *veil* to cover *her* head. But if anyone is contentious *over this issue*, we have no such custom, neither *do* the churches of God” (vs 15-16). That is to the contrary of what he's just taught here.

So, those things are not to put down women, not to elevate men. These are not clubs to be used against one another. But these are definitions given by the Apostle Paul where he says in 1-Corinthians 14:37<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: “...let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord.”

Colossians 3:16—I want you to notice the parallels that are covered here about the family relations and I want you to notice the comparison that you have here with the structure of 1-Peter 2 & 3 in the servants, the family, the husbands, the wives. Here's what we are to have happening for each one of us.

Colossians 3:16: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—... [action] ...*do* all in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as *it* is fitting in *the* Lord” (vs 16-18)—what is fitting, what is proper. This doesn't mean improper. This doesn't mean that the wife is to be intimidated, she is to be shouted down, she is to be verbally abused. One minister got up there and used to say how he used to even “spank” his wife. That is not fit in the Lord. In other words, what is right in the Lord.

Verse 19: “Husbands, love *your* wives...” I'll tell you one thing, husbands, if you love your wives, you're going to get along a whole lot better with them. That's one of the sources of a lot of problems that there are in marriage is that husband's are not loving their wives. Then what happens when you don't?:

“...and do not be bitter against them” (v 19). So, if *hardness of heart* sets in and there is bitterness, you're going to have a very difficult marriage. That's just the way it is.

Verse 20: “Children, obey *your* parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. [and then] Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they be discouraged... [I think too many times in the past there have been too many discipline sessions rather than love sessions with children and they become discouraged and disobedient.] ...Servants... [the same structure: servants, wives, husbands, children—very similar. So we see Peter is preaching exactly the same Gospel as Paul is preaching] ...obey your fleshly masters in all things—not with eye service as pleasing men; but with singleness of heart, fearing God” (vs 20-22).

In other words, you're doing it because God is God. You do a good job because you are pleasing God. And you're doing it when you're not being watched over, when you're not being seen, because you're not just doing it for 'eye-service.' And eye-service, the modern colloquial today is 'boot-lickers'—you just do it because the boss is there and you shine up to the boss.

“...not with eye service as pleasing men; but with singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatever

you do, do heartily, as to the Lord and not to men” (vs 22-23). Yet, they were owned by their masters. Now, none of us are in that kind of situation today. However, whoever we work for, this is how we should do it—isn't it? Just like this. Whether you work for someone. Whether you have your own business or regardless of what it is.

“...whatever you do, do heartily, as to the Lord and not to men knowing that you shall receive from *the* Lord the recompense of the inheritance, for you are serving Christ the Lord. But the one who does wrong shall receive *for* the wrong he has done, and there is no respect of persons” (vs 23-25). So Paul is saying here that before God there is a 'level playing field,' as it were. But we all have our submissive obligations to different people at different levels. That's just the way that it is. And no one is going to change that fact of creation.

Ephesians 5—here's a whole half chapter concerning husband/wife relations and concerning the Church. God made the creation of male and female to teach a tremendous lesson, a tremendous lesson in His spiritual creation, in what God is doing in reproducing Himself and His own Family.

Ephesians 5:20: “Giving thanks at all times for all things to God and the Father in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit yourselves to one another in *the* fear of God” (vs 20-21). This is just an overall general thing. That's what we are to do in the Church. We're not be filled with wine and be drunken and be asleep and all this sort of thing; but in the Church then, we're to honor everyone, we're to respect everyone, we are to not have this leverage of authority and things over the brethren. Why? *In the fear of God!*

Then he says here's the level where we need to start, v 22: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” If every wife had this in mind when she was doing the things to please her husband, please her family, whatever it may be, things might go along a whole lot better.

But you know, then you always have the other side of the coin. You always have the mean and nasty husband who takes advantage of that and abuses his wife. That's why Peter said that you're not to be intimidated. So, this does not mean that wives become doormats, but it does not mean that they become overlords.

Verse 22: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is *the* head of the wife, even as Christ *is the* Head of the Church...” (vs 22-23). Is anyone going to argue with Christ? *No!* But let's remember and understand something here, very importantly: Most everything within the family is not done on a spiritual basis. So we're not talking about spirituality. We're talking

about cooperating and getting along together. And you go back to the first chapter of Isaiah, and doesn't God even say to the sinners, He says: 'Come now, let us reason together'—while He demands full submission, of course.

Now here's an obligation then to the man: "...and He is *the* Savior of the body. For even as the church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything.... [here comes the obligation to the husband]: ...Husbands, love your own wives..." (vs 23-25). I'll tell you a little secret: it's so much easier to love his wife when she is respectful and submissive to him—makes it so much easier. But, if you have a wife who not quite as respectful and loving to you as you think your wife ought to be, what are you to do? ***You are to still to love your wife!*** How?

**"...in the same way that Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it"** (v 25). He gave Himself up what? *He took every abuse. He took all of those things and died*—right? *Yes!* And I'll tell you one thing: If you practice this of loving your wife, you're going to find that she is going to be far more readily and willing and able to be submissive to you—and it is the right and proper way.

Verse 26: "So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious church..." (vs 26-27). This is the whole thing of loving your wife: to up-build her, to help her, to inspire her, do whatever is necessary there. And if she gets mad and bent out of shape, don't come back on her and start stomping and correcting. How would you be if every time you did something wrong, Christ came along and treated you like you treat your wife? *Well, that wouldn't work very well either!* You would be battered and bruised and abused and all this sort of thing.

"...not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blame. In the same way, husbands are [obligated] duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies.... [because they're to be one flesh] ...He who loves his wife loves himself; for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the Church. For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones" (vs 27-30).

This took me quite a while to really understand this verse, because this verse really has a lot of meaning. Where it says, 'for we are members of His body' we could say, oh yes, we're all members of the body of Christ, it's a spiritual body and we all understand that (1-Cor. 12).

But what about this part?: ...of His flesh..." (v 30). What did Christ do with His flesh? *He gave Himself in sacrifice*—didn't He? For what? *For the*

*Church!* So, we cannot be a part of Christ without the body of Christ, which is His flesh. And is this not part of the lesson of the Passover, where Jesus said of the broken unleavened bread: 'Take eat, this is My body which is broken for you.' So we enter into this relationship with Christ, into His body, because of His crucifixion.

"...and of His bones" (v 30). Why would it say "...of His bones"? *Because no bone in His body was broken!* "...of His bones" is a direct parallel to the rib taken from Adam to make Eve so the Church was made from the innermost part of Christ, as it were. What is the function of the bones—not only to uphold the body, but the marrow produces the life-giving blood. We are members of His body because of His crucifixion and because of what He has done in having the Church to be His wife. We'll see this analogy come all the way through.

Verse 31: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh.... [There's Old Testament doctrine—right? (Gen. 2)] ...This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church" (vs 31-32). This is a tremendous thing that God is showing and teaching here, concerning husband and wife relations, and the whole key gets back on to what? *It gets back onto the very foundation of Christ:*

- of love
- of service
- of sacrifice
- of respect
- of honoring and understanding each other

Verse 33: "Nevertheless, let each one of you... [in particular—that is in a particular and special way] ...love his wife even as himself... [Would you want to be treated the way that you're treating your wife if you're not treating her the way that she should be?] ...and *let each* wife see that she reverence *her* husband." Even as it says there in 1-Peter 3, that Abraham was called 'lord' by Sarah.

1-Timothy 5:11—this is a very interesting verse, and the conclusion of it—if followed in America and around the world, would solve the problems of poverty for families; because—there are circumstances where there is only one parent available. There are also circumstances where there is only one parent by choice. And most of the time that's the result of fornication and adultery, and single women then have children and they live in poverty. So Paul has a solution for it here.

1-Timothy 5:11: "But refuse *to put* the younger widows *on the list*, for when sensuous impulses draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry... [that is they were, at that time, still expecting the return of Christ in a fairly short period

of time.] ...bringing judgment *upon themselves* because they have set aside *their* first faith. And besides this, they also learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house; and *they* not only *become* idle, but *they* also *become* talebearers and busybodies, speaking things *that* ought not *be spoken*" (vs 11-13). This is not to say that men are not gossips, but it is sure true that women have the proclivity more than men. We all ought to plead guilty to that because we've all done it at some time or other, but that's just a proclivity.

So, he gives the solution here—v 14: "Therefore, I wish the younger women to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, *and* to give no occasion to the adversary to bring a reproach; for some have already turned aside to follow Satan" (vs 14-15). There it is, that's the solution to the situation there, because it's proper that men and women be married. Not only is it not good for a man to be alone, it's not good for a woman to be alone either.

Let's go to Titus, the second chapter. Here the whole chapter is tied around this whole thing: the return of Christ and what men and women ought to do and how the servants ought to be—so this all follows right along with what Peter was teaching.

Here again we have everything laid out for different people, different ages and so forth, Titus 2:1: "But *as for* you, speak the things that befit sound doctrine. *Teach* the older men to be temperate, serious-minded, respectable, sound in the faith, in love, *and* in patience; in like manner, *teach* the older women *to be* in *their* behavior as *it is* fitting for godly women, not slanderers, *and* not enslaved to much wine, *but* teachers of that which is right; that they may teach the young women *to love* *their* husbands *and* *to love* *their* children" (vs 1-4). There are certain things you need to learn on this, you don't just automatically know how to do it.

Paul is giving the thing here—women can teach—right? *Yes!* There it is right there, 5: "*To be* modest, chaste, keepers of *the* home..."

I'll tell you one thing, our society around is the situation where there are so many women working—and I know this: that a lot of the women would rather not be working, but this society is so oriented to Satan's materialistic way that, unfortunately, there are a lot of cases where the families cannot exist unless the wives work. It's really difficult on the children. We have to, in this age, make out the best way we can according to the circumstances we're confronted with, and to be able to make some sort of compensation for the different lacks here and there. However, I will have to say that with all the modern conveniences that we have today, it does make it a little easier than back then. If you had to grind your own flour and make your own clothes and your own shoes and go out and hold a

job, too, in a addition to that, hold down a household, you women would never be able to make it. But here's the whole thing: in order to have a household, take care of the household. And that is certainly something that ought to be.

Verse 5: "*To be* modest, chaste, keepers of *the* home; *to be* good *and* to submit themselves to their own husbands, so that the Word of God may not be blasphemed. In the same way, exhort the younger men *to be* sober-minded. In all things you yourself set an example of good works; in doctrine uncorrupted, serious-minded, *and* sincere; *use* sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that the one who opposes *you* may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say about you. *Admonish* slaves to submit themselves to their own masters, *to be* well pleasing in everything, not answering back" (vs 5-9). So, here we have the same doctrine being preached—right? *Yes, indeed!*

Let's go back to 1-Peter 3 and let's look at some more things here that the Apostle Peter is teaching. Now, I might mention that what you might do is an auxiliary study. We won't do it here lest we get bogged down in this series in 1-Peter. As an auxiliary series, go through and do a study in the book of Proverbs. There are many that talk about 'he who finds a wife finds a good thing' *and* 'a good wife is like a precious jewel in a crown'; and then there are a lot of admonitions to men. You go through and read the whole thing concerning men and women in the book of Proverbs. I think you'll be surprised; most of it's talking to men. That's so you women won't have the 'picked on' feeling that this is just a sermon against women, because it's not, it's a sermon for everyone—for men and women, and the young and the old.

As the Apostle Peter is bringing out here, we're just focusing in on in a little more detailed way as we're going through the book of 1-Peter. It shows what to do here if you have an unconverted mate, that by your behavior they may be won over to God. This is something that is inherent in the nature of women.

1-Peter 3:3: "Whose adorning..." Women are always concerned about how they look. And you know, and I know, and every woman knows that when one woman looks at another woman there's an automatic head-to-toe visualization and judgment of them from hair, to dress, to color code, to shoes, to socks, to length of skirt, tightness of clothes, looseness of clothes, newness of clothes and all that sort of thing. It's just natural!

That's why he says: "...let it not be the external *adornment*..." (v 3)—because you could be the most beautiful, the best dressed, wearing the most expensive jewelry and you could have the hair

of Cleopatra. So all of that is worthless. Should be done. But that's not the whole extent of life.

"...let it not be the external *adornment* of braiding the hair, wearing gold *jewelry*, or dressing in *fashionable* clothing... [that's okay, but don't let that be the whole focus] ...but let *your adornment* be from the inward person of the heart, *manifested* in the incorruptible *jewel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value in God's sight" (vs 3-4). So, we have the whole thing here for men and women. Who do you seek to please? The Apostle Paul said: 'If I seek to please men I should not please God.' Did the Apostle Paul have a humble attitude toward God? *Yes!* Did he have a humble attitude even toward the brethren? *Yes!* He's not asking, and neither is Peter, of anything more than what they are doing.

Verse 5: "For in this way also the Holy women of the past who were hoping in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord..." (vs 5-6). Go back and study the whole situation there with Sarah. Boy! She had a lot of power and authority in that household. She led him astray on a situation concerning Hagar, and that didn't work too good because we still have the problem of Ishmael and the children of Israel to this day. There we go! But nevertheless, she was a Godly woman; she'll be in the first resurrection with Abraham.

Verse 7: "Likewise, you husbands... [What does 'likewise' mean? *In the same manner; in the same humble attitude; in the same concerning attitude—right?*] ...be dwelling with *your wives* according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel; since she is a woman, *be giving her honor...*" That is honor and respect.

Unfortunately, too many men—and I've done this, and probably every one of you men have done this to show your great power and authority as the head of the household—say things about your wife in public, or talk to her in such a way in public that dishonors her. Now all that sort of thing has got to stop! So men have their faults as well as women. So what you need to do is think about how you can honor and respect and love your wife.

Here's the reason: "...as also *being* joint heirs of the grace of life... [marriage in this life, and the man being the head of the woman in this life, may not necessarily apply in the life that is to come. Because they're neither marrying or given in marriage—correct? *Yes, indeed!*] ...[we are] joint heirs of the grace of life, so that... [there's a penalty for everyone who's not treating his wife properly] ...your prayers may not be cut off" (v 7).

There is a penalty that happens to those men who do not treat their wives in a right and a proper and a loving manner. The whole long and short of this whole thing is, is that we're all under authority

one way or the other. We all have responsibility to God, to someone above us, to someone below us—if we want to have an above and below type of relationship. But we are to all *do*, and this is what Christ is trying to do: He's trying to raise us all to His level. And we will obviously not have the same authority as Christ and God the Father, but we're going to be kings, and we're going to be priests. It doesn't say queens and priestesses; it says kings and priests. So we'll have to really think on that.

What I want you to do, rather than just get down into every little detail of all of this, I want you to use your own minds and your own prayer and God's Spirit and see where you need to change and grow and overcome; and don't be casting the fault one to another—ya, ya, sick 'em, all this sort of thing. That's not what we want to do here.

***We want to all learn to love God in the way that we should, and love each other. That's the whole purpose of why God has called us.***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter  
✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 2:21-24
- 2) John 10:1-14
- 3) 1 John 2:3-6
- 4) John 10:14-18
- 5) 1 Peter 2:25
- 6) 1 Peter 3:1-7
- 7) 1 Peter 2:13, 18
- 8) 1 Peter 3:1
- 9) Matthew 6:24
- 10) Genesis 1:26-27
- 11) Genesis 2:7, 18-24
- 12) 1 Corinthians 11:1-4
- 13) 1 Corinthians 14:33-35
- 14) 1 Corinthians 11:6-9, 11-16
- 15) 1 Corinthians 14:37
- 16) Colossians 3:16-25
- 17) Ephesians 5:20-33
- 18) 1 Timothy 5:11-15
- 19) Titus 2:1-9
- 20) 1 Peter 3:3-7

#### Scriptures referenced, no quoted:

- Romans 6
- Revelation 2
- Romans 8
- John 14:6
- Psalm 8
- Leviticus 18-22
- Genesis 3
- Jeremiah 18
- Isaiah 1
- Acts 2
- 1 Corinthians 12

Also referenced: Sermon: *I AM That I Am*

# Epistle of First Peter X

Fred R. Coulter

We're into 1-Peter 3:8, so I'm going to read vs 8-12, and then we'll go back and study these and we're going to make some comparisons. First of all, I want you to notice the absence of something that's very, very important to be missing, and that is Peter laid no claim to being the head honcho, the pope or the leading apostle. If he would have, this would have been the perfect place to do so, in the book of 1-Peter.

1-Peter 3:8: "Now, *this is* the goal... [everything that he has said up to this point, going back to chapter one and verse one, all the way down through chapter three and verse seven.] ...all of you be of one mind, sympathizing, loving and brethren, compassionate *and* friendly, not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you should inherit a blessing" (vs 8-9). Of course, most people don't even understanding what the blessing of eternal life is all about—and it's so fantastic and it's so great that it's incredible.

Verse 10: "For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days... [Everyone wants that—right?] ...let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it; because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication. But the face of the Lord is against those who are practicing evil" (vs 10-12).

Now, let's go back, and as we've done before, let's take and study this in depth; and let's see how much here is really the same preaching that Jesus did; that Paul did. We have four things in v 8:

## I. All of you be of one mind.

- Does this mean we've become brainwashed? *No!*
- Does this mean we have all the same thoughts? *No!*

This means to be one-minded toward seeking Christ—that's what it means. One-minded to seeking Christ.

Philippians 2:5—we will see how this ties exactly right in with it; and this is what we're doing in these studies of the General Epistles, because generally most people look upon them as really not very substantive, because after all they're just real short ones, and after all they're put way back toward the end of the New Testament, so they can't be very important. But they are! Here's the kind of mind that we are to have.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus... [This then is the mind of humility] ...Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; And being found in *the* manner of man..." (vs 5-8).

Showing that God came down and shared the whole human experience as a human being. Of course then, in *The Christian Passover* book I go into that in great depth and detail to show what kind flesh, what kind of human existence it was that Jesus took upon Himself. We won't get into that very deeply today, but this is the kind of mind that we are to have.

II. "Sympathizing"—that means have sympathy and understanding. Come back to Philippians 2:1, and tie that in and see how it is exactly the same thing. We have:

- *sympathizing*
- *loving the brethren*
- *compassionate*
- *friendly*

"Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind... [there it is] ...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. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others" (vs 1-4). And that leads up to v 5: "Let this mind be in you..." So that's what it's talking about.

We have Satan's counterfeit: You all become robots over here and you all join this organization over here and you follow your leader right on to death. We've got another case, it looks like, supposedly, of Jim Jones down there in Waco, Texas. Boy, I tell you, there are a lot of things that raises huge question marks in my mind. Why did they bring out the troops against them? Why did they storm it? Why did they shoot? What was going on? In America you have the right to be an idiot. But what it's doing, it's setting people up to getting use to the Federal Government coming after fringe, so-called 'religious' groups—right? So, maybe some caused them to do what they're doing, but then, on the other hand, once people get used to this kind of thing, then it's so much easier to go after other people. That's what it's setting up.

I wondered, years ago, living in America, how could this happen? Living in this world, how could it happen? It talks about all the things that are going on, Matthew 24:4-9: “Then Jesus answered *and* said to them... [when they asked when was He returning] ...‘Be on guard, so that no one deceives you. For many shall come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ”...” (vs 4-5).

There are going to be all kinds of different people saying ‘Christ is Christ’; and this fellow down there, did he say he was Christ? He said he was Christ. We had someone else saying he was the son of God—Yahweh Ben Yahweh. We’ve had someone else say something else, so you’ve got all of these things.

“...and they shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let *these things* disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these things* take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different places*” (vs 5-7). We had all of these this year—right? *Yes, indeed!* Last year and the year before and we’ll have them for the year to come—right? *Yes!*

Verse 8: “Now, all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake” (vs 8-9). How is it that they’re going to kill Christians? *Now I know!* It will be very easy when the time comes. You look back and you think what happened with some of these back in history, and all of the people who were killed for their religious beliefs.

Verse 10: “And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another...” Wow! It’s going to be a wild time to try and find your way around in this world. That’s just the way it is.

It’s going to happen. That’s why we as Christians are not to be that way. That’s why if you hear someone say ‘Hey, brethren, we need to get guns and we need to protect ourselves and we need to be on guard against these people, and when they come shoot them.’ *That’s the opposite of what Christ said. That’s the opposite of the teachings of the Bible.*

We are to be, as He says here in 1-Peter 3:8: “...be of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate *and* friendly, not rendering evil for evil... [that’s real hard to do!] ...or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you should inherit a blessing” (vs 8-9).

Let’s compare this with Romans 12, and then

we will compare this with Luke 6, where we find that Jesus was preaching the same thing. If you would like to do this for a Bible study, you take Rom. 12 and you kind of lay out all the verses and then go back into the book of Proverbs and you can probably get all the Proverbs there and add right to it, because that’s the foundations where a lot of this came from.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy *and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service...” Here’s what men tend to do, which is probably what happened in Waco, TX. When a person says to God, ‘All right, you have my whole life. I dedicate my life to You: baptized, received God’s Holy Spirit, so forth.’ Then a man steps in and puts himself between the individual and God, and leverages that dedication to himself. Then the man says ‘follow me’ under all costs. *No!* We’re to follow Christ under all costs.

“...which is your spiritual service. **Do not conform yourselves to this world...** [that’s the thing that is most difficult, because you’ve got to live in it] ...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God” (vs 1-2). That’s what it has to be. That’s exactly what it has to be. Can’t be anything other than that.

Verse 9: “*Let* love *be* without [dissimulation] hypocrisy...” Very clear: no cliques; no parties; none of that. It also means that sometimes you’re nice to a person to their face and then you turn around and behind their back you really get them. You have dissimulated. Doesn’t mean that you have a show of love but that you have love with dissimulation.

“...abhorring that which is evil *and* cleaving to that which is good.... [notice how this follows right along with 1-Peter 3—if you lay both chapters side-by-side.] ...*Be* kindly affectioned toward one another in brotherly love. *Let* each esteem the other more highly than himself” (vs 9-10). That’s what the whole situation with the people of God has to be. And the most difficult thing is when people are beat up and abused in the name of Christ. That is the most difficult thing.

Verse 11: “*Be* not slack in business. *Be* fervent in spirit. *Be* timely in serving. *Be* rejoicing in hope. *Be* patient in tribulation. *Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer” (vs 11-12). You can take each one of these and almost make a sermon for each one of these as we’re going along. But that’s not the purpose what we’re doing here today.

Verse 13: “Contribute to the needs of the saints, *and* strive to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse” (vs 13-14).

Isn't that what he just said back here in 1-Peter 3:9: 'not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead be blessing.'

Verse 15: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep; *be* of the same mind toward one another...." (vs 15-16). Identical Gospel, there's no difference between what Peter preached, what Paul preached and, and we'll see in just a minute, what Christ preached.

"...Do not set your mind on high ambitions; rather, be accommodating with those of low estate. Do not be wise in your own eyes.... [I've got that nice and underlined in red as a message to me.] ...Do not render to anyone evil for evil... [there it is, identical, almost word for word] ...*but* be prepared to do what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, as much as is your part, be at peace with all men.... [there are the instructions right there] ...Beloved, do not avenge yourselves; rather, leave *this* to God's wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense,' says the Lord" (vs 16-19). In other words, *get out of the way! Don't get in the middle of it.*

This whole thing down at Waco could have been avoided if they just would have said, 'Oh, I understand that you think that we're some sort of subversive group. Why don't you come on in and have dinner with us.' There are other things involved like a twelve-year-old wife and polygamy and things like that. You see how these things get setup? But you see the contrast in true Christianity here in Rom. 12, and then you go down and you start looking at the thing down there in Waco, TX, and you say, 'Hey, that can't be Christianity.' But yet, they call themselves Dravidians—don't they? And they keep the Sabbath—don't they? Wow! Everyone who keeps the Sabbath now is in the same category—right? That's the way the world looks at it.

"...for it is written, "'Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense," says the Lord.' Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in doing this you will be heaping coals of fire on his head.... [That is not literally 'coals of fire.' That is figuratively speaking. But what you're going to do is put it in such a situation that how can he continue to condemn you if you then are not retaliatory against him. Isn't that something!] (Here's the finality of it): ...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (vs 19-21).

Now, let's compare—we've already done 1-Peter, Rom. 12—Luke, the sixth chapter; let's see how that fits right in. Luke 6 is a reduced, or a summary of Matt. 5, 6 & 7. But I want you to see how that, consistently, Christ, Peter, Paul, the whole New Testament constantly teaches the same thing. That's what's important here.

Luke 6:20: "And He lifted up His eyes upon

His disciples *and* said, 'Blessed *are* you, the poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed *are* those who hunger now, for you shall be filled.... [that's hungering and thirsting for righteousness. And you shall be filled—filled with the Word of God.] ...Blessed *are* those who weep now, for you shall laugh" (vs 20-21).

Imagine what it's going to be like for all of those who really had to suffer and die for Christ; and their last thought was whatever, the last minute before they died, then BANG! here comes the resurrection. Now they have a new body; they have a glorified body; and they're in the full joy of the Lord. And don't you think that they're going to be, as it were here, laughing! Laughing with joy and happiness. That's not laughing back in sarcasm toward them.

Verse 22: "Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall cut you off, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as wicked, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy... [I still haven't come to that position, yet, brethren; have a long way to go before I get to that. But keep this in mind]: ...for behold, great *is* your reward in heaven... [and Christ is going to bring it with Him when He returns.] ...for their fathers did these same things to the prophets. But woe to you, the rich, for you are receiving your consolation! Woe to you who have been filled, for you shall hunger! Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep! Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you! For their fathers did these same things to the false prophets" (vs 22-26).

I can't help but think of the political scene that's going on. Everyone saying how great it is, and WOW! It's going to be bad!

Verse 27: "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, *and* do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who despitefully use you" (vs 27-28). Completely different attitude—right? *Yes, indeed!*

So, we can conclude from the Waco event here, that even though certain trappings of Christianity are hanging on this, they are not Christians because they are not doing this. ***They are not doing this!***

Verse 29: "If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other *cheek* also... [I've heard people say, 'and yeah, when they hit the other one you turn around and you punch them in the gut.' Doesn't say that! *Does not* say that!] ...and if anyone takes your cloak, do not forbid your coat also.... [that might save you from getting killed in today's world.] ...Give to everyone who asks you; and if anyone takes what *is* yours, do not ask *for it* back" (vs 29-30). That is if you give to someone and

they need it, you don't come back and say, 'Hey, well bring it back.' Now, if it's your lawnmower or something that you loan out, that's a different story.

My wife was mad at me a couple of years ago because I loaned out our roto-tiller. And I didn't know, but the guy brought it back with a blown head. Now what does the Bible say? He was supposed to be a Christian, a fellow brother, supposedly. What are you supposed to do in that case? *Fix it!* And if he can't fix it, say 'Hey, it blew, I'm sorry, I don't have any money' and then that way I could say, 'Well, since you don't have any money I'm sorry it blew, maybe it would have blown on me, so I'll take care of it.' At least I would have had the opportunity. That would have 'saved my neck from the noose.'

Verse 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. And if you do good *only* to those who are doing good to you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to *those* from whom you hope to receive, what praise is it to you? For even sinners lend to sinners... [and charge high interest, too—exorbitant rates] ...that they may receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good..." (vs 31-35).

Here is the true nitty-gritty Christianity. Yes, doctrine is important, absolutely! Yes, commandment-keeping is important, absolutely! But here is the true attitude. Here's the true conversion. Here are the true teachings—right here. Jesus taught it, Peter taught it, and Paul taught it; and we saw that James taught it. When we get to John we will see that John taught it. As a matter of fact, the whole New Testament teaches it.

"...and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be *the* children of the Highest; for He is good to the unthankful and *the* wicked" (v 35). Why? *Hoping that they would repent*, because as we have seen in the past, God is interested that they truly repent.

What would you do then if someone broke in your house and killed one of your children? What should you do? *Well, you still have the courts that you have to go through in that particular situation. It would be very difficult.* However, I will have to say this: In my experience with Christians, I know no one who is a true Christian who has ever had anyone break in a house and kill their children. So that's always a possibility, but God also protects us and God also has the angels about you and things like this. Could it happen? *Yes, it could happen!* Theoretically, many different things could happen. And you never know until those things take place. If you get ripped off with a big sum of money, you're

going to be upset—really, *really*, *really* upset!—or if someone really does you in; or if you got a boss that's terrible to work with. You still have to be a Christian. You still do the best you can. It may not necessarily be easy. But that's what we're to do.

God will take care of the one. And I can't help but thinking of the Apostle Paul who helped kill Christians before he was converted. Now that's a tough one to do. Would be most difficult, wouldn't it, for you to sit at Paul's feet if he killed one of your children. That would be most difficult. So within the scope of all of these things, yes, this is what we need to be doing. God eventually is going to take care of every one of these things.

To show you how men really get themselves in a pickle, just take on the thing concerning abortion. When men decided that a new, conceived human being is "unviable tissue mass" and is really not a person until it's born and takes it's first breath—now we've got this example in New York City. I don't know how she never knew it. Is it possible for a woman to be eight months pregnant and not know it? Is it really? I can't believe it, but she said she didn't know it. I heard it three or four times. Wow! Wow!

I've heard of this one woman who was really gigantic and she thought she had a tumor and she went the hospital and gave birth to about a 12-lb. baby. She must have been really tremendous in size not to know that she was pregnant. Doesn't the baby kick? Can't you feel the baby kicking? I suppose it's possible. I'll have to say all right we'll give the benefit of doubt; but she went to this doctor to get an abortion at eight months. So then, the doctor botched this thing up and cut off the child's right arm. Subsequently, the baby was born and it's alive and now it's two years old and it's working it's way through the courts. And it's probably going to end up at the Supreme Court.

You see how people get themselves in trouble when they try interfering with God? And try to play God? Now look, all of us, at one time, were an 'unviable tissue mass.' But we're still human beings—right? Now they're confronted with their own logic. Here's a two-year-old girl alive, beautiful and fine and she's missing her right arm. No one asked the question: Why did the mother go and try and have an abortion? If she would have had an abortion nothing would have been in the headlines; but now it's sensational.

So, it's going to make it's way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court's going to have to decide: When does life begin? I can tell you when life begins: *At the instant of conception.* It's got to. If it doesn't then when did you become alive? And most women by time they know they're pregnant, that little, tiny baby at six weeks is fully formed, but

it's one inch long. That's it!

It's going to be interesting to follow this. But you have the whole thing here of going through all of these things, trying to compare this kind of thing with how we ought to act as Christians, and then you go out in the world and you're confronted with all of these contradictions, it's almost insane!

Now they have approved the experimentation on fetal tissue. You see the problems you get into? God never intended any of that! But how far has He let man go? Does the sun still rise on the evil and on the good? Does the rain still come on the just and on the unjust? *Yes!* God is going to work it all out in the long run through His plan as depicted in the Holy Days. God *is* God and He's got to know all these things that go on—right?

A lot of people say, 'Why doesn't God come down and do something and stop it?' He's determined in His mind He's not going to. Because it's not yet in His plan to come down and do that. And when He does, it's going to be absolutely fantastic! And when He does, He's going to come with those that are resurrected, because we, brethren, are living by what's here in the Bible now!

Verse 36: "Therefore, you also be compassionate, *even* as your Father is compassionate." I tell you what—this is so true—and I'll just have to tell you, my family (as you know) we're all kind of independent people, every one of us. I've had some pretty stout words back and forth with my own sons. I found this: the more I try and enforce something upon them, the more resistance that is there—right? *Yes!* I have found the Bible works when you try and be understanding and merciful. You know they're not going to be converted. How many of us as parents bring upon our children the standards of converted Christians. Doesn't work because they're not converted! So I have had to say okay Fred, now what are you going to do? Are you going to be loving and merciful? *or* Are you going to stand there and just shake your fist and say this is right and nothing else will work? *or* Are you going to demonstrate and prove it?

I tell you what, it saved me a lot of grief! What happens when you're fighting with your husband or your wife or your children? I'll tell you what happens, your mind is in turmoil all the time. I'll guarantee it. But when you pray for them, and you try to be loving, and when you try to help and really apply yourself to it, then what happens? Can they respond to that? *Yes!*

What if they're just totally cantankerous and don't respond? Well, they found even the people—these kids on the streets and homeless and everything—what is that they really want? You set aside all their faults and mistakes and everything, what is that they really want? *Want to be accepted*

*and want to be loved!* Isn't that correct? *Yes!*

If God hasn't called people then you accept them and you love them whether they're called or not called, *because that's what we are to do!* Otherwise we've done no different, no different, than a gang of crooks who love each other. A comment was made: It gives them the right to be their own person so they can grow in character. Yes, God has given the freedom of choice to every human being—isn't that correct? *Yes, He has!* And there is no law against stupidity.

We all do stupid things. Aren't you glad you're not alone? Another thing that is true: You can't think for another person. It's impossible! God has given every person life, choice, made us in His image, and unfortunately, we're all sinners. Every one of us! So God has got to call us out of that. And when it comes time for the resurrection I do want to have a talk with Adam and Eve and say, 'Why did you do it?' That I do! But God is greater than Adam and Eve, and God is going to straighten it all out in His time.

We can be thankful that we understand the plan of God to know that those poor, pitiful people, wherever they are in the world, suffering in whatever conditions that they are—whether it's Bosnia, Russia, Africa, India, South America, whatever. And I can't help but thinking every time I see one of these specials on the Mayan Empire—and I've mentioned this before—where it shows row after row after row of skeletons, skulls, stacked one on top of the other. And you think: each one of those were alive one time. And here's this skull, there's another one, and they've dug up thousands of them offered to the gods.

Well, if God is not greater than all the sins of mankind down through history, then God is not God. God is greater and He's going to undo all those things—in His time and in His plan. That's why it's very important that we understand what God is teaching us here.

Let's go back to 1-Peter 3:9, and let's understand a little bit more here. After then we have learned how then not to "...render back evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing..."—even as Jesus did. As I mentioned several times in this series, Jesus said—when they were right in the middle of killing Him—'Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.' Now, you and I, we would say, 'You just wait till I'm resurrected and I'm going to get you.' As human beings that would be our thought, but He didn't.

How can we have the kind of mind and attitude so that we are not following our natural instinct of human nature by rendering back evil for evil or abuse for abuse? Remember that the next time you're on the freeway and stuck! I'll tell you it

works, though. Today I was coming up and I was driving along and here was a guy—I was watching and he was moving over on me, and so I just moved over into the next lane and he never saw me—and he looked over at me like....and I just waved to him. Most other people you get something much more different than a wave!

Here is how to keep your mind on the right thing: "...knowing that you were called to this, **that you should inherit a blessing**" (v 9). All right, let's talk a little bit about the reward and the inheritance that God is going to give. There are two things that you're going to inherit:

1. Personal
2. Possessional—what you will possess

Let's look at these now. Here's what you're going to receive *personally*. Let's go to 1-Corinthians 15 first and then we'll go to Philippians 3. And, brethren, there is no way for us to totally comprehend this blessing, except to say spiritually and intellectually we can understand it.

I had an interesting conversation. I went down to pay my insurance the other day and here was this new secretary in there, and when there's a new secretary I always like to tease them a little bit and I said, 'I was sent in here to get my winning lotto ticket of a million dollars, do you have it?' She said, 'No. If I did I'd have to share it with my husband.' I said, 'Well, that's fine.' And she really had a hassled day. Here you walk in and you see someone with this hassled look about 3:30 in the afternoon, and they're just waiting for five to come so they can...And if you're in front of a government building at five, you better get out of the way, because you're going to get trampled on, because the herd is coming out the door.

So anyway, I knew that would get her attention. And she said, 'Boy, time just seems to be going faster than ever before.' I said, 'Well, it's really true. When you stop and think of it, when you're a year old from one year to two years, that's 50% of your whole life—one year is 50% of your life. And when you're three, that one year is one-third of your life. When you are 70—from 70-71—that's one-seventieth of your life; and so time really goes faster—right? *Yes!*

I remember when I was in third grade I thought I'd never get out. And one reason was that I was so sick so much that I had to take it twice. I thought I would never ever get out of the third grade. But I did. That's why when we're kids, all the distances seem longer and further, and all the time is longer than it really is. And when we get older—and I tell you what, this week went by...and it was gone! It was just flat gone! I got up and I was reading the paper and I felt like Tuesday and it was Thursday,

and I said to my wife, 'Is today Wednesday or Tuesday?' She said, 'No, it's Thursday.'

Then I also said to the secretary, I said, 'Now, try this on for size: God has given every one of us a little bit of eternity.' And she said, 'What do you mean?' And I said, 'You can't think of the time when you didn't exist; and you can't think of a time when you won't exist. Even though you know somewhere along the line you may expire.' And isn't that true? ***That is sure true!***

We are going to inherit a blessing. Here's a tremendous promise. You are walking about with the assurance of that promise, 1-Corinthians 15:49: "And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust... [Do we have a physical body? *Yes!*] ...we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*... [to be as Christ is] ...Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God..." (vs 49-50). We have an inheritance. It's going to be the Kingdom of God; will be *possessional*. And the *possessional* and the *personal* both come at the same time.

"...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vs 50-52). That's the blessing we are seeking for, brethren.

We're going to see that that is going to be a body of glory; and it's going to really be something!

(go to the next track)

You think about this for a minute. It's going to happen, v 52: "In an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." We'll see what that change will be. And we will see how it's going to be. It's not going to be flitting off to heaven, as many people think. It is going to be a dynamic and fantastic spirit life that God is going to give us.

Verse 53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (vs 53-54). And I personally think that God is going to undo every evil that men have perpetrated to destroy human life. And there's one thing that Satan has perpetrated, and that is the thing concerning abortion. And I think God is going to undo all of that, too.

Let's look at the personal blessing that we are going to inherit, Philippians 3:20: "But for us, the [conduct or politics] commonwealth of God

exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ; Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (vs 20-21). That’s going to be something! There isn’t going to be any more argument about the flesh. The flesh is important as long as we’re human beings. But it doesn’t count for spirituality. Let’s see what that’s going to be like.

Let’s go to 1-John, the third chapter. This is the *personal blessing* that we’re going to inherit. And as we mentioned previously, about at that point where He says that you’re going to laugh, you talk about *joy* at that time! That you’re going to have a level of existence that you won’t have to worry about the aches and pains of getting old. You won’t have to worry about getting gray. You won’t have to worry about any of these sort of things, because you’re going to live forever! Now your mind can somewhat comprehend that because of the way that God made it. But here is something that we need to understand of this *personal inheritance*.

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us...” That means it doesn’t understand us. In other words, the world can really not understand what makes you tick the way that you tick, if you have the Spirit of God—that’s what that means.

“...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). How does Christ look? The Catholics say you have the ‘beatific vision’—you go to heaven and you kind of look on the face of God forever. What does the face of God look like? ‘Well, it’s kind of like the glowing of the sun and all this sort of thing. But you can’t really see God, because God is God.’ *NO!* That isn’t what it means or says. We’re going to see Him *as He is!*

Revelation, the first chapter; here’s a picture of the glorified Christ. What is our assurance that this is going to happen? Assurance that it’s going to happen is that if you have the Spirit of God and you have a physical body—which you do—‘as we’ve born the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly.’

Revelation 1:13: “And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in a *garment* reaching to the feet, 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... [That’s a mighty existence—isn’t it? That is something!] ...and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace... [not going to have these old knobby athlete’s feet anymore. You’re going to have feet that have glory!] ...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 went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power” (vs 13-16).

That’s something! That’s the *personal* inheritance that God is going to give us. Hebrews, the second chapter. The *possessional* one is that we are going to inherit, as the children of Abraham, the world! You think on that for a minute. We’ll plug in a couple of other Scriptures with it here.

Hebrews 2:1—it talks about the salvation, it talks about the inheriting the blessing, and so forth: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away**. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected **so great a salvation...**” (vs 1-3)—this is something, brethren, that ‘the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, nor has it come into the mind of man what God has prepared for those that love Him.’ It’s a great salvation!

“...which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will? For *it is* not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking” (vs 3-5). ***We’re going to inherit that!***

Let’s go to Revelation 20—here is the possession that we are going have, plus position. So if you want to put it this way:

- it’s personal
- it’s possessional
- it’s positional

All three! Defines it right here—Revelation 20:6: “Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection...”

- Who only is Holy? *God!*
- Is God also blessed? *Yes!*
- Are we to inherit a blessing? *Yes!*
  - ✓ Personal
  - ✓ Possessional
  - ✓ Positional

So we’ll make it three.

Verse 6: “Blessed and Holy is the one who

has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power.... [You're going to live forever.] (here's the position): ...But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years"—and bring peace to the whole world. That is a short summary of the whole plan of God.

Let's look at the other side of it, because there's still the other side of it—Hebrews 12. And here's the example of someone who gave away his inheritance, which is brought out as just a means for us to understand that what God has called us to is great and so fantastic, brethren.

Hebrews 12:14: "Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking diligently, lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and through this many be defiled; 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 14-17). That's for those of us who are called in this age, that we know that once God has called us then it is for eternal life.

Let's go back to 1-Peter, the third chapter, and we'll finish off with one other section here, concerning the eyes of the Lord. 1-Peter 3:10: "For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days... [and that's all of us projecting forward to the Kingdom of God in reality.] ...let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let Him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it; because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication..." (vs 10-12). Very important!

Now, we know the Scriptures that say that God even knows when a sparrow falls. God keeps very good track of His creation. He knows all the hair on our head. How does God know all of this? Let's go Psalm 33—here's the Psalm that this was taken from. Go ahead and read the whole Psalm there. And you know, the scientists are getting closer to this every day.

Psalm 33:6: "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made... [that's the big bang!] ...and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the people. The counsel of the

LORD stands forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, and the people He has chosen for His own inheritance" (vs 6-12). So, you see how this ties right in with what we just covered.

Verse 13: "The LORD looks down from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men. From His dwelling place He looks intently upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Together He fashions their hearts alike; He considers all their works. The king is not saved by a great army; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall it deliver any by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear Him, upon those who hope in His loving kindness, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine." (vs 13-19).

So, when we get back to answering the question *what if?*—there's the answer right there. We don't know. We can ask *what if?* But we can't project into all circumstances. Only God can take care of those things. God will take care of those things. And we can all relate to one another what God has done to prevent different things from happening to us; or blessing us and watching over us.

Let's go to Revelation, the fifth chapter, and let's see that God has His spirit powers moving on the earth at all times. God knows. And I think that if we really knew how close God's throne was to this earth, we would be surprised. But we can't see it. And everyone is wondering: I wonder what's out there? Well, one of these days when Christ starts coming back to the earth, and they're going to *see!* But right now, here we go:

Revelation 5:6: "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth." What do they do? *We'll see!*

God does a lot of things not involved in just those who are seeking Him. God also helps those who, for even in a minute, pray and say, 'Oh, God, help me!' Now how many remember the hijacking of the TWA plane over there in Beirut, Lebanon? That was what three years ago; four years ago. What happened? The pilot, he had a Bible. He was reading and studying the Bible, and praying like crazy. What happened? Everyone on that plane was praying, 'Oh, God, spare us, deliver us.' Did God hear their prayers? *Yes, they were spared; they were delivered.* Here's how God does it.

2-Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth... [They're not like as eyeballs as we would be as

human beings, and they're sort of out here bumping along on the earth—it doesn't mean that. God is able to see. We can liken it to (as we know today) remote TV cameras. God knows, only He does it a lot better than remote TV cameras.] ...to show Himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him....”—seeking Him.

Now, I remember when I was first being called, I knew absolutely nothing about nothing. And the only thing I understood about grace was that my aunt's name was Grace, and she was a Sunday school teacher. Whenever she would come and visit us she would bring her little felt board class, and I couldn't stand it. So, my feeling toward 'religion' was, always in my mind, my Aunt Grace. And every time I saw her coming, I would always run out in the yard and play and try and get away.

Well, when I was first being called, I remember I was out walking one night—over in San Mateo, going to college at that time—and I looked up and I saw the stars up there and the only thing I could remember was that “God, You made those and You said, ‘Ask and you’ll receive; seek and you’ll find’” and I said, ‘Here I’m asking and I’m seeking’”—now how’s that! That’s the only thing I knew how to do. Obviously, I had no experience in religion at all whatsoever; and yet, God heard that prayer and answered that prayer—right? *Yes, He did!*

Nevertheless, that’s the way it is with God. And there are many people who pray that God answers their prayers and does not necessarily call them. But He answers their prayers because in faith they asked Him. And God is no respecter of persons. But when God calls someone to repentance so that they receive the Holy Spirit, then it’s another whole powerful thing, like this letter we had from that man in Denmark. He said, ‘I’m burning to know what you believe.’ So we sent him a hot package off to help him out there.

1-Kings 15—here it says about David. This is when the division of the kingdom of Israel took place and that’s not the point I want to get to. But here’s what God told Rehoboam concerning his tribe here and why he did what he did. 1-Kings 15:5: “Because **David did that *what was right in the eyes of the LORD***... [God knows!] ...and did not turn aside from all that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” God knows! God won’t forget! God has called us to inherit blessings. His ears are open to our supplication and His eyes are upon us all the time.

Let’s look here at John 14—and we’ll go ahead and we’ll pretty well end it here today. Let me just have you take down these different Scriptures for under the prayers that David gave. Many of the

prayers start out: ‘Hear me, O Lord... Hear my supplications.’ {here are Psalms you can put down in your notes: Psalm 143:1; 55:1; 40:1-4; 64:1}

John 14:13: “And whatever you shall ask in My name...” It has to be legal; it has to be lawful; it has to be right. You’re not going to pray, ‘O God, help me to hold up this bank.’ If that prayer’s answered, it’s not the real God. It’s not going to be: ‘O God, help me to seduce this woman’—who’s not your lawful wife. God is not going to answer that prayer. This ‘whatsoever’ has to mean those things that are right and good.

“...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). It may not be answered instantly. The answer may be a little different than you expect, but **God will do it!**

John 16:23: “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, **He** will give you.” God the Father—the greatest Being in the universe. And that always dumbfounds me! And we pray, all of us pray, but just think of it: That you can get on your knees and pray to God and say, ‘Our Father in heaven...’ and you are in contact with the Ruler of the universe!

I suppose in modern language you could say, ‘Out of sight!’ That is true! That is amazing! And you could ask ‘whatsoever’ and He will give it to you.

Verse 24: “Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.... [v 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, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (vs 24, 26-27).

There, brethren, is the ‘simplicity in Christ’! Yes, it is true, some doctrines and prophecies do get a little complex; and some of these things get a little entangled. But there is the ‘simplicity in Christ’ right there!

So, when you pray—whatever your trouble is, whatever your difficulty is, whatever your problem is, whatever your joy is—you go to God and you pray directly to Him. Because, as Peter said, **‘We have been called to inherit a blessing.’**

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 3:8-12
- 2) Philippians 2:5-8, 1-4
- 3) Matthew 24:4-10
- 4) 1 Peter 3:8-9
- 5) Romans 12:1-2, 9-21
- 6) Luke 6:20-36
- 7) 1 Peter 3:9
- 8) 1 Corinthians 15:49-54
- 9) Philippians 3:20-21
- 10) 1 John 3:1-2
- 11) Revelation 1:13-16
- 12) Hebrews 2:1-5
- 13) Revelation 20:6
- 14) Hebrews 12:14-17
- 15) 1 Peter 3:10-12
- 16) Psalm 33:6-19
- 17) Revelation 5:6
- 18) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 19) 1 Kings 15:5
- 20) John 14:13-14
- 21) John 16:23-24, 26-27

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 5, 6 & 7
- Psalm 143:1; 55:1; 40:1-4; 64:1

Also referenced: Book: *The Christian Passover* by  
Fred R. Coulter

# Epistle of First Peter XI

Fred R. Coulter

We're going to cover essentially the last part of 1-Peter, the third chapter. Let's go back and review just a little bit; let's come to 1-Peter 3:12, and we'll just review this one as a very important Scripture. Of course, I think it's important, brethren, that we do go through these series so that we do not get in a rut as to what I preach; and we don't get into a rut as to what is taught. But it gets our nose into the Bible and of course, as I've said, this translation is not designed as a replacement for the Word of God, but it is designed as a study aid with a wide margin and so forth so it will help you in studying.

1-Peter 3:12: "Because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication...." And that's something we need to really understand and realize that

- God is there to hear
- God is there to help
- God is watching over us

As Jesus said, *the Father is not going to lose one*. And I see that very clearly. God may let us wander for a while. God may let us go hither and yon for a while, but God isn't going to give up on us; because God has such a tremendous plan for all of us to be in the Kingdom of God that He's not going to give up on us at all whatsoever.

"...But the face of the Lord is against those who are practicing evil" (v 12). Do you see how that is? See how that makes it nice and clear? Many times people think that God is not taking into account what the evil people are doing. But God is!

Let's go to the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter eight. There are two things involved with God when we're talking about people that do evil. Sometimes the punishment is immediate. Sometimes it's not. God wants to know what's in the heart. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. So, when we look at all of these things that are happening, we have to keep all of that in mind when we look at the world around us. But here is a truism:

Ecclesiastes 8:11: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily... [people think they get away with it] ...therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." When you tie all of these things together, sooner or later they are going to have to 'face the music,' so to speak. *God knows!* God knows those who are practicing evil. God is hoping that the wicked will repent. After all, that's the whole purpose in all of it—isn't it? You go back and you can tie in that also with the parable of the prodigal son.

Now those of us who are sinners like to cling on to the part when we come back to God He's there

to help us, but there's another side of the story, too. The other son should have been just as happy that the brother repented; but instead, he got mad and said, 'Well, hey, I've been here all the time doing all this and you never had a banquet for me.' The father said, 'Son, you're ever with me.' It didn't take away from the other son's inheritance at all. Sometimes we get that way toward people in the world when we see evil going on. In self-righteous indignation I've said it. How could they do that? Well, they could. God knows. He'll take care of it. Maybe they will be so miserable in what they're doing that they'll repent to God. So let's hope that that may be the case.

We'll cover 1-Peter 3:13-18 and then come back. "And *is there* anyone who will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good? Now on the other hand, if you do undergo suffering for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed.... [Many times it's not going to feel that when we're going through it.] ...But you should not be afraid of their terror, *and* you should not let yourselves be intimidated... [very interesting Greek word there] ...but sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you, with meekness and reverence; having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak against you as evil doers, those who are reviling your good way of life in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, *for you* to suffer while doing good than to *suffer for* doing evil; because Christ indeed once suffered for sins, *the* Just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God—on the one hand, having been put to death in the flesh; but on the other hand, made alive by the Spirit."

Let's pick up some different Scriptures that tie right in with that. Psalm 56 is a tremendous Psalm, and lots of times, brethren, if your prayers get stale or things get tough or whatever it may be, go to the Psalms and use those in your prayers—to start out your prayers—and that will be real helpful for you. Here's a tremendous prayer which I think has a lot to do with the very ministry of Christ and the things that He went through and the things that happened to Him.

Lot's of times we get the opinion that it was pretty easy for Jesus. But when you read back there in the Heb. 5 that He had to cry out with prayers with strong cryings to Him Who was able to save Him from death. Though He were a Son, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Think of it this way, Jesus—Who was perfect—must have suffered every day by the things that He saw going on.

Think of Christ when we read this Psalm 56:1: “Be gracious unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up; fighting all the day, he oppresses me.... [I don’t know of anyone who’s gone through it that way except Christ.] ...Those who lie in wait for me would trample me, for many are those who proudly fight against me. When I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God—I will praise His word—in God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?” (vs 1-4).

We can tie in several things there: John 6:63: ‘The flesh profits nothing.’ There may be people who can do things to you, but what difference is that going to make in the long run, when you really consider it. We’re coming into some pretty tough times, and we can see it all around us. When the general society as a whole does not follow the precepts of the Word of God you end up with people out there trying to establish their own righteousness, and you end up with more things like the Waco problem—or some other problems. We don’t have to fear what flesh can do to us.

Verse 5: “All day long they pervert my words... [twist the words of Christ] ...all their thoughts are against me for evil.” You go back and look at the confrontation that Jesus had just before He was crucified, when He came to the temple and the Pharisees came and tempted Him and the Sadducees came and tempted Him. They tried to kill Him. They wanted to stone Him. They wanted to arrest Him. They wanted to find Him in some kind of evil. Even His disciples couldn’t go through the field and just pluck up some near ripe grain and just rub it in their hands and eat it without the Pharisees coming along and saying, ‘Your disciples are harvesting on the Sabbath.’ He had it pretty tough.

Verse 6: “They stir up strife; they hide themselves; they watch my steps as they wait for my soul. Because of iniquity cast them out.... [Are they going to get away with this in the long run.] ...In Your anger cast down the people, O God. You number my wanderings, O put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book?” (vs 6-8).

This is David going through this Psalm, so we’re kind of going in and out of David’s experience personally, and the prophecies referring to Christ. Obviously, we don’t want to go around and when we have something where we really cry, we put a little bottle up to our eyes and we catch the tears and then we can hold it up and say, ‘Lord, I have suffered.’ It doesn’t mean that. This is a metaphor that God doesn’t let any of the tears escape Him. God doesn’t let any of the tears escape Him. **He knows! He knows!**

Verse 9: “When I cry out to You, then my enemies will be turned back. This I know because God is for me.” Always understand that:

- God is for you!
- God loves you!
- God has called you!
- You have a tremendous purpose!

Verse 10: In God—I will praise His Word; in the LORD—I will praise His Word. In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Your vows are upon me, O God; I will give thank offerings to You, for You have delivered my soul from death. Have You not kept my feet from falling, so that I may walk before God in the light of the living?” (vs 10-13). That’s a tremendous Psalm!

Let’s go to Matthew, the tenth chapter, and see how this applies. Here’s a Scripture that we have known and gone over quite a few times. This really helps us. This should help us in everything that we do; because I’ll tell you what: Lot’s of times we get to thinking that only in our lives do we have trouble. But I tell you what, the lives of almost everyone in the world has trouble today. So we can have strong confidence in God’s way. We can have strong confidence that God knows.

Matthew 10:28: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life; rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna.... [then Jesus adds]: ...Are not two sparrows sold for a coin? And yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father *taking account of it*.... [That means *without His knowledge*. So God knows!] ...But even the hairs of your head are all numbered” (vs 28-30). In other words, when it says that the eyes of God are upon the righteous, it’s not for hair-counting. But it is that God knows you so well, and is involved in your life so deeply that He knows that, and He knows our every thought. That’s why we can have this kind of courage that Peter’s talking about.

Let’s go to Isaiah 50:7, and here again is a tremendous section of Scripture. And I’ll tell you what, my experience has been that God will get you into a position in your life sooner or later, somewhere sometime, to where your only help is God; to where you feel that there’s absolutely nothing left in your life but to go on your knees before God because there’s nothing else you can do. When that happens, you feel pretty miserable. I know I did; and have. God doesn’t feel miserable because He’s there to help you. **God is there to help you!**

Isaiah 50:7: “For the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore I have not been disgraced. On account of this I have set My face like a flint...” Not in stubbornness against God, but in the strength and power of God’s Spirit, that **if God is for you nothing can be against you**. Just put in your margin Rom. 8. I’ll let you study that and add to it.

“...and I know that I shall not be ashamed. *He is* near who justifies Me... [God is always there to help] ... who will contend with Me? Let us stand together; who *is* My adversary? Let him come near Me” (vs 7-8).

I’ve just been lambasted by those who disagree with the Passover book. I’ve been called the agent of Satan the devil, spreading lies to the brethren. But I do know that what I wrote stands the test of God’s Word. I’m not going to be concerned what they say or do. Jesus said that ‘if they call Me—referring to Himself—Beelzebub, how much more are they going to call those of the household.’ It doesn’t do any good to throw accusations back and forth because that isn’t going to solve anything. What’s going to solve the problem is getting our noses in God’s Word.

“...who *is* he *who* shall condemn Me? Lo, they all shall grow old like a garment; the moth shall eat them. Who among you fears the LORD, who obeys the voice of His servant, who walks *in* darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely upon his God. Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who gird yourselves *with* firebrands; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks which you have kindled.... [This is saying: your own work, your own thing that you are doing.] ...This you shall have of My hand—you shall lie down in sorrow” (vs 8-11). In the long run, God is going to turn it to the good!

Isaiah 51:1—because it follows right along; here’s some more encouragement for us: “Hearken to Me, you who follow after righteousness, you who seek the LORD: Look to the rock *from which* you were cut... [Who’s that Rock? *Christ!* And did not Peter say we are to be lively stones cut out from the Rock? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and to the hole of the pit *from which* you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah *who* bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and made him many.’ For the LORD shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places...” (vs 1-3)—and then it goes into the redemption that comes when Christ returns. So those are some tremendous Psalms for us.

So, the whole lesson of 1-Pet. 3:13 is that no one can harm you if you follow God. No one can under any circumstances! Don’t let yourself be all put down over it. 1-Peter 3:14: “Now on the other hand, if you do undergo suffering for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed...” There are blessings. It doesn’t feel like a blessing when you’re going through it—does it?

There are the whole blessings that are given in the book of Matthew and we’ll cover all those when we do the survey in the book of Matthew; but it’s going to be exciting as can be, brethren; and it’s going to really just increase our faith into what God

has done with the New Testament; the whole thing that Christ has done and the apostles have done. It’s going to be really exciting.

Matthew 5:10: “Blessed *are* those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when they shall reproach you, and shall persecute you, and shall falsely say every wicked thing against you, for My sake. Rejoice and be filled with joy, for great *is* your reward in heaven; for in this same manner they persecuted the prophets who *were* before you” (vs 10-12). So we have that as a tremendous thing, brethren.

Out of it we’re going to learn a lesson. Why should those things happen to you? Why would God put you in a position that those things would happen to you?

1. Because we’re not of the world
2. God has called us
3. Christ has suffered before us

But, we all have something to learn very deeply.

Verse 43: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you” (vs 43-44). That’s hard to do. That’s the hardest thing in the world to do. For sports fans it’s real hard. When your team loses you don’t say *hooray!* You’re looking for heads to roll—right? It’s not in our nature to do this, unless we have the Spirit of God. That’s why we’re put in positions sometimes where we’re going to have the opportunity to love our enemies.

“...and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect” (vs 44-48).

So there’s the whole goal! You might tie that in with Eph. 4:17 where it’s the ‘fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ.’ Now, I’m going to ask you a question and before you answer it, I want you to think about it. What are the love commandments in the New Testament, and what should be the order of them; what is the order that they should be? It’s not very tricky; but it sounds tricky! We just read one of them. And the first one is ‘love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.’ We’ll cover something which is very fundamental;

so I'll cover it because of these things. 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... [That's the first one. The second one however, has been bumped down to number three by Jesus' own words.] ...And *the* second *one* is like it... [if you don't like us to bump it down to number three, keep it number two] ...'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (vs 37-39). Now we've got three of them:

1. Love your enemies
2. Love God
3. Love your neighbor
4. Love the brethren

'You shall love each other as I have loved you' (John 13:33-34; 15:9-12). Those are the four love commandments in the New Testament.

Verse 40 is a key verse: "**On these two commandments hang...** [and that means *are suspended downward from*] ...**all the Law and the Prophets.**" A very key, fundamental thing concerning law is: ***you cannot have law without love!*** Love must come first so that you can have the proper laws. What happens when you don't have the proper love? *You end up with the improper laws!* When we get into a little study of Judaism you will see how that happened. Just a little review here to keep that in mind.

When your children were growing up—since most of us have children that are growing up or nearly grown up—why did you have the rules for your children that you had? *Because you love them*—right? You could say that was the law of your parenting—correct? Did you, at any time, contrive in your mind toward your own children anything that was not based on love, even the correction as severe as it may have to have been? *No!* I don't know of any. Does that mean you're free from mistakes? *No!* We all look back and we can see that we should do what we should have done. Can God overcome those? *Yes, He can!* But did you not do everything that you did. Did I not do everything that I did for my children, because I love them? *Yes!* That's why ***you cannot have law without love!*** Very profound and fundamental thing that we need to understand.

Let's go back to the book of 1-Peter 3:14: "Now on the other hand, if you do undergo suffering for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. But you should not be afraid of their terror... [you don't have to go around and be afraid and intimidated by this world or people around you. Some people go around and they're just paranoid of fear. Don't be that way.] ...and you should not let yourselves be intimidated." That's a very key, important thing here, too. That doesn't mean that you rise up and be smart-aleck about anything. But you're not to be

intimidated. ***Don't let the world intimidate you, what you believe. Don't be intimidated by circumstances;*** especially today, get the psychological grip over you to manipulate you and intimidate you. That's what that means: ***don't be intimidated!***

But, instead of that, do this, v 15: "But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you, and meekness and reverence." That's why it's important that the minister always teach the brethren, because how are you going to answer unless you know? How is the minister going to be able to teach unless he grows in grace and knowledge, too? That's got to be. You can't have a set of doctrines that's approved by a doctrinal board, and we all agree with this—basic doctrine, that's true, but then do we remain static and never grow in grace and knowledge and understanding? *No! We're to constantly grow in grace and knowledge!* Be ready to give that answer!

Let's go to John 14:1—here we go about not fearing and not being intimidated. We can just put this verse in here. "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me." So, if you believe in Jesus Christ you don't have worry; you don't have to be fearful; you don't have to let anyone put you down; you don't have to let anyone shove you around. You don't have to rise up in rebellion against them or come at them with a fist in the face—that's not the point.

I saw a report on something: A man got real angry one time and turned around and busted this fellow in the jaw. He hit him so hard that it knocked the jaw loose and it went up and pierced his brain and he died. I thought, man! Just one angry burst! Poor guy had to do some jail time. But if he would not have allowed himself to be fearful and be intimidated that wouldn't happen.

Let's go to Psalm 26:1—again, there's so many of these Psalms that tie in with it. When you study Peter, there are an awful lot of Psalms that are in there, if we always put ourselves in God's hands.

Psalm 26:1: "Judge me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity. I have trusted also in the LORD without wavering. Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart, for Your loving kindness is before my eyes; and I have walked in Your Truth. I have not sat with deceitful men, neither will I go in with hypocrites. I have hated the congregation of evildoers and will not sit with the wicked.... [here's one that has to do with Christ]: ...I will wash my hands in innocence; so I will go about Your altar, O LORD" (vs 1-6). If we can have that kind of confidence. There it is in hating the evildoers, that doesn't take away from loving your enemies. You hate what they do, but you love them.

Here's a tremendous Psalm which also has been composed into a really magnificent song. You've probably heard it. You've probably even sung it. Psalm 27:1: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid... [Notice, no intimidation here at all. Nothing but faith and confidence in God.] ...though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident. One thing I have desired from the LORD, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple" (vs 1-4).

Now, if you take this verse and expand it out, brethren, to the whole plan of God, to be with God; then this just opens up this Psalm really tremendously. Then it goes on here—v 5: "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me upon a Rock." And, of course, *that Rock is Christ*. So that's really tremendous.

Verse 14: "Wait for the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall make your heart strong; yea, wait, I say, *wait* on the LORD."

Psalm 28:1: "I will cry to You, O LORD; my Rock, do not be silent to me, lest, if You be silent to me, I become like those who go down into the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry to You, when I lift up my hands toward Your Holy place. Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, who speak peace to their neighbors, yet evil is in their hearts" (vs 1-3).

Verse 7: "The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped. Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him. The LORD is their strength, and He is the saving strength of His anointed. Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them forever" (vs 7-9).

Those are some real Psalms that we need; helps strengthen us. I tell you what, we're just (in some ways) kind of battered and bruised by this world and everything around us. Put in your notes Matt. 10: that when you give the answer it's going to be the Father in you Who speaks. It's going to be the Father Who going to inspire you to speak. How can you give an answer unless you know the Word of God? How can you have God inspire you if you don't have His Word in your mind? That's how God is going to inspire us; because we have His Word in our mind.

Let's go to Ephesians, the third chapter, and we will see the whole purpose, the whole goal of what our heart is to become. And in a sense, if we

can use an analogy, if we grow up in Christ to the fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ, we have a very unique thing, which I will call *dependent independence*. The more you depend upon God the more independent your behavior becomes. What do I mean by that? Sounds like a contradiction in terms, but it's not. ***The more Christ is able to rule in your heart and in your mind because you are relying on Christ!*** So therefore, your behavior becomes more independent because of Christ in you and someone doesn't have to come along and tell you do this and do that and do the other thing. That's the whole goal of Christianity.

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; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith..." Now that, brethren, is how you can give an answer for the hope that lies within your heart—***by having Christ in your heart—and being rooted and grounded in love***. So it all fits together really tremendously. That's how we're able to give the answer. That's how it's able to be done.

1-Peter 1:16: "Having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak against you evildoers, those who are reviling your good way of life in Christ may be ashamed."

(go to the next track)

Verse 17: "For it is better, if it is the will of God..." Some people like to go out and shove a spiritual fist in people's faces—and they get persecuted—which is not the will of God. They're getting back what they've shoved out. That isn't what God wants us to do.

For example: What good would it do to turn people to Christ if you unilaterally ran around your neighborhood and, on Christmas Eve, sought to go into every house and destroy their Christmas trees? Then you're taking a *righteous fist*, as it were, and shoving it in their face. So any persecution you would get from that you deserve. God's way is not that way.

"...if it is the will of God, *for you* to suffer while doing good... [then it's for your *doing good*, not out trying to do evil to correct someone to try and make them do good.] ...than to *suffer for* doing evil. Because Christ indeed once suffered for sins, *the Just for the unjust*, so that He might bring us to God—on the one hand, having been put to death in the flesh; but on the other hand, made alive by the Spirit; by which He went and preached to the spirits in prison.... [the way I've translated it brings it into its proper context here and what it means in the Greek] ...*which* disobeyed in a past time, when once the long-suffering of God was waiting in the days of Noah, *while* the ark was being prepared..." (vs 17-20). That's when Jesus, as a spirit being—the Lord

God of the Old Testament—went and preached to the spirits in prison. There are several other Scriptures we can tie in here.

Let's put in there 2-Peter 2:4: "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned... [Here's where basic Scriptures help us a lot. What is sin? *Sin is the transgression of the law*. When they sinned, they went against the laws of God.] ...but, having cast them into Tartarus [hell]... [the Greek there: 'tartaro' which is *a place of restraint*] ...delivered them into chains of darkness to be kept for *the judgment*." When they sinned, He cast them down. Why did He cast them down? What was their sin?

Jude 6—ties right in with the same thing: "And the angels who did not keep their own original domain, but deserted their habitation, He is holding in eternal bonds under darkness unto the judgment of *the great day*." The angels didn't want to do the will of God. They weren't willing to accept what God had for them. Then we tie in there Rev. 12, and when they rebelled a third of them went with Satan the devil. Lots of times when we think of that, we say, 'How did that happen?' Probably the same way that happens within the Church. You set up a hierarchy and then the hierarchy says *trust me*—instead of trusting God. So Satan put himself between God and the other angels and said, 'Now, I'll talk to God, you talk to me, and I'll tell you what God says.' So they rebelled.

Revelation 12:4: "And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth...." This is that 'great red dragon'—v 9 says it's Satan the devil. We all know the basic Scriptures of Isa. 14 and Ezek. 28—we won't turn there. But when the ark was being built God gave them a witness personally. Jesus Christ, at that time, was the Lord God of the Old Testament; was a spirit being. He went to this 'place of restraint' that you could only get to as a spirit being. Now exactly where that is I don't know. I don't particularly care to want to know. I don't want to go there. Some say it's the bottomless abyss—maybe.

Here's when He went, when the ark was being built. Here's the condition that they brought the whole world, as one of the factors that Jesus says it's going to be like just before He returns. Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually." That's really a state of affairs!—isn't it?

I got this article—April 12<sup>th</sup>, *Time Magazine*—about this new computer thing that's going to happen. And it's going to happen! Boy, they're going to have it. You can have it coming in your house; 500 television channels. I mean, think of it! If you're mind is going 'coo-coo' over 12 or 14 or 20, think what it's going to be with 500 coming into

your house by a fiber optic, which is a glass wire. Now that sounds contradictory, but it's really something. They will also have books, magazines, articles—anything you want. You can sit in your home and never have to move. You can order anything. Just call up and dial it in—and it'll even talk back to you. Imagine that! You're bored to death with your computer, you can sit there and say, 'Computer, talk with me.' *Yeah, what do you want to talk about?*

I thought about this: Try and combine this what we have today, every sort of evil can come through that. If you think there's evil now with the channels we have, think what it's going to be with 500! But it's going to give an opportunity to preach the Gospel more, too—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* So you can have an opportunity to hear the Gospel or watch live pornography taking place right on the TV. Maybe even watch demonism, Satan-worship, the whole thing.

God is going to have it so that mankind is not going to say, 'God, why did You come and destroy this earth? Why did You send Christ back here?' God is going to let everyone, I think, come to a point that in this world, in their rebellion against God and all their evil and the imagination of their thoughts, everyone is going to feel so important that he or she is going to feel that each one is a god. Now, maybe I've overstated it, but I can see it happening!

Are the kids spoiled today? *Oh yes they are!* I went into Burger King to get a hamburger—I still like the hamburgers—and here was this little kid in there with his father. Spoiled brat! Wanting his own way! I thought: What can you teach a kid like that? What is a kid like this going to learn? I kind of looked at him and I thought if he were mine I'd tell him, be still. But he wasn't mine so I didn't dare do that, I might get the fist in my mouth.

But I thought: What is that generation going to be satisfied with? *Nothing but being made to be wholly satiated with everything that you could possibly do to the mind and the body!* Now, maybe I've overstated it, but I tell you what, it's got to be something so fantastic that they're willing to fight Christ when He returns. So therefore, brethren, you can be absolutely sure that there is no reforming of this world—it is bound to be destroyed. So when Jesus went there He was saying, 'Now look what you've done with this whole world. Everyone is evil. Everyone except Noah.' He probably told him what their situation was going to be.

Let's come back to 1-Peter 3:20: "...while the ark was being prepared... [that's when He went there] ...into which a few—that is, eight souls—were saved through water; of which *a* like fulfillment *is* baptism..." (vs 20-21). You can put in

there Rom. 6, the whole thing of baptism and we're 'co-joined in His death; we're to be co-joined in the newness of life.'

"...of which *a* like fulfillment *is* baptism, *and* is now also saving us—not the removal of *the* filth... [the *King James* has 'filth' and that is equal to dirt. But after going through and studying this and understanding what it really means, it's not the removing of dirt in a cleansing like a bath, but it is] ...the removal the flesh... [which is a reference to circumcision. Why?] ...but an appeal to God for a good conscience... [circumcision of the heart] ...by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (v 21). That should read 'the filth of the flesh,' referring to circumcision.

Since I covered it recently in some sermons, we'll just put it in here for the sake of study and for the notes. We're to be circumcised where? *In our hearts!* Deut. 10:16: 'Be circumcised therefore in the foreskin of your heart.' Rom. 2:28-29: 'The circumcision of the heart'—not the flesh. Col. 2:11<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: 'In the circumcision of Christ not made with hands.' That's what it has to do, which then does what Peter says here, the last part of 1-Peter 3:21: "...but an appeal to God for a good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Why is that important? Why does he key it on the resurrection of Christ? *Because Christ had to rise and ascend to heaven to be our High Priest at the right hand of God!* I'll just have to mention, brethren, that about six or seven years ago I started the series in 1-Corinthians and since none of those problems applied to the Church, this congregation, I suspended it after we got into about eight chapters. But I'll tell you what, we're going to understand and discover why these heresies were there. Carl Franklin's doing some research for us on it; but as I mentioned, there was the Pharisaical problem, the Sadducee problem, the priest problem, the circumcision problem. All these heresies reflect on those different things. If you're a Sadducee and you don't believe in the resurrection, then you're going to heaven—right? *Never do it!*

I often wondered this: How was it that the Church of God had people in their preaching that 'the dead don't rise'? When the whole thing of Christ is based on the resurrection of Christ—right? Never could figure that out. I think maybe we'll be able to understand that now.

1-Corinthians 15:12: "But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you... [there in that congregation preaching] ...are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead? For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain" (vs 12-14). That's why Peter is referring to it here in 1-Pet. 3—that Christ

had to ascend to the right hand of the Father for the forgiveness of our sins, but also for eternal life.

And he says, v 15: "And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised. For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins" (vs 15-17).

Peter is referring to this. So, the only way we can have a good conscience is by the resurrection of Christ. 1-Peter 3:22: "Who has gone into heaven *and* is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been *put in* subjection to Him."

Verse 21: "...but an appeal to God for a good conscience [circumcision of the heart] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Who has gone into heaven *and* is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been *put in* subjection to Him" (vs 21-22).

Now, brethren, we're going to see that with Christ at the right hand of God that this is a tremendous thing for us; and that we need to understand and realize more fully how much God is for us (in spite of the circumstances around us) and how much God's calling really means to us. So let's go back to Isaiah 48 and see what it means to be "at the right hand of God." Why is that so important and what does that have to with us; and what does that have to do with what God is doing in our lives.

Isaiah 48:12: "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob and Israel, My called..." That's an interesting phraseology—isn't it? We know that Jacob's name was changed to Israel, so why would both be used here? Here's just a thought: Perhaps 'O Jacob' refers to the 12 tribes of Israel and 'Israel' can refer to the Church, the new Israel. Now that's not a dogmatic statement, it's just something that perhaps it could be. But it's interesting that it gives both here: "O Jacob and Israel, My called..." You can go back and review:

- God's calling
- that none comes to Christ except the Father draw him
- that we are to be called
- we are the elected
- we are the selected

How great God's plan is that we have been chosen in particularly by God the Father. "...I *am* He... [or I am the One—that is the One Who is God.] ...I *am* the first, I also *am* the last." That ties in with several things.

Let's go to Revelation, the first chapter, because we find that this identifies Jesus Christ. This identifies that the One Who was the Lord God of the

Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ. Revelation 1:5—and this then is greetings: “From Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness...” ‘Witness’ is a very interesting word in the Greek: ‘*martus*’ which can also mean *martyr*—not only a *witness* but a *martyr*. This applies, both, to Jesus Christ. He was faithful, He was a witness, and He was a martyr.

“...the Firstborn...” [The Greek there is not ‘*monogenes*’ which would be *begotten*, but it is ‘*prototokos*’ which is *firstborn*] ...from the dead... [and everything that we do, brethren, is keyed by the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead] ...and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us...” (v 5). We need to understand how much Jesus Christ loved us by understanding that He willingly suffered everything that He went through and endured the suffering of death on the cross ‘for the joy that was set before Him.’

“...and washed us from our sins in His own blood... [You know and understand that no other sacrifice can do what the sacrifice of Jesus Christ does. So it had to be with His own blood.] ...and has made us kings and priests to God and His Father...” (vs 5-6). Of course, that’s the future office that we are going to hold; but He is referring to it as already done because He looks at the ‘things which are not as though they are; and the things that shall be as though it has already occurred.’

If you are faithful and if you love God, and if you respond to Him, it is as good as done. Now, that doesn’t mean we go to the extreme in this life and say, ‘Well now, I’m going to practice being a king and a priest and I’m going to become a little tyrant around here and be an egocentric and take everything to myself and lord it over everybody.’ Doesn’t mean that at all, brethren. No one’s going to be a king or priest with Jesus Christ unless they learn humility. When you really truly understand it, the most humble being in the universe is God! So we need to keep our perspective on that.

Verse 6: “...to Him *be* the glory and the sovereignty into the ages of eternity. Amen.” Now, it’s interesting in the Greek, because there are going to be ages in the eternity to come. There are going to be ages in which we are going to be doing things as the very sons of God. The first of that age is going to be *The Millennium Age*—we already know that. Then there’s going to be the age of the resurrection of the unjust, and the resurrection of the incorrigible wicked. And then there’s going to come New Jerusalem down out of heaven, which then begins a whole new age in eternity. So wherever you see ‘forever and ever’ just translate that into ‘the ages of eternity.’

Verse 7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and **every eye shall see Him...**” It makes

you wonder why that some people preached there’s going to be an ‘unseen’ hand from nowhere which is going to save the world. The truth is, when you don’t preach Jesus Christ, you preach another Gospel. And if you preach an ‘unseen hand’ you’re preaching another gospel—because *every eye* shall see Him.

“...and those who pierced Him... [which includes every human being on earth, because it is our sins that killed Him] ...and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen” (v 7). Now when you see ‘even so, Amen’ that is a dogmatic affirmation that we can say, in modern English in slang today, means *you can count on it absolutely!*

Now notice, how Isa. 48 ties in with v 8: “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the Ending,*’ says the Lord... [Not only was He the One Who is—where it says back there in Isa. 48, ‘I am the One.’ Well, now Jesus has expanded that title out even more because of His first coming.] ...‘Who is... [currently existing] ...and Who was... [Jesus Christ in the flesh and the Lord God of the Old Testament] ...and Who *is* to come... [the returning Christ in power and glory] ...—**the Almighty.**”

The beautiful part about studying the Bible is that when you truly study it, and you sight it for what the Bible teaches—and as Peter said, ‘the Scriptures are of no private interpretation,’ but you let the Scriptures interpret itself—you will find that the Bible does not contradict itself. It is all wonderfully and wholly and fantastically and spiritually put together so that we can grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and understand what God has for us.

Now, let’s go back to Isaiah 48, and let’s see what ‘the right hand of God’ means. This ought to give us an inkling of the power of the authority of the absoluteness of God and His Word—what He’s going to do.

Isaiah 48:12: “...*I am* the first, I also *am* the last. My hand also has laid the foundation of the earth... [we know this all very well and we’ve memorized it, but put in your margin: John 1:1-3] ...and My right hand has stretched out the heavens...” (vs 12-13). Just imagine in your greatest imaginations Christ standing in the universe and saying, ‘Let there be the stars’—and just put His hand out and they just, with the power of His Spirit coming out of His mouth and from His hand they were created in the vastness of the universe. That’s why Peter says that He’s at the right hand of God. That’s a very powerful thing for us. It’s very powerful for us to understand this in relationship to

- what God is doing *for* us
- what God is doing *through* us
- what God is doing *in* us

- being able to come to God in prayer
- being able to come to God and understand His Word

Remember what Jesus said just before He left the disciples. Let's go to Matthew 28, and let's see the parting remarks that Matthew recorded concerning Jesus Christ. We're going to see that it's profound.

It really makes you wonder how it is that we can get ourselves in to such spiritually weak conditions; or lazy conditions; or lethargic conditions; or whatever it is and we're just sort of oh-hum. 'I know I need to pray'—but don't. 'I wish God would bless me, but somehow He doesn't.' Well, part of that has to do with our faith and our reaction in our response to God. Because if we have this in mind, what I'm covering here right now, then we don't have to go to God with that kind of attitude, with that kind of weakness, with that kind of sniveling, human whiny character.

Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came *and* spoke to them... [He's talking to the disciples—and there are even some that doubted it (v 17).] ...saying, '**All authority**... [Which means the authority over everything that there is, that God the Father has given Christ to do] ...**in heaven and on earth** has been given to Me.'

- Do we lack anything?
- Do we have someone who cannot answer our prayers?
- Do we have someone who does not know us?

*NO! We have Someone Who has the power, Who can answer our prayers*—and that's why Peter said that 'He [Christ] is at the right hand of God.' And he said that 'angels and authorities and powers having been put in subjection to Him.'

Now, let's go back to Isaiah 48:13, again: "My hand also has laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand has stretched out the heavens. When I call they stand up together." We're going to see that in Hebrews, the first chapter, in just a little bit—the very power of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 110—because here is one of the most powerful things that was preached by the apostles. And this is the thing that just drove the religious leaders and the priest and the Pharisees and the scribes absolutely nuts. Every time they heard it they gnashed their teeth. This is a pretty profound verse, and we're going to see that Peter preached it all of the time.

Psalms 110:1: "The LORD [Yahweh] said unto my Lord..." Adoni—so this is one of the two or three references in the Old Testament which reveal an inkling of God the Father. The Old Testament does not reveal God the Father, they did not know God the Father until Christ came and

revealed Him. But here's one place which gives an inkling above and beyond; so there is more than one personage in the Godhead or God Family.

"... 'Sit you at My right hand...' The right hand is symbolic of power, of authority, of work, of creation and all of those things have to do with the right hand. It has nothing to do with discrimination against left-handers. So, if anybody out there is left-handed don't feel bad. God made you left-handed, so don't worry about it. What we're saying here is that the right hand is symbolic of all of this power. ...until I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Now, that ties directly in with 1-Corinthians 15—let's go there and see that the Apostle Paul preached exactly the same thing. When you really understand the Bible, when you put it together, when you really put everything the way that it should be, Paul and Peter and James and John and Luke and Mark and Matthew all preached the same Gospel—without a doubt. Maybe using different words, they all preached the Gospel.

1-Corinthians 15:20: "But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ *the* firstfruit... [that's symbolized by the Wave-sheaf offering] ...then, those who are Christ's at His coming" (vs 20-23). So this shows very clearly:

1. no one has gone to heaven
2. no one has been resurrected to immortality
3. no one will be until Christ returns

Verse 24: "Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. *The* last enemy *to be* destroyed *is* death. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who put all things in subjection under Him. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him... [Jesus said, 'My Father is greater than I.'] ...so that God may be all in all" (vs 24-28). This 'all' has to do with the power of Christ at the right hand of God.

Let's go back to the book of Daniel 7 and let's see another reference referring to Christ, referring to the only other reference in the Old Testament which gives then an allusion to God the Father. Then we will see how Christ Himself even used this speaking of Himself. And we will see that the scribes and the Pharisees understood what Jesus

was saying when He said this. Let's look at this very carefully. And for quoting this and applying it to Himself was one of the main reasons that the priests and the Sadducees said 'He is blaspheming; He is worthy of death.' So they understood this Scripture, but they did not understand that it applied to Christ.

Daniel 7:13: "I saw visions in the night and, behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days..." 'Son of man' refers to Christ—He referred to Himself as 'the Son of man' over and over and over again as we find in the Gospel accounts. And the 'Ancient of Days' refers to God the Father. But God the Father was not revealed in any other places than these two: Psa. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13. They didn't know about God the Father. The only thing they knew about was Yahweh or Elohim or El Shaddai or one of the other names of God that He used in the Old Covenant.

"...and they brought Him near before Him. And dominion and glory was given to Him, and a kingdom..." (vs 13-14). This is when Christ receives the Kingdom. This is fulfilled when? *When Christ returns!* How does He come? *In the clouds!* That's why it says 'with the clouds of heaven.' And when does He receive these kingdoms? *At the last trumpet!* (Rev. 11).

And it's going to be "...that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, **which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed**" (v 14).

Brethren, our calling is absolutely fantastic! A little later, as we get into some other things, I will prove to you that **religion is not of God**. 'Religion' is by people to show their goodness. God's way and God's calling is a way of life; and **God has given us the greatest hope and the greatest goals and the greatest calling that possibly could be!** We need to keep that in mind.

Let's go to Luke 22:66 and let's see what happened when Jesus Christ referred to Himself as the Son of man coming with the clouds of glory. And this absolutely (if you could say anything) set a fire in the elders and chief priests and the scribes—they could not contain themselves.

Luke 22:66: "Now as soon as it was day, the elders of the people assembled together, *with both the chief priests and the scribes*, and they led Him into their Sanhedrin... [an abbreviated form] ...saying, 'If You are the Christ, tell us.' And He said to them, 'If I should tell you, you would not believe *Me* at all; and if I should also ask *you*, you would not answer Me at all, nor let *Me* go. Hereafter shall the Son of man be sitting at *the* right hand of the power of God.'.... [Isn't that something!] ...And

they all said, 'Then You are the Son of God?' And He said to them, 'I am that *one, as you say*'" (vs 66-70). In other words, if we could rephrase that just a little bit: 'You have just said that I am.'

Notice their reaction, v 71: "Then they said, 'What need do we have of any other witness? For we ourselves have heard from His *own* mouth.'" It records in one of the other places where the high priest ripped his clothing. Many people don't really understand the powerful thing that was, when the high priest ripped his clothing.

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

✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 3:12
- 2) Ecclesiastes 8:11
- 3) 1 Peter 3:13-18
- 4) Psalm 56:1-13
- 5) Matthew 10:28-30
- 6) Isaiah 50:7-11
- 7) Isaiah 51:1-3
- 8) 1 Peter 3:14
- 9) Matthew 5:10-12, 43-48
- 10) Matthew 22:37-40
- 11) 1 Peter 3:14-15
- 12) John 14:1
- 13) Psalm 26:1-6
- 14) Psalm 27:1-5, 14
- 15) Psalm 28:1-3, 7-9
- 16) Ephesians 3:16
- 17) 1 Peter 1:16-20
- 18) 2 Peter 2:4
- 19) Jude 6
- 20) Revelation 12:4
- 21) Genesis 6:5
- 22) 1 Peter 3:20-21
- 23) 1 Corinthians 15:12-17
- 24) 1 Peter 3:22, 21-22
- 25) Isaiah 48:12
- 26) Revelation 1:5-8
- 27) Isaiah 48:12-13
- 28) Matthew 28:18
- 29) Isaiah 48:13
- 30) Psalm 110:1
- 31) 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
- 32) Daniel 7:13-14
- 33) Luke 22:66-71

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 5
- John 6:63
- Romans 8
- Ephesians 4:17
- John 13:33-34; 15:9-12

- John 15:9-12
- Revelation 12:9
- Isaiah 14
- Ezekiel 28
- Romans 6
- Deuteronomy 10:16
- Romans 2:28-29
- Colossians 2:11
- John 1:1-3
- Mathew 28:17
- Revelation 11

Also referenced: Book:

*The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

## Epistle of First Peter XII

Fred R. Coulter

What we're going to do is finish up 1-Peter 3:22 and then we'll get right on into the fourth chapter, which talks about suffering and the difficulties of overcoming while you're in the world. It's talking about Christ and that everything that we do is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- That's why we have *hope*
- That's why we have *love*
- That's why we have *faith*
- That's why we have *salvation*

This is what Peter is talking about here, how that Christ is at the right hand of God, and with Christ at the right hand of God, we do not need to hold back in fear; we do not need to hold back with being able to wonder if we're going to be saved, because Christ is going to save us—without a doubt.

1-Peter 3:22: "Who has gone into heaven *and* is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been *put in* subjection to Him." There is not one thing—*not one thing*—that Christ cannot overcome. There is not one thing that we need to worry about as far as being able to have Christ with us, even though it's in our sufferings and our sufferings may be very prolonged and very difficult.

Let's go to Colossians the second chapter and let's see why Christ was made over all principalities. And this is really something for us to understand. You're not to worry about those who are in the world. You're not to worry about Satan and his demons. Obviously, ***we need to stand with the full armor of God***, that is absolutely true. We will see exactly what was the thing that conquered all of that; because the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His death conquered more than just sin. Put Him in a situation that was more than just having overcome. Put Him in a situation then where He showed that, as God in the flesh, that He could overcome Satan the devil; He could overcome the principalities; He could overcome the powers; He could overcome the rulers and the darkness of this world. And that's very important to know.

God *is* God, which Christ was before He became human. He could overcome all of them with very little difficulty because God is all powerful—right? Then if He came and took on the form of an angel—which Heb. 2 says He didn't take on the form of an angel, but was made lower than the angels—He still could probably overcome all the angelic hosts and all the angelic beings, and all that Satan the devil has done. But God did it with a handicap. Now, those of you who play golf, you understand a handicap. That is, if you receive the

handicap, your opponent says, 'I'm so much better than you that I'm going to give you a ten stroke handicap.' Now, for most of us that would be great. So, what God did, He gave Himself a handicap, as it were. He became a human being. Took upon Himself 'the law of sin and death' and being filled with the Holy Spirit was able to overcome everything. So therefore, He defeated Satan the devil in a position, you might say that was inferior to Satan the devil—Satan being a spirit being, Christ in the flesh being the Son of God, was in an inferior position as far as power of His being was concerned. Yes, He had all power from God the Father.

We find it here in Colossians 2:15, and it talks about how He overcame every one of these things. After it says 'nailing it to His cross'—that is *the consequences of sin*: "After stripping the principalities and the powers... [He took away the power of sin from them. And that's why we are free from sin. We don't have to yield to it. We don't have to give into it. Yes, we have to overcome it. But He spoiled them.] ...He made a public spectacle of them... [In other words, Satan thought that when Christ died that that was his victory. But when Christ died and was resurrected, that was God's victory!] ...*and* has triumphed over them in it [the crucifixion]." Then it goes on with the rest of it there.

Colossians 1:16—this reiterated again: "Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence" (vs 16-18). Why? *Because Christ humbled Himself to endure the suffering of the cross!*

So therefore, in that humility, and in being able to remain totally faithful to God the Father and having never sinned, He conquered ***all*** of the principalities, ***all*** of the powers, and was raised to sit at the right hand of God. So when we come to Christ, we have tremendous power there for us—and that's what Peter is trying to tell us here; and it was all put in subjection to Him.

Let's see a little bit more about this. Let's go to the book of Acts, and let's follow through several things in the book of Acts, to show how that Peter and the apostles preached *Christ at the right hand of God*. That symbolizes the utilizing and having the very power of God Himself.

Acts 2:25: “For David speaks concerning Him, ‘I foresaw the Lord before Me continually; for He is at My right hand, so that I may not be moved.’ In this particular case David is saying that God was right there to be with Him [Christ] at his right. So the reason that Peter is saying this for us is so that we know that Christ is for us and that He, yes, can be on our right hand, just as David said.

Verse 33: “Therefore, having been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you are now seeing and hearing.” That has to do with the Feast of Pentecost.

Acts 5:29—so we get the whole context of what we have here. “But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said... [While they were still preaching in the name of Jesus when the priests and the scribes and all of those authorities of Jerusalem at the temple ordered them not to.] ...‘We are obligated to obey God rather than men.’”

That’s why Peter again is saying here that we have an appeal to God, through Christ, for a good conscience; because Christ is at the right hand of God. Peter is consistent in everything he teaches and preaches here.

He answered and said, v 30: “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” (vs 30-31). This shows how the whole operation and summary of God is working in our lives through repentance, through forgiveness, through God’s love, through God’s grace and so forth.

Hebrews is a very interesting and powerful book in the way that it was written, the way that it is presented, the way that it lays out for us the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and what Christ has done and how He did it being at the right hand of God, our High Priest forever and ever.

Hebrews 1:3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person... [that is of God the Father] ...and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins...” That’s a very interesting phrase. You look at it. Christ is the One Who created all human beings, so therefore, He alone can purge our sins. When He went through the crucifixion and He died on that cross, He did it alone by Himself. That’s why Jesus said, ‘Eloi, Eloi, la’ma sabach’tani’ that is ‘*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*’—because he had to do it absolutely, utterly alone to purge our sins!

That’s why he’s writing here: “...when He

had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (v 3). In other words, before the very throne of God, the right hand of God the Father, the greatest Being that there is in the whole universe, the God

- of all character
- of all love
- of all power
- of all life

and Christ is sitting right there at His right hand!

Verse 13: “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’?” No, God didn’t say that to any of the angels at any time.

Hebrews 4:14 talks about the high priesthood of Christ. It would be an interesting study; just go through the whole Bible. If your Bible study gets a little bored once in a while, just get out your hand-dandy concordance and get a topic and go all the way through it. Go through the whole Bible concerning the *right hand*:

- the right hand of man
- the right hand of David
- the right hand of God
- the right hand of Christ

—and so forth. And it’s so important. Remember, it’s so very important! This is interesting when you understand it.

Remember the mother of James and John came to Jesus and said, *Lord, will you grant me just one thing. Just one little thing for my boys, please?* ‘Well, what is that?’ *Will You grant that one sit at Your right hand and one sit at Your left hand!* And He said, ‘You don’t know what you’re asking for. My Father’s going to give it to whom He decides.’ So it’s really quite a powerful thing when you understand it.

Hebrews 4:14: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens... [up into the third heaven] ...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*.” This is why then we can have a good conscience; because we can go to God and have Him blot out our sins, clean our conscience, clean our mind, let His Holy Spirit work in us.

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.” You just think on that—*in every way He was tempted! Everything!* Jesus had to have the ‘law of sin and death’ within Him in order to be tempted.

So, don’t ever feel that there is a sin that you have that is so great that Christ can’t understand it;

that Christ cannot realize what your temptations are. And for each one of us, it's going to be a little different, because we're all different human beings. But you see, the thing is, Christ knows and He understands, so He's able to help.

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." When we really understand it, that's all the time; and it's not just part of the time. ***We need God's grace all the time!***

Let's go to Hebrews 7. In the whole theme of the book of Hebrews is that Christ is raised to be our High Priest in heaven above. This is very important because this was written to prepare everyone for the destruction of the temple, the ending of the Levitical priesthood; so there had to be something greater than what was there to replace it. And that's why Christ ascended into the heavens above.

Hebrews 7:25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him... [In other words, ***with out a doubt there is not one thing that is too difficult for Christ to intervene to help you with and save you to the uttermost***] ...[that] come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens; Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests [on earth], to offer up sacrifices day-by-day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the law, *the* Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs 25-28). So Christ is the High Priest Who is consecrated forever.

Hebrews 8:1: "Now *here is* a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest... [ever-living, sinless, undefiled, exalted into the heavens, at the right-hand of God.] ...Who sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.... ['the Majesty' is the greatest expression of glory that is used in the book of Heb. to define the glory of God the Father] ...A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man" (vs 1-2). So that's why it's so tremendous, brethren; why it's so absolutely fantastic what Jesus Christ has done to be at the right hand, to be our High Priest.

Let's come to Hebrews 9:24—this whole theme is that now since the temple and the priesthood, which are on the earth, are going to come to an end. Since they have served their purpose and Christ has ascended into heaven, now we have a

greater High Priest, now we have a greater system than was under the Old Covenant—here again, it's reaffirmed.

Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ has not entered into the Holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself..." In other words, when God gave the instructions to David on how to build the temple, that was just a type of the temple of God in heaven above. But, He has entered into heaven itself.

***"...now to appear in the presence of God for us..."*** (v 24). On our behalf. Now, how is He on our behalf? There are some people who come along and they just love to put a guilt trip on the brethren. They just love to get up there and lambaste their sins and talk about their sins. Sure, we don't need sin, that's correct. But Christ came that you can have that guilt trip removed from you, not put upon you. That's why there's repentance. The whole operation of Christ is repentance and forgiveness of sin, not advocacy to condemn you for your sins.

Remember what we learned during the Feast of Unleavened Bread: ***To those who are in Christ Jesus, there is now no condemnation!*** Why? *Because:*

- Christ is our *High Priest*
- He is our *Passover*
- He is our *Sacrifice*
- He is our *Advocate*

He understands every one of us and everything that we experience and go through

You need to have that kind of confidence when you come before God. There are going to be times when you come before God, you're just going to have to go to God and say, 'God, I don't know. God, just forgive me for my very thoughts and mind and heart. Christ is there in this capacity.'

Let's back up just a little bit, 1-John, the first chapter, to show us exactly how this whole thing operates. I know this is a little repeat from the Days of Unleavened Bread, but it's very important because it fits context here about Christ's High Priesthood 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, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin"—and the Greek there is *every sin*—every single sin that you have. I know that there are some ministers who will not baptize people unless they just bore in on you and say, 'Have you repented of every sin? Have you recalled every sin?' Well, we have to repent of our sins, but you have to go one step further; you have to repent of your sinful nature, and what sin, in you, does. Because I'm sure there are some sins that you have committed in the past, before you were

baptized, that you don't even remember that you did. And for a minister to come along and say, 'Unless you remember it, it isn't forgiven.' ***That's not so!*** The blood of Christ cleanses us from *every* sin.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin... [as Job did] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.... [then Job, at the end, had to repent; and he did it by]: ...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 every unrighteousness.] ...If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (vs 8-10).

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [Shall we sin that grace may abound?] Paul said, 'God forbid!' So John is writing this that 'we sin not.'] ...And yet, ***if*** anyone does sin... [Because you know we are—I know I am; you know you are. Exactly what it is you don't know because tomorrow isn't here yet.] ...***we have an Advocate*** with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous."

- He is ***advocating*** for us!

He is not up there pointing the finger of condemnation.

- He is ***advocating*** for us!
- He has ***given His Spirit*** to lead us.
- He ***leads us to repentance*** through His goodness and His grace!
- He is ***advocating*** to God the Father for us!

And furthermore, v 2: "And He is *the* propitiation for our sins..."—which means that it is the continual atoning that Christ gives; and it goes on and on and on and on. That's why it's important where Peter wrote and said: 'Who's gone into the heavens and is at the right hand of God. Angels and authorities and powers being put in subjection to Him.' In other words, there is no power on this earth; there is no demon; there is no spirit; there is no angel; there's no authority in the world ***that can come and take you from Christ***. That is true, they may kill you, but ***they can't take you from Christ***.

1-Peter 4—because this becomes very important for us to understand how then we react to the different things that we go through; we react to the different things that we suffer, because of being a Christian. Let's just read through vs 1-6 and then we'll come back and go through the Scriptures which relate to it.

1-Peter 4:1: "Consequently... [in light of what I just said] ...since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind; because the one who has suffered in *the* flesh has finished *living* in sin."—and that's what it means. Some people think that that refers to Christ, but that is not true. That refers to ***you*** living in sin.

Because if you have suffered in the flesh—which you have; not only has Christ suffered for us, but if you suffer in the flesh—then you realize the terribleness of sin and you don't want to continue living in it.

Verse 2: "To *this end*: that he no longer live *his* remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the past time of our lives is sufficient to have done the desire of the Gentiles, *when* we ourselves were walking in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference in your behavior*... [because you're not converted] ...they... [your former friends and associates] ...are astonished *that* you are not carousing with *them* in the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they are slandering you. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and the dead. And for this purpose the Gospel was preached to those who *have* died, so that, although in the flesh they may in fact have been judged according to men's *standards*, on the other hand, they might live according to God's *will* in the Spirit" (vs 2-6).

He's saying other people have died who have gone through the same thing that you have gone through, and they survived; they live God's way; they've entered into their rest and they are now waiting the resurrection.

Let's go to v 1 again, and we'll pick up on the things that are there for us: "Consequently, since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind..." Let's go to Philippians 2:5, which is a very basic Scripture and shows the whole kind of mind that we ought to have.

I remember one man saying, 'Well, the Bible doesn't mean that we have a spirit mind the same as Christ.' ***No!*** It means to have the same *attitude of mind* that Christ has, as He gives it to you through His Holy Spirit; and to understand about His life—as is recorded in the New Testament—to understand how He thought and how He acted and how He lived His life.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus." Then he goes on to show what Jesus did; how far He was willing to go for the salvation of mankind. So likewise, we need to determine—with the mind of Christ in us—how far we are going to go, so that we can make it to the end and be in the resurrection. That's what it's talking about. He said that He gave up everything.

Verse 6: "Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [that is He was existing as God] ...But emptied Himself, *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 5-8). That’s what it’s talking about here in 1-Peter: ***Arm yourself with this mind***; because Christ has suffered. If you have suffered and you arm yourself with the same mind, then are you not going to be able to do the same as Christ did? Are you not going to see that even suffering is better than sinning? That’s the whole purpose of 1 Pet. 4:1.

Now let’s see how this is carried on, also, in Romans, the twelfth chapter. This shows us what kind of mind that we need to have. How we need to have this mind. There’s one thing that is different with our mind than the mind of Christ. We still have a carnal mind up here. And the truth is, that spiritual things cannot be retained in a carnal mind. That’s why you need the Spirit of God. That’s why all the giving of the law, without the Spirit of God, is eventually going to result in total disaster; because you need the Spirit of God, you need the Spirit and mind of Christ in order to do it.

Romans 12:1—the Apostle Paul preached the same thing: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy... [that is not unclean and sinful] ...and well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world...” (vs 1-2). That’s the same thing that the Apostle Peter is talking about. All those that you’ve left, in the former way of your living, people are wondering: why did you do that? Peter is using the example that, hey, they were really rotten and debauching Gentiles. God still called them! God is no respecter of persons.

Verse 2: “**Do not conform yourselves to this world...**”

- Don’t worry about what the world thinks.
- Don’t worry about what the world does.
- Don’t let it come along and ‘conform’ you to this world; to this society; to this way.

“...but **be transformed**... [let your mind be changed and ‘transformed’] ...by the renewing of your mind...” (v 2). How is your mind renewed?

- with God’s Spirit
- with prayer
- with study
- fasting

—that’s all important. But if your mind is renewed, as you really focus in more on loving God; if you’re loving God and believing God, then all of those other things will come along; and you will have your mind **renewed**! Of course, we have a lot of things to have our mind ‘renewed’ from. And today we have so many things that are against us. They’re just impacting upon us through television, through

movies, just through people in the world and everything, that it becomes a difficult thing. So that’s why 1-Peter 4 is very important for you. Now, here’s what you do when you have your mind ‘renewed’ then: “...**in order that you may prove what is well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God**” (v 2)—so that we live our lives according to the will of God and not the will of man.

Now, let’s go to Ephesians 4:23, and we’ll see the same thing. We are to be ‘renewed’ in our mind, and it’s a constant renewal. We, as human beings—as we found during the Days of Unleavened Bread—have to put out the sin with the power and help and strength of Christ. How? *By confessing our sins* and ‘He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.’ With that then, we are to put in Christ; and with the power of God’s Holy Spirit, we are to be renewed in mind.

Ephesians 4:23: “And that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**... [It goes right down into your heart and mind and soul and spirit and being, *and changes your mind*. That’s what conversion is all about.] ...and that you put on the new man... [or the new person] ...which according to God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (vs 23-24). What God is doing *in you* is re-creating Himself beginning in the ‘spirit of your mind’ with His Spirit to create in us that true Holiness, “created in righteousness and the Holiness of Truth.” So that’s why we need to be armed with the same mind as Jesus Christ has.

Let’s take this one step further. Let’s go to 1-Corinthians 2—and this becomes so very, very important. I’m real excited about what we’re going to do when we finish 1-Peter. We’re just about there. We’re just about ready to finish it off; but we’re going to be able to look at the Word of God now with a whole new perspective. Not that it’s going to be something that we haven’t understood partially, but:

- It’s going to give us a greater and deeper appreciation for what Christ has done.
- It’s going to give us a more profound understanding of the miracle of the New Testament.
- It’s going to give us a greater spiritual insight into God’s way.

That’s why 1-Corinthians, the second chapter, is so very important.

1-Corinthians 2:7: “Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery... [It’s hard for the carnal mind to understand it.] ...*even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory... [God’s plan, before the world even existed, was for everything to transpire to have Christ be our Savior.] ...which not one of the rulers

of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory)” (vs 7-8). Now there are two ways you can look at this:

1. ‘princes of this world’ can refer to the physical human being who is in the office of ruler or leader—or,
2. it can be the power behind the throne, the principalities, the prince of this world—or the princes of this world—who are what? *The demonic beings which run this world!*

Now viewed in that particular sense, Satan would not have crucified Christ had he known what it was going to do. But Satan thought that ‘if I get Him,’ and ‘if I kill the Son of God, God’s plan is over with.’ *No! It was the beginning of it!* Those are the two ways to understand that verse.

Verse 9: “But according as it is written, ‘The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’” That is a very profound verse.

Let’s go to Romans 8:28—this will tie in with the suffering and things that we go through. And again, every time you read what the Apostle Paul has written to tell us something, it is all based on the love of God. And that’s why it’s so profound, brethren. I don’t think we can ever say it enough, but I think if we really focus in on it—of really loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being, that that is going to help us more than anything else.

Romans 8:28: “And we know that **all things** work together for good... [he’s talking about all the suffering and difficulties here in Rom. 8—right?] ...to those who love God... [Notice how that ties right in here with 1-Cor. 2:9 that love God.] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose.” God has a purpose! God has a plan! And it’s so fantastic that of ourselves we can’t think of it; of ourselves we can’t visualize it; of telling all kinds of stories one to another, or reading whatever other men have written, our ears cannot hear it. But God has done something above and beyond.

1-Corinthians 2:10: “But God has revealed *them* to us...” It’s the only way it can come:

- by God’s calling
- by God’s forgiveness
- by God’s mercy
- by God’s grace
- by God’s Spirit and begettal

that He puts into our mind—that’s tremendous! “...God has revealed...” (v 10). That’s why the Bible is so fantastic! There is so much in this Bible that we can study and re-study and dig deeply into it; and the more we dig into it, the deeper we go, the more profound it becomes—because God reveals it to us.

And that’s the whole purpose of why we study and drink in of God’s Word.

“...revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God” (v 10). Brethren, I think it’s something that if we look at that and just think about that for a minute—what are the deep things of God? Too many times we go to the elementary things, we don’t go beyond—***the deep things of God.*** Let’s pray and hope that God will lead us more deeply into the understanding of His Truth, more profoundly into the understanding of His way.

Hold your place here and let’s come to Hebrews 6, because this becomes important for us to realize. God has so much for us that it is, as Paul is saying here, ***mind-boggling!*** Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ...” When I first read that, I thought: Why is Paul saying, ‘leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ’? It doesn’t mean in the Greek what it expresses. The Greek means: *let us go beyond the principles.* In other words, let’s not *stay stuck* in this rut of the basics of Christ; but we have many things to learn.

Let’s come up here to Hebrews 5:9, so we get the flow right down to chapter six. “And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing” (vs 9-11). That’s what the Apostle Paul was saying: You’re stuck in a rut because all you do is just stick to the principles of Christ, the Foundation. If you’re going to build a house, do you not need more than just the foundation? *Yes, indeed!* If you build a house, have you left the foundation? *No, you build on it!* That’s why the Apostle Paul is saying here: ‘Let’s go beyond the principles of Christ.’

Verse 12: “For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God...” That’s what we need to really focus in on, brethren, not just go back to the basic principles over and over and over again. As I’ve said several times in the past, when you come to a house you don’t go and say, ‘Let’s me look at that foundation, boy, that’s a really good looking foundation.’ The owner is saying, ‘What about the whole house?’ So it’s the same way with us. We have to what? ***Grow up into Christ!*** We are to what? ***Come to the ‘fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ!’*** That has to be down into the deep things of God.

Now let’s come back to 1-Corinthians, the second chapter. This is tremendous. Let’s hope we

can do that, brethren. Let's hope that, **with God's Spirit**, that He will:

- bless us with His Spirit
- bless us with His understanding
- bless us with Christ in us
- bless us with the profound meaning of His Word

**to understand the deep things of God; the profound things of God.**

Now, let's come back here to 1-Corinthians 2:11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him?..." Human beings are the only physical beings that can think. An animal doesn't think. An animal doesn't have choice. But human beings do, and they think. For example, you take a cow: A cow eats grass or hay or a grain. That's all it knows! It operates by law of instinct. It does not operate by thought and choice. That's why human beings are so profoundly different than any other animal that God has created.

(go to the next track)

The other day when I was driving along Hwy 25, going out of Hollister, there're some pastures over there and here all these cows and one starts heading to go get a drink, and the other one follows to go get a drink. One goes over here and starts munching on the grass; they're all munching on the grass, and there's just this little wire fence there and the animals have no sense at all as to what to do. I saw in one of these documentaries where it was showing how the lions came in, and at the waterhole devoured one of these cow-like creatures (I forget what they're called) but the others didn't understand what was going on. They just stood there, looked blank, and the commentator made a comment. He said, they are so dumb they don't even realize what's going on.

As human beings we're a little different. Someone dies; we understand death. We have a funeral—right? What other creature has a funeral for the death of their own? *None!* Human beings are totally different. We have the spirit of man in us to give us intellect, to give us intelligence, to give us choice; but then **God gives us His Spirit** on top of that.

1-Corinthians 2:11: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God." That's why all the theology in the world over here, that all men have ever done concerning God's whatever, **cannot come to the knowledge of the truths of God by their own thoughts and intellect**, because it's not in them to do anymore than for the dumb cow over here to make a choice. God has to reveal them. That's why we have the Bible. That's

why the Word of God is so profound.

Verse 12: "Now we have not received the spirit of the world..." That's why it's so profound, brethren, that we see one of the big Churches of God making the greatest mistake in the world it has ever made. They are trying to please men. If you please men, are you going to please God? In order to do that, do they not have to preach another gospel? *Yes, they do!* They are busily going down the road to apostasy and heresy. That's a shame when there's so much here for us to learn. They are going back and inviting in the spirit of this world, which comes from whom? Who is the 'prince of the power of the air, that spirit that now works in the children of disobedience'? *None other than Satan the devil—correct?* We haven't received that.

But we have received: "...but the Spirit that *is* of God... [We've received the Spirit which is of God—from God the Father Himself!] ...so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God... [Even the 'deep' things—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But *the* natural man... [that is the one without the Spirit of God] ...does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him... [or they're a bother unto him, or they restrict his movement, restrict his behavior] ...and he cannot understand *them*... [Isn't that something? He can't even know or understand *them*] ...because they are spiritually discerned.... [here is the point we need to come to, brethren]: ...However, the one who is spiritual **discerns all things**... [you're able to make a proper judgment and assessment of everything] ...but he himself is discerned by no one" (vs 12-15).

That's what Peter's talking about here: Those that you have left, after you've repented and gone God's way, are coming back and judging you and saying, 'why don't you do this; why don't you do that; you used to do this; you used to do that.' So no one is going to judge you—why? *God is going to judge you!*

Now, this is also very important and profound when it comes to interaction between members; interactions between ministers and members. A minister cannot judge you in place of God. He may have made a judgment based on your behavior, if you're sinning; but no one can judge your heart—**God alone judges your heart**. So that's what he's talking about here.

"...but he himself is discerned by no one. For who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord? Who shall instruct Him?... [No man! No man!] ...But we have *the* mind of Christ" (vs 15-16).

So when Peter says, 'arm yourself with the

same mind' what he's really telling us is something so profound, which is the whole fullness—the fullness, as it were—of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ. To be armed with the same mind, to be filled with the Spirit of God. Now, you're not going to get it by your works. You're not going to get it by your power. You're not going to get it by having come to God and coerce Him, and say, like Job, 'God, I've done this' and 'God, I've done that' and 'God, I've done the other thing.' No, God is going to give it by His grace. That's why the Apostle Paul perhaps had more deep and profound understanding, because **he saw the greatness of God**, and the *greatness of the magnitude of sin*.

Let's go back to Romans, the seventh chapter. This is what he's talking about: let us go beyond the principles—that is the basic foundation. This is very hard for some people to understand, so let's see if we can; let's see if we can understand it, with God's Spirit; let's see if we can understand it with His Word—and what he is saying here. He had a tremendous experience. Paul was a Pharisee—correct? Paul knew the laws of God—correct? Paul knew all the traditional laws of Judaism, the Pharisaic version—correct? *Yes!* So much so that he said that he was blameless. But when God called him, something profound happened, and he explains it here:

Romans 7:7: "What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin?... [No! The law *defines* sin. The law itself is not sin.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law.... [That's the function and purpose of the law, to tell us what sin is.] ...Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, 'You shall not covet'.... [He understood that, in principle—even as a Pharisee. But when Christ came something else happened more profound.] ...But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me [all manner of concupiscence (KJV)] ...every *kind* of lust because apart from law, sin was dead" (vs 7-8).

Has that ever happened to you? Has it ever happened to you that your mind, after you've been converted with the Spirit of God, just kind of went wild with sin—in your mind? You really didn't want it. But what was happening? God was showing you the exceeding sinfulness of sin; because it is deep. "...wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, for without law, sin is dead" (KJV).

Verse 9: "For I was once alive without law... [that is, the **true** understanding of spiritual profundity of God's law.] ...but after the commandment came... [of repentance—when the commandment came and knocked him off his donkey on the way to Damascus and he was converted] ...sin revived, and I died.... [How did he

die? *By baptism*, that's how he died!] ...And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life, **was found to be unto death** for me" (vs 9-10). That's quite a thing—isn't it? To really understand that, that is deep and profound! Why? **Because the law cannot save!** The law defines! The law, because of transgression, kills! That's why sin is **exceedingly sinful!**

Let's go to Mark, the seventh chapter, and let's understand where sin comes. It's not just defined outwardly, because if it weren't for the actions of human beings, there would be no sin in the world—correct? But people **choose** to sin! And they have the 'law of sin and death' within them, which compels them to sin. And this is what Paul is talking about. He never really understood that all of that comes from within until God called him. And how was he able to understand that? *With the mind of Christ*: 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ.' It confirmed what Jesus said here:

Mark 7:21: "For **from within**..."—and that's why Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'They're like whited-sepulchers outside, but within you're full of dead men's bones and rottenness'; because all your pseudo-righteousness on the outside **doesn't change the inside**. In order to be a Christian, you must be converted, you must have your mind changed, and then you understand it from within.

"...out of the hearts of men... [you know why you need the mind of Christ] ...go forth evil thoughts... [that's why the Apostle Paul understood that sin became 'exceedingly sinful'; because that's where it originates.] ...adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile..." (v 21-22). Like reading the headlines in your paper—right? *Yes, indeed!* Go pick up your paper you got this morning or last night and read it.

"...licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness... [and the Greek there is 'anoetos' if I could put it in the English; it means *idiotic behavior*.] ...All these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man" (vs 22-23). And that's what Paul was dealing with back here in Rom. 7—very important for us to understand it. We can't grow to have the mind of Christ until we understand the profoundness of sin and the results of it within us. And then the profoundness of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome and the magnificence of Christ's sacrifice to bring that forgiveness. This is what Paul was talking about.

Romans 7:10—He said: "And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life... [Didn't God say that: 'Oh, that they would keep My commandments always, that it be well with them'—right? *Yes!*] ...was found to be unto death for me... [Why? *Because he understood the deepness of the sinful nature within him.*] ...because sin, having

taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*” (vs 10-11). His own carnal mind was deceiving him. But the commandment was right there, active and in motion—***the wages of sin is death; sin is the transgression of the law—right?***

Verse 12: “Therefore, the law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and just and good.” Nothing that God does is evil or wrong. No, the law is not sin, ***it is our behavior and transgression of the law that is sin***—which is deeply rooted in our very heart and mind and soul and being. That’s why he says this.

Verse 13: “Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? [No!] MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin...” This is the whole thing: the more deeply you are converted, the more profound that sin becomes in your mind; because God will expose it for what it is there, and that’s the struggle that goes on.

Therefore, the more of God’s Spirit you have, and the more of God’s love that you have, the more that God is going to reveal these things to you so that you can have them removed from within by conversion. It’s not going to come because of your behavior. It’s going to come because of God’s Holy Spirit, so that ***He can change your behavior***. Because what is part of you, you cannot get rid of yourself, but something greater than you must get rid of it, which is Christ and His Spirit.

“...in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death... [Therefore the law is good because it defines what sin is and you see where you’re wrong—you see that? you comprehend that?] ...so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful” (v 13).

That’s why Christ said, we’ll cover a little later, the Sermon on the Mount. The *spirit of the law* shows that hate is murder. Lust is adultery; covetousness is thievery. That’s why the Apostle Paul said that ‘the law, with the Spirit of God in him, now reveals the ***exceedingness*** of sin.’ Then you can begin to discern your own vanity. That’s hard, and your own covetousness. So that with the Spirit of God the true motive, the true intention of God, is built in you through the Spirit of God. When that happens, there’s this inner fight that

“...sin might be exceedingly sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual... [Yes, it’s acting all the time— isn’t it?] ...but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin” (vs 13-14). He’s just saying, ‘Of myself I am so sold under sin there is no hope for me ***without Christ***.’

The Protestants have a solution to the problem. They say, ‘No one can keep the

commandments perfectly, so therefore, you don’t have to keep them.’ That is illogical. I hate the word ‘logical’ because human logic gets you in trouble when you try and use human logic to understand spiritual things. But that is not correct, spiritually then, let’s put it that way.

“...I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin.... [Here he was an apostle for 20 years. He was a minister of God. Here he was preaching to other people—right? *Yes!*] ...Because what I am working out myself, I do not know.... [He really didn’t want to do those things! He really didn’t want himself to do it, but he did!] ...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what I do*” (vs 14-15).

How many times has that happened to you? How many times have you really, really felt something as a desire of will:

- to do something
- to love someone
- to say something nice to someone
- to pray
- to study
- to know God’s Word

***—and you don’t do it!*** That’s what the Apostle Paul was saying. He said he desired to do, but he didn’t do it.

Verse 16<sup>[paraphrased]</sup>: “For what I will I don’t do, but that which I hate, I find myself doing. For what I hate, that I do.”. Now, that’s quite an admission. He could have said, ‘I’m an apostle of God, called of Christ, I live a perfect life, live like me.’ *Nonsense!*

This is part of the mind of Christ: that you have the humility that comes from Christ, because Christ is exposing this kind of behavior in our minds and in our hearts and we can repent of it. So why? ***That every sin and every unrighteousness can be wiped away.*** That’s why God is doing it. And I’ll guarantee you one thing that’s for sure: no one in the world, without God’s Spirit, is having this inner conflict. They may have all kinds of other conflicts, but not this one.

How is God going to solve this problem? This is one of the deep things of God, v 16: “But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.... [It is telling me what is right, and it’s telling me what is wrong.] ...So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me.... [That’s why we have talked about the ‘law of sin and death’—sin dwells in every human being by inheritance, by their very nature, which is from within as Christ has said.] ...Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good....” (vs 16-18). When you come to

understand that, you'll be just like Job.

Hold your place here and let's go back to Job 42. It is very important what Job did, when he came to understand it; and we can, too, the lesson is there for us. After God came to Job, when Job said, 'I've done this. I've done that. I've done the other thing. I've fed the poor. I've taken care of the needy. When I came into the room I was so important that they all stood and bowed before me. When I spoke they listened. So God, it's not fair that You're doing this to me.' So God came down and said, 'Job, tell Me something:

- Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
- Where were you when I stretched out the heavens as a span?
- Where were you when I created these things?

And I'll tell you something, Job, that if you can now clothe yourself with majesty—that is by your own personal being save your own hide—I will tell you, you can save yourself.'

Job 43:1: "And Job answered the LORD, and said... [notice his humble attitude now; quite a difference from all the arguments that went on before] ...'I know that You can do all things, and *that* no thought can be withheld from You. *You asked*, "Who *is* he who hides counsel without knowledge?" Therefore, I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, "I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me." I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You.... [that is spiritually, I understand] ...Therefore, I *abhor myself*, and repent in dust and ashes'" (vs 1-6).

You see how that consciousness and awareness came to Job. That's exactly what the Apostle Paul is talking about in Rom. 7. He saw that sin was ***exceedingly sinful***; because he understood the profundity of it. People who don't have the Spirit of God, they don't see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. 'Why, a little sin is good.' What's the Bible say? *A little leaven leavens the whole lump!* Whoopee! they've got to have more. When you have God's Spirit and you're convicted of it, this is what you go through.

Romans 7:18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good.... [except the Spirit of God] ...For the desire to do good is present within me... [yes, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak—so he had the will, it was present with him] ...but **how to work out that which is good, I do not find.**" That is, of himself, of his own resources, of his own mind, of his own thoughts, how to do that

which is truly good, 'I find not.' Now what does he mean, *good*? Is that just feeding someone who's hungry? Is that taking care of someone who doesn't have a home? Is that *good*? What definition of *good* are we talking about? What is *good* before God? Now that's what we're talking about: ***the goodness before God***; the good that is truly good. In other words, that which is going to be good for all eternity, 'I,' Paul says, 'of myself I find not!'

Verse 19: "For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*" (vs 19-20). In other words, that is not his motive.

Just like you, when you sin, you don't say, 'I'm going to set out and do this sin.' No, you don't determine to do it. You don't set your mind to do it. You may willingly give into it. Temptation may come along and you slip in it. You may have a temper, which a lot of people do, and it just keeps coming on. You hate it. You don't want to do it. It's not your desire to do it. ***But you do!*** So, it's not you. As the Apostle Paul said, "It is not I that do it, but sin that's dwelling in me." And all of us have the sin dwelling in each of us.

Verse 21: "Consequently, I find this law *in my members*... [just like the law of gravity] ...that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.... [and in spite of that, he says] ...For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man... [Yes! It is Holy; it is righteous; it is just; it is good. You delight in the Word of God by the inward man, yes! That's your whole thought in mind and desire—isn't it? *Yes!*] ...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... [the law of sin right in you; that's what it's called. The Apostle Paul said it's 'the law of sin.'] ...that is within my own members" (vs 21-23).

Now, this is a dilemma, so he says, v 24: "O *what a wretched man I am!*.... [I'll tell you one thing, when you come to the point of really deep conversion and repentance, you're going to feel this same way.] ...O *what a wretched man I am!*.... [Because that all the way we are before God, without Christ. That's what he's saying.] ...Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ.... [He's going to be delivered.] ...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)—part of his very being.

This is something we need to also grow more in deeper understanding, too, brethren, Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..." Who are going

through this same struggle; who are having this same problem; who are overcoming the sins that are within. And how do you overcome the sins that are within?

Let's go to 2-Corinthians 10—this is one of these things, brethren, that's so important. You are not going to overcome the inward part of your mind by the external keeping of the Law. ***You must, with the Spirit of God and Christ in you, overcome the internal sin of your being!*** That's why it's so important. That's why Paul said, 'The law is here, it's spiritual and just and right and good; but the law outside of my mind cannot change my mind.' ***Only the Spirit of God can change your mind. Only God can convert you!*** God's Law defines what is right and wrong. God's Law can lead you to a certain amount of conversion—or that is change of behavior—but ***only God's Spirit can convert the mind.*** Then what do you do when you find yourself entrapped in this horrible enigma?

2-Corinthians 10:4<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal... [You're not going to do it by any positive thoughts. You're not going to do it by doing good. You're not going to do it by carnal means and methods] ...but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)."

The biggest stronghold is right up here in your mind, where sin dwells! That's the biggest *stronghold*. And then the imagination of the *heart* is what you need to overcome. And you can't overcome that without the Spirit of God—and then you do this, with the Spirit of God.

Verse 5: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." That's how you do it. You bring it into the 'obedience of Christ':

- by repentance
- by prayer
- by yielding to God
- by thinking on His Word
- by growing in grace and knowledge
- and to realize that this is all accomplished by the grace of God

No other way! You are saved by *grace*! Now, we do have to keep the commandments of God. But you are not saved by law-keeping. Remember that!

What did Christ tell the rich man? When the rich man came and said, 'Good Master, what should I do to have eternal life?' And Jesus said, 'Keep the commandments.' And the young man said, 'Oh, I've done that all my life. What else should I do?' Christ said, 'Go sell all that you have and come and follow Me, and you'll have treasure in heaven.' Then the disciples came and said, 'How's that going to be?'

He said in another parable: 'I want to tell you something. A man has a servant working out in the field. He does what he's supposed to do out in the field. And his servant comes in and he says, 'You fix me something to eat and then you will eat.' And after he has done all of those things, does he thank the servant for what he did? *No!* So likewise are you, 'When you have done all that you are commanded, you are unprofitable servants.' Now, that's a tough saying. Why are you unprofitable servants? *Because you haven't let Christ, in you, bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*' That's why! So when Peter says, 'Arm yourselves with the same mind that Christ has, that is saying a lot—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*'

"...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ... [That's why Christ, in you, is the only hope of glory] ...and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled" (vs 5-6).

Let's come back to Romans, the eighth chapter; now you see why there is no condemnation, because ***you, of yourself, cannot overcome yourself.*** Christ, ***in you***, and 'bringing every thought into captivity,' with the Spirit of God, ***can overcome yourself.*** Profound difference.

That's why he says, here, Romans 8:1: "...there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to the flesh... [We're not out here just living our lives the way that we used to. We are converted. We are changed! And growing in grace and knowledge.] ...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). Though we have this struggle going on with the 'law of sin and death' within us, Christ has freed us from it, that ***we don't have to be burdened down to obey it*** in the lusts thereof, as we 'bring every thought into the captivity to Christ.'

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the law to do... [the law can't convert; the law cannot empower; the law can only define and bring death] ...in that it was weak through the flesh... [why was it 'weak through the flesh'? *Because of the 'law of sin and death' within us*] ...God, having sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh... [to be exactly as we are] ...and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

If Christ condemned sin in the flesh, who has to overcome our sin within us? ***Christ in us!*** Oh, we have our part. *Yes, indeed!* But Christ has to be the activating, motivating and guiding and empowering force, with His Spirit, to do it.

Let's go to Romans 6:10: "For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He

lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also... [that is: calculate, figure, estimate, understand] ...you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body..." (vs 10-12).

That's what Christ in you does; that it doesn't 'reign in your mortal body'; you see it for what it is, you understand the evilness of it; you understand the power of it; it is there working to pull you down—but ***you don't let it reign*** over you. Why? ***Because you have the mind of Christ within you!*** And 'bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, that's how you do it.

That's why it's so profound. That's why it is the deep things of God that we are looking to. The deep things that we need to grow into. And so that's why the Apostle Peter said, 'Let us be armed with the same mind.'

Let's go back and read 1-Peter 4:1 again: "Consequently, since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind..." ***Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, our Lord.***

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

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Peter 3:22
- 2) Colossians 2:15
- 3) Colossians 1:16-18
- 4) Acts 2:25, 33
- 5) Acts 6:29-31
- 6) Hebrews 1:3, 13
- 7) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 8) Hebrews 7:25-28
- 9) Hebrews 8:1-2
- 10) Hebrews 9: 24
- 11) 1 John 1:7-10
- 12) 1 John 2:1-2
- 13) 1 Peter 4:1-6, 1
- 14) Philippians 2:5-8
- 15) Romans 12:1-2
- 16) Ephesians 4:23-24
- 17) 1 Corinthians 2:7-9
- 18) Romans 8:28
- 19) 1 Corinthians 2:10
- 20) Hebrews 6:1
- 21) Hebrews 5:9-12
- 22) 1 Corinthians 2:11-16
- 23) Romans 7:7-10
- 24) Mark 7:21-23
- 25) Romans 7:10-18
- 26) Job 42:1-6

- 27) Romans 7:18-25
- 28) Romans 8:1
- 29) 2 Corinthians 10:4-6
- 30) Romans 8:1-3
- 31) Romans 6:10-12
- 32) 1 Peter 4:1

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 2
- 1 Corinthians 2:9

# Epistle of First Peter XIII

Fred R. Coulter

Let's come to 1-Peter 4 and let's just review a little bit in v 1 and then we'll get as far as we can in chapter four and hopefully, if we can finish it.

1-Peter 4:1: "Consequently, since Christ has suffered in the flesh for us, you also arm yourselves with the same mind; because the one who has suffered in *the flesh* has finished *living* in sin, to *this end*: <sup>(A)</sup>*that* he no longer live *his* remaining time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but <sup>(B)</sup>*to the will of God*. For the past time of our lives is sufficient to have done the desire of the Gentiles, *when* we ourselves were walking in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference* in *your behavior*, they..." (vs 1-4)

Your former friends and associates "...are astonished *that* you are not carousing with *them* in the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they are slandering you. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and the dead. And for this purpose the Gospel was preached to those who *have* died... [that is, those who were in the Church already and died.] ...so that, although in the flesh they may in fact have been judged according to men's *standards*, on the other hand, they might live according to God's *will* in the Spirit" (vs 4-6).

Now, let's go back and pick it up at verse two because we left off with verse one last time. I might mention: How many of you saw in the paper that they just recently found in one of the graves that they excavated in Israel, they found the remains of cannabis? Do you know what cannabis is? *Marijuana!* They found that they were using it in the failed birth of a baby of a girl who was probably fourteen years old and was too small to have the baby, and they found the bones and the baby bones right in there with her, too—and they found traces of cannabis.

When we see things like this: the debauchery, and carousing and things like this, as we have mentioned, what makes us think that drugs in this age is any new thing. Especially when you consider that the book of Ecclesiastes says, 'there's nothing new under the sun.' They probably had some of that going on there at the same time.

Let's come here to 1-Peter 4:2, and let's notice the structure of this from this point of view: (A): There is something *not to do*; (B): which is something *to do*, which is—one contrasts with the other; and Peter has done this all the way through. "To *this end*: *that* he no longer live *his* remaining time in the flesh <sup>(A)</sup>*to the lusts of men*, <sup>(B)</sup>*but to the will of God*."

Let's go back and we will see the first part of Peter, chapter one and we will see that he did the same thing there. We find something almost similar to it, and I'm convinced the way that 1-Peter is written that it's a compilation of about three different letters that he had previously written, which he compiled.

1-Peter 1:14: "As obedient children, do not be conforming yourselves to your former lusts, *as in your former* ignorance. But according as He Who called you is Holy, you yourselves also be Holy in all your conduct. For it has been written, 'You be Holy, because I am Holy.' And if you are calling upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, be conducting the time of your *life's* journey in *the fear of God*" (vs 14-17). There we have almost the same thing repeated here in chapter four. It's quite interesting the way that has been done.

Let's come to chapter two and we will see something very similar to it. 1-Peter 2:11: "Beloved, I am exhorting you, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts, which are warring against the soul... [It's amazing, here we are living in the end-time, and what is one of the biggest problems that there is in the world? *All the lusts of the flesh!* So not only did it apply at that time, but it's also a prophecy for us today.] ...having your way of life honest among the Gentiles, that even though they are speaking against you as evildoers, *yet* through having witnessed your good works, they may glorify God in the day of visitation" (vs 11-12).

We find something very similar to this again, 1-Peter 3:16: "Having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak against you as evildoers, those who are reviling your good way of life in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, *for you* to suffer while doing good than *to suffer for* doing evil" (vs 16-17). I'll tell you what, there are a lot of people beginning to see and understand that. And unfortunately, we all have sort of been brainwashed somewhat with the Protestant religion, which is: everything is good, better and best and fine; and you shouldn't have a trial or anything because *God is in your hip-pocket* type of psychology.

So there we have the contrast. Now let's also see that this fits in another way. It says here, let's go back to 1-Peter 4:2—that we are to live "...according to the will of God." What's one of the first things we are to pray for? The model prayer (Mat. 6:9 [transcriber's correction]): 'Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be Your name... Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

Let's look at an occurrence here in Luke, the first chapter, and let's ask: Does God answer prayer according to His will in His time? *Well, yes, we have the whole life of Abraham as an example of that.* But here in Luke, let's look at the account of Zacharias, John the Baptist's father.

Luke 1:11: "Then an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him, standing at *the* right side of the altar of incense. And when he saw *the* angel, Zacharias was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, 'Fear not, Zacharias, because your supplication has been heard; and your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son to you, and you shall call his name John. And he shall be a joy and exultation to you; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great before the Lord. And he shall never drink wine or strong drink in any form, but he shall be filled with *the* Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to *the* Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in *the* spirit and power of Elijah, to turn *the* hearts of the fathers to *the* children, and *the* disobedient to *the* wisdom of *the* righteous, to make ready a people prepared for *the* Lord.' Then Zacharias said to the angel, 'By what *means* shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years'" (vs 1-18).

If you read that statement, you really get the feeling that they had given up praying about it—right? Just think about it; all those of you who are old and past time. Are you still praying for children? This was probably a prayer offered many years ago. There's something also interesting: In asking the question, he showed his disbelief! So, he was told he was going to be dumb, couldn't speak until the child was born. I thought of that, especially in relationship to where it says in the book of Hebrews, that if the word of angels met swift retribution, what do you think is going to happen if we turn back the Word of God—I'm just paraphrasing there in the book of Hebrews.

I got to thinking about Lot's wife. Why did she turn to a pillar of salt? *Because she looked back!* We've always said she looked back because she was longing for the good things of Sodom—which is generally a true statement. However, why was she turned into a pillar of salt? *Because she disobeyed the command of an angel!* That's why! So, if an angel of God comes up and says for you to do something, you say, 'Yes, sir! Show me the way.'

That is interesting. If you're going to do the will of God there are two ways—aren't there? There's the way of the world—and Peter uses this to contrast it. The way of the world is called *the broad way*. What do they call the place in New York City where they have all of these things of the world going on? They call it *Broadway!*—don't they?

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it.... [that's the way of the world, the broad way] ...for narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it" (vs 13-14). It's very interesting the way that is. You will see the continuity of the writing of the apostles, that it follows right along with the basic things that you find in the Gospels.

Let's see something interesting that Jesus said—all having to do with the will of God, which shows you what is the most important thing in life anyway: ***the will of God because He's Creator.*** And I imagine that there were some people who were offended at this:

Mark 3:31: "Then *His* brothers... [His physical brothers, who were? *James and Simon and Jude.* Shows it over here in Mark 6, and then His sisters were there—yes, James, Joseph, Jude and Simon and are not His sisters here with us (Mark 6:3)] ...and His mother came and were standing outside; *and* they sent to Him, calling Him." Saying, 'Look, we're out here, can you come out and see us. Which also knocks in a 'cocked-hat' the whole theory that there were no other children to the virgin Mary.

Verse 32: "And the multitude sat around Him; and they said to Him, 'Behold [now listen], Your mother and Your brothers *are* outside; *and* they are seeking You.' But He answered them, saying, 'Who is My mother and *who are* My brothers?'" (vs 32-33).

- You know that Jesus did not break any of the commandments of God—did He?
- You know that He was not dishonoring His mother.

But that's quite an interesting statement—isn't it? 'Who is My mother? *or* My brethren?' Most of us would say, 'Oh yes, excuse me, my mother's here, I'll be back in just a few minutes'—right? We would do that—right?

Verse 34: "And He looked around at those who were sitting in a circle around Him, *and* said, 'Behold My mother and My brothers... [Just like that, He said, 'My mother and brethren.' That's an astonishing statement.] ...for whoever shall do the will of God, that one is My brother, and My sister, and mother'" (vs 32-35). That's a pretty powerful statement when you really think about it. In Christ's own dedication to the Father and the work that God gave Him to do.

Let's come over here to John, the fifth chapter, and here's one that we know very well, but we'll just read it into the record to show how Jesus Christ lived His life. And the only way He could

have lived it perfectly. This is a very basic Scripture and one that should be good for memorization for you.

John 5:30, Jesus said: “I have no power to do anything of Myself... [In other words He’s saying ‘Out from Me, from My very own self and being, My own human nature, I’m doing nothing.’] ...but as I hear, I judge...” Just put in your notes and study it: Luke 11:37; and it says in the *King James* ‘lawyers’—but it’s really *doctors of the law*. And if you want an interesting study, study what Jesus said every time He was invited to dinner with one of the Pharisees. And here He was so hard on them at this one that the ‘doctors of the law’ said ‘You are insulting us.’ And He went on to excoriate them even more.

“... I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge... [these conversations He had with the Pharisees was God’s judgment against them] ...and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will... [So therefore, if we’re going to follow in the footsteps of Christ, we have to do the *will of God*—not the will of man!] ...but the will of the Father, Who sent Me” (v 30). That’s how Christ set the example for us.

Let’s go clear to 1-John, the fifth chapter, and let’s see how important this is in relationship to our prayers; how important this is in our relationship with God. We also know in John, the eighth chapter that Jesus said He ‘always did the things that pleased the Father.’ Not only did He do His will, but He did the things that pleased Him; which then gives us the example of what we ought to do. This gives us confidence; this helps us in every way if we really do that. It’s not a matter that we alone set our mind—now we have to set our mind to do the will of God, that is true—but God’s Spirit has to come and give us that desire to really do it, that’s true.

1-John 5:14: “And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that **if** we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us.” Maybe this is answer to why some prayers are not answered. It’s not God’s will, or it may not be His will at that particular time. Maybe like with Zacharias, the prayer that he and Elizabeth offered for children years ago, God finally said, ‘Okay, I’m going to do it.’ And the prayer took so long to be answered that Zacharias and his wife were so old, Zacharias said, ‘How’s this going to be?’ ***We know that He hears us!***

So, lots of times God is going to answer prayers at the time that it is best for us in His way, in His will. Just because He doesn’t answer immediately doesn’t mean that He hasn’t heard, that He’s not going to answer. Remember Daniel? Daniel was fasting and praying—praying his heart out! ***I mean he was praying his heart out!*** Twenty-one days later Gabriel came and said, ‘Your prayer’s been heard, but I’ve been with

Michael over here fighting the prince of Persia, and I’ve been delayed, but your prayer’s been heard.’ So there he was all this time, poor Daniel, fasting and praying for 21-days and no answer. But the revelation that he got was when the Messiah was going to come (Dan. 9 & 10).

Verse 15: “And if **we know**... [that’s a very positive statement; it’s also conditional] ...that He hears us... [You can go back and look at some of those Psalms; a lot of them start out: ‘Help, God’; ‘hear, God’; and all of those things. How do we know God hears? If we’re **doing** the things according to His will. **Asking** according to His will.] (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.” ***All contingent upon His will!***

I always remember the time we had this lady up in Salt Lake City who had breast cancer—just was right on death’s bed. I know the prayer I prayed for her was ‘God, if it’s Your will to heal her, heal her; and if not, let her die quickly.’ She was in terrible, terrible, terrible pain and suffering and agony, and God intervened and healed her. Tremendous!

But sometimes when you feel the most helpless, and when you know that you can’t do anything, and you go to God and say, ‘God, I just don’t know, but let it be according to Your will’—that’s really the best and most effective prayer. You can go back and read about the publican and the Pharisee, and the Pharisee was so wrapped up in his religion that he was praying to himself and not God. And he was comparing himself with others instead of comparing himself to the Word of God. And the publican came in and said: ‘Oh God, I’m so miserable I’m not even going to lift my eyes up to heaven. Be merciful to me, a sinner.’ Which one was justified? ***You know the story! The publican was justified!*** So there it is, we need to live our lives according to the will of God.

Now, let’s come back to 1-Peter 4:3: “For the past time of our lives is sufficient to have done the desire of the Gentiles, *when* we ourselves were walking in licentiousness...” That’s all kinds of immorality, sexual immorality; and it’s also interesting that we’re living now in an age that people God is calling are going to be those who have gone through an awful lot of trouble and difficulty. And the last thing they need to do is to come into a church of the Pharisees—which I’m going bring a sermon on *What Would a Church of the Pharisees Be Like*—based on a book by Joachim Jeremias (*Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*). Very interesting, and I think you will see that you were once in the ‘Church of the Pharisees.’ They need help, they need mercy; they have to repent though. But if they truly repent, then they need understanding. And they’re going to have the things come upon them because

they:

“...and lusts, and were debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries” (v 3). Can you imagine—what was it they had last week?—the final episode of *Cheers*, the tavern there. What are you going to do if that whole batch of people ever repented? Got a whole different story—right? *Yes, indeed!* Can you imagine the change in behavior for them, with their friends and everything, if they were converted?

Verse 4: “In seeing this difference in your behavior, they are astonished *that* you are not carousing with *them* in the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they are slandering you.... [talking against you] ...But they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge the living and the dead” (vs 4-5). We’re going to see here that God is judging us right now, as we get a little further into this chapter.

Verse 6: “And for this purpose the Gospel was preached to those who *have* died...” That has got to be referring to those whom God called, but have subsequently died. You’re not going to preach the Gospel to the dead. How effective are you going to be? Run out to a graveyard and preach the Gospel?

Oh, when we were down in Florida, we were driving along, and I tell you there is grass and green trees everywhere. Lot of pine trees over in Alabama. And almost every Church we came to—there are a lot of churches there—there was a graveyard next to it. I made the comment, I said, ‘Boy, that’d be depressing.’ Go to this church your whole life long and every year you get a little closer to the graveyard. I said it probably also gave a lot ‘hellfire and brimstone’ material for the minister, too. ‘You don’t shape up you’re going to be out there with the rest of those folks!’ But, just to make a point: How are you going to preach the Gospel to the dead? Run out there in the graveyard and shout to the tombstones? *No!*

This has to be to those who were alive but died in Christ. It couldn’t be anything other than that. “...so that, although in the flesh they may in fact have been judged according to men’s *standards*, on the other hand, they might live according to God’s *will* in the Spirit” (v 6). That is in their lives while they were living, and of course then, at the resurrection.

In our study we’ll go through all of the Scriptures which look like Christ was returning in the lifetime of the apostles. I might mention right here that also in the whole area of Judea—and they’re beginning to see this now as they’re uncovering more and more things of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They are finding there are many writings

about the end of the world, the end of the age, the coming of the Messiah—more than just Christians. So when it says there in the book of Acts, when Paul told Festus: ‘This (the whole thing of Jesus Christ) was not done in a corner.’

And you put that together where James said to Paul: ‘Now behold the thousands that believe!’ I don’t think we understand the cover-up in history that it has taken to blot out the name of Jesus Christ. And I don’t think we understand what a tremendous miracle it is that we have the New Testament. I don’t think we understand what a terrible and difficult time that a lot of the people in the true Church of God at that time had, because there were many, many professing groups who professed Christ at that time, but were not Christian; who were very Jewish. So, I think we’re in for a lot of surprises when we come to understand what was really going on at that time.

Peter’s saying, v 7: “Now the end of all things has drawn near.... [How many times have we gone through that? I remember in past years we were on the ‘gun lap’ how many different times. And we’ve gone past the ‘gun lap’ and around the track many times since then—right?] ...Therefore be serious-minded, and be watchful in prayers. But above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love will cover a multitude of sins.” (vs 7-8).

Unfortunately, that is a misunderstanding by many people. They think that if you just kind of show a sanctimonious type of love, that people can get away with sins. *No!* It means that you have to have a loving, understanding attitude so that you can deal with people who have been in the circumstance of being drunk and debauched and have their lives pretty well shot. That love that you have toward them, and you help them have toward God, covers a multitude of sins. Not license to sin by any means! And we’ve seen that, too, haven’t we? *Yes, we have!* This doesn’t mean that now you cover up great and gross sins so they continue within the Church. Not at all! But it just shows that if you have that kind of attitude, you’re going to cover the multitude of sins, which then obviously have been repented of. So that ties right back in the first part of 1-Peter.

I’ll tell you one thing, brethren, it is sure true that the people that I have met recently are just absolutely starving for the Word of God and for the love of God and everything like that—it is amazing, absolutely amazing!

Romans 13:8: “Do not be indebted to anyone for anything, unless *it is* to love one another. For the one who loves another has fulfilled *the* law.” We’re going to spend some time in that as we go along. You can have relationship of law. What was that song in *Fiddler on the Roof*? ‘Do you Love Me’—

that's it. So, his wife answered and said, 'Well, look, I've done your laundry; I've baked your bread; I've reared your kids.' And he said, 'Yeah, but do you love me?' And yes, you can have a relationship in law. But *love does not proceed from law. Law proceeds from love and law is an expression of love.* When you are truly loving someone, then you are fulfilling the law.

Then he says, here's an example of that, v 9: "Because *it says*, 'You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not lust.' And if *there be* any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, *even by this standard*: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does not do any wrong to *its* neighbor; therefore, love *is* the full expression of *God's law*" (vs 9-10).

But, *it flows from love!* It doesn't flow from just law. For example, you can take every one of these commandments: *you shall not commit adultery*; but a person could have in his heart this kind of scenario: 'Yeah, I know God says you shouldn't commit adultery, and you know, that's a tough law, God, but I'm going to keep it.' Rather than: You're going to love God so the thought of adultery will not even come into your mind. Vast difference in approach—right?

Just a thought: How many times have we heard it that we are suffering through this life so we will learn not to sin? Have you heard that? I've said it!—right? You've heard it, I preached it—right? Is that the whole object, that we learn not to sin? Or is it, more importantly, *we learn to love God*? You're learning to love God and you're building character. That's what's important. It's not that you learn not to sin; even sinners know they're not to sin. But they do! So, there's a whole lot more to it. There's just a whole lot more to it! And you can take each one of these commandments and go right on down the line and see exactly what you need to do to have the attitude of love to fulfill it.

Let's go to Colossians, the third chapter. And I think just as much as we have heard fists pounding from the pulpit in the past, about keeping the commandments of God—which is true and we need to—but unless we really strive for this part of it, we're going to miss an awful lot.

Colossians 3:12: "Put on then, as *the elect of God*, holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*. And above all these things *put on* love... [In other words, you have to grow into it. You have to put it on, and every time you lose your temper; every time I lose mine, I lose some of it and have to go back and try to

rebuild it again—right? *Yes, indeed!* So it's a whole lifelong project.] ...which is *the bond of perfection*" (vs 12-14).

Not only with one another, but with God! And how much closer are you to God because of that? Rather than just by commandment-keeping; because remember, the Pharisee said, 'Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men. I'm not an adulterer. I'm not an extortioner. And I'm not even like this old publican down here.' His was one of law! Which you need, but law without love isn't going to make it. Just like the song, *Do You Love Me?* 'I've been married 25-years and all these things, done all that.' What he wanted to know was, *do you love me?* It's the same thing with God. That's why we're going through what we're going through, brethren. There's no other reason for it. So we can see how we need to do.

Let's go to Philipians, the second chapter. And it's interesting how Paul was able to write all these things concerning love. It's interesting that he suffered so much. And I think when you suffer, you understand more about love.

(go to the next track)

Philipians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ... [After he's gone through all what he's gone through, and all the suffering, and all the preaching, and being in prison, and all this sort of thing]: ...if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the Spirit*, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, 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... [and of course, that comes from pride—all that comes from pride!] ...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 1-4). There we have it, that ties right in with what Peter was talking about.

Let's go back to 1-Peter 4:8: "But above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love will cover a multitude of sins.... [Not only does it cover a multitude of sins, it avoids a lot of sins—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!*] ...Be hospitable to one another, without complaining" (vs 8-9). We can also put 'and those who receive hospitality, don't take advantage of the one who's giving it.' Works both ways. Like everything else, there're always two sides to the coin.

Verse 10: "*Let* each one, according as he has received a gift *from God*..." Each person has something in the way of a gift from God, which is called *grace!*—that you can give, regardless of how great, or regardless of how small, whatever it is. You have something to give to someone, whether it be time, whether it be help, whether it be

understanding—and like in a Bible study, when you have a question you raise your hand and it's answered, you have something that you've contributed to it. Or whatever it is that you may do to the degree that...

Let's go to Romans 12, because that ties right in with what Paul was writing here, the whole thing. This was a very prevalent teaching in the New Testament Church. Too many times in the past it has been: well, the only ones who could do anything were those big, bad ministers; and those big bad deacons. And the way that you got ahead was play the political game and stroke the minister, and then you're going to be ordained as a deacon or whatever. Now, that's not the way that the Church originally was. Let's read what Paul says here:

Romans 12:1-2 talks about the kind of mind and attitude that we have to have and it ends, the last part of v 2: "...and the perfect will of God. For I say through the grace that was given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think with sound-mindedness, as God has divided to each one a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, but all members do not have the same function" (vs 2-4). Not an *office*. This whole thing: an office and a rank, we really don't find that in the New Testament.

Verse 5: "Likewise, we, being many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another. But each one has different gifts according to the grace that is given to us—whether prophecy... [and that means speaking, by the way—that's just speaking] ...*let us prophesy* according to the measure of faith; or service... [ministry—the source of that is where we get the word 'diakonos' or *deacon*—to be serving, to be helping.] ...*let us tend* to service; or the one who is teaching, *let him tend* to teaching; or the one who is encouraging, *let him tend* to encouragement..." (vs 5-8).

And there're some people who are just able to be cheerful and encourage. There're some people who can never see the good side of anything. There are other people who never see the bad side of anything—and they're able to help and encourage and cheer up. And it seems as though that many times the one who is currently suffering the most is able to cheer up someone else who may be also suffering, but not as much. And we remember Esther Grisinger with that—right? She helped everyone in her great suffering! So everyone has a gift or something they can do.

"...the one who is giving, *let it be* with generosity [simplicity, liberally—but on the other hand, the one who receives don't take advantage either. You have both balances as we're going through.] ...the one who is taking the lead, *let it be*

with diligence; the one who is showing mercy, *let it be* with cheerfulness... [Too many times it's, 'Well, all right, I forgive you.' That's not cheerfulness!] ...***Let love be without [dissimulation] hypocrisy...***" (vs 8-9). There're some people you love more than others, just by the way things fall. But, don't put on a pretense of love to make yourself be known and seen. That's what it's talking about here. Let it be without dissimulation, without pretense.

"...abhorring that which is evil *and* cleaving to that which is good. *Be* kindly affectioned toward one another in brotherly love. *Let* each esteem the other more highly than himself" (vs 9-10). There we go, follows right along with what the Apostle Peter was writing here.

1-Peter 4:10: "*Let* each one, according as he has received a gift *from God*, *be using it* to serve the others, as good stewards of the grace of God, *which* manifests itself in various ways. ***If anyone speaks, let it be as the words of God...*** [In other words, the words which God would want you to speak. But let's literally apply this to ministers. Too many of them are giving too many of their own ideas. If you're going to speak, let it be the words of God.] ...if anyone serves, *let it be* as from the strength which God supplies; so that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to Whom is the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. AMEN" (vs 10-11). This ends a particular section that Peter wrote.

Now again, we pick up with some of the difficulties and problems that people have with trials. There are several sections in 1-Peter where you go along and he mentions trials and it seems kind of like—if I could sort of coin a phrase here: 'peat and repeat'—in the book of 1-Peter. Let's look at a couple of these things and let's understand something and then we'll finish off chapter four and I think we can do it today.

Verse 12: "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you, *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing were happening to you." Living in such an evil world, the very nature of you keeping the commandments of God is going to put you in a bind at the very least! But Satan is out there; the world is out there; and we're going to have the trials and difficulties come along, and there's no way around it.

Verse 13: "But to the degree that you have a share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice..." I will have to say, brethren, that I'm not ready to jump up and down and shout and laugh and yell with joy with every trial that I go through; because when they come they're difficult. But I look back now at the things that we have gone through and see the various brethren now coming out of the circumstances they

have been in, and the only thing I can do is be thankful and happy for what we've gone through ***because we're able to now help them***—which then becomes very important. "...so that, at the revelation of His glory, you also may rejoice exceedingly!" (v 13).

Now let's look at just a couple of Scriptures here that we need to understand. With so many people building on the foundation of this man or that man, or whatever man, let's go back and we'll cover this quite sufficiently—not at this time only but also at times in the future.

Here's something that I want us to understand. I heard a man give a sermon, and since we have quite a few people coming out of Worldwide, we can't avoid it, and it's current and it's constant and it isn't going to go away; and if we avoid it we're not going to do proper duty; if we don't face it squarely, we're not going to be able to help those who are in trouble. But he gave a sermon—and he's supposed to be a 'high-ranking' minister who just recently left—and he gave a sermon on loyalty. And he said, 'Our first loyalty should be to God and His Word'—correct statement. Guess what he said the second loyalty should be to? *HWA!* Now I want to read something in the Bible here for all to hear!

1-Corinthians 3:10: "As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*. For **no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ**" (vs 10-11). I say to every minister who wants to build his ministry on the foundation of HWA, you've got another thought to think about! ***Jesus Christ is the only foundation.***

Now then, the rest of us all need to be careful how we build, v 12: "Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones... [Which are all improved with trials—aren't they?] ...wood, hay *or* stubble"—which are burned up with trials—aren't they? *Yes!* So, you determine, *through Christ*, how these trials and difficulties—as Peter said, 'fiery trials...no strange thing'; don't be surprised! You be careful how you build.

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. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet as through fire" (vs 13-15). So, there's a purpose in everything that God gives us. I don't love trials anymore than you, brethren. I would love to have it where it would be nice and easy and smooth and

wonderful and just everything would be great. That's not the way this life is. On the other hand, let's not be stupid and go out and do things which create unwanted trials. They're going to come.

1-Peter 4:14: "If you are being reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed... [Not by the world, not by the circumstances] (but): ...because the *Spirit* of glory and the Spirit of God is resting upon you; on their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. Assuredly, let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as an over-lording busybody in other people's lives" (vs 14-15). And that's the way it is in the Greek. And how many have suffered from the over-lording busybodies in other people's lives?

I saw a movie sometime back, where this man was what you would call a 'dead-ringer' for another criminal. And this fellow who was the criminal went out and he was holding up these little photo drive-in places, and raping the girls. And this other man was arrested, who was totally innocent but looked just like him, and had a tooth broken in exactly the same place that the real criminal had. And that poor man's life was made absolutely miserable. The police came and arrested him and they really had—this was a good one because they had these real tough and nasty police—and it took him 13 months to find out. He went through about three trials and was acquitted.

But this man nearly lost his mind because of the difficulties that he was going through. So what happened, one of the detectives happened to get one of the girls who had been robbed and kidnapped and taken out to be raped, and they put her in the car and said, 'Okay, take us along the route where you went' and finally she remembered the route and they went up to the place where the *real* robber and rapist lived; and they found the robber/rapist's brother there. And they took out a picture of the man that they had accused (who was innocent) and said, 'Do you recognize this man?' And he says, 'He sure enough is a dead-ringer for my brother; and he's got a tooth broken in the same place.'

So, they went and they finally arrested the guy who was really the robber and rapist/kidnapper; and here he had plastered on the wall of his apartment all of the newspaper clippings from all the difficulties and trials and arrests and acquittals that this other man had gone through, and as they were arresting him and taking him out, the police then remembered why, when the innocent person was arrested, that all of the robberies and rapes stopped—for a period of 13 months. Because the real crook was in jail for something else and was there for the 13 months.

That was really just a strange and weird thing that that man went through. So when Peter is

talking about here: ‘...let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer...’ in preparing for this sermon I thought about that. That poor guy, what he went through. Just ruined and destroyed his life. And it was based on a true thing, too.

Verse 16: “Yet if anyone is *suffering* as a Christian...” I want to make a point here: ‘Christian.’ Because there’s some people who say that the word ‘Christian’ does not even appear in the New Testament. And therefore, since it doesn’t appear in the New Testament we are not to be called ‘Christians.’ Well, I can tell you that right here, in the Greek it is: ‘Christian’—and also, in Acts 11, referring to the Church being raised up in Antioch where they were first called: ‘Christians.’

“...he should not be ashamed; but in this case, let him glorify God. For the time *has come* for judgment to begin with the household of God...” (vs 16-17). Brethren, that’s what’s going on in all the Churches of God everywhere today—everywhere—every Church of God is having upheavals and trials and difficulties; everywhere I go.

“...and if it first *begins* with us...” (v 17). What is the judgment? What is the trial for? What is it that God is interested in? ***Whether you love Him and obey Him! Whether you’re going to follow Him regardless, or whether you’re going to follow a man.*** That’s what it is.

“...what *will be* the end of those who are not obeying the Gospel of God?” (v 17).

Now let’s put that in perspective in relationship to those who claim to be God’s people. What if they are not obeying the Gospel of God?

Verse 18: “And if the righteous... [scarcely be saved (KJV)] ...are being saved with much difficulty, what will become of the ungodly and *the* sinner? For this reason also, let those who are suffering according to the will of God be committing their souls *to Him* in well doing, as to a faithful Creator” (vs 18-19).

That’s what Jesus did. Even to His very last dying breath. What was the last thing that Jesus said? ***“Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit.”***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 4:1-6, 2
- 2) 1 Peter 1:14-17
- 3) 1 Peter 2:11-12
- 4) 1 Peter 3:16-17
- 5) 1 Peter 4:2
- 6) Luke 1:11-18
- 7) Matthew 7:13-14
- 8) Mark 3:31-35
- 9) John 5:30
- 10) 1 John 5:14-15
- 11) 1 Peter 4:3-8
- 12) Romans 13:8-10
- 13) Colossians 3:12-14
- 14) Philippians 2:1-4
- 15) 1 Peter 4:8-10
- 16) Romans 12:2-11
- 17) 1 Peter 4:10-13
- 18) Romans 12:12-13
- 19) 1 Corinthians 3:10-15
- 20) 1 Peter 4:14-19

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 6:9
- Mark 6:3
- Luke 11:37
- Daniel 9; 10
- Romans 12:1
- Acts 11

#### Also referenced:

- Sermon: *What Would a Church of the Pharisees Be Like?* (Judaism vs Scripturalism Series)
- Book: *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* by Joachim Jeremias

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

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

# Epistle of First Peter XIV

Fred R. Coulter

If you want to put a title for this sermon, this will be entitled *In the Wake of Waco*. And I know I mentioned that I would give a sermon on cults, and Francine talked to me last week, so I promised her I would bring a sermon on cults in the light of events that have transpired. So, we'll ask the question, first of all, what is a cult?

I had an unusual experience. I went down to Dunnville's Store and got something on my way out of town. Dunnville's is kind of like a little country store, and I asked the owner there—that I know, his name is Bill—I said, 'What do you think of the problems in Waco?' He said, 'Don't get me started.' So I said okay. One of the girls popped up and said, 'Well, it's good to get rid of a cult, we don't need cults.' And I said, 'By whose definition? If I say you're a cult, then by whose definition is right? Is it the government's definition? Is it my definition? Is it our enemy's definition? Is it our friend's definition?' So I decided to try and solve the problem by looking in the *Authoritative Webster's Dictionary*. So here's what it says—and it doesn't help much:

## A cult:

1. a system of religious worship or ritual.
2. devoted attachment to or extravagant admiration for a person, principle, especially one regarded as a fad, as the cult of nudism, a group of followers, a sect.

That labels almost everyone in the world that has any belief in anything as a cult—right? *Yes, it does!*

## A sect:

1. Is a group of people having common leadership, common set of opinions, common philosophical doctrine, etc., school or following.
2. Any group holding certain views, political principles, etc., in common.
3. A religious denomination, especially a small church that has broken away from an established church.

Now, you see all the difficulties you get in these definitions.

Is the Democratic Party a sect? Is the government a sect? *Yes!* Well, we'll cover quite a few things about that, but I thought it was very profound that on the very day that they were celebrating the opening of the Holocaust Memorial in Washington, D.C., or New York—one of the two—they were bulldozing down the building in Waco. And I got to thinking about that quite a bit, especially in the light of the worst statement I heard out of the whole thing, and a lot of people just

missed it entirely—there were two statements made by a liberal in Berkley, California—hotbed of the New Age movement and total liberalism in the United States—said that there are over '2500 cults, and now we have to go after all of them.'

And the other one was made by Janet Reno, our incompetent hillbilly who is the head of the Dept. of Justice—she said "we need to investigate these cults so this kind of thing won't happen again." And my thought was, why don't we start investigating with her and the ATF. But the problem is, you see, now they're going to have hearings on cults. So now cults are going to be defined by the government. And when the government defines anything and gets a nomenclature on anything, you have had it, because we are oppressed by bureaucracies.

So, there are cult-watching networks. They've got the goodies on everybody. There is the *Cult-Watchtower* put out from Texas. Someone gave me a copy of that somewhere—I forget who gave it to me—but what they do, they name every organization that keeps the Sabbath and the Holy Days and does not believe in the trinity *as a cult*. Is that the definition they're going to use? *Who knows!* So we've got some real difficult problems.

Plus, I don't know if you've heard of it back there, but the *Anti-defamation League* has been spying on Americans—hundreds of thousands of them—for years. And all of those files are gradually making their way into the government archives.

Now, let's look at the thing down here in Waco. I know when it first started, Evelyn called me and said go watch the television, and I didn't have a chance to do that—I'm sorry that I didn't. But immediately the propaganda started saying they were shooting each other and they set the fires so 'we couldn't get at them.' But that is not true.

All of the defendants who got out unanimously said that the fires were started when they sent the tanks in to push in the walls, because they had the inside of the walls lined with bales of hay to stop the bullets; and the FBI had cut off the electricity so they had kerosene lanterns. So as soon as they started pushing in the walls, it knocked over the kerosene lanterns and then just all havoc broke loose. And when you get hay started burning, then it's gone—nothing goes faster than hay. And everyone tries to justify what they did:

- 'Well, the agents were tired and we need to have some action, because it's been 51 days.'

- *Well, at Wounded Knee they waited 78 days and got everybody out alive.*
- *'We are concerned about the children'*
- *So we go in and kill them.*

Doesn't make any sense! They had a compound there where they had classrooms, they had a gymnasium, they had a swimming pool, they had classes. Granted, they were probably into certain things of improper sex and things like that; and granted, they had fanatical religious views, which were not correct according to the Bible—but, there's no law against being a kook! There is a law which says we shall have freedom of speech.

So all of this, I really feel, was a first movement to set up the thing so that people will be psychologically programmed, like this dingy little dame down there in Dunnville, who says, "Oh, we don't want any cults around." They program everyone so that's exactly the way people will think, so they can come after anyone.

I believe that's why it's good we're meeting in homes. Now, I'll give you a true definition of a religious cult, and then we'll go back and we'll talk a little bit about some of the things that have happened, which shows that this is a total government bungle, totally unwarranted, should never have happened. If you have child abuse you don't send in tanks and kill the children. If you have sexual abuse you don't come in and surround them with tanks and cut off the electricity. There are different ways to handle it.

There is no law which says—by the way they were not in violation of Texas law at all—there's no law which says you cannot stockpile weapons; and the second amendment was made to prevent things like this so you could kill those government agents coming in to get you. Now, I'm not for killing government agents. Please don't misunderstand me in that. But when they left Europe and they had all the government oppression coming in at midnight and running down doors and burning the buildings, when they set up the United States, they had the militia not only to protect the national sovereignty, but to keep the federal government from doing what they just did.

Now, let me give you a true definition of a *religious cult*, so you might want to take this down: The true definition of a religious cult is ***anyone or any organization that places itself or its leader between you and God.*** By that definition they were a cult, but cults cannot be outlawed by civil law; otherwise they'd go after everybody. Let me give that definition again—this is what I came to with it: religious cult is ***anyone or any organization that places itself or its leader between you and God.*** Now, we'll amplify that a little bit later.

They did have that down there in Waco, but the problem is that no one was there with the truth to try and solve it. I think they were just about ready to get them to agree to come out. As a matter of fact, it was in Reading that we saw an interview with a man who was there and they were giving Koresh some new interpretations of Revelation.

So the whole thing is ***just absolutely unreal the way it happened!*** And I was glad to see that the Texas Rangers have taken over the initial investigation. I don't know what they did to 'Ma Richards' down there in Texas. They probably told her, 'Look, you don't turn this over to the Feds or you're through!' They're in there doing all the forensic thing and there is no evidence that anyone was shot trying to escape. And no one who survived has said that they started the fires. It was started by the tanks.

Let's go ahead and we'll take some comments from here and I'll try and repeat them so you can hear them:

- What should they have done when they came with the initial warrant?

*Well, I don't think they came with a warrant, I think they came with the troops first.* And, as I have said, they should have done what you're indicating here; that if they would have sent one man with a warrant to the door and said, 'Look, we're with the ATF, we have a search warrant, we would like to see your stock of weapons.' Then it would have been a whole different story. But if you're a true Christian—like you're saying there—"you agree with adversary while you are in the way." And in this case lest they knock over your building and burn you to death. So that gives a good moral to the story that true Christians should not stockpile weapons; because look what happens.

- The comment was made that they didn't have any right to go in there in the first place because the Constitution allows for the stockpiling of weapons.

You would have to say that would be correct up to a certain point of where there would be revolution. Now then you've got another whole different situation in hand. But I also heard that they were trading in those weapons as a means of earning money. So you've got a whole different scenario there. It would be like trying to raid a gun store in that particular sense.

- The comment was made that there are times when 'might makes right'—whether it's wrong or not

—and you'd better agree with them while you're in the way. I mean, would they not have all been better off if they had agreed? At least they would have

been alive. At least the children would have been alive, too.

Let's look at a couple of Scriptures which cover that kind of thing. And you know, I've had people ask me, 'Well, would it be wrong to have gun?' Now, that's not the correct question. Of course, it's not wrong to have a gun. But even when Peter had the sword and cut off the servant's, of the high priest, ear—Jesus said that was enough! So, I don't think that we ought to be out there causing war, committing war, fighting against the government. Yes, we're to give them a witness, but boy, I tell you, I think if we mind our business and keep our noses clean, then if pressure's brought upon us, then it'll be a whole different sort than what came upon them.

Here in Romans 13, we have what God says about the 'higher powers'; what God says about the government. When Paul wrote this, we need to understand that it was a Roman dictatorship of which he was writing. In spite of all the problems that are going to come about because the "power to be"—the one-worlders—want to get rid of Christians, we know that the time coming down the line it's going to happen. But in the meantime, we can learn some lessons from this, and we can learn how to act and how not to act.

Romans 13:1: "Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God; and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God; so then, the one who sets himself against the authority is resisting the ordinance of God... [Now, that was in the same Bible that Koresh was reading to his followers.] ...and those who resist shall receive judgment to themselves" (vs 1-2). You've got that part in there.

You also have another part in this whole situation, which is that if you discount the children and the women and the ones who died, you have a situation where Koresh said that he was Yahweh, meaning the Son of God. Now almost everyone who takes the position of God, says they are God, puts themselves in place of God, end up dying. I mean, look at Jimmy Jones; look at Yahweh Ben Yahweh down in Florida; look at some of these other things. So those people who are involved in religion need to realize that they can't let anything get to the point where the leader appoints himself as God. You know if that happens, and if you're in a group like that you better fast get out of there because there's going to be danger coming along.

Verse 3: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil *works*. Do you desire not to be afraid of the authority? *Then* practice good, and you will have praise from it." That has to be where then it doesn't violate your faith. We can't have anything violating our faith in these different situations.

Verse 4: "For he is a servant of God to you for good...." If the government would have gone about it properly by saying that 'now we need to come in here because there are testimonies and indications of people of those who have left that there are sexual misbehavior, perversion, incest, child-sexual things going on, and we need to handle that from the point-of-view of the social worker or the health department kind of thing—that would have been a whole different story. So what you're dealing with, you're dealing with a government that is not right. You're dealing with an organization that wasn't right, and the two of them got at total loggerheads and neither one was willing to give in until 'death do us part'—if we could use that in that horrible way. So that's really a very difficult and treacherous thing that happens there.

Let's go to Matthew 5:25, and let's see what Jesus said which is really true. This is obviously if you are in the wrong; this not if you are not wrong. "Agree with your adversary **quickly**... [obviously, it has to be if you're wrong] ...while you are in the way with him; lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. Truly I say to you, there is no way that you shall come out of there until you have paid the *very* last coin" (vs 25-26). So those are two principles that we need to watch in any of these situations in dealing with the law.

Let's understand that Jesus Christ could have been labeled a leader of a cult; because Jesus Christ was against the establishment. And He turned down every opportunity to try and defend Himself—didn't He? *Yes, He did!* Okay, Christ was mislabeled. Let's see what they called Him:

Matthew 12:22: "Then was brought to Him one who was possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that the one *who had been* blind and dumb both spoke and saw. And the multitudes were all amazed, and said, 'Is this the Son of David?' But when the Pharisees heard *this*... [who were part of the establishment] ...they said, 'This *man* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, prince of the demons'" (vs 22-24).

There you go! We don't know how many lies were brought up against Koresh and the group there, which were not true. Now I'm sure some of you have been a victim of lies. I've been victimized by lies, and I've been victimized by my own stupidity on top of it. Sometimes you get the two mixed in together, and you got a real big problem. So you've got that situation involved.

Let's go to John, the eighth chapter, and let's see another whole principle. What we are seeing is that the world—which is run by Satan the devil—is now beginning to define true Christians as cults. If you don't believe in the trinity and if you keep the

Sabbath and Holy Days, you are a cult, according to their definition. Now, there's some other things that the Bible shows, which really makes the religion a cult (which we will look at in just a little bit).

But here in John 8:31 we're going to see some very important factors here as we go along: "Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ***If*** you continue in My Word..." We can go through and show where Koresh was not continuing in the Word of God. He had his own version of Revelation. And apparently what he did, he took the book of Revelation and applied it to his group directly. In other words, the book of Revelation was only talking about that one little group. So obviously, he wasn't continuing in the Word of God at all—not at all whatsoever.

"...you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free" (vs 31-32). That's one thing that is so important in our relationship with God. Never allow anyone to take away your freedom of choice—whether right or wrong. God doesn't take it away from us. And never allow anyone to stand between you and God.

So here in this case, v 33: "They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, "You shall become free"?'.... ['What is this you're talking about?'] ...Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin'" (vs 33-34). That's how you judge the behavior of different situations: Are they living by the Word of God? or are they living by sin? And if they had child abuse and if they had sex-perversion, if they had these other things there, then they're not living by the Word of God.

Verse 35: "And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free" (vs 35-36). It's sure tragic how so many religions and take that freedom that Christ intends to give us and puts it into a yoke that they put upon their own followers and disciples.

Jesus continued and said, v 37: "I know that you are Abraham's seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*.... [That's when true persecution is going to come: when the Word of God has no place in the people in the world.] ...I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.' They answered and said to Him, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this. You are doing the works of your father.' Then they said to Him, 'We have not been born of fornication. We

have one Father, *and that is God*'" (vs 37-41).

And it's sure true. The way that you try and convince people that you're right is to label the other person—'be born of fornication.' I don't figure, in what happened there, that there's any justification for what they did to push in the buildings, to cause the fire, kill all of those people because of the alleged violations that were there. It's just complete governmental abuse.

Up in Idaho, they sent an ATF agent up there to buy a shotgun and it was 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an inch shorter on the barrel than it should have been, so they sent all the ATF agents around his house—surrounded it—and they had two personnel carriers and those tank-like vehicles up there. They killed: shot a 12-year-old boy [his son] in the back; shot his wife who was holding the baby—and they did absolutely nothing wrong. So we need to also look at the situation that there are the forces of evil out there and we need to be as Jesus said: '*Wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.*' Otherwise we're going to get ourselves into great difficulties far before the time when there's any persecution. There are two types of persecution:

1. That God wants you to go through for your own good.
2. That you bring upon yourself because of your own stupidity.

I've suffered both! And unfortunately, those down in Texas are suffering from their stupidity. They could have all gotten out. Didn't have to go to that. But when you start slinging names and say, 'Oh, it's a cult! Therefore, they deserved that.' What did Jesus say of those who were killed by the tower of Siloam? He said, 'Do you think they were sinners above all men on the earth? I tell you, no. Unless you repent you shall likewise perish.'

So, this labeling of things and coming along to try and pin epitaphs on someone is just the work of Satan; just like it is here; where they said:

"... 'We have not been born of fornication. We have one Father, *and that is God.*' Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why don't you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My Words'" (vs 41-43). That means they don't want to hear it.

Verse 44: "You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice...." We're going to see more and more of that happening in the world, in religion, in different groups; and who knows what's going to happen down the road here. I tell you, the way things are going with the federal government, just be real careful about everything because we're just being oppressed by

bureaucracies right and left.

“...He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. Which *one* of you can **convict Me of sin**?.... [Koresh could have said that: ‘Which of you can convict me of violating a law?’ That would have been the best defense in the world.] ...But if I speak *the* truth, why don’t you believe Me? The one who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God.’ Then the Jews answered and said to Him, ‘Are we not right in saying that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?’” (vs 44-48). Look what it all got down to there, even in this argument with Jesus. He’s telling the truth, and they’re turning around and accusing Him of being of Satan the devil.

Now let’s see how Jesus did not want any cultism in the Church. Let’s go to Matthew 20. Jesus did not want any cultism in the Church. Now how does cultism start in the Church? That’s what we need to answer. How does cultism start in the Church? How can a small group of people—who believe God, who want to believe the Word of God—end up being a cult? How’s that possible? Well, Jesus gave us the clues as to how it’s possible and what we should do so it won’t be. Because I just imagine that there are people—we talked about this morning; Delores looked at me and said, ‘Boy, you could be called the leader of a cult. Just as well as anybody else.’

Jesus said, Matthew 20:20: “Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, worshiping Him and asking a certain thing from Him.... [When you start playing politics everybody’s going to get in trouble. That’s what it is here.] ...And He said to her, ‘What do you desire?’ She said to Him... [Now, how can you turn down a mother? How can you turn down a sweet lady?] ...‘Grant that these my two sons... [whom I love dearly, Lord] ...may sit one at Your right hand and one at *Your left hand* in Your kingdom”” (vs 20-21). [Was not she politically sharp? She was trying to get the first two positions.

Verse 22: “But Jesus answered *and* said, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?’ They said to Him... [Because they were standing right there with mom; and said, ‘Mom, you go up and ask’] ...‘We are able’.... [They didn’t have the faintest idea what they were saying. But it just shows you the enthusiasm of carnality. That’s exactly what it is.] ...And He said to them, ‘You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*; but to sit at

My right hand and at My left *hand* is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father”” (vs 22-23).

And yet, didn’t we have the booklet in Worldwide: *The Wonderful World Tomorrow, What it Will be Like*? We had it all structured, who’s going to be on the right hand, who’s going to be on the left hand, who’s going to be in charge of agriculture, who’s going to be in charge of whatever. And then, just for convenience sake, we said, okay we’ll take this minister because he’s over Australia and we’ll make him in charge of Australia for all the Kingdom. Now you see how all this carnality gets carried away. You sit here and think about it. We really did that? *Yeah, we did!* And they had one minister—Gerald Waterhouse—who went around and he was supposed to be watering the Church, and he was contaminating it wherever he went.

Now we’ve got a big fight started here in v 24: “And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers.... [we’ve got a family fight going on here] ...But Jesus called them to *Him and* said, ‘You know that the rulers of the nations **exercise lordship over them**, and the great ones **exercise authority over them**....” (vs 24-25).

In other words, they are the final authority. They are dictators. They rule with iron fist. Now we’re going to see a great one here who which caused problems in the Church, and I’m going to show you—from the Bible—that there were warnings that hierarchical, satanic-type organization was coming into the Church and THAT was the thing that was the warning in 1-Peter 5—so we’ll get to that.

“...exercise authority over them”” (v 25). What do you mean *exercise authority*? You set down extra rules. Someone comes and says, ‘Master, how should I tithe on my check?’ *Well, let me see your check; you do this, you do that and the other thing.* No, it should be, before God, you need to determine what you’re going to give. That’s the proper answer. ‘Master, what kind of car should I get?’ *Well, the minister’s all get Plymouths.* You can go on and on and on and on with all of these things. They use their Plymouth Furies because God would ‘come in His fury’—it was actually said. Even in a joking way, it’s incredible! So they ‘**exercise authority.**’

You can’t go visit your unconverted relatives because they’re not in the Church. You cannot eat white sugar because it’s not good for you. And any other rules that you want to have. That’s *exercising authority!* So Jesus wanted to make sure the disciples understood that shouldn’t be with the true Church of God, and that was the thing that began separating between the true church and the hierarchical church, which came later.

Verse 26: “However, it shall not be this way

among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant [minister].” That is to serve, to help, to teach—why? ***Because the minister is to feed the flock and always point the people to God.*** No other way:

- not to *exercise authority*
- not exercise control
- not to rule over people’s lives
- not to interfere with their faith or anything like that

Verse 27: “And whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave [servant]... [and then He gives the example here] ...just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (vs 27-28).

So, here is the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament, gave up everything that He was as God, became a human being, was born of the virgin Mary, and humbled Himself to serve, rather than be served. Remember when He was standing there and Pilate said, ‘Why aren’t your servants fighting?’ He said, ‘If I ask for it I can have 10,000 legions of angels.’ He didn’t! He had all the power; gave it all up to serve and to die. So it’s complete opposite of what people think of hierarchical church. “...but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Let’s go to Acts 8 <sup>[corrected]</sup>—here we find the first cultist coming in contact with the Church of God—and this is Simon Magus. He was the one who set up the hierarchical counterfeit Church of God. He was the one who went to Rome. He was the one who was Nero’s sorcerer. He was the one who helped establish—with the connection into Alexandria—that which later became the Roman Catholic Church. Carl Franklin is working on that, and I’ve been in contact with him on the phone and he’s coming up with all kinds of things that are absolutely fantastic, we never knew before. Some of the reason being that some of these books were not translated until 1989. So we’re going to have a whole new understanding as to what was going on in the book of Acts and in the epistles, and especially Galatians.

We know that Philip went down to Samaria, and let’s pick it up here in Acts 8:5: “Then Philip went down to a city of Samaria and proclaimed Christ to them; and the multitudes listened intently with one accord to the things spoken by Philip when they heard and saw the signs that he did, for unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many of those who had *them*; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city” (vs 5-8). If there’s one thing that other religionists don’t like, they don’t like see people having joy without their control. And here was the first hierarchical cultist who held people

sway, who held them under his spell.

Verse 9: “But *there was* a certain man named Simon...” It’s one particular individual. And the reason he’s called ‘Simon Magus’ is because ‘magus’ means *magician*. A magician is one who uses sorcery. If you want a real interesting study sometime, go down to the library—if yours hasn’t been closed because of low tax revenues—and look at the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* and read about Simon Magus. It will just absolutely dumbfound you what is known about him. Let’s see his tactics.

“...who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery in the city... [sorcery then is witchcraft; sorcery is manipulation and mind-control] ...and [bewitched] astounding the nation of Samaria...” (v 9)—now that’s coming close to hypnotizing them.

Let’s go to Deuteronomy 18, so that we can see—right from the Word of God—that this is the kind of religion, and these are the kind of tactics that God does not want us to use. God is very clear about this. There are other places in the book of Deuteronomy—the last part of chapters 12 & 13.

Deuteronomy 18:9: “When you come to the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to do according to the abominations of those nations.” We’re also not to learn to do as the heathen nations in the way of government and rulership—right? We are not *exercise lordship* over them. We are not be called *benefactors*. We’re not to be called the only one who has access to God—because that’s not true.

So here’s what they did, v 10: “There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or a fortuneteller, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or one who seeks oracles from the dead” (vs 10-11). All of those things have to do with what we’re talking about of sorcery in Acts 8.

Verse 12: “For all that do these things *are* an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations whom you shall possess hearkened to observers of times and to diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you *to do so*” (vs 12-14).

In Acts 8:9 we have this great religious leader in Samaria, and he had all the people there convinced. Now notice what he was doing to himself. He was exalting himself. “...proclaiming himself to be some great one.... [Jesus said you’re not be like the great ones who are called *benefactors*. So that has

to do with religious leaders.] ...To him they had all given heed... [they were all obedient to] ...from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God.... [Now that's something when you think of it!] ...This man is the great power of God.' Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries" (vs 9-11).

What happens when you're challenged for control? So here comes Philip. Who was Philip compared to Simon? *Nothing!* One of those fishermen from Galilee, preaching Christ.

Verse 12: "But when they believed Philip, who was preaching the gospel—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ—they were baptized, both men and women.... [Then a strange and curious thing happens.] ...Then Simon himself also believed; and after being baptized..." (vs 12-13). Here's a whole big problem starting in the New Testament Church. That's why Luke wrote it, so that we would know the source and the origin of it.

He [Simon] did not receive the Holy Spirit, but he was baptized. Now, I don't know what was going through Philip's mind. He probably thought, well, the man really repented. You know that would be phenomenal—wouldn't it? If you had one of the great, religious leaders of the world come and repent, and you baptized him. I don't know if Philip was going to go back to Jerusalem and say, 'Guess what guys, look what I did.' I don't know. I have no idea what was on his mind. But obviously this caused a great concern the apostles.

"...he steadfastly continued with Philip; and as he beheld the signs and great works of power *that were being done*, he was amazed" (v 13). Probably says, 'How'd you do that, Philip?' *I just did it in the name of the Lord.* He's probably wondering, 'I need that power.' So he could control people. And the whole lesson here is that ***you're not to take the power of God to control people!***

(go to the next track)

Verse 14: "Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them; who, after coming down to *Samaria*, prayed for them, that they might receive *the* Holy Spirit; for as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (vs 14-16).

So, we also get a lesson as we're going along here. It's not enough to be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus unless you have hands laid on you for the receiving the Holy Spirit, and unless you receive the Holy Spirit.

Verse 17: "Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the* Holy Spirit. Now when

Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money... [Now what do you think [Jimmy] Swaggart would have done? 'Oh, bless you, Simon! Bring it on into the treasury here. All the rest of you folks, bring your money!' or some of the evangelists we see on TV today.] ...saying, 'Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit'" (vs 17-19). Notice, he was going to dispense the Holy Spirit through *his* hands, rather than asking God to give it through the laying on of hands. Complete misunderstanding. Here then is that attitude of total control of people, that only upon whom he would lay his hands they would receive the Holy Spirit.

Verse 20: "But Peter said to him, 'May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter... [he was completely rebuked from having any part in the Church, any part in the ministry] ...***for your heart is not right before God***'" (vs 20-21). We need to think of that in relationship to all the oppression and the things that happen with these cult-type groups.

Verse 22: "Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you; for I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness" (vs 22-23). That's pretty strong terminology. A time or two I've had to be pretty strong with people, but not anything like this. So this is a pretty powerful section of Scripture. That even though we've gone over it in the past, I don't think we've understood the full magnitude of what was going on here.

Verse 24: "But Simon answered *and* said, 'You beseech the Lord on my behalf... [he wasn't willing to repent. He said, 'You do it for me.' The other day at the bank there's this bank teller there that I'm pretty good friends with, and she knew I wrote the book, so I gave her a book and the other day she said, 'Fred, pray for me.' I said I will, but I said, 'You can pray yourself, too, you know.' And she looked at me as though 'You mean I can?' I said yeah, you can pray. So, it's just the same attitude that the Catholics have—right? if you get the pope to pray for you, you get the priest to pray for you, same attitude here.] ...so that none of *those* things which you have spoken may come upon me'" (v 24).

I want to go back and zero in on this term "***in the bond of iniquity.***" Let's go to 2-Thessalonians and see how the Apostle Paul said that this was already developing. I mean we have missed the whole point as to what was going on here in the Church at that particular time. Let's see what Paul said of this 'mystery of iniquity which was already working!' And we have never really tied that

in with coming from Simon Magus in such a way. As a matter of fact, Carl [Franklin] has uncovered that there was a ministerial meeting, or an apostolic meeting of the *false* apostles in Antioch around 50 A.D. So Simon didn't go out and repent. Simon went out and said, 'Boy, this really fits everything, I'm going to go preach the name of Christ.'

2-Thessalonians 2:7: "For the mystery of [iniquity] lawlessness is already working..." It was already working; it was already active; it was already a moving reality within the Church of God.

Now, let's tie that in with Acts 20, and let's see what Paul warned those of Ephesus. We read it and we think, oh yeah, that's nice. Let's read it for what it's really telling us. This is where he's talking to the elders, to the ministers.

Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God... [we'll tie that in with 1-Peter 5 in just a little bit] ...which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" (vs 28-29). What was it that was going to happen? The Church of God was going to be turned in from the Church of God into the cultic religion that evolved into the Catholic Church. And they did it by cutting people off from God ***with a hierarchy that was in charge of their faith***—based upon 'whomever I shall lay my hands upon, they shall receive the Holy Spirit.'

Is this where the Nicolaitans start? *Yes, it is. This is where they start, absolutely!* So, the whole battle with the Church of God, from the beginning was to fight against these hierarchical cultic-type things to come in and take over the Church.

As I mentioned when I was down there in Montgomery and everyone there will remember when we were talking about what is the minimum size of the Church? Well, Christ said, 'where two or three are gathered.' That's the minimum size of the Church. These people are interested in organization—right? We'll see that. They want to organize people. They want to rule their faith. They want to take their money. 'Grievous wolves...not sparing the flock!' Have we witnessed that? They don't care about the flock. They're just interested in their own power struggle.

Verse 30: "And from among your own selves... [Looking them right in the eyeballs.] ...men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves. Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears.... [Now, that's quite a statement—isn't it? You think of that! For three years he warned them—he kept warning

and warning and warning and warning!] ... And now I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up... [So, he's saying really, you don't need this hierarchy to do it.] ...and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing" (vs 30-33). Now we know why he did!

Verse 34: "Rather, you yourselves know that these hands did minister to my needs and to those who were with me. *In* all things, I have showed you that you are obligated to so labor to support those who are weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus Himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (vs 34-35). We've seen that perverted and twisted around to say 'now, brethren, send in more tithe money.'

Let's go to some things I have from a book called *Toxic Faith*. It's a pretty good book with the exception that they try and get everyone's faith orthodox-sized in one of the mainstream religions. But here is one of the main characteristics of an occult religion—which is authoritarianism:

*Toxic Faith* by Stephen Aterburn: The leader is dictatorial and authoritarian. Every Church or ministry must have a strong leader if it is to meet the challenges of the people and to help them grow in their faith. The stronger the leader, the stronger the ministry throughout. Whether the person holds all the power or chooses to delegate everything. Problems arise when the leader takes the leadership role as license to dictate whatever he or she feels is right or wrong. And those who work in this setting find themselves either agreeing with the direction of the ministry, or leaving. There is no room to compromise since the dictatorial leader believes that everyone should submit to his or her rule without question

That sound familiar? *Yes, indeed!* That is wrong! And I was talking to a woman about this the other day. As a matter of fact, I got in last night about 7:10 and there was a message on the answer phone, this person called and said 'I left Worldwide in January and can you please help me?'

So, I called her and I told her that one of the things that we do not do, we do not tell people don't read this book or don't read that book or don't look at this, or look at that; because if the people are not taught the faith of God enough so that they cannot distinguish right and wrong, then they haven't been taught properly. And the reason people are told don't read this or don't listen to this person is because they are afraid they are going to lose the dictatorial power. And when you confront them with it, then

you're in for a tirade! Sound familiar? Yes, indeed!

Persons who gather around a ministry of this kind of true faith, use their talents to reach out to people and to serve God.

That's why we will see the Apostle Peter was saying that you are to 'feed the flock'; serve the people.

However, in *Toxic Faith* systems, talents and abilities are used to meet the needs of the authoritarian leader.

And that's exactly what happened in Waco—right? *Yes, indeed!* That's exactly what happened in Worldwide. He went from being a minister to pastor general to apostle, to *the* apostle, to God's *only* apostle on earth; and everything was to satisfy his demand. Now we can see that in other churches.

His or her needs come first and must be met for the ministry to continue. The persecuted victims, blinded to the manipulation and egotism of the leader, line up to assist in serving the persecutor. When the victims find out they have not served God or other followers, they are usually very angry and often must deal with feelings of betrayal and abuse, similar to recovering from an incestuous relationship.

That's why we call ourselves *The No Hassle, Recycled Church of God*. Another characteristic is:

Legalism: Rules or distortions of God's intent and leave Him out of the relationship.

In other words, there are rules for the church that supplant the Word of God.

When religious addicts create a *Toxic Faith* system, God is lost in the process. Follow the leadership.

Okay, God is lost in the process! 'Trust me, I'm God's apostle!'

In God's place rules are implemented that serve only to further the empire of the religious addiction.

Do you believe that Herbert Armstrong is the only apostle? We don't let anyone come into this church [Worldwide Church of God] unless you understand the doctrines first, and then we don't let you come unless you've been on probation for six months and then only then we'll baptize you. It's all right to study your Bible before you come into the church, but when you get in you study what we tell you. All of those are things that have been added on, you see.

As new people come into the *Toxic Faith* they are indoctrinated into the rules rather than to have the relationship with God

strengthened. The rules reinforce addiction, not faith.

And I've heard even Catholics say it. 'I was born a Catholic, and if Catholicism is good enough for my mother, it's good enough for me; if it's good enough for my father, it's good enough for me.'

It becomes a faith system based on *don'ts*, rather than a faith system centered on God. What you do is valued more than who you are.

Here are the *Toxic Faith* characteristics of the leader:

1. special claims about the character, ability or knowledge.

- I have contact with God
- God spoke to me.

How many ministers you hear say that: 'God spoke to me.' When you pin them down and ask them what did God say? How did He do it? What did His voice sound like? *They can't tell you!*

2. dictatorial and authoritative leader

3. us vs them mentality.

That kind of gets into a gray area there in their definition of it; because it is really truly Christians against the rest of the world, when you understand it. But not in the sense then that we make everyone into this little group and we set them up to be manipulated. Then you have the other characteristics here which are:

4. legalism

5. closed communication

6. labeling of other people.

Here are some other things about the kind of *Toxic Faith* that this is talking about:

1. The leader must be in control of every aspect at all times.

No, he doesn't! I don't need to be in control of anybody else's life at any time. I've got enough trouble with mine! Let alone trying to run everybody else's.

2. When problems arise, find a guilty party to blame immediately.

Haven't we heard that? There have been purges in the ministry! I tell you, this is unreal.

3. Don't make mistakes

Otherwise you'll be visited by the minister or the hierarchy!

4. never point out the reality of a situation.

Does that sound familiar? *Yes, indeed!*

5. Don't express your feelings unless they are positive.

6. Don't ask questions, especially if they are tough ones.

7. Don't do anything outside of your role.

Why? You can't turn on the switch to this video for Sabbath services, you're not a deacon! That's not your role. In one Church of God they had a fight over who was going to turn the on button for the video for church services! I mean, that's ridiculous!

8. Nothing is more important than giving money to the organization.
9. At all cost, keep up the image of the organization or the family.

Were not millions spent on lawyer's fees to do that? *Yes, indeed!* Got to keep up the image. Well, I'll tell you what, doesn't matter what your image is, if you're not right with God, you're in deep trouble.

Let's go 2-Peter, the second chapter, and I know I will cover some of this when I get to 2-Peter; and it talks about some of the false prophets that come in and do these kind of things. And Peter knew it was going to come.

2-Peter 2:1: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies... [Boy! Is that not happening in the Churches of God today.] ...personally denying *the* Lord Who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of the, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed. Also, through insatiable greed they will *with* enticing messages exploit you for gain..." (vs 1-3)—and that was the whole system that was developing and coming into the Church.

Let's see what the instructions were that Peter gave to the ministers to completely avoid any kind of thing like this, 1-Peter 5:1: "The elders who are among you I am exhorting, even as a fellow elder, and an *eyewitness* of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed..."

What does he base it on? ***He bases it on Christ!*** He bases it upon the fact of being an 'eyewitness to the sufferings' and also 'a partaker of the glory.' That's when they went up on the Mt. of Transfiguration, and Christ was transfigured before them, and they saw Moses and Elijah talking with Christ in a vision. So he's using quite a powerful lead-in to this. That's what he's basing it upon.

'Follow the hierarchy because I'm the first pope.' Doesn't say that, does it? What a perfect place to put it—right? *Not there!* He says, v 2: "**Feed the flock** of God that is among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly..." We will see that Peter really learned this lesson. And we are going to see later, when we

understand more about Gal. 2, the great mistake that Peter made which opened the door!

John 21:15—you know this section very well, but we need to put it in here for the record. "Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?'..." Here's an independent thing that a minister has to really understand before God. Do you love God, and are going to serve Him more than anything else around? And that means you're going to do it God's way. Because Jesus said, 'If you love Me keep My commandments.'

"...*And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs'" (v 15). Very important aspect:

- the most important thing of being a minister
- the most important thing of a church.
- the most important thing of a congregation

### ***Feed My lambs!***

Verse 16: "He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' *And* he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep'" (vs 16-17).

Let's go back to 1-Peter 5:2—we will see that Peter really learned this lesson: "Feed the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight..." so it's an *oversight*,

- not a ruler over faith
- not between God and the people

but to oversee that everything is done in proper order to teach and to cover all of those things that need to be taught

"...**not by compulsion**... [because you're forced to or you force it. You constrain the people to take it because you take it by *compulsion*.] ...**but willingly**, not in fondness of dishonest gain... [which says here in the *King James*: 'not for filthy lucre.'] ...but *with an eager attitude*; not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions... [that is really a more accurate translation...] (vs 2-3). Not as being lords over heritage—God's heritage.

*God's* put in there is added by the translators of the *King James* and is in italic. But it's not exercising lordship *over possessions*. In other words, they are the brothers and sisters of Christ, the ones who are going to be in the Family of God—correct? They're not to be viewed as chattel. They're not be

viewed as so many income centers. They're not to be viewed as things to be used and abused by a ministry to get done what they want to get done. And when people submit to that, not knowing the Word of God, they create a cult! And if you want to know how bad a cult can get, just remember that the Catholic Church ruled Europe with an iron fist for almost 800 years, and what did it bring? It brought the *Dark Ages*; it brought the *Inquisitions*. Why? *Because if you were against the pope and he was sitting in the seat of God, then he could come and take away your life—because*

- you're nothing but chattel
- you're nothing but a possession
- you're nothing but something to be used and abused

And Peter is saying, 'Boy, don't do it that way.'](But how?): ...rather, be examples to the flock of God" (v 3).

You exercise leadership by exampleship! And if there's anything that needs to be straightened out in the ministry of God, that's what it is, right there. You don't exercise leadership because of lordship. You exercise leadership by exampleship by studying and serving and knowing the Word of God.

Who was it back there that sent me the John Pinkston's Passover thing? Thank you, I got it. It is almost unbearable to listen to, because that man does not study. So what happens when you don't study and you don't learn for yourself, and you don't apply the Word of God to yourself as a minister? *You become an overlord because you are not being an example.* And when you are not studying and knowing the Word of God what are you going to do when someone in your congregation catches up to your knowledge and, yes, passes you? Now what you must do is put that person down unmercifully because he's causing trouble. You see, all of these problems that develop because they go against the Word of God.

2-Timothy 2:15: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God..." and that's the whole purpose of the study of a minister—

- **To know** the Word of God!
- **To teach** the Word of God!
- **To preach** the Word of God!]

"...a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the Truth..." (v 15). Because there's a wrong way to do it; it can be divided deceitfully. I sure had that on that tape. I couldn't believe it! And someone sent me a tape that 'Rabbi' Dankenbrink did against me, and oh, that was wild and something! Can't believe that! Was amazing!

What's going to happen? Can he lead by example? *No! He has to condemn and lead by his authority*, rather than leading by the authority of the Word of God. That's why this is so important.

Verse 16: "But avoid profane and vain babblings because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness"—and boy, they sure do! Just gets worse and worse and worse all the time. Let's see what a minister is to do; let's see how he is to do it; how he is to conduct his life; qualification for it; and also the things are there for a deacon.

1-Timothy 3:1: "Faithful *is* the saying, 'If any man aspires to *be* an overseer... ['bishop' is an incorrect translation—we had a little bit of the hierarchical translators putting that in there.] ...he desires a good work.' Now then, it is obligatory *that* the overseer be blameless, *the* husband of one wife... [that makes things a whole lot easier. It's tough enough with one, think of what it would be with two; or divorced or a whoremonger or any of that.] ...vigilant, serious-minded, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching; not given to much wine, not a bully, not greedy for selfish gain; but kind, not a quarreler, not a lover of money; one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in subjection with all respect; (For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household, how will he take care of *the* Church of God?) Not a novice... [hasn't been converted enough to get rid of enough vanity—that's why.] ...lest he become conceited *and* fall into *the same* condemnation as the devil" (vs 1-6).

Now, what about a person who would come to Ambassador College at seventeen, graduate at twenty-one, be ordained at twenty-two and now be given over a whole flock of five or six hundred people. What happens? *He falls into condemnation of the devil and getting lifted up in pride.* How many times have we seen that? *Over and over and over again!* There's a snare there when you put someone new. There's a snare there when you put someone too young.

Verse 7: "It is mandatory that he also have a good report from those *who are* outside *the church*, lest he fall into reproach and *the* snare of the devil." So, there are two things that the devil's going to get him at.

1. If he's too young, if he's a novice.
2. If he's been a 'hellibaloser' before he came into the Church. Going to come and get him.

We've seen that happen—haven't we?—in both cases! *Yes!* Why? *Because if he's a 'hellibaloser' before he comes in the Church*, what happens if he gets into his weak moments later on when he's a

minister? Then you've got all kinds of problems—right? *Right!*

Let's see another guard against cultism or a hierarchical authority which God does not want us to have. He's speaking of the whole, overall thing that he brought through all of 1-Timothy.

1-Timothy 6:3 "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine... [which is teaching] ...*that is* according to Godliness." In other words, everything is based on the Word of God; everything is based on the teachings coming out of the Bible.

If not, v 4: "He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness...." (vs 4-5).

That can be political gain, control gain, monetary gain or whatever it is. Notice he uses the word 'Godliness' here in both places. That there is a substitute Godliness. And one of the things that was substituted for Godliness was counting the number of people there, the amount of money coming in, the number of magazines going out, etc., etc., etc.; and this gain was counted as Godliness. In other words, the physical gain that came around was counted as Godliness. Well, you sure couldn't say that of the Apostle Paul, because by time he got done with all of his preachings, all the churches had left him because this hierarchical government came in and took control.

"...**from such withdraw yourself**" (v 5).

2-Timothy 1:13—here's some more instructions to Timothy: "Hold *as the* standard for doctrine the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by the Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..." (vs 13-15). That is a profound statement—isn't it? When you consider that Paul wrote that those who count 'gain is Godliness'—whether it's gaining disciples, whether it's gaining followers, whether it's gaining property or money or people or whatever, you see. Paul certainly did what was right.

Let's go back to 1-Peter 5, and let's continue on and we'll go ahead and insert this as the completion of the last chapter of the book of 1-Peter.

1-Peter 5:4: "And when the Chief Shepherd has been manifested *at His coming*, you will receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory. In the same manner, you younger men be subject to the elder men... [what did we have in 3-John? *We had Diotrephes rise up and kick out the Apostle John*

[transcriber's correction]—'oh, who wants this old man around here.']) ...and all *of you* be subject to one another.... [rather than rising up in political power] ...Clothe yourselves with humility; because God sets Himself against the arrogant, but He gives grace to the humble.... [He's talking to the ministers; this is a ministerial problem; he is fighting the hierarchical, political control power that was coming into the Church.] ...[Therefore] be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at *the proper* time; having cast all your anxieties upon Him, because He cares for you" (vs 4-7). In other words, don't try and work it out with political means. Don't try and work it out some other way. Take it to God! Why? *Because here's what's going to happen:*

Verse 8: "Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, is prowling about, seeking anyone he may devour." We've always applied that to just the brethren in the Church. *No!* He would rather get a minister—right? He would rather set up a hierarchy—right? *Because if does, then he can control all of those brethren and then lead them away at a later time.* So, this is a ministerial problem. This is another warning you can add to Acts 20 that we read.

Verse 9: "Who RESIST, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren... [and we've always said that that is just brethren in general. But how about if it's elders in general? The brother elders?] ...who are in the world. But may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle you. To Him *belongs* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. AMEN" (vs 9-11).

Then the closing salutation, v 12: "By Silvanus, a faithful brother to you, as I reckon, I wrote to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, *as does* Mark, my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace *be* with all *of you* who are in Christ Jesus. AMEN" (vs 12-14).

I was amazed as I was thinking about it and studying about it that boy, you know, that applies to the ministers more than it does to just church members. So there we've got the whole problem: ***the fight against cults within the Church of God.*** Beginning with Christ when the disciples were fighting as to who would be the greatest; who would rule over all; who would do whatever. So, that's what we need to be aware of in the situation with cults.

We need to be very careful, because down the road they're going to have anybody who doesn't

agree with the establishment; everybody who doesn't agree with the orthodox religions of the world, you're going to be labeled as a cult. Just this morning before we came over, we were watching CNN News—Evans and Novak—and they were interviewing Pat Robertson, who's trying to workout things politically between the fundamentalists and the Catholics, to try and get people on school boards who believe basic moral things. And the liberal establishment accused Pat Robertson as a neo-nazi. So you see, if you label Pat Robertson as a neo-nazi, we are so far right of Pat Robertson it's incredible! as far as faith in God is concerned. So you imagine what they're going to label us! And so, what this whole thing figures out is, that in the wake of Waco, all the true believers of God are now going to become open-prey to those in the world.

Let's finish up by going to Isaiah 59, to show how the government is going to do this. And it's going to be awesome. We'll read a little about our administration back there. Isaiah 59:13: "In rebellion and denial of the LORD... [constantly/continuously] ...and turning away from our God, talking perversity and revolt, conceiving and speaking from the heart words of falsehood. And justice is driven backward... [no judgment at all in the handling of this situation or other similar ones which will come up.] ...and righteousness stands afar off..." (vs 13-14). No, if you're accused of it, you're guilty and deserve to die. No due process, no courts of law, no inquisition of witnesses to find out the truth. *No!*

"...**for truth is fallen in the street...**" (v 14). People don't understand things anymore. And I was just taken aback when that young teenage girl, down at Dunnville, said 'Oh well, it's good to get rid of all these cults.' I was little dramatic and I pointed right to her and I said, 'What if I say you are a cult, now what are you going to do? Whose definition?' And she hadn't even thought it through, but just going along with all of this.

"...and uprightness cannot enter. Yea, truth fails; and he *who* departs from evil... [the one who then to do right] ...makes himself a prey... [That is a victim to be attacked! Now if they're out there attacking Pat Robertson as a neo-nazi! I couldn't think of anything that more fit this!] ... And the LORD saw, and it was evil in His eyes that *there* was no justice" (vs 13-15).

So then, all of these things lead into the return of Christ as the rest of the chapter shows. But, I tell you what, we need to be on guard. And I know this, that whenever any of these Churches of God reach a certain point of preaching the Truth, they better beware of FBI and ATF infiltrators who come in to feign conversion. They do that. They had people in there in the Davidian compound.

One last thing that Delores pointed out, which she was really appalled at, which I thought was very fitting. They took down the Star of David over the compounded and they lifted the ATF flag over it. Now when you understand that the ATF is the arm of the IRS under the Treasury Dept., then you know exactly what's happening.

So, we need to be aware of cults. That was one of the things that changed the true Church of God from being the Church of God into the hierarchical religion that we see today, because *it* was *allowed* to be turned into a cult.

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

Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 13:1-4
- 2) Matthew 5:25-26
- 3) Matthew 12:22-24
- 4) John 8:31-48
- 5) Mathew 20:20-28
- 6) Acts 8:5-9
- 7) Deuteronomy 18:9-14
- 8) Acts 8:9-24
- 9) 2 Thessalonians 2:7
- 10) Acts 20:28-35
- 11) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 12) 1 Peter 5:1-2
- 13) John 21:15-17
- 14) 1 Peter 5:2-3
- 15) 2 Timothy 2:15-16
- 16) 1 Timothy 3:1-7
- 17) 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- 18) 2 Timothy 1:13-15
- 19) 1 Peter 5:4-14
- 20) Isaiah 59:13-15

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Deuteronomy 12 & 13
- Galatians 2

#### Also referenced:

#### Books & booklets:

- *Authoritative Webster's Dictionary*
- *Cult Watchtower*
- *The Wonderful World Tomorrow, What It Will Be Like* by Herbert W. Armstrong
- *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*
- *Toxic Faith* by Stephen Aterburn

# Epistle of Second Peter I

Fred R. Coulter

Second Peter was written because of many of the same problems that were more developed in the Epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John; and that is there was a lot of heresy going on—a lot of difficulties and a lot of problems. And I might mention that we have lived through a lot of those things today. Let's just take an overview of 2-Peter, and we're going to see a principle that always applies: *Before God starts talking about correction, problems and difficulties, He always focuses your mind on the important things concerning Christ*—and that's what he did here in the first chapter.

2-Peter 2:1 tells us what they were doing: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies...” Are they not destructive heresies? *Yes!* Of course, this is written after he verifies the Truth and power of the Word of God (last part of 2-Pet. 1; and also saying that what they were preaching was not based on cleverly concocted fables. I'm sure we've read a lot of those recently.

“[They were] personally denying *the* Lord Who bought them... [This means that it is something that they are initiating but they're also doing to themselves that has an effect on other people, as well.] ...[who are themselves] ...denying *the* Lord Who bought them and bringing swift destruction upon themselves” (v 1) Many people are going to follow what they were doing.

Verse 10 tells their attitude: “But particularly those who are walking after *the* flesh...” Note Rom. 8, about the ‘fleshly mind’ or the ‘carnal mind.’ If you're walking after the flesh and minding the things of the flesh

“...in corrupting lust... [letting the lust fully get a hold of them] ...and are holding in utter contempt *the* lordship of God...” (v 10)—over their lives. You will see the italicized words, that's what I have inserted into it to give a definition of the meaning of the words. It is *the* lordship.

“...[They are] in utter contempt of lordship of God [over one's life]. *They are* audacious and self-willed; they are not afraid to blaspheme *the* Divine powers [angels]” (v 10).

Verse 12: “But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and killed—are blaspheming those things of which they are ignorant, *and* will be utterly destroyed in their own corruption.” We can look around and we can see down through history, and contemporaneously today, that that is absolutely true.

2-Peter 3—here's something that they are also doing in addition to rejecting God; they're mocking. And we have people now in the Church of God who have said, ‘Well, you don't have to read the book of Revelation because that's really confusing, and really, we shouldn't even study it or do anything about it. Whatever is in there has already been fulfilled and it doesn't have any meaning for us today.’ There are those who are mocking.

2-Peter 3:3: “Knowing this first, that in the last days there will come mockers, walking according to their own personal lusts, and asking, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?.... [Most people don't believe that Christ is going to return at all; and more and more so even in some of the Churches of God.] ...For since the forefathers died, everything is continuing exactly the same from the beginning of creation” (vs 3-4). This shows their attitude.

2-Peter 2:13 shows their immorality; shows what they are doing: “They are bringing upon themselves the reward of unrighteousness, *while* finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires in the daytime.... [This has to do with all kinds of licentiousness and sexual debaucheries, as well.] ...*They are* stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you. [Their] “eyes are full of adultery and that cannot cease form sin...” (vs 13-14) and so forth.

These are the kind of people that Peter was having to confront. And what happens when you have that kind of attitude. Come back here to v 2: “And many people will follow *as authoritative*... [because you don't follow anything unless you believe it's in authority] ...their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed.” That's what ‘evil spoken of’ (*KJV*) means. We have seen that happen in our very day today—haven't we?

Let's come back to 2-Peter 1:1 and let's see some very interesting things concerning just the opening of it. What I would like you to do is take your Bible and open it to 1-Peter 1 and we will compare that with 2-Peter 1—and we're going to see that it is a little bit different, and why it's different.

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ...” That is a little bit different than 1-Peter 1:1 where it says: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ...” Could it be that there are others going out saying that they were Peter, and he wanted to make sure that they knew he was *Simon Peter*, the one that Jesus had chosen? *I believe so!*

Now notice the next phrase, "...a servant..." He just says in 1-Peter 1:1: "...an apostle of Jesus Christ..." Here he says: "...a servant **and** an apostle..." (v 1). I think that shows that he learned the lesson of Matt. 20: 'that he who is going to be greater among you is going to be one who is serving, one who is helping, one who is doing'—not just an apostle. Remember, Peter had to be rebuked openly by the Apostle Paul when he separated himself from the Gentiles there in Gal. 2—we won't get into that today because there's a whole lot behind that. But Peter stumbled greatly in that particular affair.

Now let's go to 1-Peter, the fifth chapter, and let's see that. I think Peter was learning the lesson here in 1-Peter. I think by the time he came to the end of his life—as we have here because he wrote this just before he died—that he really learned the lesson of the servant greater than the lesson of the apostle.

1-Peter 5:1: "The elders who are among you I am exhorting, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed. Feed the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude*" (vs 1-2). That shows that he learned John 21 very well: 'If you love Me, feed My sheep.'

Verse 3: "Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions; rather, be examples to the flock of *God*" (vs 1-3). I think when he wrote here "a servant and an apostle" I think that is showing a greater understanding on Peter's part of his role as an apostle and what he should do to help and serve and teach the people.

2-Peter 1:1: "...to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours..." This also shows a great growth on Peter's part, because when he was there in Antioch and separated himself from the Gentiles, that gives the impression that they had a greater salvation, a greater faith than the brethren.

"...obtained *the* same [identical] precious faith as ours, **by the righteousness of our God** and Savior Jesus Christ" (v 1). This means the imputed righteousness that comes from God. He learned the lesson concerning *grace*; because in Gal. 2 he hadn't learned the lesson concerning *grace* and concerning *repentance*. But he was still as the apostle to the circumcision, following along with many of the Jewish traditions. Here it shows that he learned the lesson of the *righteousness by faith*—which is by Christ Jesus.

In v 2 we get some very interesting and very important things that we need to understand concerning that: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the **knowledge** of God and of Jesus Christ

our Lord." *Knowledge* here comes from the Greek 'epignosis'; there is another word for *knowledge* (which is used a little bit later on), which means *wisdom or understanding*—and that is called 'gnosis.' But 'epignosis' means *the knowledge that can only be imparted to you from God spiritually*. This is something you cannot come to understand yourself unless God would give it and impart it to you. That's why it is multiplied in the "...knowledge—the epignosis—of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord." Showing again, this ties right in with the fellowship of God the Father and Jesus Christ together.

We're going to pick quite a few important things out of v 3: "According as His Divine power has given to us... [*bestowed, granted, given to us*] ...all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the **knowledge** of Him... [again, 'epignosis'—which comes from God] ...Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue." Let's go back and let's look at this a little bit more.

**Divine power**—comes from the Greek word 'theios';

- 'Theios' means *Divine*
- 'Theos' means *God*

There were those who have said 'Theos' means 'Theios'—which it doesn't.

- 'Theos' means *God*—a noun
- 'Theios' is an adjective which describes a *quality of God*

Another thing that is important with this is that the mystic religion of Judaism had an awful lot to do with Divine power—or becoming Divine.

I'm reading this book *Light by Light* by John Goodenough—I think I've mentioned it before; it's a 400-page book; it's pretty detailed, and I'm wading through it page-by-page. But I did not realize, brethren, that the Jews and Judaism—especially out of Alexandria—had so paganized what God was doing, that it no longer had any relevance to the Truth of God. For example, the high priest with the *urim and thummim* that he would wear on his chest, with the 12 stones—and each one of the stones was for one of the tribes of Israel—in Judaism this was one of the signs of zodiac. When the priest acted on behalf of God, he was a divine man—half God/half man. He was considered the vice-regent of God for all men on the earth.

Now, doesn't that sound a little bit like *infallibility*? I'm beginning to understand why God destroyed that whole system. I can see more and more in the writings of the apostles, how they were fighting that system; because of what the mystic-contemplated Judaism would be: they would have steps going up the ladder of enlightenment until they

could obtain the Divine. So, here Peter is saying: “According as His Divine power has given to us **all things**.... [comes from God] ...all things which pertain to life...” (v 3). There are two other places where ‘Divine’ is used.

Romans 1:18: “Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness... [they are holding back the Truth, knowing better] ...because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them... [not *in* them, but *to* them] ...for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead...” (vs 18-20).

*Divinity*—to show that God made it absolutely clear, through the creation, that anyone who would think it through, would understand that something greater than a human being had to do it; and it didn’t just happen by itself, therefore, it had to come from Someone who was Divine. It’s talking about a quality that God has. “...His eternal power and Godhead [Divinity]...” This is all tied up with the substitution of philosophy. We’ve all gone through that recently.

Let’s go to Colossians, the second chapter, for just a minute, and let’s see how this is tied together with philosophy—because philosophy and the religion of philosophy was a way of becoming perfect—through your own *religious works* to come to the illumination, through divine mystic contemplation; of which you have today, the first step of that is yoga mediation. It’s the same thing.

Colossians 2:8: “Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ.... [That’s what they all are: just vain deceit and fables and lies and things in the name of God.] ...For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (vs 8-9). He’s telling us several things very important here.

1. God has a body. All Divinity resides in Christ in relationship to human beings. You’re not going to find any Divinity through philosophy—but through Christ; and you’re complete in Him.
2. These things are *vain deceit*—the philosophy and things that are taught.

That’s why when you read some of these things it is confusing. They’re meant to be! That’s so you will think that someone smarter than you wrote it—but it’s the other way around.

“...according to the elements of the world,

and not according to Christ. For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness...” (v 8).

There’s also another doctrine of mystic religion and philosophical aspirations that they have, and that is *coming to fullness*. That’s why he’s using these words in this context. Peter is saying here that He’s given to us **all things** which means then *we don’t need to go outside what Christ has given to us* to try and discover all things related to life and the knowledge of Christ. We have to stay within Him.

Those are the other two places then where ‘Theios’ is used. And it’s 2-Peter 1:3: “His Divine power given to us, all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness...” We have here concerning the *power* of God and what He has.

Hebrews 1:1 is another one that ties right in with it. Where is Christ going to sit? *He’s going sit on the right hand of the power of God!* “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds [ages]; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person...” (vs 1-3). This also shows that God has *image*.

In philosophy God does not have *image*. God is what they say is *incorporeal*; means *He doesn’t have parts*. We’re *corporeal*; we have parts. What did Jesus say when Philip said, ‘Show us the Father’? He said, ‘Go look at the glob, stupid.’ NO! *He said, ‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.’* Christ is the expressed image of His person, and the *Geneva Bible* says the *engraved representation of God, made exactly as He is*.

“...and **upholding all things by the Word of His own power**...” (v 3). That’s the Divine power that God is using to give to us. Christ has that power to uphold everything *by the Word of His power! His Word!* How powerful is the Word of God? *By His Word He can close down the whole universe—BAM!* Remember when we went over the creation and God said, ‘Let there be light, and there was light’? If God said, ‘Let the world come to an end’—it’s ended!

“...upholds it with the Word of His power when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (v 3). That’s the kind of Divine power that God has given to us, that we are dealing with and that we can call upon.

2-Peter 1:3: ...that *pertain* to live and Godliness, through the knowledge [‘epignosis’] of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue.” God is the One Who has to call, as a Divine intervention into your life, by the greatest and

highest Power that there is in the universe, because God the Father Himself loves you. It's His own choice. And by *His power* and by *His wisdom* and by *His goodness* He has called us.

Verse 4: "Through which... [through the *calling*, through the *knowledge*, through *Divine power*] ...He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises... [The greatest that can be. In the Greek, these words are so super-abounding that it's the highest level of expression of the greatest that can be.] ...greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these **you may become partakers of the Divine nature...**" There it is again, Divine power, Divine nature. "...**you may become** partakers of the Divine nature..." And that, of course, is going to be *at the resurrection*—that's correct! Right now we have the earnest with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13; 2-Cor. 1:22), the earnest, the begettal, the down-payment until the 'redemption of the purchased possession.'

What Peter is doing is the same thing that the Apostle John did just before he got into some very heavy correction in 1-John 3. This is also a good lesson for us: when things get difficult, when things get tough—which they're going to be—when the 'beginning of sorrows' really takes place and isn't anything that's going to work out right, *you've got to have the hope and faith that comes from God*. That will always work. The love of God never fails! **Absolutely never!** John was doing the same thing when he wrote where it shows what this Divine nature is going to be: ***we will be as God!*** That is not a doctrine of Satan the devil. The doctrine of Satan the devil to become God is contained in philosophy; how you go through degrees until you come to the final enlightenment. That's what Satan means 'to become gods.' What God says:

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

- we could have eternal life
- we could have a Divine nature
- we can live with God the Father and Jesus Christ and all the saints in heavenly Jerusalem

—and that's the whole setting and meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles—is it not? *Yes!*

Peter starts out here because some of the things that he's going to bring out a little later on are

pretty heavy, indeed! Just like John did here in v 3: "And everyone who has this hope in him... [Faith, hope and love overcomes every difficulty that there is—always will!] ...purifies himself, even as He is pure." You can't get any purer than Jesus Christ. Again, the imputed righteousness of God makes that possible. This is really a tremendous thing that He has given to us.

Let's go to Ephesians, the third chapter, here is what God can do. When we think about God and some of the things don't come out right—and I've had that happen; you've had that happen—the promises that are given...

Ephesians 3:19: "And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." That's a tremendous and great and exceeding marvelous promise—isn't it? *Be filled with the fullness of God!* Have you ever sat down to just contemplate what that means? To be filled with the fullness of God? That's really something!

Verse 20: "Now, to Him Who is able to do ***exceeding abundantly***... [same word that's in the Greek, as great and precious promises] ...above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us." God is able to do that! That is tremendous! Brethren, God has given these promises, these are so fantastic! These are just so marvelous! I don't know what it's going to be like to be a spirit being, but I can tell you what, the older I get I know that human life is not going to have it, I can tell you that. This is going to be so great, ***to become partakers of the Divine nature***.

2-Peter 1:4: "...that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust." When we receive the Holy Spirit of God we are released from the dominion of the 'law of sin and death' in us, which controls us unto death. We still have it there, but it doesn't have its iron-tight grip upon us; we're to overcome it.

Now I want to focus in on the word *become*. Let's go to the Gospel of John, the first chapter—*become: to be made or become, or created into* 'e-entos'

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... [showing individuals] ...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..." (vs 1-4).

Verse 14: "And the Word ***became*** flesh..." What God is showing us is this: here is God Who was Logos; Who created everything that there is; and in Him was life inherent and He ***became*** flesh ***to***

*show us that we can become God.*

Christ became flesh “....and tabernacled [dwelt] among us... [the Greek there means ‘tabernacled’—so this has to do with the Feast of Tabernacles; Christ living on the earth] ...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and Truth” (v 14).

So, when it says that we will become partakers of the Divine nature that then is the reciprocal of it. When we understand what Christ did to become a human being, carry the ‘law of sin and death’ within Him and yet, never sin and be that perfect sacrifice for all human beings, then when He says ‘we will become partakers of the Divine nature’—that means a lot! That is tremendously inspiring and those are the great and precious promises. And, brethren, don’t let anyone ever take that away from you. You can have the world fall all around you, but if you have that hope and you understand that faith, and if you love God, ***no one can take it from you!*** That’s going to get you through everything.

2-Peter 1:5: “And for this very reason also, having applied all your diligence besides...” What Peter is doing, he’s doing what God wants him to do, and that is to inspire him to inspire the brethren. You work and you accomplish when you’re inspired. When you’re hired, you punch the clock and you watch it, and you do what you have to do to meet the production, and you punch the clock and you go home. But God has called us to the greatest cause that there can be and Peter is inspiring us to be diligent in what we are doing because we love God and we want to do those things.

“...having applied all your diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, **knowledge**... [‘gnosis’—which then is discernment and wisdom and understanding] ...and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love, and to brotherly love, **the love of God**” (vs 5-7). The *King James* has it ‘charity’; but that is really quite a poor translation of it. It really means *the love*, ‘the agape’; which is *the love* that comes from God.

I find it very interesting how that many times ‘the last will be first and the first will be last.’ Well, we find this is the same case when we compare this with Gal. 5. Paul does this a little differently. Peter ends up with love and Paul starts out with love.

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love... [Peter is talking about the same thing, that you have to also work at—which is a work of faith—is not a work that you can do, but Christ in you, can.] ...joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; **against**

**such things there is no law**” (vs 22-23). Let’s analyze this a little bit more concerning faith. Faith actually comes down into three distinct categories within the New Testament.

1. The body of beliefs—***the*** faith
2. Your personal belief—from which then we have healings and so forth
3. Christ’s own faith

—and you actually need all three of these for salvation. So let’s look at them.

### 1) **Body of beliefs**

Romans 1:5: “Through Whom... [It talks about Christ, the Spirit of Holiness by the resurrection from the dead.] ...we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to **the faith**...” That means a set of *beliefs based upon faith*, which then is based upon Scripture. And by the way, the Feast of Tabernacles is not *feast of faith*—it is the Feast of Tabernacles. But *we do keep it by faith*.

“...among all the nations...” (v 5). That’s very interesting—isn’t it? You look at that statement and it’s almost contradictory for those who fight against *works* and *laws*—correct? Between grace and law; and faith and law; and works and gifts. ‘Obedience to the faith’ shows that if there is faith, then you have to be obedient to it. This is the set of faith that comes as a *set of beliefs*.

Ephesians 4:4—this is interesting. How many faiths are there, as far as *a set of beliefs*? Well, Paul makes it very clear: “*There is one body*... [which means there’s only one true spiritual body of Christ] ...and one Spirit... [which comes from the Father] ...even as you were also called in one hope of your calling... [some are not waiting the resurrection; some are not going to heaven, etc., etc. There’s one hope.] ...one Lord, **one faith**... [and isn’t it interesting, there’s] ...one baptism” (vs 4-5). Not many, ***one!***

Some are not buried in water, and others are sprinkled—you’re buried in water-immersion for the death of the old self to be raised in ‘newness of life.’ This one body is where Christ sees that the Church is. It’s not restricted to any human, corporate organization. That’s how God is viewing it. And ***it’s by one spirit that you’re baptized into one body***. That’s why Paul is writing it there.

Let’s go to Colossians 2:6—let’s see something else. “Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him; being rooted and built up in Him, and **being confirmed in the faith**... [that is the *set of doctrines of belief*] exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving” (vs 6-7).

Let’s go to 2-Corinthians 13; let’s see something about this, which also begins to lead into

the next one: whether you have faith; whether Christ is in you. This can be applied both ways: your personal belief; set of beliefs; and Christ's faith in you—so actually all three could apply here.

2-Corinthians 13:5: “Examine yourselves *to see* whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Don't you *of* your own selves know that Jesus Christ is in you? Otherwise, you are reprobates.” There are kind of all three of them tied together in this one verse. Jesus made a profound statement, you can just put this in the margin of your notes—Luke 18:8, He said, ‘When the Son of man comes, will He find faith on the earth?—and that is *the faith*. That is the doctrines, *the correct doctrines of belief*.

**2) Faith as a personal belief**—as something that you act upon because you believe it. The kind of faith then which motivates you to do those things. Remember, you have to be obedient to *the* faith, which then is *the doctrine of beliefs*. But then if you have the faith, then you're going to have *works of faith* like Abraham had—because he believed God; then he had works of faith.

Romans 1:8: “First, I truly thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, for your faith is spoken of in the whole world.” This means they're a living, believing kind of faith in Christ Jesus is spoken of and well known.

Verse 17: “For therein *the* righteousness of God... [herein is the Gospel] ...is revealed from faith unto faith...” Christ's faith to you; you're faith back to Christ—and the Greek means *into*—so it is a spiritual interchange.

(go to the next track)

This kind of faith is we end up with the faith of Christ in us, because

1. we believe
2. we follow the set of beliefs
3. we grow in grace and knowledge in the Spirit of God, and we begin having more faith because of that
4. then the very own faith of Christ then becomes a part of us

Here Paul shows that it is from faith to faith: “...according as it is written: ‘The just shall live by faith.’” That is the trust, the belief, the hope, the love in God. They shall *live by faith*.

Romans 4:1 is talking about Abraham, and Abraham *believed* God! It ‘was imputed to him for righteousness’ because *he believed* and he acted upon that belief. “What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? ‘And Abraham believed

God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness” (vs 1-3). So you are motivated by this belief. You act upon this belief. Let's see

- how this belief is
- how we're to do it
- how Paul did it
- how our faith should be
- who we should rely upon
- how we should apply it

1-Corinthians 2:1: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you; and my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of *the* Spirit and of power; so that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God” (vs 1-5). That's what God's Divine power is to do to us to give us that kind of faith.

Now let's carry this just a little step further, Let's see something else here. How do you grow in faith? The apostles wanted to grow in faith; they had the same thing. ‘Boy, I need the kind of faith; wooo I need more faith.’ We'll see what kind we're going to be dealing with here in just a minute, and what Jesus said about it.

Luke 17:5: “Then the apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith.’ 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” (vs 5-6). I don't know of anyone who's done that in my lifetime. This kind of tells us what kind of faith we all have—how much if you want to measure it. Then he goes on to explain something else which is important for us to realize.

Verse 7: “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’?.... [No union there! I tell you what, this is bad news for any union.] ...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 7-10).

That is a tough saying; that is a tough, *tough*, *tough* saying—isn't it? When you consider all that you do, you consider all that God has commanded;

and when you've got it all done and finished, if you don't have faith, hope and love, you just say 'you're an unprofitable servant.'

Let's see something else concerning that; Matthew 17 shows a way, hopefully, a way out of the dilemma here. This gets into healing, and we'll cover some things concerning healing, here in just a minute. They came down off the mountain—this was after the Mt. of Transfiguration—they saw Jesus transfigured before them; they came down and the disciples were not able to cast out this demon out of this little boy.

Matthew 17:14: "And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him, and saying, 'Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is insane and suffers miserably; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Your disciples, but they were not able to heal him'" (vs 14-16). Quite a set of circumstances! This put everybody in a bad light. What did Jesus say?

Verse 17: "Then Jesus answered *and* said, 'O faithless and perverse generation... [Who was He talking to? *His disciples!* That's who He was talking to. They hadn't come out of the world enough to really understand.] ...How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you *in your unbelief?* Bring him here to Me' And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it departed from him; and the boy was healed from that hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately *and* said, 'Why were we not able to cast it out?'" (vs 17-19).

Very important question—right? There're some things that come along that are difficult to do: difficult healings, difficult mental problems, difficult physical problems. We just have to admit that maybe some of us are in the same category as the disciples—maybe we're kind of faithless. We're not all as faithful as we think we really are.

Verse 20: "And Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief....'" They probably went up and said, 'I wonder if we can do this?' You're through already; because they couldn't do it in the first place. ***It's what God will do!*** That's why when you're anointed claim the promises of Christ. No minister has an inherent thing within him that can heal anyone. God has given us some very simple things to do: anointing, laying hands on, praying and anointed cloths; and we've had some tremendous healings. We will have more in the future. We've had some that haven't been healed; and not every time are you going to be healed.

Sometimes God allows—just like with the Apostle Paul—a 'thorn in the flesh'; or in the hip or in the back or in the neck. Sometimes God just does that! But it doesn't make any difference, because the

Apostle Paul said Christ told him his 'grace was sufficient.' So, if you have grace unto salvation and you're bearing around a little problem. Don't worry about it! God will take care of it. If He doesn't, flesh is going to rot anyway. Are you going to live forever in the flesh? *No, you're not!*

Verse 20: "And Jesus said to them, 'Because of your unbelief, for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, "Remove from here," and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting'" (vs 20-21). That shows when you pray and when you fast and you go before God, it's not for your own; it's not to make you some great thing—but it is so that you're going to ask God to grant you His faith, His trust, His ability, because whatever is done is done in the name of Christ.

Let's go to Acts, the third chapter here, and let's see something that happened afterward. Did Peter and did James get the point? *I guess they did!* There's a time when God pours out miracles. There are other times when He doesn't. Remember the account of the Apostle Paul? How that one of his helpers was sick unto death? And they prayed and prayed and prayed, he says God 'spared him from death and had mercy on me.' But here in Acts, the third chapter, we have a tremendous miracle that was done. Here is the man who was sick from his mother's womb, lame:

Acts 3:2: "And a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried, whom they placed daily at the temple door which is called Beautiful... [he was put there right at the door so he could be healed] ...to beg alms from those who were going into the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. But Peter and John, intently observing him, said, 'Look on us.' And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, 'Silver and gold I do not have; but what I do have, this I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, rise up and walk.' Then taking him by the right hand, he raised *him* up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones were strengthened. And leaping up, he stood and walked..." (vs 2-8).

Never walked before because he was there in that condition from the day he was born. Now God has created some people that way just for a purpose of a miracle like this. Just like the man who was born blind for the purpose that very day that Jesus healed him.

"...and he entered into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. Now, all the people saw him walking and praising God" (vs 8-9). All the people saw it and they knew who he was and then they wondered how this happened.

Verse 12: “And when Peter saw *it*, he answered to the people, ‘Men, Israelites, why are you wondering at this? And why are you looking upon us so intently as if by *our* own power or Godliness *we* have made him to walk? 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 was made strong in His name; and the **faith that is through Him**’...” (vs 12–16)

***The very name and power of God through faith in that, belief in that.*** No faith on the part of the man there—right? He didn’t have faith. He didn’t say, ‘Oh, heal me in the name of Jesus.’ Peter and John just stood there and looked at him and Peter said, ‘Rise and walk in the name of Jesus Christ. So, when things are done in the name of Christ then we have to ask God to help us increase our faith. Now, how is that done?’

In Mark 11 we’ll see something very interesting, and this comes back and starts tying in together with the faith of Christ in us. So, our faith, and Christ’s faith in us, overlaps. And the longer that we are in the Church the more it should be Christ’s faith in us being our own faith—because you grow in that. Here’s where He cursed the fig tree and then He came on back, and they came on back the next morning and saw that it withered up from the roots.

Mark 11:20: “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, ‘Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith *from* God.... [If you read that in the Greek it means *have God’s own faith*. Did Christ have God’s own faith in Him? *Yes!*] ...For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, ‘Be taken away and be cast into the sea,’ and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say” (vs 20-23).

Most people when we do this—and I include myself—we get down on our knees and we ask God for something and then the first thing we say is: ‘I wonder if God’s going to do that?’ *You’ve already lost it!* We have to have faith that God is going to do what is best in His will. God is more interested in other things.

That’s why He says, v 25: “But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, **forgive**... [What do we do when we go pray?

What’s one of the first things that we do? *When we pray we ask God to forgive us our sins*—right? We desire that—correct? I know I do; I’m sure you do. There’s another kind of forgiveness that comes along with it.] ...when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, **forgive** so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses” (vs 25-26).

Why does God require that? *That is so you can have a Godly attitude*—that’s why! Can you ask God to bless you and curse your enemy? *You can!* Why not just let the enemy be taken in their own devices. Is God able to handle the enemy? As we read there in Zech. 15—is God able to handle them? So, they come along and do whatever they do to you—can you change that? *No, no you can’t!*

Matthew 5:23, let’s see something here that’s very important. “For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar... [Is what you’re doing—when you come to God to pray and offer the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and fasting and praise and thanksgiving—asking forgiveness.] ...and there remember that your brother has something against you... [this is your brother; this is someone that is close to you] ...leave your gift there before the altar, and go *your* way; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (vs 23-24). Why? *Because that puts you in the right frame of attitude and the right mind, and puts you in the right circumstances so that God can bless you!*

Verse 43—this is the hardest, hardest, hardest, hardest one! You can’t just read this and say, ‘Oh now, these are wonderful words’—which they are—and just expect to go out and do them instantly; it is difficult. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy’.... [I tell you what, that is tough! That is hard! Especially when your enemy is despicable—right? *Yes!*] ...But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?’” (vs 43-46).

This quite a requirement; this is a lifetime requirement, brethren—lifelong. I find myself, many times, just doing the opposite of what this says. But I do know this: When I forgive my enemy and get the thoughts out of my mind, then I have peace of mind—I can tell you that; and just leave them in God’s hands. What if he can’t go to them and try to resolve the matter that way? What if they’ve just shut the door and they won’t even listen to anything? Then you still forgive

them in your heart and mind, put them in God's hands, and let God take care of it. Is God able to take care of it? *Yes, He is!* A lot of people have said, concerning the troubles in one of the big Churches of God, God will work it out. Yes, He is! What is happening? *You just look!* That's why, in some cases, when there's no change you have to leave—let God work it out! I just hope that there is repentance involved that's coming along. If not, then I'm afraid that it's going to be bad news. I don't think there's going to be repentance coming, because there have been many, many warnings on down the line.

That's all a part of it. Now then, when we come here to the prayer, notice Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner... [this is the outline prayer] ...'Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors'" (vs 9-12). There it is all right there, that's all part of faith; all a part of healing.

Now let's look at some other things that Jesus did in the way of healing, and the faith that was accomplished. Let's go to Mark, the second chapter, because we will see that healing requires the faith of both:

- the faith of one who is asking for the healing
- the faith of one who is called upon, in the case of an elder, to do the anointing

In this case, Christ! Did Christ have perfect faith?—*absolutely!*; had no problem whatsoever with it.

Mark 2:1: "And after *some* days, He again entered into Capernaum, and it was reported that He was in *the* house. And immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer any room, not even at the door; and He preached the Word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paraplegic borne by four *men*" (vs 1-3). In other words there were four men carrying the stretcher and a man was on it. They couldn't get in. Well, they used a little initiative—didn't they? What did they do? *They climbed up on the roof!*

Verse 4: "And since they were not able to come near to Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was; and after breaking *it* open, they let down the stretcher on which the paraplegic was lying... [he comes down right in the middle of them all; interrupted a meeting] ...Now, when Jesus saw their faith... [it took some work; it took some action] ...He said to the paraplegic, 'Child, your sins have been forgiven you'" (vs 4-5). This is where we know that sickness is a result of sin. Whatever it was; it doesn't tell us what it was. Sometimes it's a sin that

someone else has committed against your body. Sometimes someone sneezes on you and you get a terrible virus. It's still a sin—physical sin!

Verse 6: "But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 'Why does this *man* speak such blasphemies? Who has the power to forgive sins, except one, *and that is* God?' And Jesus immediately knew in His spirit what they were reasoning within themselves, *and* said to them, 'Why are you reasoning these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paraplegic, "*Your* sins have been forgiven you"? or to say, "Arise, and take up your stretcher and walk"? But in order that you may understand that the Son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins'... [I'll bet they were astonished at that.] ...He said to the paraplegic, 'I say to you, arise and pick up your stretcher, and go to your house.' And immediately he arose and, after picking up his stretcher, went out in the presence of them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen the like!'" (vs 6-12).

Tremendous thing! Whenever we see something like this: when someone is sick with the palsy or something like that, immediately we try to figure out how it was that way and whose fault it was; and then we make a judgment in our mind and we were off base the first time around. If we can help them, and if they can explain to us some things, maybe we can help them. But, it isn't going to do any good going around and accusing them of different things when maybe it wasn't even their fault. But anyway, the point is here, He had faith, they had faith and God healed them.

Let's go to James, the fifth chapter. I'll let you read any other examples of healing. There's an example of the woman who had the issue of blood for 12 years and came and touched the hem of His garment, and immediately she was healed and Christ said, 'Go your way, your faith has healed you.'

Here's something that's most important and something we need to understand; and something that we need to realize from an elder's point of view, that our prayers have to be also the prayer of faith. And if someone is not healed, we should not immediately say, 'You did not have faith' and accuse the other person. Maybe it was the elder who did not have faith—could be. But notice here:

James 5:14: "Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him after anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." I know the first time I read that I thought, you get anointed, they're going to lay you on a table and cover you with a sheet and just pour this oil all over you. I thought, oh my, I don't want anything to do with that. But that isn't what it is. It's just a very simple thing.

Verse 15: “And the prayer of faith...” Who’s going to do the prayer? Who’s going to pray? *The prayer of faith of the elders!* The one coming should have faith. But are there times when God heals just because of the faith of the elder? *Yes!* That’s how the man in Acts 3 was healed—because of the faith that Peter and John had. It was their faith. And I know when I anoint, I pray and claim the promises of Christ, because I know that in me there is nothing that resides in me that’s going to cause anybody to be healed—***except the faith that comes from Christ.*** We don’t go demand of God: ‘God, You have to do this; You have to do that.’ *No! God doesn’t have to do a thing!* We come to God and ask for His grace and His mercy. Come to God and claim His promises, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That’s the ***prayer of faith!***

Verse 15: “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him”—because ***there is a sin not unto death***—they shall be forgiven.

Verse 16: “Confess *your* faults to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. *The* supplication of a righteous man prevails much, being effective.” Then he gives the example of Elijah. And you know, Elijah’s prayer was really not very much—was it? What was his prayer? Remember that—the showdown between the prophets of Baal and Elijah? Let’s go back and look at that. Long, long prayers don’t necessarily make it.

1-Kings 18:17: “And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, ‘*Are you he that troubles Israel?*’.... [Isn’t that always the way it is? The one who’s causing the problem looks at someone else and says, ‘you’re causing it.’] ...And he answered, ‘I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and you have followed Baalim. Now therefore, send *and* gather to me all Israel to Mount Carmel, and four hundred and fifty of the prophets of Baal, and four hundred of the prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel’s table.’” (vs 17-19). Jezebel was the daughter of the high priest of Phoenicia—so he was a Canaanite and this was Baal-worship. She was Ahab’s wife. Did that cause problems for everybody? *Yes!*

Verse 20: “Then Ahab sent to all the children of Israel and gathered the prophets together to mount Carmel. And Elijah came to all the people and said, ‘How long will you vacillate between two different opinions?’....” (vs 20-21). That’s what’s happening today.

When you’re holding two opinions, you’re in bad shape, just as Jesus said, ‘No man can serve God and mammon. No one can serve two masters. You either love one and hate the other; cleave to one and

despise the other.’ You can’t do it both.

James 1:8: “*He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” That’s why Christ told the Laodiceans that ‘I would you were either hot or cold.’ God wants it one way or the other. He doesn’t want double-minded duplicity. As some people have said, ‘Where were you on this?’ *I’m right down the middle!* When that is said you know you’re in trouble—immediately! When you’re halting between two opinions, you’re unstable—spiritually speaking.

Here’s the solution, 1-Kings 18:21: “...If the LORD *is* God, follow Him. But if Baal is God, *then* follow him.’ And the people did not answer him a word. And Elijah said to the people, ‘I, I alone... [and Handel wrote a real good oratorio for this—how many have heard Handel’s *Elijah*? Pitiful way that he sung it.] ...remain a prophet of the LORD. But Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men” (vs 21-22).

So, you know what he did. He said: ‘All right, let’s do this, we’ll take a couple of bullocks and we’ll let the prophets of Baal start out early in the morning, put it on their altar—they can do all they need to do.’ So they prayed all morning, and then, at noon, Elijah got up and said, ‘Hey, maybe he’s sleeping; maybe he’s on a journey—you better shout a little more, you better make a little more noise.’ So they got up on the altar, jumped up and down, slashed their bodies—drew blood—to try and make Baal answer them. He didn’t answer. They wailed and said all day long (vs 26-29 *paraphrased*).

So then the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah said, ‘All right, now build the altar, put the wood on it, put the bullock on it, douse it with water—do it again, do it the third time—the water was running. Here, in the middle of a drought, water is precious! (vs 31-35 *paraphrased*). And then, here’s Elijah’s fervent prayer:

Verse 36: “Now, it came to pass at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said... [I want you to notice how long this prayer is. It’s not the length. It is ***the heart***, and it is ***the faith***.] ...‘LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and that You have turned their heart back again’” (vs 36-37). That was it! God answered immediately. Fire came down, consumed the whole thing. So that’s why James says, and gives the example of Elijah. It was ‘***a fervent prayer of a faithful man, a righteous man does much!***’ So in healing that’s important!

### 3) Christ’s own faith

Let's come to Galatians 2—very important for us to understand, one of the key fundamental things concerning Christianity. Yes, we have things to do as we read there in 2-Pet. 1—‘give all diligence to do these things’—that's correct. We are to give diligence to do the things and built the spiritual character.

Galatians 2:16: “Knowing that a man is not justified **by works of law**...” All through Galatians, the definite article *the* works of *the* law—both of the *these* are not in the Greek. It is **by works of law**—because this gives you the implication that it is commandment-keeping. If you are keeping the commandments of God in faith, **is it your work?** *No!*

“...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [this means Jesus' faith] ...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ...” (v 16). How do you know your sins are forgiven?

- You **believe** God
- You **believe** that Jesus is the Savior
- You **believe** that He died for your sins
- You **believe** that He was resurrected from the dead
- You **believe** that the commandments of God are those things that you are to keep
- You **believe** that Christ will put you in right standing with God—**by faith**
  - ✓ You can't see Christ
  - ✓ You can't see God the Father
  - ✓ But you **believe by faith**

“...and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified” (v 16). There's nothing you can do to forgive your sins—**except repent!** Once something is done, it's done. Who's going to make it right? **Only God! God alone can make it right.**

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [No! The ‘law of sin and death’ is what's making him do it. Christ is not motivating sin.] ....For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor. For I through law died to law, in order that I may live to God.... [Because what? ‘The wages of sin—which is *the transgression of the law*—is death.’] ...I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but **Christ lives in me**.... [the ‘eth’ there in the *King James: is living in me*] ...For *the life* that I am now living in the flesh... [because he's still in the flesh—and this is for us today] ...I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God... [Now what does this mean in the Greek? In the Greek it means *he lives by the Son of God's own faith in him,*

*spiritually*. So you come to have Christ's own faith within you. So it starts out by having a body of belief that you believe in, then it is faith that you're believing in God and trusting in Him, and then it is Christ now—what is He doing?—*trusting in you by giving you His faith*. Now, think on that!] ...Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (vs 17-20).

Let's look at it again. We have two places where it is: Rev. 13 & 14. This is talking about the end-time. Here's the patience, or the endurance, of the saints. Revelation 14:12: “Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” Jesus' own faith! That's the kind of faith we are to grow into. Then we can do the things that Jesus spoke of, if we have ‘faith as a grain of a mustard seed.’

Over here, Revelation 12:17: “Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Or that is the very testimony of Christ Himself within them. That ties right in with the faith, the faith that comes from Christ being in us. So this is what we need to grow into, brethren.

#### 4) **Virtue**

We are to add to our faith. Here's what we are to do when we grow into this kind of faith and this kind of knowledge and this kind of understanding. We are to add to it: **virtue!** And virtue is then—it's only used four times—means *moral uprightness*. It means *good living*. **or** It can mean that you have *conduct worthy of praise by God*, because it's motivated by God's Holy Spirit. This is something that takes place when you have that kind of living faith.

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

- ✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Peter 2:1, 10, 12
- 2) 2 Peter 3:3-4
- 3) 2 Peter 2:13-14, 2
- 4) 2 Peter 1:1
- 5) 1-Peter 1:1
- 6) 1 Peter 5:1-3
- 7) 2-Peter 1:1-3
- 8) Romans 1:18-20
- 9) Colossians 2:8-9
- 10) 2 Peter 1:3
- 11) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 12) 2 Peter 1:3-4
- 13) 1 John 3:1-3
- 14) Ephesians 3:19-20

- 15) 2 Peter 1:4
- 16) John 1:1-4, 14
- 17) 2 Peter 1:5-7
- 18) Galatians 5:22-23
- 19) Romans 1:5
- 20) Ephesians 4:4-5
- 21) Colossians 2:6-7
- 22) 2 Corinthians 13:5
- 23) Romans 1:8, 17
- 24) Romans 4:1-3
- 25) 1-Corinthians 2:1-5
- 26) Luke 17:5-10
- 27) Matthew 17:14-21
- 28) Acts 3:2-9, 12-16
- 29) Mark 11:20-23, 25-26
- 30) Matthew 5:23-24, 43-46
- 31) Matthew 6:9-12
- 32) Mark 2:1-12
- 33) James 5:14-16
- 34) 1-Kings 18:17-21
- 35) James 1:8
- 36) 1-Kings 18:21-22, 26-29, 31-37
- 37) Galatians 2:16-20
- 38) Revelation 14:12
- 39) Revelation 12:17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 8
- Matthew 20
- Galatians 2
- John 21
- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Corinthians 1:22
- Luke 18:8
- Zechariah 15
- Acts 3

Also referenced: Book:

- *Light by Light* by John Goodenough
- *The Geneva Bible*

# Epistle of Second Peter II

Fred R. Coulter

As you will notice, I passed out to you the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry. This is the one that I use and recommend to everyone because it is based on the Stephen's Text of 1550<sub>A.D.</sub> I think if you have it, read the introductory part, at least about the first five pages; and I think you will see that right in there there's a message as to why we really need this kind of teaching, so we can know. As you know, God preserved the text in Greek. When we have difficulties in the translation, then we should go to the Greek and derive as much as we can from it.

Between the time the *King James* translators made their translation and the turn of the century, 1901, there was a great deal of information discovered about what is called Koine Greek—which is what is called New Testament Greek. Koine Greek was a common language; it is not some sort of holy, secret language, separate from what ordinary people used. So they have been able to discover a great, huge number of just ordinary writings and business transactions and so forth; and so, they have a good background and a lot of knowledge now as to what the Koine Greek really means. Coupled with that, we have the change of the English language from 1611 until now. So, George Ricker Berry, I think, did an outstanding job with his *Interlinear*. And even though you don't know Greek, there are still certain things that you can learn.

Hopefully, I'll be able to point out a couple of things to you as we go along, which will help you. I don't need to be burdensome, or cumber you down with something that's too difficult, although I know that some of the technical things you can get if you stick with it. We just had a new fellowship group back in Ohio—that started three or four weeks ago—and their first project was going through the *Holy Spirit* series that we did with the whole printout on it, and the Greek and everything; and they had a group of eight people and they sat down and they went through it. I sent them each a copy of the study paper with it. When they heard it without the study paper it was really difficult.

So, when they got the study paper and sat down, they all went through it—and they went through it fast. They went through in the three weeks—they took two tapes a week. When they got done they were so happy they could understand everything that I covered in it. It made me feel good that at least I was able to reach them. They had no background in Greek or anything like that. So, I'm not trying to be over your head, or I'm not trying to be super-technical in some of these things. But what I'm trying to do is to make it as understandable as I

can so that we can grow in grace and knowledge and understanding of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as we ought to.

Let's come to the beginning of 2-Peter in the *Interlinear*. I just want to cover just a couple of things here, which will help it. 2-Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter, **bondman** and apostle of Jesus Christ..." That's a servant. It's a special kind of a servant. It is a slave. A bondman is someone who is bought and paid for. Now notice the Greek word over it. You can almost make out all the letters because they're very similar to English—δοῦλος—**dou**—and then the next letter looks like and upside-down **y**—that is an **l** and **os**—and that's pronounced: 'doulos'—and 'doulos' means *slave, servant*.

As we compared last time, when Peter began his first epistle, he said, 1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ..." He's learned something in between. Let's also understand that this word 'doulos' is also used in Christ. Let's go to Philippians, the second chapter, and let's understand what it was that Christ did when He came to be the human sacrifice. He didn't come as king. He didn't come grand and glorious. He didn't come as some high, exalted person. Let's notice what it says here, because this is telling us the whole purpose of our conversion is to reach the ultimate of:

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [and the Greek means *actually existing as God*—'huparchon'] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God... [and as we covered last week: 'In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God.'] (but notice v 7): ...**but emptied Himself**..." (vs 5-7)—'with no reputation' (KJV).

Not only that, He came with such a common visage that there was 'no comeliness, there was no beauty, there was no outstanding feature to which, physically, people could be drawn and say: 'Aha! This is the Savior I know because He's the most perfect, beautiful specimen of a human being I've ever seen. No, He didn't do that! 'made Himself of no reputation'! Remember, He created everything that there was; so when it says that *He humbled Himself*, it really means it.

"...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant... ['doulos'—a slave, the lowest rung of Roman society; a slave, bought and sold. But here He was a total slave of God.] ...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). And I think

therein, brethren, is a lifelong lesson for us to really learn and study on, because that is a profound thing when we understand that our Creator did that for us. I think Peter shows a great deal more of conversion in his second epistle than he does in his first epistle. And this, I think, is a clue: where he says ‘doulos.’

Now let’s come to the *Interlinear* of 2-Peter 1:5 (last part): “...supply ye in your faith...” Let’s not add to in the strictest sense. That *supply* means *to put in to addition*; but notice it is *in* your faith. So, it is *adding within*. It’s a *growing within*; *character within*.

“...in your faith virtue, and in virtue knowledge, and in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance... [it says *patience* in the *King James*; but we’ll see why it’s *endurance* a little later] ...and in endurance piety... [which is *Godliness*] ...and in piety brotherly love, and in brotherly love” (vs 5-7).

Look at the word for *love* in the Greek. You will notice just to left there is another three-letter word—that three-letter word is the definite article meaning *the love*. So what he is doing in writing this, he is building each one of these to the pinnacle of *the love*. So when they didn’t translate that in the English, I think they really missed a tremendous and powerful point.

That’s why in my English translation of it, I translate it THE LOVE! (all caps with an exclamation mark) because he is ending up with *the love*. I think it gives us an incite into how much we can learn, even not knowing Greek. If you would just take the time, get the *Interlinear* and read all of the English that is there, you will find that that translation is superior, and far more accurate than the *King James*—far more accurate. All I do is I improve upon it just a little bit by taking care of the participles and taking care of the verbs and their proper tense, and also some of the passive verbs in the *King James* are translated as *active verbs* when they should not be.

Now let’s come back to 2-Peter 1:4—and I want to cover just a couple of things here to gain a little more incite into what he is writing about. And I think today we’re going to see something very interesting. How many times did the writings of the apostles agree, with variation. How can they agree with variation? *You will see!* All these things listed here are listed a little bit differently in one place by Paul; a little bit differently in another place as he writes to Timothy, and so forth.

2-Peter 1:4: “Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” If we keep our mind on that, regardless of what happens; keep our mind on the promises of God, then it doesn’t matter what happens. I’m going to say that

again: *It does not matter what happens in the world around you*. We’re coming to a time when it’s going to get most desperate. What if you were in St. Croix yesterday, or the Virgin Islands, yesterday. Your world is gone, physically. Hurricane came through and ripped it asunder—tore it apart—there’s nothing left. There’s hardly a palm tree that has not been snapped in two. Now, living in circumstances like that, if your whole focus in life was just on the physical things in the world around, your world has ended, especially if you don’t know God, or if you think you know God, now you can be mad at God. But when you focus on these promises, and know that we are going to ‘see Him as He is’ because ‘we’re going to be like Him’—then nothing, nothing, *nothing*, *nothing* in this physical world should unsettle you in any way. Now, it may discombobble you for a while; but there is a way around it.

Here’s quite a famous Psalm that God is going to protect you. Let’s look at this in relationship to receiving the spiritual promises—as Peter is talking about here in 2-Pet. 1. Psalm 91:1: “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust.’.... [regardless of what there is] ...Surely He will deliver you from the fowler’s trap and from the destroying pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge. His Truth shall be your shield and buckler.... [and you can tie in Eph. 6 there concerning how fight against Satan with shield and buckler and helmet and all that.] ...You shall not be afraid of the terror by night... [because those days are going to come.] ...nor for the arrow that flies by day, nor for the plague that walks in darkness, nor for the destruction laying waste at noonday” (vs 1-6). Whether it be a war; whether it be a hurricane; whether it be a tornado; whether it be an earthquake.

Verse 7: “A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand; it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked” (vs 7-8). God can take care of the wicked—*He will!* But He’s going to do it

- in *His time*
- in *His way*
- with *His devices*
- with *His means*

—and when they go down there’s no recovery.

Verse 9: “Because you have made the LORD, Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling, for He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your

ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone” (vs 9-12). This is what Satan quoted to Jesus when he was tempting Him—didn’t he? *Yes!*

Verse 13: “You shall tread upon the lion and asp... [both signs of Satan] ...the young lion and the jackal you shall trample underfoot.... [God is speaking]: ...‘Because he... [you can just put your name there] ...has set his love upon Me... [that’s why all of these things are done, brethren] ...therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation” (vs 13-16).

Whatever these great and precious promises are, focus in on those whenever the going gets tough. That way you’ll never be discouraged, you’ll never be down, you’ll always find a way out of all of the difficulties that come along.

Now, let’s come back to 2-Peter 1:4, and let’s look at a couple of other things here: “...that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.” Now let’s look at this thing concerning corruption and so forth that we need to escape.

The world is out there doing everything that which is corruptible. Currently, those of us who like football, we’re out there and we’re rooting for our team—who’s going to be in the Superbowl? And what happens? *Only one team wins!* I feel sorry for teams like the Buffalo Bills who’ve lost four times; and the Denver Broncos, three times. I think they ought to have a silver trophy for them—at least they’re number two; give them something!

1-Corinthians 9:24: “Don’t you know that those who run a race all run...” We’re going to see that as we come to some of these other things that we’re also in a race; we’re all running. In the world, in these races, in their marathons—which calls for endurance.

“...but *only* one receives the prize?... [But with us, we’re all going to receive the prize—the prize of the high-calling of Christ Jesus.] ...That is the way you are to **run in order that you may obtain the prize**. For everyone who is striving for **mastery controls himself in all things...**” (vs 24-25). We’ll understand a little bit more about the self-control that we are to have.

“...Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible crown...” (v 25). They’re in there pumping iron, working out from day to night, keep their bodies in great shape and trim form so they can run or push or shove or tackle or leap or catch—whatever it is that they do. ‘to obtain a

corruptible crown.’ It’s going to be gone! A hundred years into the Millennium who’s going to remember Jerry Rice? *Nobody!*

“...but ***we are striving for an incorruptible crown***.... [We’re going to have a name, which is going to be absolutely fantastic! Personally given to each one of us by Jesus Christ—which will never perish; never fade away.] ...I, therefore, so run, not as one who is uncertain; so *also* I fight, not as beating *the* air. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected” (vs 25-27).

There’s one other thing we need to understand with that is this: is that if you truly have the Spirit of God and God the Father has called you—which He has, otherwise you wouldn’t have His Spirit—you are not going to be lost if you’re doing what he says here to really strive. But also do what Peter says here, *with all diligence*. To be diligently doing it. They do it after a corruptible one.

Let’s see some things which are important concerning corruptible vs incorruptible. 1-Peter 1:2: “*Who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto the obedience and *the* sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has **begotten us again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; into an inheritance incorruptible**... [we escaped the corruption that’s in the world. Now ***we are looking for something which is incorruptible***.] ...and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us” (vs 2-4). When Christ comes He will bring it.

In order to be redeemed, we have to be redeemed with something which is not corruptible, v 18: “Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from your forefathers, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for your sake” (vs 18-20).

Verse 23: “*For* you have been begotten again... [not *born again*] ...not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living Word of God, *which* remains forever.” I know, and you know, that with the experience of getting older we know the longer we live, the less time we have to live. There comes a point when this old body just shuts down. Someone was telling me about one of their relatives who had just died yesterday. They got up at two o’clock last night, person got up, feeling fine and someone there with him said, ‘How you

feeling?’ He said, *fine*. Went back to bed and was dead in the morning. Now, that’s the way to go! I mean if there’s any way to go, that’s the way to go! This person something like 80-something—way up there. Now, ***if they have the Spirit of Christ they are guaranteed an incorruptible inheritance.*** And that’s the whole point! Paul talks about this; it has to be, and that’s something! I can hardly wait for this time. Boy, I tell you, that is something; if we really keep this in mind and look forward to this, this is going to be awesome!

1-Corinthians 15:51: “Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed.” Metamorphosed—that’s why we can learn something from the insects. They change from one form to another—a caterpillar to a butterfly. If you look at a butterfly over here, not knowing that it came from a caterpillar over here, you would not connect the two together—would you? But there’s a process that they go through so that it happens. It’s called *metamorphose*. Our change will be instant!

Verse 52: “**In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed** [metamorphosed]. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality” (vs 52-53). That’s what we are to look forward to. These are the ‘great and precious promises.’ And we can be ‘partakers of the Divine nature.’

Let’s see something else, 2-Peter 1:4: “...having escaped the corruption... [all of it] ...*that* is in the world through lust”—deceitful lusts.

How can we escape the corruption that is in the world when we are still in it and it’s all around us? It’s there everywhere. As Jesus said, ‘We are ***not of*** the world; we ***live in*** the world.’ Here’s how we do it:

1-John 2:15: “Do not **love the world**... [We’re going to notice—you might want to circle this as we go along—it mentions *the world* six times!—which is profound—isn’t it?] ...**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**... [This *pride of life* is the ‘bio’—the physical from which we get the word *biology*. This is the 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). I think it’s interesting, we have ‘the world’ listed six times; ‘lust’ three times—including the *pride of life*.

As we will see a little later on, Peter is building up to what he’s going to bring in the second

chapter. Whenever there is bad news the apostles always bring, first, the good news; then the bad news. Inspire us first so we can understand the correction, second; and what’s going on.

Let’s go to Ephesians 4, and we’re going to see that the world is run according to deceitful lusts. What I want you to do, since you will probably be watching some television sometime tonight or tomorrow, what I want you to do is look at every commercial that comes on, look at the shows which are made, and just ask the question: Is this the *lust of the flesh*, the *lust of the eyes*, and the *pride of life*? And you’re going to see almost every one of them is. Almost every commercial! Almost every program!

You will notice in each case Peter is telling us in 2-Pet. that we are to *put in*. When we *put in* something, you also have to *remove* something; and Paul is saying the same thing here, expressing it just a little differently:

Ephesians 4:22 “That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (vs 22-24). We’re going to talk about Holiness here in just a little bit. And then it shows some things to *put away* and other things to *put on*.

2-Peter 1:5: “And for this very reason... [of these promises] ...also, having applied all *your* diligence besides...” We’re to put forth the maximum effort we can. When you put forth the maximum effort, how are you to do this? *With Christ in you!* You ask God to bless you in your efforts—what you are doing—that you can put forth the maximum. Have you ever put forth your maximum effort but to find out that you weren’t ‘in gear’? Try it some time.

Go in your parking lot and put your car in neutral and step on the gas. You’re not going very far. You have to have Christ in you do it; because if we are doing this to show God what we can do, then we’re just like sitting in the car, in neutral, and going full blast. But if Christ is in us, we ask God

- to help us
- to motivate us
- to inspire us
- to give us the diligence

then we will be able to be so much more productive. Another thing this will do: You won’t be devastated when you don’t succeed the first time. You’ll be able to pick up and go on.

“...add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control... [we’ll see what kind of self-control that is in just a bit]

...and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, **the love...** [‘tein agape’] ...of God” (vs 5-7).

Now, let’s pick up where we left off last time—we finished with faith and we started just a little bit with:

#### 4) **Virtue**—means moral uprightness.

It’s used only three times or four times in the whole New Testament, and that is if there is any good thing—or you can also say, *good behavior*, *good conduct*, and so forth—so we will look at it from the point of view of *good conduct*. There are virtuous or Godly or good things that we are to do; and this is really a very important Scripture, which probably should be expounded a little bit more, at another time.

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship...” We can see about *overcoming with Christ in you*.

Verse 8: “For by grace you have been saved...” In the Greek this means *having been saved*—a completed, past fact. As I mentioned before, there are three steps to salvation:

1. *have been saved* now
2. *being saved* currently
3. *shall be saved* at the resurrection

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are **His workmanship...** [let God have that perfect work within you] ...created in Christ Jesus... [What did the Apostle Paul say to the Galatians: ‘Oh, Galatians, I travail until Christ be formed in you.’] ...in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [and *good* here can be similar to *virtue*, which then *good works* are those things which you see outside, as well as *good works* can be those which are within.] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (vs 8-10).

Now, let’s go to Luke, the sixth chapter, and let’s expand this just a little bit; because if we’re going to have virtue, then we have to be connected in with Christ, Who is good. We have to be minding that which is good, doing that which is good; and here in Luke it’s compared to a tree.

Luke 6:43: “For there is not a good tree that is producing corrupt fruit; nor *is there* a corrupt tree that is producing good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit; for they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather a bunch of grapes from a bramble. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart... [which then is: **the virtue**] ...brings forth that which *is* good...” (vs 43-45). If you’ve escaped the lust of the world—which we have—and if you

‘love not the world, nor the things that are in the world’; and you’re not given over to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, then you’re going to what? *You’re going to bring forth good things*; out of your heart—that’s what it’s going to bring.

“...and the wicked man out of the wicked treasure of his heart brings forth that which *is* wicked...” (v 45). Now, you think on that as you watch the *progressive degeneration* of television. How many of you have noticed that over the last ten years? Progressively more degenerate! When you understand and remember that every word spoken is scripted; when you understand and realize that every scene is preplanned; every frame in that videotape has been edited to do exactly what they want to be done; and they are bringing forth ‘evil treasure out of their heart.’

**“...for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks”** (v 45). Very profound! Absolutely true! So those are some of the *virtues* that we need to have.

Now let’s go to Colossians, the first chapter, please; and we’re going to see something else concerning it. Colossians 1:9 falls right along with this, but let’s notice what this is doing: “For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will...”

That’s what we want, brethren. I want to know and understand the knowledge and the will of God, because that’s the greatest thing that we can know in this life. Only God can reveal it and give it. That’s wonderful! There are going to be times when you’re studying, when you’re praying, when you’re thinking, that God is going to give you added understanding. I tell you, there is nothing that encourages you more than something like that—and you know it has to come from God, it’s not from you—it’s from God! We need to increase in that.

“...knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding... [that can come with the mind of Christ; that gives you the spiritual understanding] ...That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work... [again, this is the virtue that is seeing the moral uprightness] ...and growing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with **all power...** [‘*dunamis*’—that is *the energy that comes from the power of God’s Spirit*] ...according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy... [The days around us are going to get real rough. If we can do it with joyfulness, that’s going to be great.] ...giving thanks to the Father, Who has **made us qualified...**” (vs 9-12).

And you know, it’s really true; I’ve heard

many sermons: you gotta do this; you gotta do that; and qualify. If you don't do it, you won't qualify, you're going to fall short. Well, if Christ is in you, and God the Father is qualifying you, ***you're going to make it!***

"...for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred us unto the kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins" (vs 12-14).

Listen, God is doing everything so that we can make it! That's great, brethren! That's wonderful! We're going to. I know there's going to come a time when we can help and inspire other brethren to do the same.

Now, let's go to 1-Peter 3:8: "Now *this* is the goal: all of you be of one mind, sympathizing... [this is all part of the *virtue* that we're to have. Now notice how these exhortations come along one after the other, just like in 2-Pet. 1.] ...loving the brethren... [that means be sympathetic and understanding of other people's problems.] ...compassionate *and* friendly, not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you should inherit a blessing. For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days, let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good [virtue]. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it; because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication. But the face of the Lord is against those who are practicing evil" (vs 8-12). So again, let God handle it; let God take care of it. Those are some of the things that we have in the way of *virtue*.

## 5) Knowledge

There are two kinds of *knowledge* which are listed here; although, they are used interchangeably. There's

1. 'epignosis'—which is *saving knowledge*—which comes from God
2. 'gnosis'—which is *knowledge*

—but they're used interchangeably. I've done a word study on that and they're pretty much used interchangeably. Let's see the ultimate of the *knowledge* that God wants us to have. Let's go to Ephesians, the first chapter, and ***only God can give this***. You will find that when I'm preaching, there'll be two or three places in Ephesians that I will go to quite often—Eph. 1 & 3. The reason that I do is because those contain such powerful and tremendous lessons for us, that we need to go there quite often; because we can learn more and more each time we do. Here's the kind of knowledge that we want to have—knowledge,

understanding, wisdom; you can bunch that all together in 'epignosis.'

Ephesians 1:17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him.... [That's why we go through and study it the way that we do; so that we can understand as much as we can.] ....*And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened..." (vs 17-18)—and I like that phrase—*the eyes of your understanding*. There is one thing to see with the eyes; there's another thing to see with the mind—and that's what he's talking about here.

(go to the next track)

Let's look at this knowledge, this 'epignosis' that we are to add to our faith and put in our faith. Faith is the foundation, then we add everything else into it as Peter was saying, and he ends up with love. Paul starts with *love* is the fruit of the Spirit and adds everything into it and then ends up with *self-control*. Now let's look and see what kind of knowledge that God wants us to have. There are places in chapters 1 & 3 that I will use quite often; and the reason that I will is because they're very, very inspiring sections of the entire Bible.

Ephesians 1:17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him.... [the 'epignosis'—God wants us to have that knowledge.] ...*And* may the **eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend**..." (vs 17-18). That's a tremendous experience! God wants us to all have that in relationship to His Word. So there may be times when you're praying; there may be times when you're studying, that all of a sudden, with God's Spirit, BAM! you understand that you never understood before. And it wasn't that it wasn't there, it was there all the time; but God is opening your mind to it.

Just like Job, because Job had the same thing. He was seeing with his eyes; he was seeing partly—or 'hearing with his ears' as he says. But he had to come to understand something very, very profound and that is that God IS God.

Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said..." God came to Job and He didn't smash him down, knock him all apart because Satan already did a good job with that. I mean, how would you like to be weeks and weeks with boils from the top of your head to the sole of your foot, and sitting there scraping with a potsherd, and the pus running out and the blood running down, and the flies coming around and landing on you and laying their eggs; now you look down and there are maggots crawling in your flesh. So he pretty well had had it. So if you think you've had a bad week, think on Job!

God came down to Job and said, ‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the world. I tell you what, if you can clothe yourself with majesty, as I am clothed; if you can make the water stop at your word; then I’ll declare to you that you can save yourself.’ So Job got the lesson.

Verse 2: “‘I know that You can do all things, and *that* no thought can be withheld from You.’” God knows! Now that’s a powerful thing—*isn’t it?* That doesn’t mean that God is going around spying in everyone’s mind. Please understand that! But it means this: God can know any thought that He wants to at any time. And besides, whatever you think is stored in your mind, so it’s there anyhow—right? *Yes!*

Verse 3: “You *asked*, ‘Who *is* he who hides counsel without knowledge?’.... [Job was talking about himself.] ...Therefore, I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, ‘I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me.’ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear... [partial understanding; just that which is outside—not which is inside.] ...**but now my eye sees You....** [In other words, the understanding of the eyes of his understanding in his mind now understood God.] ...Therefore, I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.” (vs 3-6).

Let’s go back to Ephesians 1 again; and I’ll guarantee you this, the more that the eyes of your understanding are opened, and you see the greatness of God and what God has done and the magnitude of God’s promises, and the magnitude of the blessings that God is holding out to us—just like Peter said, ‘exceeding great and precious promises’—you don’t have to worry about beating the flesh to be humble; you will be overwhelmed in awe!

Ephesians 1:18: “*And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend... [God wants us to **know always**, brethren.] ...what is the hope of His calling, and what *is* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints... [riches and glory. I don’t know what it’s going to be like to be a spirit being, and clothed with spirit clothes, and to be able to have access to the greatest riches of the universe, brethren—that’s what God is going to give us; that’s something!] ...And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power” (vs 18-19).

Now let’s go to Colossians, the second chapter, and let’s see what he says about the mystery of God—God wants us to know. Isn’t that something! When God calls you, He says, ‘I’m going to take you into My confidence; I’m going to reveal to you My plan.’ That’s something!

Colossians 2:2: “That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the **full assurance of understanding...**” I tell you what, when you understand and are confident in that understanding, no one can take it from you—can he? *No! Nobody can!*

I was talking with a person the other day, and this person was telling me about a problem; and I said, over the phone, *breathe for me*. I didn’t say a word, and the answer came back, ‘Well, I can’t.’ I said, *You’re right. There are certain things that only you can do.* And this was in relationship to other people’s problems and people coming and bothering and dumping all their problems on him. They get all worried—just worried! Some people worry when there’s nothing to worry about. ‘My, there must be something wrong! I have nothing to worry about.’ So that’s why I asked this person to breathe for me. Couldn’t do it. You can’t have a church where all the brethren are on artificial respirators; because when those are cut off they can’t breathe.

You see, **God wants us to know!** He wants us to have the full assurance, each one of us, in our mind and heart “...unto *the* knowledge... [‘epignosis’—that’s where this comes from] ...of the mystery of God... [He wants us to know, brethren] ...and of *the* Father, and of Christ; in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (vs 2-3). Only God the Father and Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, can bring that knowledge to you—it cannot come any other way.

Colossians 3:10—here’s what this knowledge—this ‘epignosis’—is to do for us. “And have put on the new man, who *is* being **renewed in knowledge...** [epignosis—with the Spirit of God] ...according to *the* image of Him Who created him.” So this is what the knowledge of God is to do for us.

Let’s go to 2-Peter 3:15 and let’s see what he ends up saying: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, also wrote to you; also, as in all his epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* *distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (vs 15-16).

What he’s doing here, if you really understand it, he’s equating the writings of the Apostle Paul to Scripture. They were, in fact, at the time of Peter writing this getting together all the Epistles of Paul and they were producing what we have as the New Testament at that time.

Verse 17: “Now therefore, beloved, *since* you know this in advance, be guarding yourselves against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the

error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge [epignosis] of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....” (vs 17-18). So, he starts out with that and he ends up with that. That becomes very important, especially when you sandwich in between it 2-Pet. 2 with all of the heresies that were going on.

Now let’s look at another kind of ‘gnosis’ or *knowledge* this is just ‘gnosis.’ We will see that some of these things are kind of interchangeable, as we go along, with ‘epignosis.’ But ‘epignosis’ has more of the connotation that it comes directly from God—not that ‘gnosis’ cannot also allude to that.

Let’s go to 1-Corinthians 1. This book is some book, and it relates all of the problems that any church would go through. I remember one time a ‘high-ranking’ minister said to me: ‘I don’t know why 1-Corinthians is in the Bible, we don’t have any of these problems.’ And guess what, 15 years later we had all of these problems.

1-Corinthians 1:4: “I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God that has been given to you in Christ Jesus; and that you have been *spiritually* enriched in Him in everything, in all discourse and knowledge... [‘gnosis’—this is knowledge *about*, not knowledge *from*] ...According as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you do not lack *even one spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 4-7).

Verse 9: “God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” So that has to be revealed and given to us.

1-Corinthians 12:8—knowledge is one of the gifts of the Spirit, which God can give. That’s why we have to rightly divide and put together the Word of God. “For to one, a word of wisdom is given by the Spirit; and to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit.” Now he has listing the gifts of the Spirit in a different way. These are ministering gifts to minister to the Church. The fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22-23 are the individual fruits that each individual will develop. These then are gifts of ministering to the brethren.

Verse 9: “And to a different one, faith by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing by the same Spirit; and to another, *the* working of miracles; and to another, prophecy; and to another, discerning of spirits; and to a different one, various languages; and to another, *the* interpretation of languages. But the one and the same Spirit is operating in all these things, dividing separately to each one as *God Himself* desires” (vs 9-11). It is to bring us not only knowledge, but wisdom and all of these other things

together. It’s a little bit different than listed by Peter in 2-Peter, the first chapter.

After he said he counted all things a loss that he may win Christ, Philippians 3:9 “And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; that I may **know** [‘gnosis’] Him, and the power of His resurrection...” (vs 9-10).

## 6) Self-control—right self-direction

Right self-direction can only come with Christ in you. So it’s a little bit different kind of self-control that the control that you would see like in military discipline or the control that you would see that the police are disciplined into. This is ***internal self-control***. I like this section here, it’s called *temperance* (KJV)—has nothing to do with the Women’s Temperance Society, which were teetotalers. And there’s a funny movie out, *Hallelujah Trail*—where the Temperance Union gets all drunk. See, no self-control—bad news. Self-control also has to do not only with right self-direction, but *right* self-control in relationship to restraint sexually. This is when Paul was in prison.

Acts 24:24: “Now, after certain days, Felix appeared with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess; *and* he sent for Paul and listened to him *speak* about the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned concerning righteousness... [he’s talking in a language that he would understand] ...and self-control, and the judgment to come... [It must have been a pretty powerful message.] ...Felix became fearful *and* answered, ‘You may go now, and when I find an opportunity, I will call for you’” (vs 24-25).

He couldn’t stand it any longer. I wonder if Felix was lacking in righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come against people who do those things. Makes you wonder. Could be, but I thought it was funny reading through that. He trembled!

Verse 26: “Moreover, he was also hoping that money would be given to him by Paul, so that he might release him... [a little bribery; no wonder he was shaking, he was looking for a bribe there] ...for this reason, he sent for him and conversed with him more often.”

So he came in, took two years, and he kept talking to him. And the next guy down—Festus—said, ‘You almost persuade me to be a Christian, Paul.’ So Paul was still really going at it there—he was talking about that self-control. Let’s see that that’s one of the first things that anyone who is called to be an overseer or an elder must have—he must have self-control. That is *right self-control, as controlled by Christ in him*.

Titus 1:7: “For it is obligatory that as God’s steward an overseer be blameless...” He’s going to list off some qualifications for an overseer. And I view an elder as one who is like a coach. I’m going to have to give another sermon on that and finish off the Church structure and function, because there are some people going around, because they’ve been so hurt by ministers, they say that everyone who’s baptized is a minister. There is no difference.

I have to go through and cover that. I view an elder, who is leading and teaching, like a coach. A coach is on the sidelines. He gets them all involved in doing what they need to do, and he is teaching so each one can become competent in what he or she should do in whatever sport it may be. So that’s how I view it—he’s overseeing from the sidelines. And when it’s done, and it’s done properly, there’s a minimum of trouble; there’s a minimum of strife; and you don’t have to bring any great sermons, resoundingly, coming down on authority. So that’s how I view an elder—on the sideline teaching, training, helping everyone so they can all enter into the Kingdom of God.

“...an overseer [must] be blameless...” (v 7). That’s kind of the opposite of *virtuous*. In other words, not having any great faults. You have *virtue* over here which is the goodness; then you have *blameless* over here which is the lack of great, huge faults.

“...not self-willed... [that is so he will yield to the Spirit of God] ...not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not a bully, not greedy for material gain; but hospitable, a lover of [the] good... [not good men—the good—which can be men or things or whatever] ...sound-minded, just, Holy, self-controlled... [temporant] ...holding steadfastly to the faithful word, according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ*...” (vs 7-9). This right *self-control* is what we need to have.

I tell you, it’s something that needs to be taught our children. The other day I was in K & S—our local market—and they have a little place you can go cash a check. So I had to go cash a check, and there are some mothers in the line and here’s a kid standing outside waiting (they have one of these separation things that you have to walk through)—and there’s a stamp machine. So here’s this kid pushing all the buttons on the stamp machine, and he went through it about three times. So finally, I looked at him and said, ‘Please don’t do that, this is not a toy, this is a stamp machine. If you want to buy a stamp then put in some money and buy some, but if not, leave it alone.’ And I guess this mother looked and told him to get his hands off, but *self-control*—my they sure need to teach that in school. What is this program that the kids watch; this thing on the Nickelodeon? They have one where they have

the face of Nimrod in the middle of it with his tongue sticking out—it’s Baal-worship. They have here on this Nickelodeon program—as I’m channel surfing I’ve seen this quite a few times—where it’s speaking! It’s speaking! The image of the beast is speaking! A type of it! But here, all of these kids are just being sucked into all of these, almost uncontrollable things that they go through. It’s something! No self-control! No right direction!

## 7) Endurance

The *King James* has it as *patience*, but *patience* is not a good translation. It’s okay—on a scale of one to ten it’s about four-and-a-half; because in order to have *endurance*, you must have *patience*. But you can be patient mentally, but have no *endurance*. It means *courageous steadfastness*, or *steadfast endurance in the face of evil or suffering*. Let’s look at some Scriptures concerning this. I think we’re going to find this real important here.

James 1:2: “[My brethren] Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials... [temptations, or difficulties—I haven’t gotten there yet. Hope to.] ...knowing that the testing of your faith produces *endurance*” (vs 2-3).

What does it say in Matt. 24? One of the very famous Scriptures we look to. ‘He who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.’ That’s why you have to have *endurance*—for salvation. Says *patience* in the *King James*, but it means *endurance*.

Verse 4: “But let endurance have *its* perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*” (vs 4-6).

James 5:10—this is the thing which help me understand the difference between *patience* and *enduring*. “My brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of *the Lord as an example of endurance*... [not just patience, but endurance. You go back and look what Jeremiah had to endure; look what Ezekiel had to endure. I think of poor Ezekiel, he must have had the toughest assignment of all of them.] ...in afflictions and of steadfastness. Remember, we call those blessed who endure. You have heard of the *endurance of Job*... [it says *patience* in the *King James*, but Job was anything but patient! He was impatient; demanding of God—but *he endured!*] ...and you have seen the end result of *serving the Lord*: that the Lord is very compassionate and full of tender mercies” (vs 10-11).

We may come back to this again a little later, but let's go to Romans, the fifth chapter, because it talks about **endurance**. And it talks about it in a way that, I think, is very good. And again, notice the steps that it gives. I'm going to compile all of those things—the steps—all of these sections of Scripture which gives these one after another. I think it'll be a good lesson for us.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 1-3).

Boy, I tell you what, God must have given all the apostles a real, special blessing in how to endure tribulations. He must have! Everyone of them says, 'joy in tribulation.' And I've talked to a lot of people and they don't *joy* in tribulation. Like I said, I haven't arrived there yet, myself.

"...realizing that **tribulation brings forth endurance**, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope" (vs 3-4). Which shows that character only comes by experience. I can look back in my life now and I can speak from experience where I couldn't before. Some of the things that I have gone through have been tribulations and difficulties.

Verse 5: "And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit... [here he ends up with love, just like Peter did.] ...which has been given to us,"

Now let's see some more concerning enduring and what we need to do. Let's see another charge. This is given to Timothy, so this is a charge to all the elders—and here's what he was to do, and it's just a little bit different; it's similar, but it's a little bit different.

1-Timothy 6:11: "But you, O man of God, flee these things... [that is all of the going after money and covetousness and so forth] ...and pursue righteousness... [It's just a little different—isn't it?] ...Godliness, faith, love, endurance *and* meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith! Take hold of eternal life to which you were also called, and did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses" (vs 11-12).

When you're down and when you are out and when you are filled with difficulties and you think that you can go on **no further!** Have you ever come to that point? or you thought that you were close to that point? Well, when you get down to it, we will call it *the brink of the river end!* or *the brink*

*of the end of the rope!* And sometimes things will happen that you're almost like on a rope and you're trying to hold on, and you are slipping, slipping, slipping, slipping, slipping! And finally, you turn to Christ. Well, here's what you need to do, and the reason that this is important is because Christ also went through all of these things. Can you imagine what Christ had to think of when He was in the flesh?

- *knowing* that He was the Creator of everything that there was
- *knowing* that He was carrying the 'law of sin and death' within Him
- *knowing* that He cannot sin even once

So, you compare that with your own life. And from that then you will gain a great deal of strength, because you know that He's gone through everything.

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight... [You've got to put it aside! When troubles and difficulties come, you have to work it out the best way you can, with God's help, then when it's over, put it aside! Just like I said earlier, you can't breathe for me. I can't breathe for you. Always try and do this when there are troubles and difficulties that come: **do not pollute today with the problems of yesterday; and do not project the problems of today into tomorrow**—because it hasn't come yet. That's what we need to do.] ...lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; and let us **run the race set before us with endurance.**"

Just like these long-distance runners. They have to have endurance—don't they? *Yes, they do!* What are they called? *They are called marathons.* The worst endurance one is the triathlon, where it's the bicycle, and it's the swimming, and it's the running. You try that. I think almost all of us here would huff and puff one block and we would've had all we could endure.

So, "...run the race set before us with endurance... [looking: you always have to have your eyes and your heart and mind on Christ.] ...having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy... [He must have imparted a special joy of comprehending tribulations and difficulties to the apostles that, so far, any of us have received.] ...that lay ahead of Him **endured** the cross, *although* He despised *the* shame... [didn't make any difference] ...and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 1-3). So we have to have the endurance; we have to endure to the end—

don't we? *Yes!*

Let's see how that in our patient or enduring continuance in well-doing, we're striving for eternal life while we are looking to Jesus Christ. Romans 2:6: "Who will render to each one according to his own works... [*deeds and works* in the *King James* are exactly the same because they come from the Greek: 'ergon'] ...on the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life" (vs 6-7). Now again, we have a set of things coming one after the other: you're to seek for glory, honor and immortality—you're going to receive eternal life. So that's really tremendous, the things that God gives us if we endure.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 13:4, and let's see that ***the only way you can endure is to have the love of God***: "Love is patient... [that implies by that, ***endurance***] ...and is kind.... [v 7]: *Love* bears all things... [you can't *bear all things* unless you have *endurance*] ...believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." When we look back and see that we haven't *endured unto blood, resisting against sin*, yet, then we can look to Christ and we'll make it through. He'll see us through. We don't have to worry!

Let's go to 2-Timothy 2—here again are some things that are given to Timothy; he's told certain things that he needs to do. Good instruction. A little bit different sequence of things; but it's interesting how many times this follows through.

2-Timothy 2:9: "For which I am suffering hardship, *even* to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal... [Paul had it really rough; he had it very difficult] ...but the Word of God has not been chained. Because of this, I endure all things for the sake of the elect... [whatever it is; whatever the difficulty] ...in order that they may obtain *the* salvation that *is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: If we have died together with *Him*, we shall also live together with *Him*; if we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us; if we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself" (vs 9-13). So there again, ***the charge to Timothy to be faithful, to endure, to go forward.***

- 5) Psalm 91:1-16
- 6) 2-Peter 1:4
- 7) 1-Corinthians 9:24-27
- 8) 1-Peter 1:2-4, 18-20, 23
- 9) 1-Corinthians 15:51-53
- 10) 2-Peter 1:4
- 11) 1-John 2:15-17
- 12) Ephesians 4:22-24
- 13) 2-Peter 1:5-7
- 14) Ephesians 2:10, 8-10
- 15) Luke 6:43-45
- 16) Colossians 1:9-14
- 17) 1-Peter 3:8-12
- 18) Ephesians 1:17-18
- 19) Job 42:1-6
- 20) Ephesians 1:18-19
- 21) Colossians 2:2-3
- 22) Colossians 3:10
- 23) 2-Peter 3:15-18
- 24) 1-Corinthians 1:4-7, 9
- 25) 1-Corinthians 12:8-11
- 26) Philippians 3:9-10
- 27) Acts 24:24-26
- 28) Titus 1:7-9
- 29) James 1:2-6
- 30) James 5:10-11
- 31) Romans 5:1-5
- 32) 1-Timothy 6:11-12
- 33) Hebrews 12:1-3
- 34) Romans 2:6-7
- 35) 1-Corinthians 13:4, 7
- 36) 2-Timothy 2:9-13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ephesians 6
- Galatians 5:22-23
- Matthew 24

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Holy Spirit*

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

✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author's translation

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Peter 1:1
- 2) Philippians 2:5-8
- 3) 2-Peter 1:5-7
- 4) 2-Peter 1:4

## Epistle of Second Peter III

Fred R. Coulter

Today we're going to finish off the section where he gives us the things that we need to do, that we need to grow in, that we need to apply in our lives.

Let's come to 2-Peter 1:5 and we'll just a review a little bit and then we're going to get into the section where it shows that in the Old Testament there were prophecies that the disciples would finish off the Word of God. We will see the evidence in the New Testament where Peter and Paul and John were the ones who did the canonization. If you understand the Word of God, you understand how God works, and you can realize that the true canonization had to be done by the apostles. God would not leave it to a paganized, philosophized group of theologians who just converted, supposedly, from paganism to Christianity in the 300s<sub>A.D.</sub> to canonize the Bible.

The true fact is that the apostles canonized the New Testament, and when it came time for them to canonize it in the 300s and the 400s in the Orthodox and the Catholic Church, all they did was go ahead and put their stamp of approval on the greatest number of extant manuscripts, which is the one that we have here. So, when you understand that, then you'll realize that God is the One Who inspired the apostles to canonize the New Testament, because it is the Word of God and it was inspired by Him, written by the apostles, and preserved for us, as we will see.

2-Peter 1:5: "And for this very reason also, having applied all *your* diligence besides..."—so we're to be diligent.

Verse 10: "For this reason, brethren... [after he sums everything all up] ...be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure..."—so **diligence** and **faithfulness** and **watchfulness** are all a part of Christian growth and understanding.

Back to v 5: "...for this very reason also, having applied all *your* diligence besides, add to your faith... [It's a little awkward to translate it literally in the Greek, as we saw with the Interlinear, which *in—add in*. It's *putting within*; and actually it's *growing from within that way*.] ...add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, **the love of God**" (vs 5-7). And the reason I translated it that way, because that's the way it is in the Greek, as we saw last time.

Let's just cover a few points concerning *the love*; because it's very important for us to understand. However, we have done quite

extensively a series of that when we were in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> John, *the love of God*—and all that is there, because that's very important.

We're going to see with the writings of Peter, when you also understand that the book of Mark was written under Peter's tutelage, because Mark was the one who assisted Peter; as well as we will see a little later on he assisted Paul in helping get all the epistles together to canonize the New Testament. You will see that love was not a strong point with Peter. I think, toward the end of his life, he learned it more and more; but he certainly was not as strong as John; certainly not as strong as Paul.

1-Peter 4:8: "But above all, have fervent love among yourselves... [The *King James* says *charity*; but it actually is love. The Greek is 'agape' and most places where *charity* is used in the New Testament, it should be the Greek word 'agape'—which should be translated *love*.] ...because love will cover a multitude of sins." Now, why does *love* 'cover a multitude of sins'? *It understands* the problems and difficulties of human nature! When there is repentance—of course, if there's not repentance, it doesn't mean to whitewash, to cover up, to stonewall, to deny, to lie about. That's not the kind of covering it's talking about. It's talking about 'to cover a multitude of sin' because it **understands!**

Matthew 18 gives us a very good lesson in repentance and acceptance upon repentance, as far as what someone does or doesn't do, or their lack thereof. This all has to do with 'love covers a multitude of sins'—**will cover it!** Sometimes there are sins that need to be exposed, and Jesus talks about those. He said, 'That which is spoken in secret shall be shouted from the housetop.' You have to discern the difference between the two. Sometimes they have to be exposed because they're not repented of. And, of course, there are many sins, which effect many people in an overt way, such as we have just covered here with now the advent of Christmas in some Churches of God. That's a sin that should be exposed and 'shouted from the housetop' as wrong. But in dealing with each other in brotherly love:

We'll connect these two because Peter is the one who wrote the Second Epistle of Peter. Matthew 18:21: "Then Peter came to Him *and* said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?'.... [that seems reasonable; but that does not cover *human nature*. Do you have sins that you have sinned more than seven times? *Yes!* Now he doesn't tell us the timeframe involved, but let's just consider this as being a day.] ...Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to

you until seven times, but until seventy times seven” (vs 21-22). So then, that’s how *love covers a multitude of sin*.

Let’s also look at it this way—John 3:16—to show that the love of God is that which does cover sin. Since God is love, this all applies to it, and God is eventually going to cover all the sins of the world. They’ll either be repented of and put under the blood of Christ; or as we know by the Scriptures, there will be the death of the wicked, which will be burned up in the lake of fire; but they will all be taken care of.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world... [He loves us; He loved the world; He still loves it and He’s going to save it. Even though He let’s humankind go the way that they do, God is greater than all the sins that human beings can do. God is able to work it out.] ...that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (vs 16-17). Which takes an awful lot of forgiveness to do so—correct? *Yes, it does!* So, that’s how *love covers a multitude of sin*. And notice how then, John expands upon what Peter wrote.

I think perhaps maybe we’re one of the few churches that does this: 1-Peter 5:13: “The *Church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, *as does* Mark, my son.... [the one who wrote the book of Mark; and as we will see a little later, he is the one who came and helped Paul; and he is the one who brought the parchments and brought the different things so that the New Testament could be finished.] ...Greet one another with a kiss of love....” (vs 13-14).

I think we do that in this church more than any other church. Some churches get so formal that everything is Mr. & Mrs. and it’s a formal handshake and you don’t dare show any emotion to each other; and I think that’s totally wrong. This shows what kind of love we are to have.

Let’s go to 2-Corinthians 6, and this is important because this shows us how that through everything that we go through—and there are many things that we go through, just like the Apostle Paul. I tell you my-oh-my-oh-my did he go through a lot. And I think all the suffering and all the difficulty that Paul went through taught him an awful lot about the love of God; and taught him an awful lot about how God really has the capacity to forgive upon repentance—and He does!

2-Corinthians 6:1: “We then, working together *with Him*, are also exhorting you not to receive the grace of God in vain.” The grace of God is not a license to sin. The grace of God is to cover sin—upon repentance. The grace of God is to give

you a standing with God

- that gives you the fruits of His Spirit
- that gives you His love
- that gives you His understanding
- that gives you the things that God wants you to have to grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ

That’s all a part of the *grace of God*. and he says that you ‘receive it not in vain.’

Verse 2: “(For He says, ‘In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in a day of salvation...’ Today is not the only day of salvation. If you look around at the world, you’d have to conclude that if this were the *only day* of salvation, surely God was losing, because Satan is winning hands down at this time. So, it is a day of salvation; and that is for us—we’re called out.

“...I have helped you.’ Behold, now *is* an acceptable time.... [that’s for us] ...Behold, now *is the* day of salvation.)” (v 2)—and that is for us. It’s not the day of salvation for the world, but for us.

Then he talks about his ministry, v 3: “We do not give offense to anyone in anything, so that the ministry may not be blamed; but in everything we are confirming ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings” (vs 3-5).

This doesn’t sound like very many people I know today. Does it sound like very many people you know today? You think you’ve had it tough as a Christian? My, my, we haven’t even started—have we? I mean, we’re not even up to bat, let alone take any strikes, or run to first base.

Verse 6: “In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in *the* Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned.” Through all of this every one of these things, developed into Paul:

- the *love of God*
- the patience
- the pureness
- the knowledge
- and all of these things]

Verse 7: “In *the* Word of Truth, in *the* power of God; through the armor of righteousness on the right hand and *on the* left, through glory and dishonor, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and true... [So Paul had a lot of people going around saying things to him.] ...as unknown and well known; as dying, but behold, we are alive; as chastened, but not put to death; as sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. O *you* Corinthians! Our mouths have been opened to you,

and our hearts have been enlarged *toward you*. You are not suppressed by us, but you are restricted in your own hearts” (vs 7-12). In other words, he is telling them that he is so concerned for them that he is just constrained within himself.

Now notice what he says here, v 14: “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?... [Isn’t that a true saying today? Isn’t this a true, living thing today?] ...And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness?... [You can’t bring in a little bit of darkness and expect the light of God to continue, because the darkness will take over; because you’re yielding to Satan.] ...And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For **you are a temple of the living God...**” (vs 14-16).

Will there be a temple during the Millennium? *The answer is, no, there will not be!* There will not be a Levitical priesthood during the Millennium. We will be the kings and priests. There will be no animal sacrifices. If Christ is here, why should there be animal sacrifices? At the Feast of Tabernacles I go through the whole section there in Ezek. 40-47; and you will see that there are some things that project out in prophecy to the Millennium and out beyond. But what you’re really dealing with in Ezek. 40-47 is the second temple and the preaching of the Gospel coming out from the second temple and the beginning of the Church.

Verse 16: “And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For **you are a temple of the living God**, exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, **come out from the midst of them and be separate**,’ says *the Lord...*” (vs 16-17). Not go join the world; that’s what Paul is saying here. Love does not give the right to go out and join the world; that’s what he’s saying.

“...‘and touch not *the* unclean... [let alone eat it] ...and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the Lord Almighty*” (vs 17-18). Here we see the whole scope of Christianity reduced down into one chapter in 2-Cor. 6, in covering everything that we will experience as Christians. I’m convinced before the end is over, we’re going to experience many of these things that he had to go through, without a doubt we will.

Let’s go to 1-Timothy, the fourth chapter, and we’ll see some instructions here concerning the love of God—some of the things that we didn’t cover before. 1-Timothy 4:12: “Do not allow anyone to despise your youth; but be an example to the believers—in word, in conduct, in love, in Spirit, in

faith *and* in purity.” This doesn’t mean he didn’t have his difficulties and didn’t have his problems—he certainly did, all of us do, we can attest to that.

Here’s another admonition to Timothy by the Apostle Paul, 2-Timothy 2:22: “But flee youthful lusts; and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace with those who are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart.... [Then here’s a good admonition, because you can surely be drug down with these—we know that, don’t we?]: ...But foolish and ignorant speculations reject, knowing that they engender arguments” (vs 22-23).

And boy, that sure can be. I tell you, ***there’s been more argument over what the Bible means and not means down through history than any other book in the world!***

- Do people argue over Shakespeare? *No!*
- Do people argue over Homer’s writing, *The Odyssey* and the *Iliad*? *No!*
- Do they argue over, necessarily, the book of Koran?

I haven’t heard of any martyrdoms because there was argument over the book of Koran—I suppose there have been. But there sure is over the Bible— isn’t there? It’s interesting, ‘foolish and unlearned questions’ that defines the kind. Some people ask questions just to ask questions to cause problems; they don’t ask questions to learn, to know and to understand. So we’re to avoid those.

2-Timothy 3:10: “But you have closely followed my doctrine [teachings], conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions *and* sufferings—such as happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, *and* in Lystra. *You know* what sort of persecutions I endured... [he was left for dead; they got the crowds all riled up; had a big riot; went after Paul, stoned him, left him for dead; and he got up and walked away from that and came back preaching because]: ...and the Lord delivered me out of them all. And indeed, everyone who desires to live godly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted. But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*” (vs 10-13).

Isn’t that true? That’s exactly what’s happening! One deception leads to another deception. One of the things here is: Is it wrong for Christians to innovate in their worship of God? As then saying, ‘Well now, if we worship God without the pagan trappings of Christmas, then surely it’s all right; reasoning themselves totally astray! So, they wax worse and worse. We’re seeing these things happen right before our eyes.

Let’s go to Colossians 3, and we’ll finish the section in admonitions that we had that Peter wrote that we have to use to grow in grace and knowledge

and add the different characteristics of the Holy Spirit in growth and understanding. Here are the things that we are to put on. This is difficult. This is high-level Christian growth, right here.

Colossians 3:12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another... [That’s why ‘love covers a multitude of sins.’] ...if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*. and above all these things... [This is the *crowning glory*; this is what Paul was talking about; this is what Peter was talking about; this is why Paul said that there’s faith, there’s hope and love—and love is the greatest.] ...**put on love, which is the bond of perfection**” (vs 12-14).

How can you be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect? *Right here:*

- by putting on the love of God
- by letting God’s Spirit be in you
- by letting God’s Spirit lead you and guide you
- by standing the grace of God so that these things will grow in you

Let’s come back to 2-Peter, the first chapter, and let’s continue on from here and we’re going to see some very interesting things—and then we will get into how the New Testament was canonized by the apostles—put together and finalized by them in a way that many people don’t understand.

2-Peter 1:8: “For *if* these things are actually existing and abounding in you...”

- the *faith*
- the *virtue*
- the *knowledge*
- the *self-control*
- the *endurance*
- the *Godliness*
- the *brotherly love*
- and *love*

They’re actually existing and abounding in you.

What’s another term, a more modern terminology for *in you*? What is one thing that they have learned and they’ve known for a long time, but there’s a modern phrase for it? *It’s called, internalization.* Internalization means that *you understand the rules and regulations* out here; *you understand, as it were, the laws of God*, out here; but to be *internalized* then means *they are written in our heart and mind*. So, he’s saying the same thing here, that if these characteristics in vs 5, 6 & 7

“...are actually existing and abounding in you, they *will* cause you *to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

Christ.... [In other words, you’re going to fulfill one of the very last things he said that *grow in the grace and the knowledge* of our Lord Jesus Christ.] ...But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins” (vs 8-9).

Let’s see what happens when they do not have these things in them; when they use the name of Christ for profit; when they use the name of Christ and combine it with Belial.

2-Peter 2:18 “For *while* they are speaking bombastic words of vanity, they are alluring through the lusts of the flesh—by granting indulgences to sin—those who truly were escaping from those who live in deception.” Here’s a whole group of people that were half-way out of the world, coming to the knowledge and understanding of the Truth, and someone comes along with some deception and begins telling them—through ‘alluring to the lusts of the flesh’—the things that they were given in license to do.

Verse 19: “While promising them freedom, they themselves are actually the slaves of corruption; because by whom anyone has been overcome...” If you have something that is totally overcome you, you have been defeated by that, and you need to have the triumph of Christ to overcome that.

“...he is also being held in bondage. For if, after having escaped the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in *corruptions* and are overcome by them, the final end is worse than the beginning” (vs 19-20). That is actually what we’re seeing happening before our very eyes.

“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. 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” (vs 21-22). And we’re going to see some of that happen within the very Church of God. It was happening right then during Peter’s time; so he gave this warning before he gets in to chapter two, he says:

2-Peter 1:9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind...” Are those who are blind and naked and destitute? *Yes! the Laodiceans!* We’re not going to pick on them. There are others who are blind.

Let’s go to John, the ninth chapter; because Jesus gave quite a parable—lesson—the whole

chapter is about a man who was healed from blindness that he had been born with. It shows everything that took place in this account. We'll just cover the first couple of verses in the chapter, and then we will pick up some of the verses at the end of the chapter for the lesson.

John 9:1: "Now *as Jesus was passing by*, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (vs 1-2). That's really not a very good question—is it? *No, because* how could someone in the womb sin, to be born blind?

Verse 3: "Jesus answered, 'Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, *this blindness came* so that the works of God might be manifested in him.'" There are some people that God deliberately caused to be born in a handicap situation to show His power and glory. This blind man was one particular one to teach a lesson that has been written in the Scriptures for us down to this day.

Verse 4: "I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is still day. When *the* night comes, no one is able to work. As long as I am in the world, I am *the* light of the world' After saying these things, He spat on *the* ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to the eyes of the blind man" (vs 4-6).

Now that's something—isn't it? You think about that! How would you like to have that done to you. Of course, you couldn't see it being done, but the disciples and apostles saw it. He reached down and got some dust and spit in it—probably had to spit quite a bit in it and mix it up and make a little paste and put it over the man's eyes. I imagine the disciples thought, 'Boy, this is really not very smart.' Well, it was, I think, in relationship to their dumb question. So He did this. So, he went to the Pool of Shilom and washed and came back.

Could it be that he had no eyes? *I do not know!* So, you're saying that the dust was part of that which was a miraculous creation of the eyes when he washed. I don't know. We'll just have to leave that as a question mark.

He went into the synagogue and the Pharisees said, 'Were you blind? Who healed you? And then he told them who healed him. They didn't believe it, so they asked the parents: 'Is this your son?' *Yes, this is our son.* 'Well, how does he see?' *Don't know, ask him, he's of age.* 'Well, we're going to kick you out of the synagogue if you don't tell us the truth, because we know this man is a sinner.' So the lesson is:

Here's what the man told them after he said, v 31: "'This is truly an amazing thing... [here he is instructing the Pharisees] ...that you do not know

where He has come from, yet He has opened my eyes. Now we know that God does not hear sinners. But if anyone is God-fearing and is doing His will, He hears him. From the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that anyone has opened *the* eyes of *one* who was born blind. If this *man* were not from God, He could do nothing'" (vs 31-33). Yet, the Pharisees said he's a sinner.

Verse 34: "They answered and said to him, 'You were born wholly in sin, and you are teaching us?' ...." Here's a miracle that had never occurred—anything like it—from the foundation of the world; and what were the scribes and Pharisees more interested in than the fact that he could see and the miracle that was done? *They were interested in condemning Jesus and retaining their power and their political authority!* That's what they were concerned with.

"...And they cast him out.... [This sounds like some experience, that people have had, that we know.] ...Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He found him, He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?' He answered and said, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?' And Jesus said to him, 'You have seen Him, and He is the One Who is even now speaking to you.' Then he said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped Him" (vs 34-38).

If He was not God in the flesh, He wouldn't have allowed him to worship Him; because we go back in the book of Revelation where then John bowed down to an angel and the angel said, 'Don't do this, I am one of your fellow-servants and of your brethren—worship God.' So here he worshiped Him.

Verse 39: "And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world...' It says in another place that He didn't come for judgment. He didn't come for judgment for those who repent, because their sins will be forgiven—but, He came for judgment for those who won't repent.

Here's why: "...so that those who do not see might see... [just like this blind man; of low status; of no consequence; obviously, of no education worthwhile considering by the Pharisees.] ...and those who see might become blind.' And those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things; and they said to Him, 'Are we also blind?'" (vs 39-40). That's the whole lesson. You go to some of these 'experts'—as Dr. Martin has pointed out many times concerning doctors. If you went up to a doctor and told him, 'You are totally wrong and you're only here for the money'—you would be thrown out. You may even be arrested and thrown in jail if you get vociferous enough about it. They claim they see, just like the Pharisees; just like the religionists—they claim they see.

Verse 41: “Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, your sin remains”

So, when you come to this point of spiritual blindness, then you’re going to be in deep, deep trouble with Christ. Why? *Because you won’t see your sins and you won’t repent of it.* It’s not the person who’s sinning and repenting who’s in trouble. It’s the person who’s sinning and refuses to recognize sin; and hence therefore, does not repent. That’s the one that’s in trouble, because they say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, their sin remains.

That’s why Peter wrote, but if these things are not present, 2-Peter 1:10: “For this reason, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure...**” We have here twice: *diligence*—right? Use all diligence; and here be *more diligence than all diligence*. “...**to make your calling and election sure...**”

It’s not a matter that we can guarantee it; it’s a matter that God has given us a tremendous amount of responsibility in our part to make sure that our calling and election is sure. We have things that we have to do. We are responsible and God is making sure that we follow through with that.

“...because *if* you are doing these things... [*doing* in the Greek means *practicing*] ...you will never stumble at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (vs 10-11)—and, of course, we know that is at the resurrection.

Now, let’s go ahead and amplify a little bit concerning *calling* and *election*. *Calling and election* are very interesting. No one can call himself. Let’s look at this calling. How is one called? Can one present himself forward and make God call him? Then who is doing whose will? No one is going to force God. God is the One Who is calling. This is a very important thing that we need to go back and review and rehearse and understand.

John 6:44—and here’s what Jesus said: “**No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...**” You can’t go to God on your own; God has to call you. Just living in the world, just living in the righteousness of the letter of the law, that’s a little bit different story. But we’re talking about *spiritual*, where you receive the Spirit of God. Since God the Father is the One Who gives the Holy Spirit, God is the One Who has to draw. God is the One Who has to put it in the mind to desire God’s way.

“...and I will raise him up at the last day.... [This is the shortest summation of the whole process of the Gospel, right there!] ...It is written in the

prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’....” (vs 44-45). That is everyone that is called. That’s how we really learn. How do you understand the Bible and know the things in the Bible? *It’s the Word of God*, and if it’s the Word of God, Who’s teaching you? *God is!* If the Spirit of God is in you and God is leading you to understand His Word, Who’s teaching you? *God is!*

“...Therefore, everyone who has heard... [and you have to answer that call] ...from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me. No one has seen the Father except He Who is from God; He has seen the Father” (vs 45-46)—and He’s talking about Himself.

In John 6:65 He reiterates it again. To even come to the knowledge of the understanding of the Truth, it is a gift of God; and if that gift is rejected, then you’re all in trouble.

- The Holy Spirit is a gift of God
- The calling is a gift of God
- The Son of God as our sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins is a gift of God

And in the final analysis, as we have said before, ***we have nothing that we didn’t receive.***

(go to the next track)

Let’s read again, John 6:65—because we need to understand very thoroughly, very profoundly, in order to understand about how to make our calling and election sure, what Jesus really said here: “...For this reason, I have said to you, **no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father.**” So God is the One Who has to do it. God is the One Who has to call you (as we saw in v 44); you cannot come to Jesus Christ unless the Father gives you the ability to do it. So this is the way that God is going to insure that the calling—the ones He calls and really has His Spirit—are going to know and they are going to understand.

I realize that these are very basic Scriptures, which we should all know; yet, nevertheless, these are very foundational for us to understand about our calling lest we get lifted up in our own vanity and our own goodness and our own works, and think that we’re doing something. Remember, there is no work of any law that can substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And also reiterate that there is no work of any law that can substitute for the imputation given to you as a free gift of the righteousness of Christ. ***No man can make himself just before God***—only God can through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

John 14:6—after Thomas said he didn’t know where He [Christ] was going: “Jesus said to him, ***‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’***” What we see there and we know is that God the

Father has to start it; Jesus Christ has to be involved in it; and then we come to Christ because the Father makes it possible and He's the One Who does the initial calling in the first place—and this is the calling that we are to make sure of.

Let's go to Hebrews, the third chapter. Let's carry this on a little bit further here in the book of Hebrews, because we need to understand what kind of calling this is. This is not a calling to a religion, to make yourself better in the world. This is a calling directly from God the Father, the greatest Being in the universe. And please understand this: that He and He alone is fit to sit in the universe's throne. No one else is. Therefore, when you really comprehend that then you will understand the sin of Satan where he was going to exalt himself above 'the stars of God and sit in the throne in the sides of the north.'

Hebrews 3:1: "Because of this, Holy brethren..." That comes from the word *sanctify*—that's what makes you Holy. If you have the Holy Spirit; if you have the Holy calling; if you have Christ *in you* you are Holy brethren.

"...partakers of *the* heavenly calling..." (v 1). This calling is tremendous! This calling is fantastic! And *calling* comes from the Greek 'klesis'—which means (as we've been studying) *that God has to do it*. That's why it's a heavenly calling; *the Father has to do it*.

"...consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*" (vs 1-3). Christ is the One Who is building the house; and actually the owner of the house—He has more honor than the house.

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful as the Son* over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast... [Tying in with the same wording of the Apostle Peter: *make your calling and election sure*. You have to hold fast]: ...the confidence... [and that confidence comes from the power of God's Spirit] ...and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the end*."

Now let's see Who's the Beginner and the Finisher; the Author of our faith. This is important to understand because this fits right in with the calling that God has given.

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... [that is also *making your calling and election sure*.] ...having *our minds* fixed on **Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of our faith...**" (vs 1-2).

How many times have we read in the Scriptures where Jesus said, 'I'm the Beginning and I am the End; I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.'

Here it is He's: "...the Beginner and Finisher of our faith..." (v 2). He's the One Who alone can make it possible. That's why we need to look to Him. We need not look to a man. We need not look to an organization. All of those things become idols when you do that; because men will disappoint you and organizations will disappoint you; but Christ will never!

"...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds. You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin" (vs 2-4).

We're also in a time of correction; and this correction is coming in the form of a vomiting session—that's what's happening in the Churches of God today—so that they *can* 'make their calling and election sure' if they would only strive to do so.

Verse 5 is very important: "And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise *the* chastening of the Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him; for whom *the* Lord loves... [constant, current love; present tense] ...He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives'... [all of those are present tense] ...If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons.... [and that's what's so important, brethren. We need to understand that the end of our calling is to be the very sons of God.] ...For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all [everyone; every single one of us] are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons" (vs 5-8).

There it is! It's very important for us to understand that God also wants us to 'make our calling and election sure.' He is the One Who called us. He is the One Who makes it possible.

Now let's see where we are if we could look at it this way, in the history of the Church today. Let's go to 1-Corinthians, the first chapter—then we will go to Matthew 22. Let's look at what the Bible says about our calling. We know this verse and we know it well; but we read this into the record, because it's talking about our calling—and it's something that God alone does.

1-Corinthians 1:23: "But we proclaim Christ crucified. To *the Jews it is* a cause of offense... [and

the stone is going to fall on them and grind them to pieces] ...and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness; but to those who are called..." (vs 23-24). Notice the word *calling*; selected of God. You are personally, individually selected by God the Father.

"...—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God's power and God's wisdom" (v 24). You don't need the wisdom of philosophy; you don't need the power of demonism; you don't need the power of personality; you don't need the brains of a genius—***you need Christ!*** Why?

Verse 25: "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God... [if He has any] ...is stronger than men. For you see your calling, brethren... [God is doing a marvelous and magnificent and a wonderful thing; but it's going to astound the world!] ...that *there are* not many who are wise... [and that means only just a very few] ...according to the flesh, not many who are powerful... [that means those who have ability, political strength, powerful in the world—and I would have to say, I don't know of any] ...not many who are high-born *among you*" (vs 25-26)—those of noble birth or a princely line.

Verse 27: "Rather, God has chosen... [*Chosen* is the verb for calling, which is the noun. Chosen means *selected*.] ...the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world... [Every once and a while you've probably asked: Why has God called me? *Well, you're reading it, right here.*] ...and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing... [the world looks out and we don't even exist—we amount to nothing to them] ...—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are... [and here's the reason] ...***so that no flesh might glory in His presence.***... [No one is going to glory in His presence.] ...But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*'" (vs 27-31).

Let's look at what happens when you have those who think that they are called, or think they are mighty, or think they deserve it—and what happens to them. Let's go to Matthew 22, and perhaps maybe we'll get a good analysis also of where we are in the world today in relationship to the Church.

Matthew 22:1: "And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king, who made a wedding feast for his son... [this is a type of the Church and Jesus Christ] ...and sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the

wedding feast; but they refused to come. Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, 'Say to those who have been invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast.' But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*'" (vs 1-6).

Do we not see the same thing in the Church of God today? How many were called that are now beginning to reject it? Is not God rejecting all of the organizational establishment that was there?—the lands? the buildings? the leaders? *Because they are treating the calling lightly!* In fact, they are speaking blasphemously of the Truth—which we will cover when we come to 2-Pet. 2—beginning to say that the way of the world is better; Christmas is better; Easter is better; all of these things are better; and Satan's interpretation of the Word of God we love more than God's interpretation of the Word of God. What did they do? *They kicked a lot of people out;* they disfellowshipped them; they killed them *spiritually* so to speak. *Yes, they did!* But there's something else that God is doing, which also lays a burden upon us, as well.

Verse 7: "Now, when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city" That's exactly what He did to Jerusalem; that's exactly what He's doing to the Churches of God that rise in power and arrogance and reject the Truth of God. He's going to take away what they have. Is that not what Jesus said concerning the talents? *Yes, He did!* It'll be taken and 'given to those who bring forth fruit thereof.' It's going to be destroyed, for the fact that we can understand that God is not looking to physical things.

God is not looking to a physical temple. He destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 70<sub>A.D.</sub>—did He not? Why? What is Jesus looking for? What did He say that the true worshipers of God would be doing in worshiping God? Jesus said, '***The hour is coming, and now is, when the Father will seek those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. For God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth!***' And that's what God wants.

Verse 8: "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy... [Why were they not worthy? *Because they counted the calling as a light thing.*] ...therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast.'" And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil; and the wedding feast was filled with guests. And when the king came in to see the

guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in proper attire for the wedding feast” (vs 8-11).

This also tells us that once you are called, you are responsible for dressing yourself; and if you put on Christ and you put on the righteousness of God; and if you have the Spirit of God, then you know that the wedding garment is the *righteousness of the saints* as we’re told in Rev. 19:7-8. So we have to be ready. There are things that we need to do. What is one of the problems with the Laodiceans—if we will just remember that we are living in that age? *They are poor and miserable and blind and naked*—they are not clothed!

Verse 12: “And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for the wedding feast?’ But he had no answer.” He was speechless. He didn’t know what to say. Because, the truth is, when you stand before God at the Judgment Seat, which is says ‘all shall come before the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ and shall give an account for himself.’ No one else is going to do it; and you won’t have anything to say.

Verse 13: “Then the king said to the servants, “Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness.” There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen” (vs 13-14). Why are few chosen? *Because few repent, and you have to be always in an attitude of yieldedness and tenderheartedness to God*—which is in effect an attitude of repentance. You have that once you really understand the great and tremendous and fantastic calling. Once you comprehend and realize that

- it was God the Father Who personally called you
- it is God the Father Who led you to Christ
- that it is God the Father Who is doing these things for you.

Then He begins to open your mind to the understanding of *His will*, rather than *your will*.

Let’s go to Ephesians, the first chapter, because this is very important for us to understand; very important for us to realize. ***God has given us, with His Spirit, the understanding of His own personal will and pleasure.*** Some of these verses, you will notice in these series, we will come back and cross paths quite a few times. And the reason is because these tell us and give us the greatest impact of what God is doing.

Ephesians 1:4: “According as He has personally chosen us for Himself...” God the Father is the One Who has done it. Remember, we are studying out of 2-Pet. 1, that we are to make our calling and our election sure—***That becomes our responsibility.*** But God will help us in it. God has to do it in us; but we have got to *choose* that; we have

got to *choose* to yield to God.

“...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [that was God’s plan all along, just like Christ was ‘slain before the foundation of the world’—but yet, He wasn’t slain until He was crucified.] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless... [and *without blame* means there is no sin at all, because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us and that’s the way God the Father views us and looks at us.] ...before Him in love.”

That’s why there can never be enough of the preaching of the love of God, because that’s the only thing that’s going to get us there. That is the only thing that going to bring us the knowledge and the truth and the understanding of God and His way—is with the love of God.

Notice, this is our destiny, v 5: “Having predestinated us for sonship... [*not* ‘adoption’ (KJV) because we are God the Father’s own children by receiving the begetting of the Holy Spirit.] ...to Himself through Jesus Christ... [it is for the Family of God to present us to Christ as His bride.] ...according to the good pleasure of His own will.” That’s what *the calling* is all about.

Now let’s see a couple of other verses which are so important for us to realize and understand. This is where we need to be, brethren. This is what we need to be doing, always; so that we can understand and realize what God the Father really is doing and how He is doing it.

So that we understand how all of this flows together, v 13: “In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” This Holy Spirit of promise is the begetting from God the Father. It actually imparts to us the beginning of the nature of God—the mind of Christ.

Verse 14: “Which is *the* earnest... [the down-payment, because the fullness of God’s way has not yet been given.] ...of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession to *the* praise of His glory.... [We are going to be of the praise of the glory of God so that we can know and understand; we need to realize that as never before.] ...For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers” (vs 14-16).

Here’s what he was praying; this prayer is written down for us today. This is God’s desire for us. This is how we can make our calling and election sure, as the Apostle Peter admonished us to do.

Verse 17: “That the God of our Lord Jesus

Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him.”

- That it’s got to come from God.
- It’s got to come from His Word.
- It has to come from His Truth.
- It has to come from His Spirit.

Verse 18: “*And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened...” Brethren, this is a spiritual thing that takes place; and this can only come with prayer, with yieldedness; with the choice of an attitude that comes from God the Father; but you have to provide the choice that your heart is tender before God.

“*And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened... [God wants us to know] ...in order **that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling**... [He doesn’t want us to be in doubt, He wants us to know; and that hope is the greatest thing that there ever is—to be the very sons and daughters of God; to know that! That’s why God has called you!] ...and what *is* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (v 18). That is astonishing when you understand that.

- Does not Jesus Christ uphold the universe ‘by the word of His power’? *Yes!*
- Is He not going to inherit the universe? *Yes!*
- Are we not called ‘joint heirs with Christ’? *Yes! Yes, indeed!*

It is glorious, brethren.

Verse 19: “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe...” God has that power that He wants us to receive. God has that power that He wants to use in our minds and our hearts, that we can ***truly be converted; truly yielded to God.***

“...according to the inner working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from *the* dead, and set *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named—not only in this age, but also in the *age* to come” (vs 19-21). That’s the One Who is our Savior. God the Father wants us to understand that, that we can make sure our calling and election. This is the greatest, more profound thing that there is.

Verse 22: “For He has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the Church, which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all” (vs 22-23). And that’s fulfilling and filling the fullness of the calling of God, as well.

Let’s see the Apostle Paul, what his attitude was toward all of this; how the Apostle Paul looked

at his calling. After he says all the physical things that he could lean upon and say how great he was, he said:

Philippians 3:8: “But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.... And may be found in Him... [that’s where we want to be found, brethren—in ***Christ!***] ...not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law...” (vs 8-9). Oh yes, you can be a law-abiding person without Christ. But you cannot be a spiritually law-abiding person without the righteousness of Christ.

“...but that *righteousness* which *is* by *the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith... [that is the true righteousness—***Christ in you!***] ...**that I may know Him**... [that’s something we really need to know; we need to know Christ.] ...and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving... [that means he presses hard after] ...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (vs 9-12).

Here’s a key overcoming verse—v 13: “Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—forgetting the things that are behind, and **reaching forth to the things that are ahead**.” That ties right back in with Matt. 6:33, ‘seek the Kingdom of God first, and His righteousness; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’

We’ve got enough problems and difficulties day-by-day as they come, so we need to forget those which are behind. You can’t change them; you can’t rework them; you can’t go back and redo them. So don’t spoil the minute today because of what happened yesterday; and do not worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow isn’t here yet. And don’t take today’s problems into tomorrow, just like you should not take yesterday’s problems into today.

Notice what he’s doing—this is how you change and grow and overcome, v 14: “**I press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**” Always pressing toward that. Always moving toward that. Always realizing that

- God is greater
- God is love
- God is merciful
- God is forgiving
- God has given you the righteousness of Christ
- God’s grace is to cover everything that you have in your life

Therefore, you can ‘press toward the mark of the high calling.’ Yes, as we saw, it’s a heavenly calling.

Here is a promise, v 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you.” That’s why God shows you your bad attitudes when they come along, because He’s revealing it to you; that you can repent of it, that you can change and grow and overcome. That is absolutely tremendous when you understand it, brethren.

Let’s go to Romans, the eighth chapter, and here’s something to always remember! Never forget this! This is so profound, this is true, and it is something that you need to make a very part of your being. Romans 8:28: “**And we know**... [it’s what we have to know; it’s what you have to know. Do you know this? Can you say this with the Apostle Paul? Are you convinced in your heart and your mind and soul and being that this is true—that regardless of what it is.] **...that all things**... [and that mean *everything!*] **...work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**” You’re called for the very purpose of God and you are to *make that calling and election sure*.

Let’s go back to 2-Peter 1—because we are not only to make our calling sure, but our *calling and election*. Election then is your response back. God calls you, and you choose back. *You’re elected, you’re selected, you are called!* But you then must elect and choose to respond to God; and this is what becomes very important. Let’s read that again and then we’ll look at a couple of other verses which helps bring out about this *calling* and *election*—or *selection*, as you could put it that way. Your choice involved.

2-Peter 1:10: “For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent... [this means we have to work at it; in the light of everything going on, we’ve got to be more diligent] **...to make your calling and election sure**... [or that is *secure*. Now, how do you do that? He tells us right here in the last part of the verse]: ...because *if* you are doing these things... [What things?] ...you will never stumble at any time.” What things? The things in verses 5, 6 & 7—let’s read those again.

Verse 5: “And for this very reason also, having applied all *your* diligence besides, add [in]to your faith... [and as we learned: *in; put in* your faith] ...virtue; and [in]to virtue, knowledge; and [in]to knowledge, self-control; and [in]to self-control, endurance; and [in]to endurance, Godliness; and [in]to Godliness, brotherly love; and [in]to brotherly love, **the love of God**” (vs 5-7). What does he give to inspire us in this; because this is very

important the way that this is written.

Let’s go back to verses 2, 3 & 4, and let’s go over those again; because this is what we are to be doing. This is our calling; this is our election; this is what we are to make sure. And God is doing this to inspire us because we will never be able to stand the assaults of all the false teachers that he talks about in chapter two unless we’re doing this.

Verse 2: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.... [and that’s what we need to be growing in] ...According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life...” (vs 2-3). We don’t need philosophy; we don’t need the theology of men. And He’s given 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...” (vs 3-4). Brethren, the greatest and most precious and most inspiring promises that God can ever give. To be like God! To see Him face-to-face! That we are going to be.

“...that through these you may become partakers of the Divine nature... [That’s what God has given us with the begetting of His Holy Spirit; and God wants to give us the completion of it. He wants to give us the fullness of it. He wants us to be as He is.] ...having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust” (v 4).

Now, why does He construct this epistle in this manner? Let’s just survey ahead just a little bit and let’s look.

1. **He’s given the promises**: vs 1-4—great and precious promises.
2. **He tells us how we can grow**: vs 5-10—to make sure that we are able then to make our calling and election sure.

So that then: v 11: “For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” That’s what it’s for, that we can enter into the Kingdom of God. And of course, that’s going to be at the resurrection; because we know that the Scriptures tell us that ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.’ ***We must be a spirit being!*** As ‘we have born the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly.’ So we need to have that entrance, brethren. Remember, we read that many will want to enter in, but won’t! They’re going to look to all the things they claim are the good works; and Jesus is going to say, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me who work iniquity.’ But these things give us the guarantees of entering into the eternal kingdom.

Verse 12: “Therefore, I will not neglect to

make you always mindful of these things...” And as we will see next time, he also is going to write them down.

Then he says in v 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 spoke as* having been eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory.”

Then we also have the “...confirmed prophetic Word...” (v 19).

And then vs 20-21 tell us how then the Word of God was put together. We’re going to study that next time. But we need to understand how this is put together—the way and the sequence that it is put together—so that we realize that now when we come down to chapter two, when we get into all the false prophets, when we get into all the things that are going on, and we’re also going to study the Epistle of Jude right along with it side-by-side, because those are parallel.

Then we will be able to understand that the calling of God is so great that no man, no false teacher, no false brethren can possibly take it from us; but we have got to understand and know how we can recognize false teachers and false prophets and false doctrines and different things like that—which then we will cover after we see that the apostles were the ones who canonized the Word of God and this is what he is telling us in the last part of the first chapter of 2-Peter.

- 21) 1-Corinthians 1:23-31
- 22) Matthew 22:1-14
- 23) Ephesians 1:4-5, 13-23
- 24) Philippians 3:8-15
- 25) Romans 8:28
- 26) 2-Peter 1:10, 5-7, 2-4, 11-12, 16, 19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ezek. 40-47
- Rev. 19:7-8
- Matthew 6:33
- 2-Peter 1:20-21
- Jude

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Love series*

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

- ✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author’s translation

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Peter 1:5, 10, 5-7
- 2) 1-Peter 4:8
- 3) Matthew 18:21-22
- 4) John 3:16-17
- 5) 1-Peter 5:13-14
- 6) 2-Corinthians 6:1-12, 14-18
- 7) 1-Timothy 4:12
- 8) 2-Timothy 2:22-23
- 9) 2-Timothy 3:10-13
- 10) Colossians 3:12-14
- 11) 2-Peter 1:8-9
- 12) 2-Peter 2:18-22
- 13) 2-Peter 1:9
- 14) John 9:1-6, 31-41
- 15) 2-Peter 1:10-11
- 16) John 6:44-46
- 17) John 6:65
- 18) John 14:6
- 19) Hebrews 3:1-3, 6
- 20) Hebrews 12:1-8

## Epistle of Second Peter IV

Fred R. Coulter

Today we're going to do 2-Peter 1 (the last half). The study translation is my own way of understanding the Scriptures—study them, translate it. I'm not doing it because I'm trying to set myself up as a greater expert than anybody else. That's not the point. I do it so I can learn the Word of God even more and I can teach you, hopefully, even better. And personally, there's a command in Deuteronomy 17, which says that the king will make a copy of the law for his own personal use and read it all the days of his life.

I've studied sufficiently in Greek to be able to translate it at the level that I'm translating. That doesn't mean that I'm perfect or know everything about it; that certainly is not the case. But there are certain things when you get into the Greek—and I use the Greek from the Berry *Interlinear*. And the reason that I use that one is because that's the text of *Stephens 1550*, which is the text used by the *King James* translators. And I do it because it helps us understand the Word of God, and so we can realize even more what God is telling us. What we have in our hands, with the whole Word of God, is so wonderful and tremendous—and the way that it has been written and preserved for us, actually there are clues of it in the Bible as to how we came to have what we have.

You think about it for a minute. What we have right here in our hands [the Bible] we have coming *from the very day of creation all the way down to us*. This contains information that is absolutely essential for salvation. When we come to 2-Peter, we're going to learn something very important concerning the Word of God; and very important concerning how we got the New Testament.

2-Peter 1:12: "Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although *you already* know them and have been established in the present Truth." One of the things I've done, you will notice that I translate the present tense with 'ing'—especially the participles: 'though you are knowing them'—because it's an ongoing thing that we do.

We'll read clear on down to the end of the chapter and then we will come back and go through some of the verses in little more direct way.

Verse 13: "Now 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*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ *has* also signified to me. Also, I will make every effort *that* after my departure, you may at all times have a *written*

memorial of these things, *so that you may continue* to practice *them* for yourselves. 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 spoke as* having been eyewitnesses of is magnificent glory; because He received glory and honor from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, '**This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased!**'.... [and that is a literal translation of the Greek] ...And this *is the* voice from heaven that *we* heard *when we* were with Him on the Holy mountain. Also, *we* possess the confirmed prophetic Word, to which you do well *to* pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts; Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (vs 13-21).

Notice how that also would then include any of the writers of the New Testament. Let's go back and look at some of this and let's understand some things, which are very important for us to realize.

Verse 13: "Now I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle..." He's talking of himself, of his body. Let's go to 2-Corinthians and let's see how Paul uses this same terminology: 'this tabernacle.' When you fully comprehend and understand that our bodies being this tabernacle has a special significance to God, which it does—because with the Holy Spirit, God is tabernacling with us. We then are likewise tabernacling with Him. There's the full meaning of part of the Feast of Tabernacles. You could build the whole thing of the Feast of Tabernacles about that. Let's see how the Apostle Paul referred to the same thing.

2-Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle [our body] is destroyed... [that's what happens when you die] ...we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven... [That is a *spiritual* house. What did Jesus say? *If I go I will come again. I go and prepare a place for you that where I am you may also be.* All of these things fit in and tie together with these verses.] ...If indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked" (vs 1-3).

If you want an interesting Bible study, study *naked* and *nakedness* through the Bible—New Testament and Old Testament. It's interesting that of having another god before the true God and getting

involved in false religion is called *fornication*—isn't it? or 'porneia' or *adultery*. He says to the Laodiceans that 'you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and *naked*.' So, there is quite a bit to that. So we want to be spiritually clothed and not be found naked.

Verse 4: "For we who are in *this* tabernacle... [that is our body right now] ...truly do groan, being burdened..." I can tell you, yes, that is true. We are burdened; burdened with this society, burdened with troubles and difficulties on every hand; and yet, you read what the Apostle Paul went through and the others went through and we have it very easy.

"...not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon... [then he explains the kind of clothing that it is] ...so that the mortal *flesh* may be swallowed up by life.... [eternal life—a spirit mind, a spirit body, and spirit clothing] ...Now, He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit.... [That's what makes us tabernacling with God!] ...Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in *this* body, we are away from *our eternal* home, *which is coming* from the Lord" (vs 4-6).

In other words, you can be guaranteed that as long as you have this physical body, you're not with Christ; *you're only tabernacling*. In translating the Apostle Paul's writings, you have a great and difficult time. The hardest one I've had to translate is the first chapter of Ephesians. That is almost one long sentence.

"...(For **we walk by faith**, not by sight.)..." (v 7). That's what we need to do, brethren, because of all the difficulties that are coming down in the Church of God today; and let's understand something very important: In the book of Revelation it says of the Laodiceans that 'I'm going to spew you out of My mouth.' And the Greek means *to vomit*. You know, and I know, when you vomit you get the heaves; and you don't vomit everything all at once. The longer that you have these vomiting attacks the worse that the vomit becomes when it comes up.

I think that's what the Church is going through right now. That's why we've got to **walk by faith** and not by sight. And especially, *especially*, that you walk by faith with Christ, keeping your eyes on Him and not on men. We're going to have more casualties and people coming along now who are going to be hurt because they've had their eyes on men and they're going to fall flat on their faces—they just will.

Verse 8: "We are confident, and we are willing to be *away* from *this* home (*that is*, out of *this* body) and instead to be at home with the

Lord.... [Yea, we can say that's true. I would rather not be in this world today the way it is. I would rather be in the Kingdom of God when Christ returns than the way it is right now.] ...Because of this, we are also laboring *so that*, whether present or absent, *we* may be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ... [when He comes, that's when it will be] ...so that each one may receive according to the things *done* in *his* body—what he has practiced, whether good or evil" (vs 8-10).

Now, let's go to 1-Corinthians, the third chapter, because this also talks about the *tabernacle* or the *temple*. If we have the Spirit of God in us, we are the temple of God—and this becomes very important for us to know and realize and understand concerning the Word of God and how things will be, and what is going to happen here.

1-Corinthians 3:16: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is Holy, which temple you are" (vs 16-17). And God is going to take care of it. **God really will take care of it.**

The Apostle Peter and the Apostle Paul were writing concerning this tabernacle. He says, 'exactly as our Lord Jesus also signified to me.' What did He tell them? Let's go to John 21; and what did He tell Peter? Of course, Peter's always political; good ole political Peter.

John 21:18—Jesus told Peter: "'Truly, truly I say to you, since you were young, you have dressed yourself and walked wherever you have desired; but when you are old, you shall stretch out your hands, and another shall dress you and bring *you* where you do not desire *to go*.' Now, He said this to signify by what death he would glorify God...." (vs 18-19).

That, I think, is a kind way of saying that he would be crucified. Remember what happened when they came and they said we want this position or that position or the other position and then Peter and the others got mad and then Jesus looked at all of them and said, 'Can you be baptized with the baptism that I'm about to be baptized with?' And they said, 'Yea, Lord.' He said, 'Yep, you will, you will be baptized with the same baptism.' So, I think this has to do with the crucifixion.

"...after saying this, He said to him, 'Follow Me.' But when Peter turned, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, 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?' Jesus said to him, 'If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you? **You follow Me.**'...."

[I think it's something! You had these three: 'Feed My Lambs, feed My sheep' and then the two 'follow Me'—I think that has a profound meaning in the life of Peter.] ...Then this saying went out among the brethren, that that disciple would not die" (vs 19-23).

Now, let's come back to 2-Peter 1:15: "Also, I will make every effort *that* after my departure, you may at all times have a *written* memorial of these things... [How are you going to have things in remembrance if it's not written? *You can't!* I will show that this means *written remembrance*.] ...so *that you may continue* to practice them for yourselves."

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." *The New King James* says 'monuments.' And the reason is says monuments is because on a monument you have something written—a *written remembrance*. The same Greek word is used by *remembrance* by Peter in 2-Pet. 1; so that's why I translated it *written*—I inserted the word *written*.

Did the disciples know that they were to finish the Scriptures? Let's look at a couple of things first, and what Jesus said. Let's see what Jesus said that He was going to do, and then we'll look at a prophecy to see how He was going to do it. Again, here is a basic Scripture we've gone through many different times.

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" (vs 17-18).

- Did Jesus do things which He did, to fulfill the Scripture? *Yes, there are many places which say: 'and He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled....'*
- How else did He fulfill the Scripture? *He filled it full of meaning* (Matt. 5, 6 & 7) by giving the spiritual application of all the laws and commandments of God.
- How else did He fulfill the Word of God to make it full? *He inspired the writing of the New Testament!* He also gave us the promise that it would be in our own language.

Let's go to Isaiah, the eighth chapter, and see where it was inspired that it was going to be finished by the disciples. We're going to see that they knew what they were doing; that the disciples themselves, in fact, Paul, Peter and John canonized the New Testament before the death of John. see that.

Isaiah 8:11: "For thus the LORD spoke to

me with a strong hand, and warned me against walking in the way of this people, saying, 'Do not say, "A conspiracy!".... [a political alliance; all political alliances are going to collapse] ...to everything of which this people says, "A conspiracy!" And do not fear their fear, nor be afraid. The LORD of hosts, Him shall you sanctify, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be a sanctuary *for you*... [Christ is the only One] ...—but for a Stone of Stumbling, and for a Rock of Offense to both the houses of Israel, and for a trap and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and be snared, and be taken'" (vs 11-15). That is one that the apostles quoted time and time again, about the 'Stone of Stumbling' and the 'Rock of Offense.'

Verse 16: "Bind up the testimony; **seal the Law**... [*finish it*] ...among My disciples"—which He did.

Verse 20: "To the Law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."

Let's see something that is very interesting concerning the Word of God; and then we will see the prophecies of it—the original prophecy in Deut. 30; and then we will see how the Apostle Paul applied it. Mark 13:10: "And the Gospel must first be published among all nations." The old *King James* says *published*; the *New King James* says *preached*. But how can you preach unless you have it? Let's see the original prophecy of this clear back in Deut. 30, and then we will see how the Apostle Paul applied this—and I think it's very interesting. Here's a promise that God gave that He would make His Word available in a language that you and I can understand.

Deuteronomy 30:11: "For this commandment which I command you today *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, 'Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?'" (vs 11-12). Can you imagine the money-raising that would go on to raise the money to build a rocket to go to some planet somewhere so they could get the Word of God? So they could find out how to have eternal life? My you could have a project doing that! It's not there, no!

Verse 13: "Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, 'Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?'" We have lot of people doing that today—don't we? They're running over to Tibet; they're seeing the Dalai Lama. They're seeing other ones. What were all the *rock stars* doing in the '60s? They were running over to India to see their Indian guru and the Maharishi 'Mooheehaha' and try and find out: What

was the secret of life? The other night on Discovery Channel I was watching this special on the Buddhist religion. And it showed the Dalai Lama doing this special mass—whatever they do—they do it every 20-25 years or whatever, and then afterward the commentator was saying this was to help them to be perfected into the divine person—whether in this life or reincarnation. So then, afterward they were asking this expert, ‘Do you think there is anyone on earth that has reached that?’ and he said, ‘Well, we can’t ever say that it isn’t possible; but somewhere, somehow there must be one.’ **Yes, my friend, Christ! He was the One!**

Now then, God gives a promise, v 14: “But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it.” This is a prophecy that it would be in a language you could understand—that’s what it’s telling us. Is the Bible in a language that everyone understands—today and in the world? **Yes! Absolutely, yes!** The whole Bible is in nearly 300 languages and the New Testament over 1400, and the book of Mark in 2100 languages—that’s according to the American Bible Society.

Let’s see how Paul applied this. Who is the Word? **Christ!** Notice how he applies this in Romans 10:5: “For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the law, ‘The man who has practiced those things shall live by them.’ But the righteousness that *comes through* faith speaks after this manner: ‘Do not say in your heart, “Who shall ascend up to heaven?”’ .... [then he gives his own interpretation]: ... (that is, to bring Christ down)... [Christ is the living Word] ... ‘Or, “Who shall descend into the abyss?”’ (that is, to bring Christ up from among *the* dead.).... [He’s already risen. You want to know the whole truth about God and your purpose here, *it’s in Christ*—that’s what he’s saying.] ... But what does it say? ‘The word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart’ This is the word of faith that we are proclaiming...” (vs 5-8)—and they had it in their language in their day—correct? **Yes!**

We’re going to see they also had another mission. They had some things that they needed to do. They needed to write. They needed to make sure that what was written then would be preserved.

2-Peter 3:15: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, also wrote to you.” We’re talking about writing. We’re going focus in on the determined writing of the New Testament by Peter, by Paul, by John—and subsequent to that, Luke.

Verse 16: “Also, as in all his epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand,

which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* *distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.” Let’s notice something here that’s very important. He’s equating the writings of the Apostle Paul to Scripture—*calling it Scripture*. Did they know what they were writing? *Obviously, they did!*@

Jude 1:3: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence **to write** to you concerning the common salvation, I was **compelled to write** to you, exhorting *you*...” There it is, it is written.

Now then, let’s see that there was kind of a change in the approach by the Apostle Peter. Here he’s saying that these things are equated with Scripture, and we’ll look and see what Paul has to say about that in just a minute; but in 1-Peter, the fourth chapter, we find something very interesting concerning what Peter was writing at that time vs what he wrote in 2-Peter, the third chapter.

Let’s see what he wrote concerning the times in which they were living. 1-Peter 4:7: “Now the end of all things has drawn near. Therefore, be serious minded and be watchful in prayers.... [v 12]: ...Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you, *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing were happening to you.... [v 17]: ...For the time *has come* for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it first *begins* with us, what *will be* the end of those who are not obeying the Gospel of God?”

2-Peter 3:8: “Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you; that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day....” [It’s delayed; but not according to God.] ...The Lord is not delaying the promise *of His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, *He* is long-suffering toward us...” In other words he’s saying: *God is not done with His plan; don’t think He’s delaying it—it’s on time*. But it’s not going to be now.

Verse 18: “Rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....” Combine that with what we just read, that ‘I want you to always have these things in remembrance after my departure.’ And ‘departure’ comes from the Greek, which means *exodus*. So, if you say you’re going to exit the scene and die that is a true Scriptural way of putting it.

Let’s see what Jesus said that He was going to do. Notice that we read how that the Holy Spirit inspired those to write; inspired those to speak. Let’s see what it was going to inspire and let’s look at some of the things that Jesus said would happen.

John 14:26: “But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall teach you all things, and shall

bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you.”

He’s going to inspire; remind, and that still applies today, brethren. I think we’re going to see if we really yield to God and we ask God to open our minds to understand His Word and Truth even more—not that we can exalt ourselves in any way, because it all comes from God—but so that we can understand what God is teaching us. Is the Holy Spirit capable of helping us put together the Scriptures in the way that God wants them to be put together and for us to understand things that we haven’t understood before? *Yes! Yes!* God’s Spirit will do it, not only in what is taught but in what we study. And God will open up our mind. I know I’ve experienced, at times, when I’ve gone along and it’s just been almost like a light is turned on—PING! Why I never thought of that before. And it will happen just that way.

Now, let’s see another promise: John 16:12—Jesus said: “I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now.... [So He was going to inspire it later.] ...However, when that one... [in the Greek—‘ekeinos’] ...has come, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth... [The Holy Spirit is able to do that today, brethren. That’s what we need; that we can be inspired of God’s Spirit.] ...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. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you” (vs 12-15). It’s going to reveal more about Christ and His plan. That’s something we need to know and understand.

Now let’s look at the Apostle Paul and some of the things that he wrote. Let’s see that the Apostle Paul knew that he was going to help fulfill—or fill full—the Word of God. Colossians 1:24: “Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you... [He’s talking about himself, a minister, that he was going to rejoice in the sufferings for them] ...and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the Church; of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given to me for you *in order* to **complete**... [bring to the full] ...the Word of God” (vs 24-25).

- Why do we have 14 Epistles of Paul?
  - plus Luke and Acts?
- which were written under his aegis by Luke.
- How did he view what he wrote?
  - Did he know what he was doing?
  - Did he know?
  - Did the Apostle Paul know what he was doing?

1-Corinthians 14:37: “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual... [We have a lot of people who think they are, today—don’t we?] (I think there are preachers and prophets and spiritual): ...let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are... [just my own ideas—NO!] ...**commandments of the Lord**.” He *knew* he was fulfilling the prophecy of Isa. 8. These are the **commands of the Lord**. That’s something! I mean, you really need to think on that!

Let’s look at some evidence of editing. In translating the book of Romans, I can see that he edited and inserted some things to clarify Rom. 5; because there are some repetitions there that can only be accounted for by that. But let’s notice that it’s evident that he edited these three times:

Romans 15:33: “Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.” *Amen* concludes something. Then later he said, ‘Okay, I need to remember all of these people’—so he commends all of them, going all the way down: Rom. 16 all the way down through.

Romans 16:17: “Now I exhort you, brethren, to take note of those who are causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and shun them; because these are the sort who are not serving our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and are deceiving the hearts of the innocent by smooth talking and flattery” (vs 17-18). That’s happening today.

Verse 24: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with all of you. Amen.... [He wasn’t quite done again, so he adds this other section to it]: ...Now, to Him who has the power to establish you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery... [Which then, this had to be inserted after Ephesians was completed—right? Because Ephesians talks about *the mystery of God*.] ...that in past ages has been kept secret; but now *is* made manifest, and by *the* prophetic scriptures, according to *the* commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations unto *the* obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, *be* the glory into the ages of *eternity*. Amen” (vs 24-27). So we have three *Amens*! It shows some editing here.

Now let’s look at some other things concerning the writing of the Scriptures. Let’s come to 2-Timothy, the fourth chapter, and we’re going to see some things here. We’ll also look at the third chapter, because there’s something for us there that’s important for us to realize. The fourth chapter talks about right at the end of his life.

2-Timothy 4:8: “From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that

day—and not to me only, but also to all who love His appearing. Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present age, and has gone to Thessalonica; Crescens, to Galatia; Titus, to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me.... [Remember, Luke wrote the book of Luke and the book of Acts.] ...Get Mark *and* bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for *the ministry of the Word*" (vs 8-11).

After Mark left Paul because of a feudality—Mark was considered by Paul not really diligent—there was an argument between Paul and Barnabas so Barnabas took Mark. Later we find in 1-Peter 5:13, we find that Mark is with Peter. And Mark is an assistant to Peter. "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, *as does* Mark, my son." That's the same Mark. They just, at that particular point gave the transliterated Greek spelling: Markus.

Let's notice what he is to bring. He is to bring something very specific—several things. 2-Timothy 4:11: "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark *and* bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for *the ministry of the Word*.... [Why? *Because he was going to help assist in getting the written copulation of the Word of God together.*] ...But I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the chest that I left in Troas with Carpus, and the books—especially the parchments" (vs 11-13).

The cloak here is not a coat. This cloak is a *special covering* in which you would put scrolls. So, he's saying bring him that and bring the parchments. Why? *Because he had some more to write!* He wanted to write. He knew that it had to be done. He knew that he had to fulfill the Word of God. In the light of that, let's look at a couple of other things that Paul has written, in light of the fact that he said, 'The things which I write to you are the commandments of God.'

2-Timothy 3:12: "And indeed, everyone who desires to live Godly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted. But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*.... [watch the nightly news] ...But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus" (vs 12-15). That obviously includes the Old Testament. But, does it exclude the New? I mean, we need to think on that! Especially in the light of:

Verse 16: "All Scripture..." If Paul said 'the things I wrote are the commandments of God' is that not part of Scripture? Did not Peter say that the

Epistles of Paul were Scripture? He says 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' Did God inspire Paul? Did God inspire Matthew? Did God inspire Mark and Luke and John? Did God inspire Peter? *Yes!*

Verse 16: "**All Scripture** *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Now let's look at something else concerning some of these things. Let's ask some questions concerning writing; what they wrote. Let's go back to the book of Luke—let's look there first of all. How many here have important contracts that they have signed? *We all have*—whether it's a house or a car or a piece of equipment or something. Why do they have it in writing? *To specify the terms and condition of the contract!* Is that not correct? *Yes!* That's why God had the New Testament written, so that this covenant would be written so we know the terms and the conditions of the covenant—the same thing. If God did not have it written, how should He judge the world? They could say, 'Well it wasn't here, Lord, You didn't send it from heaven. Lord, I didn't live where there were Bibles.' Hardly any place that you can go where there are not Bibles.

Luke 1:1: "Since many have taken in hand to compile a *written* narration of the matters which have been fully believed among us." Many were doing things, taking in hand, they were writing it down.

(go to the next track)

Verse 2: "As they delivered *them* to us, those who from *the* beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word." What happens when you have stories that are told? If they're told and retold and retold and retold by voice, they can be twisted and distorted and added to and taken away from—can they not? *Yes!*

Verse 3: "It seemed good to me also, having accurately understood everything from the very first, **to write these things** in an orderly sequence to you... [that is the events that came about] ...most excellent Theophilus, so that **you might know** the *absolute* certainty of *the* things in which you have been instructed." So, this was deliberately written; deliberately put together—just like the book of Acts—deliberately written, an accounting. Why write it if they didn't know it was going to be passed on? *They knew it was!*

Acts 1:1: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach." Then he says he's going to set forth what the apostles did—which he did.

Let's see that the Apostle Paul knew that writing would clarify and set things in order, 2-

Corinthians 13:2: “I have previously told *you*, and I am telling you in advance the second time, as though I were present; but since I am absent now, **I am writing** to those... [because they didn’t listen when he was there and spoke to them; told them verbally. It’s just like with your children: *shut the door; shut the door; pick up your room, pick up your room*—sooner or later you have them together and put a big sign] ...who have continued to sin until now—and to all the rest—that if I come again, I will not spare.”

Verse 10: “For this cause, **I am writing** these things to you while I am absent...” That’s very important.

Let me just tell you this: If you want a good Bible study, go through the New Testament; get out your handy-dandy concordance and look up *write*, *wrote* and *written*—see how important that that became. We’ll look at just a few of them, because there are many more than what I’m going to cover here.

Galatians 1:20 “Now the things that **I am writing** to you... [Which then is everything in Galatians, and Galatians is a pretty heavy book. And he’s castigating the Apostle Peter.] ...behold, before God, **I am not lying**.” So writing it’s very important.

Philippians 3:1: “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in *the* Lord. Indeed, for me **to write** the same things to you *is* not troublesome, but for you *it is* safe.” He knew about writing. Had to be written. He understood it. Very profound!

We’ve covered what Peter was doing; what Paul was doing; now let’s look and see what John was doing, John 20:30: “Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not **written** in this book. But **these have been written, so that you may believe**... [in other words, this was a purposefully written copulation of those important things relating to the belief] ...that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name” (vs 30-31).

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**.” We’re just showing the internal evidence that we have in here in John.

Let’s go to 1-John, the first chapter—we’re going to see something very, very significant; probably overlooked by almost everyone as they go through 1-John, and I imagine that you may have overlooked it when you first read it. We’re going to see something very important. Again, **we**—this ties in with what Peter said.

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... [*gazed upon intently to understand*] ...and **our** own hands handled, concerning the Word of life; (and the life was manifested, and **we** have seen, and are bearing witness, and are **reporting to you** the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to **us**;) that which **we** have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with **us**; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ. These things **we** are also **writing to you**, so that your joy may be completely full” (vs 1-4).

1-John 2:1—this shows and editing in chapter one; look at chapter two: “My little children, **I am writing** these things to you so that you may not sin...” It changes—doesn’t it? *Yes!*

- Verse 7: “Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment...”
- Verse 12: “I am writing to you, little children...”
- Verse 13: “I am writing to you, fathers... I am writing to you, young men... I am writing to you, little children”
- Verse 14: “I wrote to you, fathers... I wrote to you, young men...”

All the way through they knew what they were doing in writing. They understood it. Without a doubt, there can be absolutely no doubt whatsoever.

Now, let’s come to Revelation the first chapter. Very interesting! Very profound! And there are some good messages—very, very good messages for us—that we have in the book of Revelation concerning writing.

Revelation 1:1: “*The* revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly; and He made *it* known, having sent *it* by His angel to His servant 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... [In other words, this introduction was put on after he wrote the book—as an introduction.] ...and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things that *are* **written** therein; for the time *is* at hand” (vs 1-3).

Verse 11: “Saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last”; and, “What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia...” When you read that, brethren, and you see what’s going on in the Churches today, **trust the Word of God**—we are going to have **no excuse!** We can’t say, ‘Lord, we didn’t have it.’ He’s going

to say, ‘Yea, I made sure you did.’

Verse 17: “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the one Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death. **Write the things that you saw**, and the things that are, and the things that shall take place hereafter” (vs 17-19). Then He gives the explanation of the seven stars and the seven angels—seven candlesticks. Let’s look at what He says to every one of the Churches:

Revelation 2:1: “‘To the angel of the Ephesian church, **write**...”

- v 8: “And to the angel of the church of the Smyrneans **write**...”
- v 12: “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos, **write**...”
- v 18: “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira **write**...”

Revelation 3:1: “And to the angel of the church in Sardis, **write**...”

- v 7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, **write**...”
- v 14: “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, **write**...”

I mean, does that not send and impact? *Yes, it does; it really does!* He wants us to know something, and we’re going to see in closing up the whole Bible, what the Apostle John was inspired to **write**.

Revelation 21:5: “And He Who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” Then He said to me, ‘**Write**... [I don’t want to sound like a broken record, but it’s there—isn’t it? *Yes!*] ...for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.... [That ties up the whole Bible—does it not? *Yes, it does—has to!*] ...To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life” (vs 5-6).

Let’s see how powerful that these words are—we’re going to be judged by them, 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.” That can also include all the plagues of Deut. 28; all the things that are in the whole Bible.

Verse 19: “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...” That’s the second death; that’s how important these things are. If you don’t believe how important they are, then you go back and you re-study the lesson that we

did: *Sin Unto Death*. We’re going to see that there are probably a whole lot more people committing the ‘sin unto death’—doctrinally—and teaching people the wrong way than perhaps maybe we have supposed. In order to prevent them from doing that, there’s going to be some more vomiting of the Church by Christ. Because if not, then he’s going to take away their part from the book of Life where our names are to be what? *Written!*

“...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 19-21).

Who do you suppose the **we** could have been in 1-John? *Maybe some of the apostles who were still alive! Maybe even Jude was still living at that time—we don’t know. Maybe he died. But here he ends the whole Bible, v 21: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” That’s something the way that this has been written.*

As we understand that, let’s realize that there are some very important things for us to also realize. Let’s come back to 2-Peter the first chapter, and let’s understand that before we get to chapter two, with all the false teachers, and all the heresies—and we’re going to cover that and we’re going to spend some time on it and we’re going to, in this particular case like the Apostle Paul did, name a couple of names that are important to be named—when we get there.

First we have to go through and build, so we understand what’s going on. To build, to come to that point, what did the Apostle Peter write about? *He wrote about the Truth of the Word of God, in inspiration of the Word of God, the power of the Word of God—the power of the Word of God!* The only way can handle the reality of heresies and false prophets and men who have deceived and lied to the brethren is to understand the veracity of the Word of God; because then we will know that it was not God who was doing it; **but men**. When we understand that we’re not going to fall. We can pray for every one of them; that they may change; that they may repent. That’s what God wants them to do. But in the meantime, we can’t let this thing go to destroy any more of the brethren. Somewhere it’s got to stop. (When we come to chapter two we’ll cover some of that.)

Let’s come back to 2-Peter 1:15: “Also, I will make every effort *that* after my departure, you may at all times have a **written** memorial of these things, *so that you may continue* to practice *them* for yourselves.... [Now, it’s very interesting.] ...For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*... [What are ‘cleverly concocted myths’? *Pagan religions—about Nimrod and Simaramis—philosophy, the nature of God, etc.!* Those are

‘cleverly concocted myths.>] ...when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but *we spoke as* having been eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory” (vs 15-16). They saw it in the vision. They saw it two ways:

1. The transfiguration on the mount
2. After His resurrection

You can read the accounts of it at the end of the Gospels, but I particularly want to read 1-Cor. 15 because this will help tie several things together in relationship to the Scripture and the Word of God and the seeing of Christ and so forth.

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... [That is including all the Old Testament—correct?] ...and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures... [That is New Testament Scripture. That’s why he says it twice: one for Old Testament; one for New Testament.] ...and that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve. Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time... [That’s a big group, and they all saw Him. We don’t know how much glory was able to manifest to them, that they could take it.] ...of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen sleep. Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage” (vs 3-8).

So, when Peter is writing here and telling everyone that they’re basing this upon the eyewitness; they saw Him. We just read where John said ‘Our hands have handled; our eyes have gazed upon.’ So he’s talking about the same thing here.

1-Peter 5:1: “The elders who are among you I am exhorting, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed... [there again, confirming that glory that he saw] ...Feed the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude*” (vs 1-2). They continually go back to this ‘eyewitness of His magnificent glory.’

Now let’s come back to 2-Peter 1:17: “Because He received glory and honor from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased!’”

Now, let’s go to 1-John, the fifth chapter—we’ve covered 1-John 3 here just a bit ago—and let’s understand something and that is: Can we do the things that please God? *Well, if Christ is in us, yes, we can! We can!* And here’s what John said about it.

1-John 5:13—again, *written*: “These things **I have written to you** who believe in the name of the Son of God in order **that you may know**... [He wants us to know.] ...that you have eternal life, 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. 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” (vs 13-15).

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**.” So yes, we can do those things. And where it can be said the same of us, ‘You are My Son, the Beloved.’

Now, let’s come back to 2-Peter 1:18—to know and understand why he emphasizes that the Word of God so tremendously before he gets into about the false prophets. “And this *is the* voice from heaven that we heard *when we* were with Him on the Holy mountain. Also, we possess the confirmed prophetic Word... [The *confirmed prophetic Word* has got to be not only the Old Testament, but the New Testament.] ...to which you do well *to* pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place... [Jesus is the Light, the Light of the world; it’s shining in the world; the darkness does not overcome it.] ...until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts...” (vs 18-19). Why does he say *star*?

Jesus said something about the Kingdom of God and those who are in it, and the starts of heaven. Here Peter is talking about it in a little different way. Matthew 13:43: “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father...” [Now, that’s a star—‘till the day star rises in your hearts.’ In other words, until you are resurrected as a spirit being in full glory.

2-Peter 1:20: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of anyone’s own *private* interpretation.” That applies to the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is ‘precept upon precept; line upon line; hear a little, there a little.’ Also we have that Christ opened the minds of the apostles to understand the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms; and also we have concerning what we read—Peter was writing about the writings of the Apostle Paul. He said, ‘Of no private interpretation.’ In other words it’s got to come from the Word of God put together.

Verse 21: “Because prophecy was not brought at any time... [It says in the *King James* ‘old time’ but it really means *anytime*.] ...by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

Let's see Peter's example of that. Did Peter speak as he was moved by the Holy Spirit? *Without a doubt! Without a doubt!* The whole account on the day of Pentecost, it says:

Acts 2:2: "[After the] ...sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind... [v 4]: ...they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit... [v 14]: ...Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them..." Did God inspire him? *Yes, through all the rest of the chapter we have summary of his sermon.* And he spoke about Christ; resurrection from the dead. He preached so intently that 3,000 repented that very day and were baptized. That's how the Word of God comes. *That which is spoken and later written!*

I also know this from just my own experience in writing, that first I study on something and then I speak on it, and then I speak on it sometime again later, and then I think on it more, and then I begin to write about it. When I begin to write about it, I start getting my thoughts clarified and get it down. That's the same way that God inspired the New Testament to come about—that He inspired them to preach; then inspired them to write; then inspired them bring it together and now we have what the apostles did for us: *the whole Bible*.

It's not possible, as is brought out in the book, *The Original Bible Restored*, which I didn't read from. It is not possible that God left it to those philosophers and ex-pagan priests who came into the Orthodox and Catholic Church—*He did not* leave it to them to write the Scriptures. *He did not* leave it to them to compile the Scriptures. Any writings that you find about the copulation of the Bible, they only list the 27 books of the New Testament as already having authority by the time they get around to doing it. And here's a good example of what they would have done: *The New Testament and Psalms, the Inclusive Version*.

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

✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author's translation

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Peter 1:12-21, 13
- 2) 2-Corinthians 5:1-10
- 3) 1-Corinthians 3:16-17
- 4) John 21:18-23
- 5) 2-Peter 1:15
- 6) Matthew 23:29
- 7) Matthew 5:17-18
- 8) Isaiah 8:11-16, 20
- 9) Mark 13:10
- 10) Deuteronomy 30:11-14
- 11) Romans 10:5-8

- 12) 2-Peter 3:15-16
- 13) Jude 1:3
- 14) 1-Peter 4:7, 12, 17
- 15) 2-Peter 3:8, 18
- 16) John 14:26
- 17) John 16:12-15
- 18) Colossians 1:24-25
- 19) 1-Corinthians 14:37
- 20) Romans 15:33
- 21) Romans 16:17-18, 24-27
- 22) 2-Timothy 4:8-11
- 23) 1-Peter 5:13
- 24) 2-Timothy 4:11-13
- 25) 2-Timothy 3:12-16
- 26) Luke 1:1-4
- 27) Acts 1:1
- 28) 2-Corinthians 13:2, 10
- 29) Galatians 1:20
- 30) Philippians 3:1
- 31) John 20:30-31
- 32) John 21:25
- 33) 1-John 1:1-4
- 34) 1-John 2:1, 7, 13-14
- 35) Revelation 1:1-3, 11, 17-19
- 36) Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18
- 37) Revelation 3:1, 7, 14
- 38) Revelation 21:5-6
- 39) Revelation 22:18-21
- 40) 2-Peter 1:15-16
- 41) 1 Corinthians 15:3-8
- 42) 1-Peter 5:1-2
- 43) 2-Peter 1:17
- 44) 1-John 5:13-15
- 45) 1-John 3:22
- 46) 2-Peter 1:18-19
- 47) Matthew 13:43
- 48) 2-Peter 1:20-21
- 49) Acts 2:2, 4, 14

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Deuteronomy 17
- Matthew 5, 6, 7
- Romans 5
- Deuteronomy 28

#### Also referenced:

Sermon: *Sin Unto Death*

#### Books:

- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *The Original Bible Restored* by Ernest Martin
- *The New Testament and Psalms, the Inclusive Version*

## Epistle of Second Peter & Jude V

Fred R. Coulter

This Sabbath is going to be a keynote Sabbath; we're going to cover some things that are going to be very shocking. We are going to cover some things leading into 2-Peter and Jude; and this series is just happening to fall right at the time when these things are very important and are taking place. First of all, let's look at some Scriptures and then we will get into get into 2-Peter, and then we will get into what is happening in the Churches of God today.

Let's go to 2-Timothy 3:13—here's an absolutely key important verse to understand, because we are living in a time when there is going to be more deception; there are going to be more lies; there are going to be more double-speaking than ever before; and we are going to have to be responsible to understand the Truth from the error and separate out the error *weaved* within the Truth. We're also going to see that what has happened in the Churches of God recently *was planned with foreknowledge, with forethought and with deception!*

2-Timothy 3:13: "But wicked men and imposters... ['seducers' (KJV)—those who come along to entice you with smooth sayings. Seducers are those that come along and deceive.] ...shall become worse and worse... [We could also put in there: bold and more bold] ...deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*...." Then notice he tells Timothy what he has to do to avoid that. He points right to the Scriptures—does he not? *Yes!* There is a Scripture in Rev. 12:9 that says that the devil is actively 'deceiving the whole world.' And he's doing this with power and in a profound way; and it is affecting the Churches of God.

We're going to see how important and profound this is. I think, brethren, many times in the past we would go and we would read a Scripture, or we would give something, and we'd say 'yes, yes, yes'—we'd all shake our head in agreement; but I don't think we understand the absolute deep and profound things which are taking place in the world that are affecting the Church of God directly and on the inside of it, too.

Revelation 17:5—of the woman who's riding the beast: "And across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." I have a book that I'm reading, it is called *All Roads Lead to Rome?* (the Overturning of the Reformation). While I concentrated quite a bit here recently concerning the Zionist's deception, there is also the Catholic backlash—and watch out, it is

going to come and it is going to be awesome! I'll get into that a little bit later. It is not only the 'mother' at Rome, but it is all of her daughters and they all came out of Babylon. One of the great identifying factors of it, as we have said, is any form of the trinity—be it one God with three manifestations or three who are one. Any form or any variation of that you need to be aware of. Even Judaism takes the letters YHWH:

- Y—the Father
- H—the mother
- V—the Son
- H—they're all one

—the three in one. And that is in mystic Judaism. So watch for that sign because it's very, very important; it's something that we truly really need to understand.

Let's go to Matthew 24 and let's see something that's important for us to understand and realize and see that's taking place. One of the first things that Jesus said when they wanted to know what was going to take place at the end of the age. Now, if we're not living in the end of the age, then I don't know... We surely are. How long is it going to be 'til the end I don't know, but I do know this: It's going to take every bit of what we can do to keep up with what's going on. So, they [the disciples] wanted to know when these things would be (Matt. 24:4).

Matthew 24:5: "Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Be on guard... [watch out, be alert, beware, be looking out] ...so that no one deceives you. For many... [not just a few] ...shall come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ"; and they shall deceive many."

Verse 24: ...For there shall arise false Christs... ['pseudochrists'—'pseudo' means *a fake or a replacement or put before*] ...and false prophets... [How do they convince you of their authority? even though you know they're lying?] ...and they shall present great signs and wonders... [Seeing is believing; but not everything you see is the Truth; please understand that. Magicians know that very well—that the hand is quicker than the eye.] (Here's a warning to us; that's why it's going to impact on us, and I don't think we realize the impacting that has happened): ...in order **to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**"

Matthew 7—here's what Jesus said. Here's one of the ways we can know. And then we're going to look at some different things concerning false prophets. We're going to look at some different things on what kind of false prophets there are, and

so forth.

Matthew 7:12—this leads into it: “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

- Do you want people to show you who the real God is? *Yes!*
- Do you want them to give you the true information of God? *Yes!*
- Do you want them to show you the proper day to worship on? *Yes!*

You surely don’t want them to murder and kill and commit adultery and all those things; and lie and cheat and steal. Then notice what He says. He starts right out from there to going into ‘beware of false prophets.’

Verse 13: “Enter in through the narrow gate... [*difficult*] ...for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; for **narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it**” (vs 13-14). So, if many are deceived in the name of Jesus Christ, then using the name of Jesus Christ is one of the tools they will use—correct? *Yes!* The ones who will truly find life will be *few*.

Verse 15: “But **beware**... [The whole New Testament is filled with warnings like these: ***be on your guard, watch out, be diligent!***] ...of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire” (vs 15-19). We’re going to see that some chopping has been going on. We’re going to see that they’re getting ‘stubble ready for the fire.’

Verse 21: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven...” These are the ones of the ‘many’ who are the ‘false prophets in sheep’s clothing’ that came bringing the wrong way in the name of Christ. And they were doing many things—weren’t they? They shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

“...but the one who is **doing** the will of My Father... [I want you to note the word *doing*. That comes from the Greek word we covered earlier—‘poieo’—which means *practicing to do; to execute; to perform; to follow*.] ....Who *is* in heaven. **Many**... [many for the broad way; many false prophets; ‘many coming in My name’] ...will say to

Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?....’” (vs 21-22). Whoa! ‘Look how many programs *I* have done. Look how many articles *I* have written. Look at how many books *I* have done. Look at all the people that followed *me*. Look at all the money *I* raised for You, Lord. Look at all the property *we* bought in Your name, Lord.’

“...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....** [You might make note: go back and re-study all the Epistles of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, because the whole key is to know Christ, to know God, to know what you’re doing, to understand.] ...Depart from Me, you who work [iniquity] **lawlessness**” (vs 22-23)—‘anomia’—which means *against law*. That’s why commandment-keeping is so very important.

Deuteronomy 12:29: “When the LORD your God shall cut off the nations before you, where you go to possess them, and you take their place and dwell in their land, **take heed** ... [another *watch out*. Sometime if you’re real bored in Bible study, go look up all the words *beware, take heed, watch out, look, behold*—all of those, all have the meaning.] ...to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?’.... [We know that includes all the pagan practices of Christmas and Easter—correct? *Yes!* You can go back and read *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop. I assume you’ve read it and you know it. If you don’t, then go do it.] ...**You shall not do so...**” (vs 29-31).

Is that not as strong as any other command of God? *Yes!* It’s as strong as any other command of God!

- **You shall NOT** have any other God’s before Me.
- **You shall NOT** make unto yourself any graven image of any likeness of anything that’s in heaven above, the earth beneath or water under the earth.
- **You shall NOT** bow yourselves down to worship and serve them.
- **For I the Lord your God am a jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers unto the children of the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me! And bless those unto a thousand generations that love Me and keep My commandments.

That’s the full first and second commandment, brethren. This carries the same weight. This is an expansion of those two commandments.

Verse 31: “You shall not do so to the

LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates.... [It's an active *hating* that God has toward those things.] ... they have done to their gods... [then He mentions the worst]: ...even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods." When you're done doing that then you eat them, because that is the sacrifice to the gods; if you don't then priests do. That's why the priests of Baal are called *canni-bals*—because they ate human flesh.

Verse 32: Whatsoever thing that I command you, **be careful to do it**. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it." What was the last warning of John? *You shall not add to or take away from!* Correct? *Yes!* Same warning here.

Now, then let's come to 2-Peter, the first chapter. What I want you to do, I want you to read this straight through. I was absolutely dumbfounded when I did this, brethren! I did not do this until I was preparing the study printout for everyone. I was going to put them side-by-side in columns, but then when I did it this way, I found out that they run in sequence, and Jude puts in things that Peter doesn't, and Peter puts in things that Jude doesn't—and it is astonishing! Let's read Jude first and I have 2-Peter coming right after that.

Jude 1: "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the called *saints*... [that means the *ones that have been called*—and you are saints] ...sanctified... [who have been loved] ...by God the Father and kept in Jesus Christ: Mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to *ferently* **fight for the faith**... [that's what we need to do] ...which once *for all time* has been delivered to the saints. For certain men have stealthily crept in... [they snuck in; men came in deliberately, with malice and with forethought.] ...these are the ones who a long time ago have been written about *condemning them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are distorting the grace of our God into licentiousness, and are denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-4). Those are pretty powerful words!

Notice what Peter writes, and how these two go right together, 2-Peter 2:1: "But there were also false prophets among the people, **as indeed there will be false teachers among you**, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies... [Bringing in teachings from outside!] ...personally denying the Lord Who bought them... [That means they were covered with the blood of Christ at one time] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed" (vs 1-2).

I heard a minister in Worldwide Church of God (the tape was sent to me) who said: 'This coming Feast of Unleavened Bread, now we don't have to keep these because it's not commanded. But we're going to do it as our tradition. If you want to eat unleavened bread, that's all right. If you want to eat leavened bread, that's all right. You're perfectly at liberty to do so.' Now, I want you to key on a couple of words: *that's all right; that's okay*—it goes right back to the New Age book *I'm Okay, Your Okay*, and is part of the one-world religious philosophy of bringing all religions together.

Several years ago I originally made the statement in jest, but I'm seeing that it is actually true. When I said that Job #2, which is: 'One day the sons of God came before the Lord and Satan was among them. And the Lord said to Satan, *You see My servant Herbert Armstrong how he's repenting of all the evil that you are leading him to do.* (and he was being led to do a great deal, brethren, but he did repent) And Satan says, 'Yeah, You turn the Church into my hands and in ten years I will make it a New Age Church.' Brethren, ***it has happened in a most profound, planned and determined way!*** I'll show you that in a little bit.

"...the way of the Truth, will be blasphemed" (v 2). 'Sabbath is not required. However, it is *our tradition*. And if you would like to keep the Sabbath, we're going to meet here on such-and-such a day. However, it's perfectly all right if you worship on Sunday. We have said in the past that Christmas was wrong. However it's perfectly all right if you keep Christmas"—and on and on! That's what they are doing.

Verse 3: "Also, through insatiable greed they will *with* enticing messages exploit you for gain... [with enticing messages] ...for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever*-watching .

Let's begin to tie a little of this together to see exactly what has been happening. There are many different types of false prophets; and there are many different variations of true prophets or teachers (we'll get to that a little later on).

Deuteronomy 13:1: "If a prophet rises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder which he foretold to you comes to pass, saying, 'Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them'. [that's exactly what's being done today] ...you shall not hearken to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God *is* testing you..." (vs 1-3)—and that's what's upon the House of God, right today!

Let's go to 1-Peter, the fourth chapter, for

just a minute, so that we may understand what Peter was telling us what was happening in his day, that we may understand what is happening today; that we may not only see and understand the miserable corruption that has been going on, but we can understand why it has been happening and whence it has come from. This is during his day and this is a prophecy for our day, so that you understand what's happening in the Church of God today.

1-Peter 4:17: “For the time *has come* **for judgment to begin with the household of God...** [and judgment is upon the Church of God today!] ...and if it first *begins* with us, what *will be* the end of those who are not obeying the Gospel of God? And if the righteous are being saved with much difficulty, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” (vs 17-18).

So, there's a testing; there is a judging. Are you so convicted and converted in your way of God that you can tell Truth from error; that you can see what the difference is between cunningly devised fables. And isn't that what Peter just said before this? *He said, 'Look, we haven't followed cunningly devised fables'* of which hypostasis and the nature of God is a cunningly devised fable.

Deuteronomy 13:3: “...for the LORD your God *is* testing you to know whether... [how many times have I said this]: ...you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” That's what it's about, brethren. If there's anyone who just wants to be a better person in the world, you're in the wrong place! *Because the world is going to hate us!* That's going to mount even more and more; and I will read you a declaration of war against the Church of God, right out of the mouths of one of the conspirators who helped take down Worldwide from the inside!

God wants you to know this! Love is a choice! Love is something you choose to do! And love is not conditional. ‘Lord, I'll love You if You bless me.’ That's a condition. Love is not conditional. ‘Oh, Lord, I will love You if just do this for me, or do that for me. And if You don't do this, I won't love You.’ That's a reciprocal of that. Your loving God has to be complete—absolutely nothing in between! That's why, brethren, the wrong structure of church organization—I won't call it church government because that is a misnomer—which cuts off that love between you and God has been so detrimental to the Church of God.

Verse 4: “You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice... [How many times have we come across that phrase? ***Obey His voice!***] ...and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he has spoken to turn

*you* against the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slaves, to thrust you out of the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put the evil away from the midst of you. If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your friend who *is* like your own soul, lures you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods’—which you have not known, you nor your fathers, that is, of the gods of the people who *are* around you, near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth—” (vs 4-7).

That's pretty all inclusive—isn't it? *I would say so!* And this is exactly the same One Who became Jesus Christ Who said: ***'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.'*** We need to really grasp that.

Verse 8: “You shall not consent to him nor hearken to him. Nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare, nor shall you conceal him.” In other words, you are to expose him. Is that not correct?

Now, let's see there's another kind of false prophet. This is a false prophet who causes something to happen. There's also another false prophet that speaks in the name of God and says something and it doesn't happen. So, it's all in the message, not just in the work or the sign or the wonder.

Deuteronomy 18:20: “But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.” I want you to remember 1-Pet. 4:17: ‘judgment is now on the House of God.’ And I want you to remember that in September {1995} we had two key events happen:

1. Joseph W. Tkach suddenly died
2. Destruction of one of the other Churches of God because of corruption

God is telling the Church that He means business. If you're *playing religion* go somewhere else. That's what God is saying. I'm not saying people leave the fellowship, but I'm just telling you God's message—because you're not going to fool God!

Verse 21: “And if you say in your heart, ‘How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?’ When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not follow nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You shall not be afraid of him” (vs 21-22). So here's one the thing doesn't follow. You have the two kinds:

1. sign or wonder—happens; says, ‘let's go

- after other gods
- the Lord says this—and it doesn't happen; then you've got the other side of the coin

What we're going to do with this, we're going to see that the Word of God is over everyone: true prophets, false prophets, sinner, righteous, *everyone!* Is not the Word of God over everyone? Are we not going to be judged by the Word of God? *Yes!* 'Those who know to do good and do not will be beaten with many stripes. Those who know not to do good, and don't, shall be beaten with few.' But the judgment is still the same one way or the other—correct? *Yes!*

Jeremiah 14:13: "Then I said, 'Ah, O Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets are saying to them, 'You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine; but I will give you true peace in this place.''" Brethren, apply that to the world today, as well as then. Jeremiah was the only one saying, 'Look, the Babylonians are going to come and they're going to take you away. And if you fight them you're going to die. But if you go, God will spare you in captivity.' And they're saying, 'No! It's not going to happen!'

Verse 14: "And the LORD said to me, 'The prophets prophesy lies in My name... [That's something!] ...I did not send them, nor have I commanded them, nor did I speak to them. They prophesy to you a false vision and a worthless divination... [They have spirit help—*demons*] ...and a thing of no value, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore, the LORD says this concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, and I did not send them, yet they say, "Sword and famine shall not be in this land—By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed"' (vs 13-15).

God's judgment is coming! Why are false prophets so successful? *Yes, they want to hear it; they want to be deceived!* Don't you? *Yes!* Flattery will get you everywhere!

Jeremiah 17:9—Here's why! Here's why these things can be done. Here's an old, old verse, but it's still new, new, new! because it's happening today: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (vs 9-10). That's why they're so successful!

Jeremiah 23:21—a key, important verse to see that the Word of God is greater than the false prophets—and that God will honor His Word. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in My counsel and **had caused My people to**

**hear My words...** [The Word of Truth is greater than anything—correct? Even greater than the false prophets? *Yes!*] ...then they would have turned them from their evil way and from the evil of their doings" (vs 21-22). That's something—isn't it?

Verse 31: "'Behold, I *am* against the prophets who use their tongues and say, 'He says,' when I did not say. Behold, I *am* against those who prophesy false dreams and tell them, and cause My people to go astray by their lies and by their wantonness. Yet I did not send them nor command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all,' says the LORD. (vs 31-32).

Now let's go to the New Testament. We're going to categorize all of these false prophets here in a little bit. Let's go to 1-John, the second chapter. Here's one kind within that is leaving. But this is also a prophecy for our day. Please understand that when you read some of these things in James; 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Peter; 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude they're prophecies for our day.

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." They are coming! And, brethren, it is going to be something to be hold!

1-John 3:4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning...." (vs 4-8). That makes it very clear.

Let's see what they were doing, Ephesians 4:14 (KJV): "That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive."

*Faithful Version:* "So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error... [they have 'systematized' the error] ...But holding the Truth in love..." (vs 14-15).

At the time of the end, we're going to have all of these combined together. We're going to have things that are going to be so awesome that are going to take place.

Ephesians 5:6: “Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words... [There are a lot of *vain* words going out now.] ...for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them” (vs 6-7). That’s the message for the Church today.

It’s going to be powerful. This is going to be profound! It is going to be awesome! Brethren, even our wildest imaginations concerning 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter, have not even begun to slightly fulfill what it’s going to be. It is going to be so spectacular that the world is just going to be absolutely just enthralled with it beyond anything! I’ll just summarize a few things here:

2-Thessalonians 2:2: “That you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present.” We’re going to be confronted by spirits, with word—that is messages—by letter or that is by writing.

Verse 3: “Do not let anyone deceive you by any means... [that is by *any* means—and they’re always looking for new means] ...because *that day will not* come unless the apostasy shall come first...” That is ***the great apostasy***—and it’s happened within the Church and it’s happening within the world, because all roads lead to Rome—and we’re going to see Worldwide Church of God is beginning to march on the road to Rome, believe it or not!

“...and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition... [he’s going to exalt himself above all] ...the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (vs 3-4).

Why is all this going to happen with ‘signs and wonders and deceivableness of all unrighteousness’? ***They didn’t love the Truth!***—the Truth of God!

I’ll just call your attention to Rev. 13, that there is going to come this false prophet beast that’s going to call fire down from heaven. There are going to be so many things that are unreal, that are going to happen. One little teeny thing I want you to watch, because this is the only stumbling block in the formation of a world army under the auspices of the United Nations. There is a man, a soldier, in the U.S. Army who refusing to wear the blue hat of the U.N. saying he pledged allegiance to the United States. He’s going to Court Martial right now. And if he’s court-martialed, know the world army is just around the corner. When they go in the U.N. army they pledge allegiance to the United Nations—did you

know that? A lot of things are taking place—a lot of things! It’s almost too much to keep up with it.

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.... [just multiply that many times, by every fax, by every computer, by every printing press] ...By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God” (vs 1-2).

(go to the next track)

Again, I call your attention to the series we did on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> John. If you don’t have that, please write for it—it is most important for you to have that and understand it.

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, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world. **They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world...** [very, very profound] ...and the world listens to them.... [the world hears 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 3-6). Never before has that ever been more true, that we need to know right now ***the Spirit of the Truth or the spirit of the error or deception!***

Let’s go to Luke 6:26—very important! This ties right in with it: “Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you! For their fathers did these same things to the false prophets.” Think on that! If this were a Psalm, I would say, ‘Selah!’—*let it sink deep into your ears!*

2-John 6: “And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it because many deceivers have entered into the world—those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is *the spirit* of the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward. Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” (vs 6-9).

And, just a little interjection here: If he were talking about the Holy Spirit, he would have put it there—correct? *Yes!* He didn’t. He never did talk about it that way.

Verse 10: “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not say to him, ‘Welcome!’ For anyone who says, ‘Welcome!’ to him is partaking in his evil works” (vs 10-11). There are other places which show that we have to shout these things from the housetop.

Did you know that Pat Robertson, [Charles] Colson, Billy Graham, all of the leading evangelicals on television are all a part of returning to Rome? Did you know that? *They are!* Here’s a book entitled, *All Roads Lead to Rome?*. It’s dedicated to the nearly 100-billion Roman Catholics, misinformed by their hierarchy; and to the 400-million Protestants equally ignorant of the facts; and to the genuine martyrs on both sides, this book is dedicated. I want you to listen—remember what we just read in here about the third millennium of Christianity. All right, listen to this:

The most significant event in nearly 500-years of Church history was revealed as a fait accompli... [that means *almost finished*.] ...March 29, 1994, on that day leading American evangelicals and Catholics signed a joint declaration—evangelicals and Catholics together.... [the Christian mission in the third millennium] ...The document in effect overturns the reformation and will unquestionably have far-reaching repercussions throughout the Christian world to come.

Then it talks about the evangelicals: Pat Robertson, Charles Colson, John White, the president of Geneva College and former president of the National Association of Evangelicals said this ‘statement represents a triumphant moment.’ That’s why this Christian coalition thing is going to go so good; because you have the evangelicals, the fundamentalists and the Catholics together. You didn’t know that—did you?

Now, active participation in the Catholic Church makes one a Christian. If that is indeed the case, then the reformation is a tragic mistake. The millions martyred all died in vain. If however, the reformers were right, then this new agreement between the Catholics and evangelicals could well be the cleverest, deadliest blow struck against the Gospel in the entire history of the Church.

Now here’s what one leading evangelical declared:

Our closest friends as evangelicals in this cultural task and in the fundamental, theological task are Roman Catholics.

Brethren, all I want to do is just ask you to think! What will happen if they have a miracle-working

pope who says abortions are okay and married clergy are okay? We were just discussing the father/son thing—Billy Graham just appointed his son to succeed him. The son of Herbert Armstrong—Garner Ted Armstrong—personally has taken the Church into the whorehouse. The son of Tkach Sr. [Tkach Jr.] is personally taking the Church into the world’s spiritual whorehouse.

The document explains that both Catholics and evangelicals endorse the Apostles Creed, which starts out: We believe in the holy Catholic Church. That creed, however, like the Nicene Creed and other creeds does not express the gospel that saves, that Christ died for our sins. Mormons affirm the apostles creed, yet, they aren’t Biblical Christians, nor does embracing the creed make Catholics or Protestants Christians.

Furthermore, what Catholics mean by Christ dying for our sins is an entirely different thing from what the evangelical understanding of this truth is, as we shall see in later pages. It is important to note that the concern at the bishop’s conference was not the truth of the gospel or the salvation of souls, but maintaining the influence of the Vatican and keeping people in the Catholic Church.

While evangelicals signed a truce, Rome is stepping up its evangelization of Protestants into the Catholic Church. Rome’s evangelization 2000 has six evangelizing training conferences scheduled—just for 1994—across America. Evangelism for evangelicals means leading people to Christ. For Catholics however, it means bringing people into the Roman Catholic Church. “Our job,” as father Tom Forest, to a group of Catholic charismatics said, “is to make people as richly and fully Christian as we can make them by bringing them into the Catholic Church. We have the visible sacrament of salvation. We have to be evangelizing into the church. No, you can’t just invite someone to become Christian. You invite them to become Catholic. First of all there are seven sacraments and the Catholic Church has them all!

- On our altars we have the body of Christ... [a blasphemous thing if there ever was]
- we drink the blood of Jesus;
- Jesus is alive on our altars as offering;
- we become one with Christ in the Eucharist; as Catholics we have Mary,

queen of paradise, praying for all of us till she sees us in glory;

- as Catholics we also have the papacy, the history of popes from Peter to John Paul II;
- we have the rock upon which Christ did build His church; as Catholics...
- [now, I love this one] ...we have purgatory. Thank God. I am one of those people who would never get to the beatific vision without it. It's the only way to go.

So as Catholics our job is to use this remaining decade evangelizing everyone we can into the Catholic Church, into the body of Christ and into the third millennium of Catholic history.

Brethren, WAR has been declared against the Truth. And it's come right into the Worldwide Church of God. And war has been declared against all the others who do not believe in the trinity, who will accept Christ and the Truth and the Word of God. These are some things! I am totally astonished! But you see, it can happen! The Truth can be subverted! And we're seeing it before our very eyes; and what a shame, brethren, what a shame!

If and when you hear this sermon by Garner Ted Armstrong—especially the backside of it—and you know what is in here, in this report, there is not one iota of repentance at all. So, I don't really know how to end this sermon except to say, we've got some tough times ahead of us—very, tough times ahead of us! And it's going to be the Truth of God that we have to really stick by. That's why I see it's very important, at least what we're doing in our part:

- to get our noses in the Bible, *to know the Bible*
- *to understand the Word of God*
- to really have that *relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father*
- to *know what you believe and why* you believe it
- and *know why it is the Truth*

—not just accept as a profession. But we are down to the thing where now where I'm beginning to understand how the world is going to hate us. I've got some other things, too. That's not to say anything about the Masonry involvement in this thing of taking down the Worldwide Church of God. That's not to say anything about some of the other facts of Hanegraaff, part of which is his daughter is a full-fledged witch! We are dealing with some pretty tough stuff!

Let's finish here: 1-Timothy 4:1: "Now, the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some

shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow deceiving [seducing] spirits and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*" (vs 1-2).

Let's finish with this in 2-Peter 2:1: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord Who bought them... [whether it's action of adultery and fornication physically or adultery and fornication spiritually] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed" (vs 1-2).

***When you repent to Satan you have blasphemed!***

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

Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author's translation

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Timothy 3:13
- 2) Revelation 17:5
- 3) Matthew 24:5, 24
- 4) Matthew 7:12-19, 21-23
- 5) Deuteronomy 12:29-32
- 6) Jude 1-4
- 7) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 8) Deuteronomy 13:1-3
- 9) 1 Peter 4:17-18
- 10) Deuteronomy 13:3-8
- 11) Deuteronomy 18:20-22
- 12) Jeremiah 14:13-15
- 13) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 14) Jeremiah 23:21-22, 31-32
- 15) 1 John 2:18
- 16) 1 John 3:4
- 17) Ephesians 4:14-15
- 18) Ephesians 5:6-7
- 19) 2 Thessalonians 2:2-4
- 20) 1 John 4:1-6
- 21) Luke 6:26
- 22) 2 John 6-11
- 23) 2 Peter 2:13-14
- 24) 1 Timothy 4:1-2
- 25) 2 Peter 2:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12:9
- Matthew 24:4
- 1, 2, 3 John
- 1-Peter 4:17
- Revelation 13

Also referenced: Books:

- *All Roads Lead to Rome?* by Michael DeSemlyen
- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
- *I'm Okay, You're Okay* by Thomas Harris
- *Kingdom of the Cults* by Dr. Walter Martin

Sermon Series: *1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John*

## Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VI

Fred R. Coulter

In relationship to the report and the tapes sent out with the study papers on 2-Peter and Jude, this past week—after having talked with the investigator with the situation concerning Garner Ted Armstrong—I told her that I needed to talk to the principle people, the principle parties involved, which was Suerae Robertson, and that if she felt comfortable in calling me that I would be glad to talk to her, because I would like to verify this first person.

So, what you have is a newspaper clipping that has additional information than when I first brought it to the congregation two weeks ago here in San Jose. I might mention that this article here from Associated Press is quite graphic and speaks for itself; but there were other things that he did on a second visit which constituted felony rape. And Garner Ted has been subsequently arrested for attempted rape. I don't know if he's in jail or posted bail. I also talked to the attorney for the plaintiffs, and he said that they are going to take this case all the way—they are not interested in the money, though they need to recover certain things that they will do through a civil lawsuit. But this is so big down there that it is really something! He said they are going to take it all the way and see it to the end.

It is stated that GTA resigned on November 11, 1995, but I've subsequently found out that that was not the case. He is putting out letters under Garner Ted Armstrong Evangelistic Association letterhead as well. So, we don't know what it is. But I think in this article that you have, the very last paragraph on page one of the article out of Dallas, it says:

At one point he supposedly told her [Suerae Robertson] that his execution of the Lord's work was so vital that any transgression on his part would be overlooked by God.

And this, brethren, is the attitude that prevailed when all of these things were going on in Worldwide a long, long, long time ago. And as I mentioned before, I would like to do a song: Where Have All the Evangelists Gone? The reason being, that something happened spiritually and mentally those who are evangelists, inasmuch as that most of them have felt that they could do almost anything and God would approve of it.

I don't know what got into their minds concerning it; and I would have to say, that when you read the resignation letter of Ron Dart, you will see that he's still the same old politician he's always been. That rather than stand for Truth, he'll slide to the side and try and do whatever he's going to do.

But you can't continue in that and expect anything to prosper.

In the letter that I wrote that accompanies the full report, I won't dwell on it, you have eyes to see and so forth, so you can read the report; but I think you will find it very shocking. I think you'll find it very interesting when you tie in together the demise of the Worldwide Church of God and the takedown of it internally. I have a full report on that plus this report has some information on the CRI—the Christian Research Institute—which has more information than it does in the letter that they sent out. And Hank Hanegraaff is definitely one of those ecumenists and the verbiage that comes out of Worldwide now where they are looking forward to the beginning of the “third millennia” of Christianity is straight out of *Evangelization 2000*, from the Vatican.

I'm going to finish reading the book *All Roads Lead to Rome?* That is quite something! The Vatican's position is that if they can take down the Anglican Church—the Church of England—then they can take down all Protestantism. Their whole modus operandi with the Jesuits is to infiltrate every Protestant Church that they possibly can. Jack Chick, who puts out *Chick's Publications*, said that he was in a meeting before he left the Catholic Church where, in a meeting of Jesuits, that they mention specifically the Seventh Day Adventists and the Worldwide Church of God to be targeted for internal takedown. And it just about happened. When you understand and remember and know that Christmas, Easter, and day-and-a-half resurrection are the three key things that the Catholic believes. Once a Protestant church accepts those things you know that they have been subverted. So those who have **eyes to see and ears to hear**, please do so!

Let's go to Jeremiah 23, for just a minute, please. This is part of what I quoted in my letter, because I truly felt this way. I feel just as upset as anyone else in having to go through some of these things. I'm not doing these things in any way to come back upon a person, because I hope, that in the final analysis, if it's possible for repentance that Garner Ted will; if it's possible for repentance for those in Worldwide that they will. But in bringing this out, it needs to be brought to the fore so that we no longer have to live with cover-ups and lies having to do with the Church of God. I wrote in the letter and quoted:

Jeremiah 23:9: “As for the prophets my heart within me is broken; all my bones shake. I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome because of the LORD and because of the

words of His Holiness. For the land is full of adulterers. Because of swearing the land mourns; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and they *wield* power unjustly. 'For both prophet and priest are ungodly... [that's what you call secularization] ...yea, in My house I have found their evil,' says the LORD.... [You expect the wickedness in the world; but NOT in the Church of God.] ...'So their way shall be to them as slippery ways in the darkness; they shall be driven on, and fall in *their way*; for I will bring evil on them, even the year of their judgment,' says the LORD" (vs 9-12).

I wonder if this is 'the year of visitation' for the Churches of God? Makes me wonder, because Joseph Tkach died, the doctrines were changed, Worldwide was taken down, Garner Ted Armstrong was finally caught in all of filthy philandering—and it had to be someone outside the Church, because it seems as though everyone within the Church can be bought off one way or the other; or intimidated with fear! And the last two sermons I heard of Garner Ted Armstrong, he's doing all that he can to cover the way.

1. Don't even look into the allegations of anyone's life
2. We should all be like little children and expect the best.

I have heard those before. He does it every time he gets caught. And ***this time there's going to be no way around it.*** I don't wish him any ill. I wish him repentance. But if it takes ill for him to come to repentance, then he's entirely in God's hands.

Verse 13: "And I have seen repulsive things in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied by Baal... [that's what's happening in Worldwide right now.] ...and caused My people Israel to go astray.... [that's what they're doing with the Church] ...I have also seen in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing; they commit adultery and walk in lies. They also strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that none returns from his evil; they are all of them like Sodom to Me, and her inhabitants like Gomorrah" (vs 13-14).

Let's go to Revelation, the third chapter, please—and this is not to beat upon the Laodiceans, but this is face the facts of life the way they are happening in the Church today. Revelation 3:15: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot... [Which means then that they're converted slightly, but they're not on fire for God—they're all profane, secularized!] ...I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.... [the word 'spew' means *to vomit*. And in this 'year of visitation' I wonder if that's what's happening?] ...For you say, 'I am rich, and have

become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.... [and nakedness has to do with sexual sins.] (So then, He gives them the counsel): ...I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." (vs 15-17)—because He loves them!

Look at what the world is—and let's tie this in with Sodom and Gomorrah—and I think God is really telling us something profound here! Not only does this have to do with the city of Jerusalem, but this also has to do with the spiritual condition of the world. And unfortunately, it may also have something to do with the spiritual condition with part of the Church of God. This is what we all need to get away from. It talks about the two witnesses, who were killed:

Revelation 11:8: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt..." So, as I've mentioned before, *Sodom reflects the moral values* and *Egypt reflects the religious values*. And that is exactly what is happening to the Churches of God!

I got a report from our 'disciple at the end of the earth'—Don Campbell—he lives on the southern most part on the southern island of New Zealand. He journeyed that 15,000 miles to come here to be baptized. That's why we call him 'our disciple from the end of the world.' He has sent me some reports from the Seventh Day Adventists, because he used to be one and he's still in communication with some.

And brethren, the same thing is happening there. The internal takedown from within—and you can tell exactly what it is. I don't think you're going to move them away from the Sabbath, but there's still a good number of Seventh Day Adventist who have left and gone to Sunday-keeping. The one who wrote the book *Sabbath in Crisis*—that's the big rage in Worldwide: *Sabbath in Crisis* by Dale Ratzlaff. Dale Ratzlaff used to be a Seventh Day Adventist minister in Watsonville; and when we first kept our Feast of Tabernacles, after leaving Worldwide, we kept it in Watsonville in his Seventh Day Adventist Church. At that time he let us know there was a lot of turmoil concerning Ellen G. White and so forth.

I think that the best thing that God is doing, is going through and correcting the Church and scattering the Church and putting us in smaller groups so that we can learn the love of God and know the Truth of God; because in smaller groups there's not a structure that you can infiltrate and take down. That's how they get into these positions. You just go back and you think about all the things that took place, all the false doctrines that came down, and you think about how they wormed their way into positions—and then started all the false doctrine.

But they were so high up you couldn't touch them.

And that's exactly what 2-Peter and Jude are all about. Let's look at combined 2-Peter and Jude. I was amazed when I did this. When I first thought about doing it, I thought about doing parallel columns like a harmony. When I put it together in columns it looked a little awkward, so I thought what I would do I will take those sections that I have paralleled and I will put them end-to-end. And what it really does, it really shows that what Jude wrote and what Peter wrote, one fills in the details that the other one left off—and really gives us a tremendous insight as to what was happening at that particular time.

What I want to do is just mention a little bit out of this book I've been reading: *All Roads Lead to Rome*? Did you know that a Franciscan university and a Jesuit seminary both have been given awards to "Rev." Billy Graham, and that Billy Graham is an ecumenist, and calls the pope one of the most righteous men in the world? Now then, where is all of this deception going? And I think I mentioned, just an off-hand remark, that wouldn't it be staggering if the pope and the Dalai Lama got together? In this book I found out that they have met five times already. That is shocking! That was shocking to me—they've met five times already! And the Catholic Jesuit plan is to take down the Church of England and the heart of Protestantism and then the rest will fall—and they just about have it. Queen of England is going to go to hear an archbishop give a sermon of some kind here for this Christmas coming up {1995}. Now, I don't know if it's going to transpire or not but at least that what has been reported.

Comment was made that an article in the paper says that the Catholic Church is the fastest growing church in England. The reason is because all the Protestants have been infiltrated by the Jesuits. They take a vow to lie, to cheat, to steal, to kill, to infiltrate, to take down! I mean, we need to understand who the enemy is!

Here in 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter shows how far the apostasy is going to go. And I'm amazed! I am amazed! Good old Pat Robertson, you watch him once in a while, he's an ecumenist. He's on the road to Rome. John Bennett is a Catholic. Jack Kemp is a Catholic. Rush Limbaugh is a secret Catholic. Guess what all this moral coming back is? *Catholicism*. Guess what their goal is after they get Britain, guess where they're going to come? *Right here in the U.S.; they're going to get us*. Their goal is world-domination. But they know that they cannot have a religious leader run the world. They understand that.

How many remember the speech of the pope at the United Nations, and he talked about universal

law—remember that?—universal moral law! What is another word for universal? *Catholic*! That's correct. So when it was being translated from English to German, the translator would say *ka-to-lish*—*Katholik*—instead of universal.

Comment was made that they heard Rush Limbaugh say—when it was said that the pope is out of touch with the American people—'Well, the American people are out of touch with the pope!' That's something! There's something else that you need to know: Have you ever wondered how in the world are they going to get all of these disparate religions to get together and agree to a one-world religion? And how are you going to get the Muslims to get together with the Catholics? The answer is: *Mary*! They believe in Mary and there have been visions of Mary to the Muslim people. Now, please note that the famous vision of Fatema—Fatema is a Muslim named town in Portugal—which was originally overrun by the Moors and that there is some connection between these three girls as being cousins to Muslims. So, Mary is going to be the thing to do it—*Mary worship*.

By the way, I did get that 'politically correct New Testament—Psalms and New Testament—and I'm going to bring a sermon on that and I'm going to introduce it with the article that Marsha gave me about witches and 'Wicca' because this is exactly what this is!—precisely!

Now then, here in 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter, let's talk a little bit about the apostasy; because we've heard many variations of it. In my lifetime I've heard that:

- The pope is the man of sin. He *is* a man of sin, that is true.
- After the fall of Herbert Armstrong, he was the man of sin—I think that's wrong.
- Some people claim that Joseph Tkach, Sr. was the man of sin in the apostasy.
- That the falling away has to do with those people leaving the church—and I know when I left the Church I was pointed at with those very Scriptures.

But this really means *the* apostasy—that's what it is in the Greek. And the apostasy has got to mean taking everything to Satan's religion. That's what it has to be; and it's going to be hegemony of all religions. Now, let's look at it from this point of view:

2-Thessalonians 2:3: "Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition.*" There's only one other person in the Bible called *the son of perdition*. Do you know who that was? *Judas Iscariot*! And in the book by Roger Rusk, *The Other End of the World*, I think he fairly well proves that

Judas Iscariot was an Esauite. I think he did a pretty good job in proving that. This is a profound individual with a profound mission.

Verse 4: “The one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God... [that is above Ishnew, Buddha, Shintoism, Confucianism, Catholicism, Orthodoxy] ...all that is called God or that is an object of worship... [which means greater than any icon, greater than any saint. And what does it say in Rev. 13 to do to this man? *Make an image, an icon, unto the Beast*. This is profound, this is great!] ...**so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God.**”

That really is a profound statement! Herbert Armstrong never did that. Joseph Tkach never did that. The pope has not done that. Some pope's have come close to it, but this is a profound, singular event of one man—called ‘the man of sin, the son of perdition’—whom Christ is going to destroy when He returns; so that has to be the Beast Power that's going to come. And Satan is going to give him everything. You tie that in with Rev. 13 and that'll tell you what's happening.

Let's see how all of this nonsense started in what is called *the Christian church*. Just read through and you will see how each one of these things really ties one in with the other in bringing out the profound, important historical sins. Just like 2-Thess. 2, we are talking about profound historical sins. So what he's talking about here is a profound, historical and prophetic event for us.

Jude 1: “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the called *saints*, sanctified by God *the Father* and kept in Jesus Christ... [Notice again, no Holy Spirit. That's part of understanding the truth of the nature of God; that God is two—not three, not one.] ...Mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to *ferently* fight for the faith which once *for all time* has been delivered to the saints” (vs 1-3). What did Jesus say? *When the Son of man comes, will he find faith in the earth?*—***once delivered!***

Verse 4: “For certain men have stealthily... [invisibly, imperceptibly] ...crept in; these are the ones who a long time ago have been written about... [and the reason that's translated that way is because that's what it means in the Greek. The Greek verb there is ‘grapho’—which means *to write*] ...have been written about... [you can read it—false prophets (Ezek. 13, 34; Jer. 23, and many, many other places)] ...*condemning them* to this judgment... [What's going to happen, we're going to see that Jude and Peter bring that judgment. They specify it

upon them. So this was pretty profound sin!] ...*They are* ungodly men, who are distorting the grace of our God into licentiousness, and are denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” There again, God the Father and Jesus Christ—Lord God and Lord Jesus Christ—two!

Anytime you have a doctrine that changes the nature of God you are denying Christ and the Father. If you change the nature of God, you are changing whom you worship. It may be said it doesn't make any difference, because you still pray, you still study; but it does make a profound difference. Has it made a difference in the church that proclaimed that? *Yes! Every doctrine is changed!* How can you know God if you don't know Christ and the Father? That's why the trinity is always a mystery, because you can't know God in a trinity. And we're going to see that monotheism is just another form of paganism, in which there are three-in-one. You take the four Hebrew letters: YHWH and it is called the tetra-grammaton; and this is what the Yahwehists use as their idol.

- **Y** is the Father
- **H** is the mother
- **V** is the Son
- **H** is three-in-one

—that's what that means! How many have seen a Hanukkah menorah? How many candles are on it? You count it sometime. *Eight!* Why are there eight when the menorah, in the Scriptures, is seven? *No, not in case one goes out!* They can have all kinds of excuses like use that one to light the other ones with, but what does it really mean in mystic Judaism? *Yes, it is for the mother—queen of heaven.* If you start having queen of heaven visions to Judaism, guess what's going to happen? And to the Muslims? *It's going to come together like there is no tomorrow!*

This also tells us something very profound, 2-Peter 2:1: “But there were false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily...” In other words, subversive, who know what they are doing; coming in and planning and waiting for the time that they can lay the golden egg—change the doctrine. That's why when you have a hierarchy; anytime you have a hierarchy it is political! The way you advance is please the one over you and you please the one over him and so forth, until you're up there. So, when all of these stealthy people get in there they get in these positions.

“...introduce destructive heresies... [did we not see that happen? Bit-by-bit, every week! Every month! Every *Worldwide News!* Every *Plain Truth!* Bit-by-bit-by-bit!] ...personally denying the Lord who bought them... [that is they're turning their back on the true salvation of Christ.] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people

will follow *as authoritative...*” (vs 1-2). The reason I inserted *as authoritative* is because what was contained in 2-Peter 1 concerning the authoritativeness of what they were doing instead of the myths.

“...their destructive ways... [Are people following, as authoritative, their destructive ways? *Yes!*] ...and because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed” (v 2). You can blaspheme and still give an off-handed comment: ‘Well, God didn’t mean that. We don’t need to do this. That’s not required of Christians today.’ As I have in my report, there is documented evidence, in a memo, that in Worldwide Church of God today those who insist that the Sabbath and Holy Days are commands of God and are required by Christians today are subject to disfellowshipment. That’s how far it’s gone. Are those destructive heresies? Are they denying Christ? Are they blaspheming the way of Truth?

Verse 3: “Also, through insatiable greed... [Give us more money; send us more money—money, money, money, money, property, money, high salaries!] ...they will *with* enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever-watching*.” Those who have *eyes to see and ears to hear*—do so!

Let’s look at how this also comes about within the Church. So today, what I want to do is I want to look at *true prophets and false prophets*—and how did such a thing ever come to be? Acts 17 talks about the Bereans as compared to those in Thessalonica.

Acts 17:11: “Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, *for* they received the Word with all readiness of mind *and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so...*” Now, in searching the Scriptures, you have to make sure that you have a good, bona fide Bible—and that does not mean the *New International Version*; because that is an ecumenical Bible—please understand that. *New King James Version* is okay. The best one is the old *King James Version*. [transcriber’s

note: The Holy Bible in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version by Fred R. Coulter is now available.] I recommend for everyone, because a lot of people write in and say: What version do you use? And I tell them that I generally use the Greek *Interlinear* by George Ricker Berry for the New Testament, and read from that. I recommend that they get it from CBD [Christian Bible Distributors]. You have to have the right Bible to ‘prove whether these things are so.’ And I will guarantee you one thing, that—if you’re truly searching for God and His way, and searching the Scriptures—you will know Truth from error because God has promised that you would be able to discern it. And that’s how

you’re able to know what is right from what is wrong.

Now then, let’s go to Acts, the twentieth chapter—here is how it can start. Remember those who stealthily snuck in. We’re going to see that there are good elders who can go back. There are those who once served God and no longer serve God. As Paul said, ‘I say that they are the enemies of Christ and serve their bellies.’ That does happen. Paul warned them!

Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers... [The truth is, every elder who oversees any part of the Church of God has to understand that *all the brethren belong to God the Father*. They are His! They are to be entrusted to teach them what God the Father wants taught to them] ...to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.” He’s laying it right on the line, the very blood of Christ, which pays for the sins of the whole world for how you take care of the Church of God.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock... [those ‘grievous wolves’ are going to come in using the name of Christ and so forth] ...and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves. Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears” (vs 29-31). Now, that’s something!—isn’t it? Paul really knew what was coming down. Today we’re just kind of out here and we don’t know what’s coming down until we get hit like a Mac-truck, standing out in the middle of the freeway and we get splattered all over the place.

Let’s begin this way. Some of these Scriptures we have used so I will just mention them; some of them we have not so we will turn to them. We’re going to have six categories of prophets: three true and three false.

### 1. True Prophet/True Teachings

Prophet, in this case, is anyone who speaking on behalf of God—whether an elder or a teacher. Let’s go to the Gospel of John, chapter three, and let’s see what it said of Christ as testified by John the Baptist. And as we turn there, let’s remember what Jesus said. Jesus said,

- I am *the* Way, *the* Life and *the* Truth
- I am the Light of the world.
- He is the Word of God.
- He is the resurrection.
- He is the Son of God.
- He is the only begotten.

Just put all of this together. And remember, Jesus said that He was ‘taught of His Father’—He didn’t learn from the other people around Him.

Here’s what John testified concerning: John 3:31: “He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthy.... [that’s what we are; that’s what the scribes and Pharisees were.] ...and speaks of the earth He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true” (vs 31-33).

Let’s understand how important this is. God is true and His Word is true and God’s Word is so true that there can even be false prophets who preach in the name of Christ. And they even preach the Truth, that part of the Truth that they preach God will uphold—because the Word of God is greater and over all of us.

Here’s the key. v 34: “For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God... [that’s referring directly to Christ, so that there would be no mistake that God sent Christ.] ...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him” (vs 34-36). That ties right in with some of the things we’ve covered concerning the false prophets.

Now put in your notes: Isa. 8:16-20, where it is that the Law would be finished and bound up with the disciples; and then it says ‘to the Law and the testimony if they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them.’

Let’s go to 1-John 2:3, because here’s something that is **very important!** It is true that we are to have the laws and commandments of God written in our hearts and in our minds. How is it written there? *Through God’s Spirit!* Do we put them there because of the goodness of our own choice? *No! God does that*—correct? We don’t keep the commandments because we’re doing a favor for God. Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments.’ We don’t keep the Sabbath out of preference or tradition. We keep it out of the fact that God created it and said this is the day to keep. Now then, here is a key way that you know a true teacher from a false teacher:

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him... [so it’s a double-knowing, as I’ve mentioned before, but I want to reiterate it here] **...if we keep His commandments....** [present tense] ...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). Now, that’s a strong

statement—isn’t it?

Therefore, an prophet that comes along, speaking nice, smooth words and saying that you don’t have to keep any of the commandments of God, just have love in your heart, he’s a liar, the Truth is not in him. You have to have love in your heart, but you also have to keep the commandments—both! Because keeping the commandments is an expression of the love of God: ‘This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.’ The way a false prophet interprets that is: ‘this is the love of God that we love Him in our heart and we don’t have to keep His commandments because they are burdensome.’ That’s how it comes out—direct opposite. So he’s a liar!

Verse 5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [not just commandment now—**Word!** And as I’ve mentioned before, and I’m going to mention again, which Word of God are we going to count uninspired? Which Word of God are we going to say, ‘God, You made a mistake’? Which Word of God are we going to say ‘this does not apply to us unless God tells us’? *None!* Dare any of us go up to God and say, ‘God, You made a mistake’? God Who is perfect! God’s laws which are perfect? God’s love which is perfect? I mean, we need to think some of this through, brethren!] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected... [and this means in a constant continuing sense—**is being perfected.**] ...By this *means we know* that we are in Him.”

God wants us to know; not be in doubt. Someone comes up to you and says, ‘What do you believe?’ *I don’t know.* ‘Well, who are you?’ *I don’t know.* No! The first thing they want to know is your name—right? You say, *I don’t know.* ‘Do you have amnesia?’ There are a lot of people out there with **spiritual amnesia!** They don’t know God. They don’t know the commandments. They don’t know Christ. ‘But we love Him.’ How can that be? If you don’t know Him, how can you love Him? How can you love somebody you don’t know? **Impossible!**

(go to the next track)

The whole purpose for the ministry (Eph. 4) and for all of us is that we come to the ‘fullness of the stature of Christ.’ That needs to be taught—**true teachings.**

Put in your notes: Isa. 28—there has to be ‘line upon line; precept upon precept; line upon line; precept upon precept’—that is the principle of addition. The way that false prophets do it, they take the principle of subtraction. Whenever there is a conflict, that looks like a conflict in Scriptures, they subtract both of them out. That’s what they do with James. He says ‘you be justified by your works.’ They say, ‘No, that contradicts God, so therefore we go with Paul. We subtract James out of it and we go

with Paul that you are ‘justified by grace.’ *So, the true Bible way is addition.*

This one I know we’ve covered a couple times recently, but let’s read it into the record, because it’s most profound that we have it here. This is how you can tell the true teachings, and this is what any teacher is to do, 2-Timothy 2:15: “Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God... [Not the congregation; not the deacons; not your professor, but unto God! That’s what’s so important!] ...a workman... [It takes work!] ...who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the Truth... [That means *straightly cutting, properly putting together*—as we just covered with *precept upon precept and line upon line*.] ...but avoid profane and vain babblings because they will only give rise to more ungodliness” (vs 15-16).

Let’s see that they will be teaching the Word of God, preaching the Word of God, upholding the Word of God *vs* those who were not. You can read the whole chapter concerning false prophets. Jeremiah 23:23: “‘Am I a God *Who is* near,’ says the LORD, ‘and not a God afar off?... [Jesus said, ‘Knock and it shall be opened; seek and you shall find; ask and you shall receive.’] ...Can anyone hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him?’ says the LORD. ‘Do I not fill the heavens and earth?’ says the LORD. ‘I have heard what the prophets said, who prophesy lies in My name, saying, “I have dreamed, I have dreamed.” How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies and who are prophets of the deceit of their own heart? They scheme to cause My people to forget My name by their dreams which they tell, each one to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten My name for Baal” (vs 23-27).

And you know, the bottom line of all of this false prophecy and teachings is *Baalism!* That’s why both Jude and Peter bring in Baal; bring in Cain; bring in Sodom and Gomorrah—*and there is a reason!* (We’ll take those when we come to them).

Verse 28: “‘The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream. And he who has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully.... [That’s what the *true teaching* is going to be—*faithfully teaching the Word of God*—true prophet/true teacher.] ...What is the chaff to the wheat?’ says the LORD. ‘Is not My Word like a fire?’ says the LORD, ‘and like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I *am* against the prophets who steal My words each one from his neighbor.... [they come twisting, turning, distorting] ...Behold, I *am* against the prophets who use their tongues and say, “He says,” *when I did not say*. Behold, I *am* against those who prophesy false dreams and tell them, and cause My people to go astray by their lies and by their wantonness. Yet I did not send them nor command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at

all,’ says the LORD” (vs 28-32).

- What is the one thing that is used to get people to believe lies?
  - One of the major things? *Say it over and over again!*
  - What’s the major thing? *Mixing lies with Truth!*
  - How can you get them to do so? *Fear!*
- Let’s take this one step further.
- What is the one thing that is used to make people believe lies?
  - Act upon them?

*Yes, embrace them and follow those orders! Security! Hierarchical authority!* Which then ties in with fear; which then ties in with security. *Hierarchical authority!* How does the pope get done what he wants done? *Because he is the ‘vicar of Christ and his word is the Word of God on earth!’* If you just transfer that to another man; ‘stay in this church because this is where the authority is, always follow the authority.’ That is a false prophet. *You always follow God!*

Let’s see how a true teacher is going to live his life and behave in his life in a proper way. Jesus said ‘you will know them by their fruits.’ Just go ahead and put in your notes 1-Tim. 3, because those are the qualifications of elders and deacons.

1-Timothy 4:6: “If you are teaching these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, being nourished by the words of the faith... [Timothy as an elder and teacher was to also be ‘nourished’ up in the ‘words of faith.’] ...and of the good doctrines... [we’re going to see that doctrine is very important.] ...that you have closely followed. But refuse profane and old wives’ fables; rather, exercise yourself unto Godliness.... [Then it talks about]: ...physical exercise is profitable... [v 9] ...faithful and worthy of full acceptance. Now it is for this *reason that* we are laboring, and we are personally suffering reproach because we have hope in the living God...” (vs 6-10).

Why do you labor and suffer reproach? *Because when you’re dealing with the Truth, there is the sword of Truth that cuts the line—that’s why!* Put in your margin there: Matt. 10: ‘I come not to bring peace on earth, but a sword to set a father against his son and son against the father, daughter against the mother and the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law,’ and so forth. And ‘your foes will be those of your own household.’

“...Who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who are believers. These things command and teach.... [There it is right there; that’s what true teacher’s going to be doing.] ...Do not allow anyone to despise your youth; but be an example to the believers—*in word, in conduct, in love, in Spirit,*

**in faith and in purity.** Until I come, devote *yourself* to reading, to encouragement... [and inspiration. And I feel this, brethren, God wants us to be inspired to be in the Kingdom of God. He's not going to drive us in. He's not going to beat us in. But inspire us, because it is so great.] ...*and to doctrine*" (vs 10-13). There again he says 'doctrine' the second time.

What does it say in 2-John? *'If any come and bring not this doctrine, receive him not! Or bid him God-speed!'* Or what? *'You're a partaker of his sins.'* Think on that!

Verse 14: "Do not neglect the *spiritual* gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood. Meditate on these things; give yourself wholly to them..." (vs 14-15). That's what you're going to find a true teacher of God doing.

- Did not Christ give Himself wholly to God the Father?
- Did He not always do those things that pleased Him?
- Did He not always keep His commandments? *Yes!*

***That's our Perfect Example!***

"...so that your growth *in the faith* may be apparent to all. Be diligent with yourself ..." (v2 15-16). Watch out for your own carnal nature—that's what he's saying. Don't get lifted up in vanity. Don't get lifted up when people come around and say this and that and the other thing.

"...and with the doctrines..." (v 16). He said it three times! False prophets will say 'doctrine is not important.' But Paul said three times it is important. It is important to know what the Truth is. That's why you have doctrine. It is important to teach it because that's the knowledge of Christ. It is important for you, as an elder, because that's what you're going to be judged upon.

"...continue in them. For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you" (v 16). We could add all kinds of other verses there, so in the first category of *true prophet, true teaching*. So, if you want to do an extra Bible study and go through and add extra Scriptures to that, you go ahead and do that.

## **2. True prophet with true teachings that are misapplied or deficient teachings**

Let's see a good example of that. Here was a true teacher. Here was one named Apollos, who was teaching the Scriptures, Acts 18:24: "Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man who was skilled in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and

taught accurately the things concerning the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And after hearing him, Aquila and Priscilla took him and expounded the way of God to him more perfectly" (vs 24-26). Here he was deficient in his knowledge, now he's brought up to speed. So there will be certain things that will come along where you have a true teacher, then who is defiant in his teachings, because of lack of knowledge.

Or you'll have someone who has misapplied teachings because of a personal sin—let's go to Hebrews, the third chapter—because that can take a hold. And here's a warning that is given here; and we're going to see the next category then how that fit in. You can have a true prophet and false teachings. That can also happen. They should be called to repentance over it. But let's finish this second category first. Here's a true prophet with true teachings, but now comes in the deceitfulness of sin. In other words, unrepented of sin gradually builds up to the point that you have misapplied teachings; even though the person may have been a true teacher at one time. Just like Paul said, 'Out of you will arise those who will be grievous wolves.'

Hebrews 3:12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God." I'm amazed! I've heard ministers say, 'Well, I never believed that all the time I was in the Church.' What about 'proving all things; holding fast to that which is good.' You can add many, many, many things to what we're covering here.

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.... [So, now we have a true teacher beginning to twist the Scriptures because of sin, going away from it.] ...For we are companions of Christ, if we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end" (vs 13-14).

## **3. True prophet with a mixture of true and false teachings**

Let me give you one example of that. Here is an example of a true teacher who then has a true teaching and a false teaching—side-by-side. You have to be careful to discern it. 1-Corinthians 12:13: "For indeed, by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body..." The Church is a spiritual organism of God. Wherever there are those who have the Spirit of God, they are part of the Church. *True teaching!* 'If you are not in this corporate church, and if you are not supporting what we are doing, you're not in the Body of Christ.' *False teaching* by a true teacher. That is not only misapplied, but it's gone one-step further of being a false teaching. When you

have authority combined with that, then you have a good mixture for believing other false things.

I want you to understand that Paul is writing some of these things in here about Peter. Was Peter a true teacher with false teachings? *Yes!* Was he corrected for it? *Yes!* Galatians 1:6: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *gospel*; but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Christ. But if we...” (vs 6-8). Who’s *we*? *The apostles!* He’s introducing chapter two here.

“...or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!” (vs 8-9). I hope that those who are in the midst of changing doctrine would please read that, and maybe change their course if they can.

Verse 10: “Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.” What is the one central thing that everyone is trying to do in religion today, in the world, and in some cases even within the Churches of God. ‘Let’s all get together. Let’s not rock the boat.’ That, brethren, is politics; that is pleasing men, and it’s doomed for destruction day one!

Let’s see what happened, let’s see what the Apostle Paul did—Galatians 2:1: “Then after fourteen years I again went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus with *me* also. And I went up according to revelation, and laid before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain. (But indeed, Titus, who *was* with me, being a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised.) Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly...” (vs 1-4). There’s such a thing as false brethren, that’s what he’s saying. They came in unaware!

“...who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom... [This was circumcision or non-circumcision inspection—yea! that’s what this was!] ...which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage... [and say ‘you can’t enter into the Kingdom of God unless you’re circumcised.’] ...To whom we did not yield in subjection *not* even for one hour, so that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with you. But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me...)” (vs 4-6).

That’s pretty strong language. How does that go down in an authoritarian church? *Not very well!* The Apostle Paul knew and figured that the Truth of God was over everyone, including the apostles—that’s what he’s saying.

“...God does not accept *the* person of a man.)... [Yet, there are some who are claim that they’re born to this or born to that, and that is nonsense!] ...For those who are of repute conferred nothing upon me. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision” (vs 6-7).

Now, what problems do you think you would have if you were the apostle to the Jews? *Many! Many!* Now you know why God used Peter to go to Cornelius, so that no man would be called *common* or *unclean*. And now you know why God gave the Holy Spirit to Cornelius and his household before they were baptized; to show Peter that they were not to Judaize. Now you know Peter’s sin when the politics got involved—let’s see what he did:

Verse 9: “And after recognizing the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John—those reputed to be pillars—... [notice *it seemed to be pillars*—he didn’t say *were*] ...gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision. *Their only request* was that we remember the poor, which very thing I was also diligent to do. But when Peter came to Antioch, **I withstood him to his face because he was to be condemned**... [that’s what it means in the Greek—not just blamed; condemned publicly. What did Paul write to Timothy? ‘*The elders that sin rebuke before all.*’ So he was following this here.] ...For before certain *ones* came from James...” (vs 9-12). Oh yes! We must play politics with all of those leading Jews up in Jerusalem—correct? *Yes! Yes!* I’ll show you some of the politics of that when we get back into Judaism—*Scripturalism vs Judaism*.

“...he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*... [playing politics with the brethren. *No way!*] ...being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party. And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, “If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?” (vs 12-14). That’s the original Greek.

Now, if we're all brethren, why should there be separation? That was never a Law of God. That was perverting the Gospel. That was a false teaching by a *true prophet*. Peter was practicing and teaching false doctrine. Later he repented of that. Some people get mad at me when they hear this on the tape, but you explain it some other way. That wasn't so. We can have a *true teacher* who teaches *false teachings*.

Let's see where a true teacher then will even get into demonism; even prophesied of it, 1-Timothy 4:1: "Now, the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons; speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*" (vs 1-2). We've lived through that, haven't we, brethren? We know that, yes.

1-Timothy 6:3: "If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness, he is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness. From such withdraw *yourself*" (vs 3-5). That's been a perfect description of the Churches of God here lately—correct? *Yes! Totally!*

Now then, let's carry this one step further. There's the false prophet teaching nearly true or true sounding teachings. Let's go to Matthew 7—there are those, and they quote Scripture. Remember, Satan quoted Scripture. Scripture is true, but it's how it's used. Jesus gave the warning concerning false prophets (Matthew 7:15).

Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?....'" (vs 21-22). There can be a false prophet preaching in the name of Christ, and it sounds true. You do this some time: Sit down and just analyze Pat Robertson. I think you'll find it most interesting. Remembering that he's an ecumenist, and in league, and has signed in league and alliance with the Catholics. Listen to all the good works that they are doing.

"...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?" And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness [against law]'" (vs 22-23). Put in your margin there: 1-John 2:3-6—they're

against law.

Now here's how they do it. 2-Corinthians 4—it will sound good; it will have the *tinkle of Truth*—because Scripture can be twisted; and they will say, 'Isn't it in your Bible?' *Yes!* But we saw that you have to 'rightly divide the Word of God'—which means that if you're not 'rightly dividing' it, then you're wrongly dividing it. Is that not correct? *Yes!*

2-Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness... [political ambitions] ...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God" (vs 1-2). So there's a deceitful handling of the Word of God. That's how a false prophet can have things that can sound nearly true.

#### 4. False prophets/false teaching, with a little Truth in it—more false teachings

Let's go to Colossians, the second chapter. We did a series in Colossians; and that is really one of the most important that we have. And if you haven't received that series, by all means write me and let me know and we'll send it to you. We cover Colossians 2 very carefully—word for word.

Colossians 2:2: "That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ; in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.... [The whole basis of Masonry and all of philosophy is the Word of God does not tell you everything, you need this to understand it. The Scriptures say NO! you don't need that!] ...Now, this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech" (vs 2-4).

So, here are false preachings with enticing words, designed to appeal to your vanity; to let you know the unknown; to let you know the mysteries of the secret powers within you. Sound like a television commercial—right?

Verse 5: "For though I am indeed absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him... [Notice how these words are laid out here.] ...**being rooted and built up in Him**, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the

elements of the world, and not according to Christ” (vs 5-8).

Those false teachers, teaching false doctrines with a little bit of Truth in it are going to lead you into traditions. What is the famous saying of the Catholic Church? *We believe in the Bible and the church fathers and tradition!* **False teachers/false teaching with a little bit of Truth.**

Verse 18: “Do not allow anyone to defraud you [deceive] of the prize *by* doing *his* will in self-abasement and *the* worship of angels... [that’s what Masonry is; that’s what Catholicism is; that’s what all of these eastern religions are] ...intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind.” It appeals to the vanity, because everyone wants to be important; so that’s what this tradition and philosophy does.

Now we have true teachers gone totally bad, totally false, Philippians 3:17: “Brethren, be imitators together of me, and bear in mind those who walk in this way, as you have us *for* an example. (For many walk *contrary*... [That’s interesting—isn’t it? *Many!*] ...I have often told you *of* them, and I tell *you* now *with* weeping, ***they are the enemies*** of the cross of Christ... [We’re seeing that happen again today. Astounding!—isn’t it?] ...Whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* *their* belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame; *for* they mind earthly things.)” (vs 17-19). That’s what’s going to happen when you have ***false prophets with false teachings with a little bit of Truth mixed in with it.***

Galatians 5:1: “Therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and do not be held again in a yoke of bondage. Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised... [for salvation, as a requirement for salvation, necessary for salvation] ...Christ shall profit you nothing! Again, I am personally testifying to every man who is being circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law.... [all the laws of Judaism] ...You who are attempting to be justified by *works of* law, you are being deprived of any *spiritual* effect from Christ. You have fallen from grace!” (vs 1-4).

### **5. False preachers and false teachings**

In this category we could put the Dalai Lama today—false teacher/false teaching, right from the get-go. There are two good examples of it here in the book of Acts. They do sound ‘religious.’ They do speak of God. But in both cases they use witchcraft; they use sorcery; they use Satan’s power. Simon Magus—you know where I’m going. Let’s look at it for what it really says.

Acts 8:9: “But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery...” I’m amazed at how many magic shows there are on today; how many demon

shows that are on today. I mean, I’m reduced down to sports and the Discovery Channel and Matlock—and that’s about it. This is what Simon was using: sorcery—and ‘bewitched’!. That means he had hypnotic control over the people

“...in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria, proclaiming himself to be some great one.... [I think we need to look at that in relationship to the coming False Prophet.] ...To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest... [the smallest most insignificant person and the wealthiest, the greatest politically stacked people—they gave heed] ...saying, ‘This man is the great power of God.’.... [Who is the great power of God? *Jesus Christ!*] ...Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries” (vs 9-11). He wanted to come in and take the name of Christ and do something with that; because he knew how to do that kind of thing. He was determined and evil.

That’s why Peter said to him in v 20: “But Peter said to him, ‘May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you; for I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness’” (vs 20-23). There you go! ***False prophet/false teachings right from the get-go.***

Again, a sorcerer; and this is telling us that anyone—it does not matter what the words that they say or preach or how they may sound—anyone who uses sorcery or witchcraft ***is a false teacher, teaching false doctrines!*** No good can come of it.

Acts 13:5: “And when they came to Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they also had John *as* an assistant. And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-Jesus” (vs 5-6). That means *the son of Jesus*—can you imagine what he could have done with that?

Verse 7: “He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who called Barnabas and Saul to *him*, desiring to hear the Word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so was his name interpreted) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith” (vs 7-8). That’s what a false teacher with false teachings will do to seek you to turn away from the faith of God. So then you know what Paul did.

Verse 9: “But Saul, who *was* also *called* Paul, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him, *and* said, ‘O full of all guile and all

craftiness, *you* son of the devil *and* enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of *the* Lord? And now behold, *the* hand of the Lord *is* upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.’ And immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking someone to lead *him* by the hand” (vs 9-11).

You can get a lot of spiritual analogies out of this, too. Those are the six categories of prophets:

1. The true prophet with true teachings
2. The true prophet with true and deficient or misapplied teachings
3. The true prophet with a mixture of true and false teachings
4. The false prophet with nearly true sounding teachings
5. The false prophet with false and true teachings
6. The false prophet with false teachings.

So, as you discern some of the things that are happening today, ***apply the test as to whether they are a true or false prophet.***

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

- ✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author’s translation

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Jeremiah 23:9-14
- 2) Revelation 3:15-17
- 3) Revelation 11:8
- 4) 2-Thessalonians 2:3-4
- 5) Jude 1-4
- 6) 2-Peter 2:1-3
- 7) Acts 17:11
- 8) Acts 20:28-31
- 9) John 3:31-36
- 10) 1-John 2:3-5
- 11) 2-Timothy 2:15-16
- 12) Jeremiah 23:23-32
- 13) 1-Timothy 4:6-16
- 14) Acts 18:24-26
- 15) Hebrews 3:12-14
- 16) 1-Corinthians 12:13
- 17) Galatians 1:6-10
- 18) Galatians 2:1-14
- 19) 1-Timothy 4:1-2
- 20) 1-Timothy 6:3-5
- 21) Matthew 7:15, 21-23
- 22) 2-Corinthians 4:1-2
- 23) Colossians 2:2-8, 18
- 24) Philippians 3:17-19
- 25) Galatians 5:1-4
- 26) Acts 8:9-11, 20-23
- 27) Acts 13:5-11

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 13
- Ezekiel 13, 34
- Isaiah 8:16-20
- Ephesians 4
- Isaiah 28
- 1-Timothy 3
- Matthew 10
- 2-John
- Matthew 7:15
- 1-John 2:3-6

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *All Roads Lead to Rome?* by Michael DeSemlyen
- *Sabbath in Crisis* by Dale Ratclaff
- *The Other End of the World* by Roger Rusk
- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

##### Sermon Series:

- *Scripturalism vs Judaism*
- *Colossians*

## Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VII

Fred R. Coulter

Let me mention that we are not going to go through the book of Jude separately. We are going to take the book of Jude side-by-side or end-to-end as we go through 2-Peter, the second chapter, as we have done so far. Let me just review the six categories of prophets that we covered last time, and then we will get right into the combination 2-Peter and Jude section.

1. true prophet/true teachings
2. true prophet/true and misapplied or deficient teachings
3. true prophet/true and false teachings
4. false prophet/nearly true or true-sounding teachings
5. false prophet/false and few true teachings
6. false prophet/false teachings

Let's come to Jude 5—study translation that I have done to try and help make it more understandable and readable, and hopefully a little more accurate than certain sections of the *King James Version* of the Bible. I do not intend anything grandiose out of it, but it's just something to help us to really study and to know and learn the Word of God a little bit better.

Jude 5: “But I personally want to remind you... [Remember how that ties in with 2-Peter 1 where he said ‘I’m putting you in remembrance; I’m going to have for you to remember always after my demise.’ We are dealing with a time when people were forgetting. They were forgetting the Gospel that was preached, how it was preached, the basics that were there.] ...though you once understood this... [We’re going to see how he divides down these major sins, and the categories of them, as we go through here.] ...that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who did not believe.”

This is telling us something very important: ***You can lose salvation if you turn your back on God!***

2-Peter 2:4—What he’s talking about in Jude 5 is Israel—the nation of Israel—the 12 tribes. Here in 2-Peter he’s talking about something even greater. “For if God did not spare the angels who sinned...” Angels are greater than human beings, but even God gives them free moral agency and choice, and some of them sinned. We won’t go through the whole account of everything that is there, but according to Rev. 12 the ‘tail of the serpent drew a third part of the stars of heaven,’ which is symbolic of the angels that went with Satan. Rev. 12:9 it says that Satan and his angels fought against Michael and his angels.

“...but, having cast them into Tartarus... [that is the actual Greek word: ‘tartaroo’ and translated *hell*, and in this case this *hell* is not an ever-burning hell, but a *place of restraint*. It’s a place where they are held captive.] ...delivered them into chains of darkness... [totally cut off from God; totally restrained and put away and cut off from God] ...to be kept for *the* judgment” (v 4).

Now, Jude 6: “And the angels who did not keep their own original domain, but deserted their habitation, He is hold in eternal bonds under darkness unto the judgment of *the* great day.” There’s one important aspect of the Last Great Day that I think that we have not been covering, and that is of the judgment of Satan and the demons. That is a very important aspect of the Last Great Day.

Let’s look at this, let’s go back and analyze each of three verses here. First of all, look at Israel; let’s go to Numbers, the fourteenth chapter. As we’re going through this, especially when we get to Baalim and Korah, all of those are in the book of Numbers. The book of Numbers is really quite a tragic book. I mean, when you read the whole thing it’s one horrendous problem upon another.

What is being said here in Jude 5 is—talking about Israel—that ***even a whole nation, if they all sin, is going to be judged of God.*** And let’s see why; let’s see what their sin actually was. We’re going to see that it was more than just rebellion, as you have commonly heard in the past: speaking against Moses and speaking against Aaron.

Numbers 14:1: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried. And the people wept that night.... [an all night affair] ...And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron. And the whole congregation said to them, ‘Oh that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or, Oh that we had died in the wilderness! And why has the LORD brought us into this land to fall by the sword so that our wives and our children should be a prey? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?’” (vs 1-3). Now they’re *accusing God*:

1. of lying
2. of taking them out of Egypt under false pretenses.

God is willing to forgive many sins, ***but don’t accuse God!*** Should God be accused?

- The One Who is perfect!
- The God Who is love.
- The God Who is perfection.
- The God Who is righteous!
- The God Who is Holy!

Here's the whole lesson for us. As Paul said, these things were examples so that we don't do after them. Even though things may be going tough, **don't accuse God!** Let's look at the rest of this here:

Verse 4: "And they said one to another, 'Let us make a leader, and let us return into Egypt.'" (v 4). Going right back into Egypt; right back into where they were—*abandoning God*—abandoning Moses and just going off on their own. They were in a little bit different situation, as you know; because what did they have perpetually before their very eyes every moment of every day? *Either the pillar of cloud or the fire by night! Every moment of every day!* And furthermore, everyday in the morning for six days a week there was *manna!* So, accusing God of this becomes really a very miserable and hateful thing.

Notice the reaction of Moses and Aaron. They knew God! Verse 5: "And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel." I think that means more than just bowing their face to the ground. I think this is laying flat, prostrate! I mean, you can't get any lower than this.

Verse 6: "And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those that searched the land, tore their clothes." This was a tremendous thing that was happening. As we go through, I want you to think of spiritual parallels within the Church today. Think of the attitudes that come down.

Verse 7: "And they spoke to all the company of the children of Israel saying, 'The land which we passed through to scout out is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey'" (vs 5-8).

Now let's take and look at the other side of the coin here. How about all the Canaanites that were in the land. I imagine they thought that Baal and Ashtoreths were really blessing them. Really giving them a bountiful and good land, that all of their rituals to Baal and Ashtoreth produced all this good stuff. Whereas, God was preparing it for the children of Israel.

That's why it is such a deceptive thing to look around at your circumstances and environment and think: 'My I must be right with God because I have all this.' Remember the parable of the farmer/rancher who had such bountiful crops. He had more than he could hold. All of his barns were bursting, and he said, 'What am I going to do? I'm going to build new barns and I'm going to store this up and I'm going to say, Soul, hug myself, love myself—have a wonderful time.' And God says, 'Fool, your soul is going to be required of you this night.' **So, never look to the physical circumstances**

**around you! Always look to your spiritual relationship with Christ!**

Comment was made: Just reminded of, remember 'Nebby'—Nebuchadnezzar—he bragged and boasted. One of the most important things we all need to remember, always: **We have nothing we didn't receive!**—physically or spiritually.

Here they had a chance to repent—didn't they? They could have said to Moses and Aaron and Joshua and Caleb, 'Yes, you're right. We're really being stupid in this.' But they didn't because this went on all night.

Verse 9: "'Only do not rebel against the LORD, neither fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection has *been* removed from them, and the LORD *is* with us. Do not fear them.'.... [Listen! What does it say? **If God be for you who can be against you? Nothing can!**] ...But all the congregation said to stone them with stones...." (vs 9-10).

That was the last straw! There they were taking this all into their hands—right? This is not a lynch mob, this is a stone mob. If you have thousands of people out there—and there are lots and lots of stones out there in the desert—and you pick up these stones and you start hurling them, my you're going to be out of it!

Now God intervened instantly: "...And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.... [that stopped the whole thing.] ...And the LORD said to Moses, 'How long will this people provoke Me? And how long will it be before they believe Me, for all the signs which I have shown among them?'" (vs 10-11).

Can you imagine how it was? How you would feel? Just put yourself in Moses' shoes/sandals, and just picture yourself standing up alongside the Red Sea. And it's not like this stupid movie *The Ten Commandments*. It's a pretty good movie, but their depiction of the Red Sea is really very narrow-minded. What had to happen, the Red Sea had to dry out for a long space; probably 7-10 miles long, because the Israelites took a flanking move and all went across, and they were across in just a very short period of time.

Can you imagine doing what God said, hold the rod over it and God would cause the dry ground to appear. So, here comes the dry ground and you look all the way down on either side and it's dry! Now you know why Pharaoh went in there; he didn't see the water at either end. He thought this was a permanent thing. Just that one miracle alone, if you let it sink into your brain real deeply, you're going to fear God, let alone all the other things that were

done. How about the death of the firstborn? How about the giving of the manna? My! My!

Verse 12: “I will strike them with the pestilence, and disinherit them...” Think of this *spiritually*. As we’re thinking about this complaining and accusing God, what was the sin of the man who received the one talent? Remember that (Matt. 25) one received five, one received two, one received one. What was the sin of the man who received one? *He accused God!* He said, ‘I know.’ But God is not that way. God is loving, merciful, kind and long-suffering—is He not? But he wanted to accuse God to relieve himself of his responsibility; and say, ‘God, You’re responsible for my inaction.’ That is not correct! Same way here—and God gave it to him in the first place.

“...and will make of you a greater nation and mightier than they” (v 12).

Can you think of anyone who would say, ‘God, I’m so glad that You know I’m important. Go ahead, kill them all; you do it with me because I’m such a good guy.’ *NO!* Moses didn’t do that. Notice what Moses did. Now this shows another thing, too. How strongly can you reason with God? *As strong as you need to!* But you don’t need to accuse Him.

Verse 13: “And Moses said to the LORD, ‘Then the Egyptians will hear, for You have brought up this people in Your might from among them. And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, *are* among this people, Who is seen eye to eye. You *are* the LORD, and Your cloud stands over them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. And will You kill this people as one man? Then the nations who have heard Your fame will speak, saying, “Because the LORD was not able...”’” (vs 13-16).

This is some pretty strong reasoning. He didn’t say, ‘God, You’re not able.’ He’s saying, ‘Just think what they’re going to think, and think what they’re going to say.’ That’s different.

““...to bring this people into the land which He swore to them, therefore He has slain them in the wilderness.” And now, I beseech You, let the power of my LORD be great, according as You have spoken, saying... [What did he appeal to?] ...“The LORD *is* long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression...”’” (vs 16-18). What is he repeating? *He’s repeating what God told him when He revealed Himself in Exo. 34.* This was after another one of these fiascos that they had.

Exodus 34:5: “And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD

God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy to the thousandth *generation*, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and to the fourth generation.’” (vs 5-7). But then He says in the second commandment that ‘He extends His blessings to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.’

Numbers 14:18—here again he’s reiterating this: “The LORD *is* long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth *generation*.” Notice how he approaches God when he finalizes his request: What does he do? *He uses God’s own words!* Why is that important in approaching God? *Because God spoke those words and He will back those words up*, and when you ask according to the will of God, He will do it! *Because He spoke it!* That’s why that’s very important. This gives us a good example of how to reason with God.

Verse 19: “I beseech You, pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy, and as You have forgiven this people from Egypt even until now.’.... [This sounds almost like the plea of Abraham when he was bargaining for Lot’s family’s life.] ...And the LORD said, ‘I have pardoned according to your word’” (vs 19-20). How ready is God and will is God to forgive? *There it is, instantly!* He didn’t say, ‘Well, come back in three days and I’ll let you know; let Me think this over here a little bit, Moses.’ *NO!* He said, ‘I’ve pardoned according as you asked.’

One of the things you have here is that even though God will forgive sin—which He does; even though He’s desirous to forgive sin—which He is; *He does not want anyone accusing Him*, and He is not going to stand for people going around and abusing His forgiveness and abusing His grace. He forgave the sins so they wouldn’t die in that minute, because that’s what God proposed. ‘I’ll kill them all as one man right now, Moses, and I’ll stand by you.’ No, He says—after Moses beseeched Him—*‘I forgive them according to your word.’*

Psalm 86:1: “Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul, for I am Holy; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, **for You, LORD, are good and ready to forgive, and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You....**” (vs 1-5).

That’s a powerful Psalm, brethren! Powerful

words! This helps us understand how we need to approach God, and how God is willing to intervene and help us. And He is!

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

How much different would it have been if they would have said, ‘Magnificent, the Lord is with us! We see this cloud every day and this pillar of fire every night and God is with us! We saw what He did to the Egyptians. We saw what He did to the Red Sea. Let’s go in and take the land.’ What a different story—My! My! But it also shows how people can get carried away with their free choice.

Numbers 14:20: “And the LORD said, ‘I have pardoned according to your [Moses’] word. But truly, *as I live...*’” (vs 20-21). Understand something very profound and important: **When God says, ‘As I live’ He’s basing what He’s going to say on His very eternal existence.**

“...all the earth shall be filled *with* the glory of the LORD.... [That’s the ultimate goal of God! Fulfilled in Rev. 21-22.] ...Because all those men who have seen My glory and My miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to My voice, surely they shall not see the land which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it. But My servant Caleb...” (vs 21-24).

Verse 26: “And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ‘How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation which murmurs against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel which they murmur against Me’” (vs 26-27).

*This should never, never, be translated and transferred from God to any church leader—never!* This is no comparison. Never put complaining against a human being in the same realm as complaining against God, because that is not so. If you’re truly complaining against God then you are truly complaining against Him. But one of the big sins of the past was: ‘we’re going to shut the mouths of the brethren; we are going to put them down, because any criticism coming to the ministry is like criticizing God. **NO, it is not!** We need to be able to sit down and reason together if there is a difficulty. And the pulpit should never, *never* be used for that.

Verse 28: “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘as you have spoken in My ears... [God is going to judge you out of your own mouth, just like He did the servant who had the one talent. He said, ‘I’m going to judge you out of your own mouth.’] ...so I will do to you. Your dead bodies shall fall in

this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against Me, you shall certainly not come into the land which I swore to make you dwell in, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which you said should be a prey, I will bring them in...” (vs 28-31). Completely reversing the judgment—right?

“...and they shall know the land which you have despised. But *as for* you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall feed in the wilderness forty years and bear your whoredoms... [That’s an interesting definition— isn’t it? When you accuse God it’s just like whoredoms.] ... until your dead carcasses have been consumed in the wilderness” (vs 31-33). That must have been every day; I wonder how many we’re going to bury today? Every day someone died. That must have been something!

Verse 34: “‘According to the number of the days in which you searched the land—forty days— each day for a year you shall bear your iniquities, forty years; and you shall know my displeasure *of this generation*. I the LORD have spoken it; I will surely do it to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me. They shall be destroyed in this wilderness, and there they shall die.’ And the men whom Moses sent to scout out the land, who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up an evil report upon the land, even those men that brought up the evil report upon the land died by the plague before the LORD” (vs 34-37). Doesn’t pay to accuse God! Just doesn’t!

Now let’s go to Deuteronomy, the first chapter, and see what they did. There comes a time when you can’t get repentance. There comes a time when you may make your heart so hard you can’t get repentance. Remember what happened to Esau. Not only did he sell his birthright, turned his back on God, but also he was in hatred and vehemence against Jacob. Then he couldn’t repent. ‘Though he sought it carefully, with tears’ (Heb. 11). Just exactly like the lake of fire—there’s going to be what?—*weeping and gnashing of teeth!* So, while there is life, while there is sensitivity, always remember: **keep a tender heart that you may always repent!** That’s what we all need. Not a fake repentance, so you can continue doing evil—we’ve seen that, too.

Deuteronomy 1:36: “Except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him I will give the land that he has trodden upon, and to his sons because he has fully followed the LORD.... [There’s the whole key. God wants us to wholly follow Him. To love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and

being; to seek Him with our whole heart. Put all of those things together.] ...Also the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, 'You also shall not go in there'" (vs 36-37). And Aaron's going to bring a sermon as to why it was more than just pounding the stick on the rock when he was told a command.

Verse 38: "Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there. Make him strong, for he shall cause Israel to inherit it. And your little ones..." (vs 38-39). It's just like in a court scene: When the person who is guilty is finally sentenced, he doesn't believe that the sentence is coming down. So, he wants to do something to mitigate the sentence. This is what the children of Israel were doing here.

"...who you said would be a prey, and your children who in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in there. And I will give it to them, and they shall possess it. But you turn and take your journey *back* into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.' And you answered and said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD... [too late!] ...we will go up and fight according to all that the LORD our God commanded us.' And when each one of you had buckled on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the hill'" (vs 38-41).

Now here's another thing, a lesson that we've learned before over and over again: ***you cannot accomplish spiritual things by physical means.*** To get into the land was a *spiritual* thing, and God would fight for them. They thought: 'We'll just put on our weapons of war and we'll go up there and we'll just take it. God, we repent, bye-bye, thank You.' Slam!

Verse 42: "But the LORD said to me, 'Say to them, "Do not go up, nor fight, for I *am* not among you, you will be beaten by your enemies.'"" I can add here: ***he who has an ear, let him hear.*** If you're being smitten before your enemies and God is not with you, you're in terrible shape.]

Verse 43: "So I spoke to you. And you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill. And the Amorites who lived in that mountain came out against you and chased you, even as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, to Hormah. And you returned and wept before the LORD. But the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear to you" (vs 43-45). You end up accusing God! That's why Jude mentioned this. This is an important lesson. Even a whole nation is going to be punished. Even a whole generation is going to be punished if they accuse God and turn their backs on Him. Just put in your notes Heb. 3 & 4, which has to do with provoking God in the wilderness and not believing Him. And we are told to be careful what the deceitfulness of sin does not

come against us.

Now, let's consider the angels. We're dealing with major categories here: angels who sinned. Just put in your notes: Rev. 12, when the rebellion took place—took a third of the angels; Ezek. 28, Satan was created perfect and then sin was found in him.

Isaiah 14 is the attitude that we want to cover here, and this is an attitude by choice. We're responsible for those things. And we know from other things in the Scriptures that this took place before the creation as recorded in Gen. 1-2. That takes a little bit of discovering to go through and understand and put that together correctly, but it did happen then. And the geologic timetable really shows that it did occur.

I was talking to a woman in Salt Lake City and she is studying geology, and they're getting into a very sophisticated kind of geology and paleontology, and she says the more that she studies it the more that it confirms what we have taught out of the Bible that there was the first civilization of angels and it was destroyed—and then there was the re-creation of the earth and man and his civilization and the story of the Flood of Noah. There is a geological succession: two floods, two dyings. That's how profound God is. Sin is so important to not do that God will even punish the angels, curse a whole generation, and He even flooded the whole world because of sin. The first dying is the dinosaur dying, and certain of the sea animals also died, too.

Notice the attitude; let's think on this for a minute.

- Is God perfect? *Yes!*
- Is God righteous? *Yes!*
- Is God Holy? *Yes!*
- Is there any greater than God? *No!*

That's why Lucifer was cast down. Here's his attitude.

Isaiah 14:12: "How you are fallen from the heavens, O shining star, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!.... [which he has starting with Adam and Eve] ...For you have said in your heart... [it was a choice] ...'I will ascend *into* the heavens, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... [now that can be taken two ways: the literal stars of the creation where God's throne is; and also the angels of God] ...I will also sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High'" (vs 12-14). That's a profound statement.

Romans 9:15: "For He said to Moses, 'I will show mercy to whomever I show mercy, and I will

have compassion on whomever I have compassion.' So then, *it is* not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs; rather, *it is* of God, Who shows mercy. For the Scripture said to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up in order that I might show in you My power, so that My name may be declared in all the earth.' So then, He shows mercy to whom He will, and He hardens whom He will. Will you then reply to me, 'Why does He yet find fault? For who has opposed His purpose?'.... [In other words, why do you find fault and judge God?] ...Yes, indeed, O man, who are you to answer against God? Shall the thing that is formed say to the one who formed *it*, 'Why did you make me this way?'" (vs 15-20).

That's what Satan was saying about himself—Lucifer: 'I want to be like God.' Well, God never made him that way! What is behind all the 'rights' movements in the world? Men's rights, women's rights, black rights, Oriental rights, Arab rights, Jewish rights—what is it? They're demanding something, rather than turning to God and saying, 'God, here we are, we need your mercy and kindness and goodness to know how to live and understand'—*we demand this!* And a lot of that is to undo the whole structure of the blessings and curses of Gen. 9 that God gave when the incident occurred with Canaan. You think on that for a while, because no one's going to undo that! No one is going to undo—by their will, by their power, by their force, by their might—what God has determined to do, that's what He's saying here.

Verse 21: "Or doesn't the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump of clay one vessel unto honor, and another vessel unto dishonor?"

Remember the Canaanite woman? Came screaming and yelling after Christ and the disciples and said, 'Oh, Lord, heal my daughter, she's vexed with a demon.' Didn't even answer a word. They were going along, she kept yelling and screaming, following Him, going after, plaguing—'stalking.' Finally the disciples said, 'Lord, will you please tell her to shut up. (sort of paraphrasing this) And He [Christ] said, 'Woman, it's not fit to give the children's food to the dogs.' And she said, 'Yea, Lord. But the dogs eat the crumbs under the table of the children.' He said, 'Great faith that you have, woman. You're daughter's healed!' It's the same thing here. She didn't try to become something she was not. She said, 'Lord, yes.' Now, that's a pretty derogatory statement to be called a dog—I mean, think on that! How would you respond? I've thought of that. Most of us would respond with a sharp tongue and a fist.

Verse 22: "And *who dares to question His purpose* if God, willing to show *His* wrath and to make known His power, chose in much long-

suffering to put up with *the* vessels of wrath which were created for destruction; in order that He might make known the riches of His glory unto *the* vessels of mercy, which He prepared before for glory" (vs 22-23). That's what He was doing with Israel. That's what He was doing with Lucifer.

Now you know why this attitude was such an attack upon God. Not only was this an act of war against the angels, but it was the act of the mind and choice and the sin, saying, 'I will be like the most High God.'

Isaiah 14:15: "Yet, you shall be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit. Those who see you shall stare and watch you closely, *saying*, "Is this the man who made the earth to tremble; who shook kingdoms" (vs 15-16). That's going to be some day when we see that, brethren! I mean, this is something! So, this is quite an attitude. Even the angels cannot go against God. So, then they were restrained and put in the abyss (Rev. 20 & 9) that the demons come out of the abyss—Satan and the demons are going to be put there.

Let's come back here to 2-Peter, the second chapter, and let's now talk about the world. Since we covered some of that recently when we went through the short series of three studies on Genesis, we won't go back there at this particular time, but we'll just read this into the record.

2-Peter 2:5: "And *if God* did not spare the ancient world... [[Think of it: because of sin, where 'every thought of the imagination of the heart was only *evil* continually.' And just imagine what it's going to be like when they get the super-information highway out—oh my! it's going to be something!] ...but saved Noah, the eighth [person *from Seth*], a preacher of righteousness... [with seven others] ...*when He* brought the Flood upon the world of the ungodly"—and *that's the result of the way of Cain*.

(go to the next track)

We have the specific instance in what we would call today *lifestyle* or *sexual immorality*—two specific places in particular. Jude 7: "Just as Sodom and Gomorrah—and the cities surrounding them, in the same manner as them—having given themselves over to sexual debaucheries, and having gone after different flesh... [that's bestiality—with other animals] ...are themselves exhibited as a *perpetual* example of undergoing the punishment of eternal fire." We know that the angels rained down fire and brimstone from heaven upon them.

2-Peter 2:6: "And having reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes..." This is for us today. Remember how many times recently we've gone back and we've look at the verse: Rev. 11:8, that the morals are Sodom and the religion is Egypt. Isn't it interesting that the Israelites said, 'Let's go

back to Egypt.' Of course, that means all that it was—right?

“...condemned them with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example for those who would be ungodly in the future.... [and that's the sense of the Greek] ...and *if* He delivered righteous Lord, who was oppressed by the lawless ones *living* in licentious conduct; (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, thorough seeing and hearing their lawless activities, *was* tormented day-by-day in his righteous soul)” (vs 6-8). There are times when you feel like that—isn't it? You get out there in the world and it just tears you upside down and crossways when you see all this stupidity and nonsense going on.

I know I've mentioned it sometimes, it's like I need to have a couple of old television sets—that's what I ought to do, go an *old television set demolition*. Buy these old sets, turn them on to these raunchy stations and get my 44-Magnum and shoot them all. There are times when you feel like shooting the TV. Sometimes it's so outrageous! It's incredible!

Verse 9: “The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unrighteous to the day of judgment to be punished.” Some hope in here, brethren, in spite of the circumstances around you that are fit for destruction, God is able, capable, willing and wanting to save you—don't forget that!

Now, let me tell you a little bit about Sodom and Gomorrah. Marvin Wilson, who lives near Dallas, Texas, has taken several trips to the place where there's the true Noah's Ark. That's not the one at the top of the mountain, it's the one that sits between the saddle of a couple of mountains, because it's the mountains of Ararat. They also found the exact place of Sodom and Gomorrah. And they found it this way: they were going south of the Dead Sea and all of a sudden—just like from one side of this table to the other side of this table—the landscape changed dramatically!

On one side was sand, on the other side was powdered dust! They didn't know what this was. The road looked like it went on down around, and it looked like cliffs. They went back the second day and they found that it had rained. It rains about once every ten years. And it rained just enough to move some of this powdery dust; and what did they find? *They found sulfur-balls* anywhere from the size of a pea to a size of a big-sized steely [marble]. Millions of them everywhere! as far as the eye could see! Then they began looking at this and they saw that these cliffs were not cliffs of rock, but they likewise were the dust. And they could see the faint outline of buildings. Now, when fire and brimstone comes down with sulfur, it heats up to 5,000-degrees

Fahrenheit, and it turns even rock to powder. Amazing!

Then they found the area where there was a sphinx just nearly the same form that is in Egypt today. And they brought back some of these sulfur-balls. They had them tested and analyzed. And they were the strongest, purest sulfur that the chemist had ever seen. They took one and lit it and held it on a spoon and it burned right through the spoon.

That's an example for what does God think of that kind of thing. He gave them plenty of chance; even if there would have been ten righteous people, God promised Abraham He would spare it. Couldn't find ten. So these are examples. We're getting into the same kind of conduct today.

Jude 8: “In the same way also, these dreamers of *filthy dreams* are defiling the flesh... [out of the imagination of the heart comes evil] ...and are declaring as invalid *the Lordship of God* [in one's life], and are blaspheming [angels] the Divine powers.”

Aldous Huxley was one of the leaders of the evolutionary and sexual revolution that occurred beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century. His goal was: we need to liberalize everything and get rid of God, because if we can get rid of God and bring in evolution then we get rid of all sexual restraints, because we want to do what we want to do. There it is, right there. ‘We do not want God ruling over us!’ That's what ‘lordship’ means. That's why I put ‘of God in one's life’; and that's what it means; that's what we're talking about. “...and are blaspheming [angels] the Divine powers.”

2-Peter 2:10: “But particularly those who are walking after *the flesh* in corrupting lust, and are holding in utter contempt *the Lordship of God* [over one's life]. *they are* audacious [presumptuous] and self-willed; they are not afraid to blaspheme *the Divine powers* [angels].” Now, there's another aspect of it, too. Not only are they following the corrupting lusts of the flesh, but what they are doing...

Jude 4: “...*They are* ungodly men, who are distorting the grace of our God into licentiousness...” How did they do that? *By saying the laws of God have no validity anymore!* That's what they're doing. Or, by saying and being so presumptuous, if they are religious, that ‘my work in the Lord is so important that God will overlook any of my sins.’ **NO! Judgment is at hand!** Yes! Because they're saying, ‘I'm going to use the Word of God to rule over someone else's life, but don't, God, use Your Word to rule over my life. But I want all the grace I deserve! But I'm going to deny it to the congregation so I can control them.’ **NO! The judgment of God is just around the corner!**

2-Peter 2:10: "...they are not afraid to blaspheme *the* Divine powers [angels]."

Jude 9: "But Michael the archangel, when he was personally talking issue with the devil, disputing about the body of Moses, did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment against *him*, but said, '**The Lord Himself** rebuked you!'"—that is a middle verb; that God is the One Himself Who did this.

This is interesting, the way it is in the Greek: "...rebuked you" How often does God have to say something for it to be so? *Once!* That's what this is telling us. This in the Greek is a very special verb. This is what is called an 'aorist' verb—a second aorist verb, which means *a punctiliar event*, by this verb, *happened and was completed at one time in the past*. So, **this one rebuke of God is good for all eternity against Satan**. That's what it means. Now, this gives you a clue on how to handle things when you come up against a spiritual struggle. You don't say, 'I rebuke you.' You say, '**The Lord HAS** rebuked you; and this I say **in the name of Christ**.' It's an entirely different thing. *You don't take it upon yourself*, not even an angel did.

Why were they fighting over the body of Moses? When I first read that I wondered why would they fight over the body of Moses? And I got to thinking about that, and one day the answer came to me through television. I was watching a special of the temple in Mexico City with the virgin of Guadeloupe and in there they have the casket of one of the founding bishops, or whatever it was that was there, and it is a see-thru casket. And the body is there all submerged in honey. Honey is a perfect preservative. The body won't rot, it won't decay, it won't let any oxygen in there. And I thought to myself: look what the Catholics have done to this, just think of what Satan could have done with the body of Moses. Put him in a see-thru coffin and say 'here is the true religion of God; here is the one who talked with God face-to-face; here is the one who brought the law; here is the one who did all of this.' They could make a temple that would just knock your eyes out.

And also, another thing that is important: When people go by this coffin, there's a little place to put some money. So, Satan is up to his old merchandising tricks again—right? Think what he could have done to sell an indulgence to go view the body of Moses. My, that would have been something!—wouldn't it? That's why they were fighting over it. Now notice, Michael the archangel was in charge of burying Moses, and to hide the place where he was buried.

When we were at the Feast of Tabernacles in Glenwood Springs, they had a special tourist thing. They had a special little graveyard where you could

go up and see the grave of Doc Holiday, who was the doctor for Wyatt Earp, I believe. You had to go at about a 40%-incline to get there—it was a steep climb. You had to go about half-mile to get up there. You get up there and there's a sign which says: The Burial of Doc Holiday—disclaimer: we cannot tell you exactly where it is, because people will dig up his bones and take them. So, think of what would happen if they ever discovered where Moses was buried. I mean think what the Jews would do with that. It would be something! So, we're glad that God took care of it this way.

2-Peter 2:11: "Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring a railing condemnation against them before the Lord."

Jude 10: "But 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." Just gone after the flesh; fulfilling their lusts.

2-Peter 2:12: "But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and killed—... [This, brethren, is a sentence and condemnation of second death. Now we're talking about some profound things!] ...are blaspheming those things of which they are ignorant, *and* will be utterly destroyed in their own corruption. They are bringing upon themselves the reward of unrighteousness, *while* finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires in the daytime.... [there is a pleasure for sin, there is!] ...*They are* stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you" (vs 12-13).

I just recall your attention to the report on the internal takedown of the Worldwide Church of God, and there you have it perfectly described, right there. These are stains and blemishes while feasting together.

2-Peter 2:14: "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls; having a heart trained in *lustful* craving—cursed children." Statement was made, 'I don't care if we lose sixty-percent of the people, we're changing.'

- What is it to be when we come to services?
- What is it be when we're gathered together as a congregation?
- What are we here for?
- Who's day does it belong to?
- *It belongs to God!*
- We are to study the Word of God.
- We are to drink in of what God has for us.
- We're to make this day a delight.

What is ‘carousing in the daytime’? *That’s going out and being licentious and partying and all of the things that go with it, including ‘sexual debaucheries’ in the daytime!* You’re so bold you just do it in the daytime. Don’t sneak out at night under the cover of night, you just go out and do it in the daytime. And to ‘blankity-blank’ with the rest of anybody who pries into your private life. When it gets to that point:

Verse 14: “Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in seducing unstable souls; having a heart trained in lustful craving—cursed children.*” And to have all the audacity, after being caught, to say, ‘Oh, brethren, this wasn’t nothing. Send us more money.’ Spare me!

Malachi 2:1: “‘And now, O priests, this commandment is for you.... [Let’s just say to the ministry, whoever is a teacher—those who handle the law—God says, ‘You didn’t know Me.’ How can you handle the Law of God and not know God? That’s unreal stuff!] ...If you will not hear, and if you will not lay *it* to heart to give glory to My name,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘then I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yea, I have indeed cursed them *already* because you do not lay *it* to heart.... [didn’t listen] ...Behold, I will rebuke your seed; and I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your appointed feasts. And one shall carry you away with it” (vs 1-3).

Have you ever been to a Feast of Tabernacles or a Feast of God where you came away feeling just YUK!? Just like you walked through the barnyard and got your feet all splattered with manure, and some of it splattered up in your face? I remember, as a kid milking the cows, when the cows would be eating that fresh green grass in the spring, you’d be milking the cows and when it came time for their duty, and you were milking, you’d grab the pail and you ran, because if you didn’t it would come down, splatter! Plop! Plop! all over, all over you and all in the milk and everything; and then I’d be in trouble for bringing in dirty milk. So, I grabbed the pail and ran! I use to milk two to three cows twice a day when I was nine-years-old. Don’t want that!

Verse 4: “‘And you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, so that My covenant might be with Levi,’ says the LORD of hosts.” Is not the covenant that God has made with the Church a greater covenant than with Levi? *Yes!* Is it not more important that we preach the Word of God? *Yes!*]

Verse 5: “‘My covenant with him was *one* of life and peace, and I gave them to him *for* fear; that he might fear Me, and he was in awe before My name.... [He started out good] ...The Law of Truth

was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned away many from iniquity.... [that’s how it started] ...For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and *the people* should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts” (vs 5-7).

Brethren, that’s what a true teacher and elder and minister ought to be. He should teach God’s Word. Pray tell, Jesus said, ‘I don’t speak My own words, I don’t do what I do, I speak what I hear the Father speak, and I do what He does.’ If Christ be in us, what should we be doing? *That very thing, yes!*

Verse 8: “‘But you have departed out of the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Therefore I have also made you contemptible and base before all the people....’” (vs 8-9). My! My! Is that not happening today to some leaders in the Church of God?

“‘...just as you have not kept My ways but have been partial in the Law.’.... [those are pretty strong words] ...Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, each man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?’” (vs 9-10). Then it gets all into divorce, and God says, ‘I hate divorce. I’m wearied with your words.’ There comes a time when God says enough is enough and that’s what’s in here.

Jude 11: “Calamity *be* to them!... [It says in the *King James*: ‘Woe unto them’—means *calamity*. It’s not just that there’s going to be some little ‘woe’ that’s going to happen—this is *calamity*!] ...For they have walked in the way of Cain...”—we’re going to talk about three ways:

1. **The way of Cain**—“...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam’s delusion, and *have* perished in the rebellion of Korah.”

We have three distinct things which have to do with the relationship with God, and has to do with those God has selected and chosen.

2-Peter 2:15: “Who have abandoned the straight way.... [Jesus said, ‘straight is the way and narrow is the gate’—right?] ...They have gone astray, having followed... [*as authoritative*—because that’s their authority for doing it] ...the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the reward of wickedness.... [Sin and wickedness ‘profits for a season.’ It does! Does crime pay? *Yes, it does today. Yes!*] ...But he received a rebuke for his own transgression; the dumb ass, speaking in a man’s voice, restrained the madness of the prophet” (vs 15-16).

Now, let's look at a couple of things here concerning the reward for wickedness. 'Sin for a season is pleasurable'—*afterwards* is when the problem comes! All those who run off and commit illicit sex before they are married, now they have very little chance of escaping some kind of immediate punishment because there are 36 venereal diseases, of which the worst is AIDS, and incurable syphilis, and incurable gonorrhea. It would be fun, a blast! if you stole a million dollars and spent it all. You could have a ball while you're spending it—until you are caught!

Hebrews 11:24: "By faith Moses, after becoming a great *leader*, refused to be called *the* son of Pharaoh's daughter, **choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the temporary pleasure of sin**; for he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered, as *if he were* seeing the *one Who is invisible*. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not slay them" (vs 24-28).

Let's look at a very interesting Psalm right now. This is a good one. This is most apropos for us today. Psalm 37:1: "Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart" (vs 1-4). Think of that, brethren. Tie that in with what I covered earlier concerning that He's able to give to you above and beyond exceedingly even what you even ask or think.

Verse 5: "Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way; because of him who carries out wicked schemes" (vs 5-7).

Psalm 73:1—notice this one, and this can happen to people if they're not truly looking to God. "Truly God is good to Israel, even to those who are pure of heart." What did Jesus say after the Passover ceremony? He said, "You are clean through the words which I've spoken." Clean heart—that's how God cleans us up.

Verse 2: "But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped, for I was envious at the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (vs 2-3).

Driving around in Rolls Royce limousines,

and living in great spacious palaces. The other night Delores was watching...showing some of these homes. I think it was Palaces or Castles in America—showing great, huge homes which just ornate everything. And guess what they were of; all the rich, all the famous. You look at that and you think, my! my! poor little me. Well that's when you're looking at the little ole table. Get your mind on God! Prosperity of the wicked. Crime pays! The mafia's making it.

Verse 4: "For there are no pangs in their death... [NO!] ...and their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men... [That really means he's talking about himself: they're not in trouble as me.] ...neither are they plagued like *other men*. Therefore, pride is as a chain about their neck. Violence covers them like a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than the heart could wish for. They scoff and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth: (vs 1-9). Sounds like our infamous President [Clinton]—doesn't it?

Verse 10: "Therefore, his people return here: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, 'How does God know? And is there knowledge in the most High?'.... [Oh yes, God is dead, we'll work it out.] ...Behold, these are the wicked, **who prosper in the world**; they increase in riches. Surely..." (vs 10-13). Notice: when you compare yourself with someone else, the Bible says 'you are not wise.'

Notice what he's doing here: "...I have made my heart pure in vain and washed my hands in innocence." (v 13). 'God, I've tried to follow your way and look at all those wicked out there just prospering and just money galore and everything, just so much it's just like a big, fat balloon that's popping out everywhere.'

Verse 14: "For all the day long I have been plagued and chastened every morning. If I say, 'I will speak thus;' behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me... [some of those things are hard to figure out. He had a splitting headache, it was blowing his mind.] (here's the cure—not Advil): **...until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end**" (vs 14-17).

That's what 2-Peter and Jude is all about—to tell us what their end will be. Sometimes God let's them prosper and come to the full before He cuts them off—but cut them off, He will!

Verse 18: "Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down into destruction. How have they been brought into desolation, as in a

moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors, Like a dream when one awakens; so, O LORD, when You awake, You shall despise their image, for thus my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins.... [Put in there (Luke 15) about the prodigal son finally coming to himself—this is repentance!] ...So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was like a beast before You” (vs 18-22). There are times when you go through that!

I remember there were times and I was driving along in my old Isuzu diesel and the times were kind of tough back then, and I barely could keep the thing going, and I barely could keep enough loans coming in to keep everything afloat at the household, and so forth. I would go into these loan offices where it was nothing but riches and wealth, money, power, everything right there, and I would go and say, ‘Oh, God, just a little, please.’ Then go along, those diesel Isuzu’s would make a lot of noise and I didn’t have air-conditioning, so I had the two window type, let the air come through—anyway I was glad to have the car. Then I drove along one time and I saw this beautiful, beautiful Jaguar or something, or a Mercedes Benz, all smashed to smithereens, just crinkled up! And the people who had been driving it, it’s one of these displays they put out, they died. And I thought, ‘Oh, Lord, thank You for my Isuzu. Oh, God, thank You that you provide for me. You haven’t let me go hungry.’ I was just like this, stupid foolish. I foolish and ignorant.

“...I was like a beast before You. Nevertheless, I am always with You; You have held me by my right hand. You shall guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You I desire none upon earth. My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever” (vs 22-26). Those are some tremendous promises there—right?

Verse 27: “For lo, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all who go a whoring from You.... [Those today in the Church of God, you better have an ‘ear to hear.’] ... And me, it is good for me to draw near to God; I have made the LORD God my refuge, that I may declare all Your works” (vs 27-28).

When we come back and compare that with the *way of Cain* and the *way of Baalim* and the *rebellion of Korah*, I think all of this will really come clear in focus for us.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Jude 5
- 2) 2 Peter 2:4
- 3) Jude 6
- 4) Numbers 14:1-18
- 5) Exodus 34:5-7
- 6) Numbers 14:18-20
- 7) Psalm 86:1-7
- 8) Numbers 14:20-24, 26-37
- 9) Deuteronomy 1:36-45
- 10) Isaiah 14:12-14
- 11) Romans 9:15-23
- 12) Isaiah 14:15-16
- 13) 2 Peter 2:5
- 14) Jude 7
- 15) 2 Peter 2:6-9
- 16) Jude 8
- 17) 2 Peter 2:10
- 18) Jude 4
- 19) 2 Peter 2:10
- 20) Jude 9
- 21) 2 Peter 2:11
- 22) Jude 10
- 23) 2 Peter 2:12-14
- 24) Malachi 2:1-10
- 25) Jude 11
- 26) 2 Peter 2:15-16
- 27) Hebrews 11:24-28
- 28) Psalm 37:1-7
- 29) Psalm 73:1-28

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12:9
- Matthew 25
- Revelation 21, 22
- Hebrews 11, 3, 4
- Revelation 12
- Ezekiel 28
- Genesis 1, 2, 9
- Revelation 20, 9; 11:8
- Luke 15

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

- ✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author’s translation

## Epistle of Second Peter & Jude VIII

Fred R. Coulter

We are not going to go specifically through the book of Jude verse-by-verse, but I've combined 2-Peter 2 and Jude together, because they give the same story flow and actually give us quite a few more details in it. We're talking a awful lot about false prophets, various kinds of rebellion and what God does. We need to understand something that's very important: It doesn't matter who or what you are, sin is still sin.

You go back and you look at even the first man and woman that God created. They didn't say, 'Well, God, You know I'm the first man You created and this is the first woman You created, surely we have a right to do whatever we want.' Of course, that didn't work with God either. They had their punishment because of their sin.

We're just going to review a couple of things so that we can understand that God is going to bring judgment because of sin. Punishment does not come real quickly does not mean that it isn't going to eventually come. Most people who sin, and knowingly sin, they either attach the name of God to it to give them license to do it, or they avoid the inevitable because punishment doesn't come instantly.

Ecclesiastes 8:11: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore, the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner does evil a hundred times, and his *days* are prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with those who fear God, who fear before Him" (vs 11-12).

### 1. All of Israel (Jude 5)

Remember, we talked about Israel. Even though all Israel sinned, did God punish all of Israel because of their sin against God and not accepting going into the 'promised land'? *Yes, He did!* How did He judge them? *As we saw, He judged them 'out of their own mouth!'* He said, 'Okay, the sentence they accused Me of, I'm going to judge against you.'

Jude 5: "But I personally want to remind you, though you once understood this, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who did not believe."

### 2. We have the angels (2-Peter 2:4)

God did not even spare the angels. When the angels sinned and rebelled, God had to judge them and take care of them.

The reason that I'm going through this is because we need to understand that sin is sin and it

doesn't matter who or what you are or how many you are, God is still going to hold it all accountable. And if He doesn't judge instantly, as we think that He ought to, nevertheless, God is still going to—in His time!

### 3. And God spared not the ancient world

Let's go back to Genesis 6 for just a minute, because this will tie in when we come to the section there: the three distinct ways—which are in addition to these—*the way of Cain*. This is an appropriate place to read it into the record—sometimes it's good to have things contained within the context of what we are studying. We need to review how bad it really was. Let's remind ourselves of what Jesus said: 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.' Whatever they were doing back there is what is going to be happening here. Isn't it interesting that everything we look out and see how things are developing—we have one-worldism, we have globalism, we have all of these things coming closer and closer together.

Now, I don't know if they had what is called *the mark of the beast* back then, but they're getting down now to electronic transactions. Everything electronic. They have experimented in Australia and in England and I think in one town in Iowa, and they use what is called 'monex'—that's a card, has a number on it. The next step which they are going to introduce—which a lot of people are going to accept—is 'debit cards'—you go the bank and they stick it in a machine and they say, okay, we're going to give you a thousand dollars worth of debits on this; you can use this for a phone—they actually have this in major tourist areas, which you can get, you don't have to have any money for a phone or anything, you just stick the card in, takes so much off, deducts it out of it and keeps a running balance on the card—so it tells you how much they can really do with these cards.

It's not a credit card where then you build up a balance that you pay off. This is a debit card. You start off with a plus balance and you take it down. When you run out of money you can't use it—it says, 'sorry, out of debits.' And they're going to make this to fit into phones, into parking meters. I think they going to try and devise a way where they can just have all regular commuters across the bridges—just have a little readable chip on their fender or corner of their car and you just drive straight thru, and it clicks up whatever you owe and they bill you at the end of the month. You can have special number that clicks up and takes it right off your bank account you don't even have to worry about it. So, it's quite amazing concerning those

little, teeny chips that were shown me—it's amazing what they can do with those.

Let's look at the moral side of it, because we're seeing the way that the world is today—and by the way, there are more dangerous diseases coming out of the jungles of South America which make the Ebola disease look like a bad case of the flu.

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.... [That is a broad sweeping indictment. It wasn't that there were just a few who were evil, now we have the whole civilization so bad that]: ...And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart" (vs 5-6).

Now, that takes an awful lot to do, especially when you understand that God knows the beginning from the end. Jesus said, 'I am the Beginning and the Ending. I am the First and the Last.' But this even got so bad that it grieved God! He knew it was going to get bad, because when you give free moral agency, you must have free moral agency and you can exercise free moral agency, and God does not intervene in the free moral agency. But, what surprised God was how far they went! How evil it got!

This is how the pagan societies got right after the Flood. We don't know how far they got scientifically in their development. We don't know the different things that they did, but if it's just like it is today. We won't go through the whole chapter here. You can go back and tie in various different things here. You can tie this in morally, sexually, intellectually, every other way you want to.

Romans 1:28—this is the key: "And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral." There comes a point in rejecting God that God says, 'Okay, I'm just going to give you a mind totally void of any judgment.' That's what 'reprobate' means. You can't decide what is right and wrong, you're just going to give yourself continually over to evil.

Verse 29: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions, whisperers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*... [and that's what we are seeing today; great inventions of evil things] ...disobedient to parents, void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful... [now then, here is the

key: when people reach a certain point.]: ...who, **knowing the righteous judgment of God**... [there are some of those in different positions, high and low positions who *know* the judgment of God, but have determined to set their course against God.] (Just like it's recorded here): ...that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*" (vs 29-32).

This is what we are dealing with, with the whole society. If the whole world sins against God, is that going to stop God's judgment? *No!* Let's look at it this way: let's just talk for just a minute about how it's going to be with the two witnesses. They're going to be two men testifying against all the evils in the world. And what is the world going to end up doing to them? *Killing them!* That's how the world will view this. That's how the world was viewing what was happening here with God.

You would have to imagine that they got a point that they felt that they themselves had as much knowledge as God and they could defy God and get away with it. They had to have felt that way. If there is any fear of God, even an evil person will stop at a certain point. But when you get to this point, where you're only thinking evil, you must have in mind that you're as good as God, you're greater than God; so God let's them continue in that and then brings a judgment upon them.

Genesis 6:7: "And the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.'" What was so grievous here that God had destroy *all life*? That's something! All animal life! All bird life! All the creeping things!

Verse 8: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a righteous man and perfect in his generations..." (vs 8-9)—*genealogy*. Why would it say that he was perfect in his genealogy unless all the other human beings had corrupted their way and had corrupted the genealogy.

This was brought up in discussion earlier that there is a man who received the marrow of a baboon just this past week. He may live for a while, but there may be a reaction against it. Could it be that at that time that they learned the secrets of genetics? Isn't that what man is trying to do today? *They learned how to combine different genes and come up with all of these weird-looking animals and creatures that God had to destroy!* You think about how many times God said to Israel, '*turn, repent, change and I'll hold back My judgment.*' But here is the whole world, the whole civilization.

Notice there are two things that he (Noah) had in order to receive this grace:

- 1) perfect in his generations
- 2) walked with God

We're going to see that's important, that's very important.

Verse 10: "And Noah begat three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now, the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt—for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth" (vs 10-12). That's corrupting God's way! This could be translated either way. They corrupted God's way or *every way of all flesh was corrupted*.

Verse 13: "And God said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them. And, behold, I will destroy them *with* the earth.'" Again, God brings His judgment according to what they were boasting. So, this really some mammoth, powerful things we're dealing with when we are going through 2-Peter and Jude. We're talking about the mammoth sins that God expects the whole world to learn from.

Jude 7—we're still reviewing—and we have been talking about Sodom and Gomorrah—the rebellious, impetuous lifestyle, or sexual immorality. Of course, men have always tried to say 'God will overlook it.' They went further in the pagan religions. They made sexual immorality a part of their religious ceremonies. You can go back and read about the temples in Babylon and so forth. He's saying here that it doesn't matter if you have a whole group together—and I'm still waiting to find out what's going to happen to San Francisco because it's going to happen. One of these days something drastic is going to happen in San Francisco and the whole so-called 'gay' community is going to be completely and absolutely ravaged. I would not want to be the mayor of San Francisco. As a matter of fact I don't even want to go into the city.

2-Peter 2:6: "And having reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, condemned them with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example..." God has done all of these things for an example.

I remember when I joined the army—I was very intelligent to do so. I joined for three years when I could have volunteered for two; it tells you something about the thought-process of youth. We went down to Ft. Ord for basic training, and they get you in and they always do it—just like in the movies—'how would you like your hair cut?' *oh, a little here and a little there*. And they do, they take all of it off and they give you this real short haircut. Then they march us out and they march us down to orientation and here comes the general out there,

dressed up and had his hat on, light on the stage and here are all these recruits sitting out there and we're looking at him and he says: 'I want to tell you one thing: *I've learned through the years, a wise man will learn from his mistakes; but a wiser man will learn from the mistakes of others.*' He said, 'Now, I don't want any of you to forget that.' At least I remembered it. That is a truism out of the Bible. That is absolutely true!

This is what God is trying to tell us with these examples. You read 1-Cor. 10, that all these things 'happened to them as examples' so that we don't do the same thing. Let's come down here to v 9, because there's always interjected into these things of condemnation; there is always a little hope—so v 9 gives us a little hope.

2-Peter 2:9: "The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unrighteous to the day of judgment to be punished." Of course we know that 'judgment is on the house of God.'

Verse 12: "But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and killed—are blaspheming those things of which they are ignorant..."

It says in v 10 that men are blaspheming angels. How do you blaspheme angels? Well, I think you blaspheme angels by attributing to demons the things the angels of God should be doing. And I think that you blaspheme angels by putting demons as points of worship rather than looking to God and the true angels. There's a lot of angel stuff out there in the world today—how to get in touch with your angel and all of this sort of thing. All of that is just spirit-divination. Nowhere are we instructed in the Scriptures anywhere to get in touch with our so-called 'guardian angel.' We have guardian angels watching over us, and we don't know them, we don't talk to them, we don't see them; and most of all, they should not be worshiped at all. But this is what they are teaching in society and that's how they are blaspheming angels.

Verse 12: "But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and killed—are blaspheming those things of which they are ignorant **and will be utterly destroyed in their own corruption.**"

Now notice, God always brings the judgment upon them that they accuse God of—always! Verse 13: "They are bringing upon themselves the reward of unrighteousness, *while* finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires in the daytime...."

Why does he say 'daytime'? *Because when sinners get so bold that their lustful indulgences just come right out in the open, in the broad, bright daylight, they are arrogant; they are contemptuous;*

they are going against God in such terrible and horrible ways. Then it affects the Church.

“...They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you; having eyes full of adultery... [they’re supposed to have their minds on God, but they don’t] ...and that cannot cease from sin... [almost like ‘every imagination of the thought is only evil continually.’] ...they are engaged in seducing unstable souls; having a heart trained in *lustful* craving—cursed children” (vs 13-14). They know how to work the angles; they know how to come in and conquer with words.

Now then, let’s review just a little bit more: Jude 11: “Calamity *be* to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain... [We’re going to see today the *way of God/the way of Truth; the way of Cain/the way of unrighteousness.*] ...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam’s delusion, and *have* perished in the rebellion of Korah.”

2-Peter 2:15: “Who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the reward of wickedness.”

We ended up last time where there is pleasure in sin for a season. Now let’s go back and look at the other three major areas of sin: *Israel*, the *angels* and the *whole world*. The next three are specific ways: *The way of Cain*; and *Balaam*; and *Korah*. So, we’re going to take these in that particular order:

### The Way of Cain

Let’s go to Genesis, the fourth chapter. The way of Cain is that which led to the way the world was in its destruction; and Cain, by choice, decided to do what he did. Always remember this: *Sin*, when it becomes willful, *is a choice*. And when it becomes a choice that it is planned and practiced, then it becomes a way of life. The *way of Cain* was that he was completely rejecting God’s way; yet, in his attitude was demanding that God accept him. This means that the *way of Cain* is actually setting yourself in the place of God. We’re going to see at the end-time all of these things are going to be combined in the way that the world is at the end.

Genesis 4:3: “It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.” We are to bring firstfruits if you harvest; that is true. But this is something that was not pleasing to God. I read the account in *Josephus*, and Josephus says that he forced the ground; that he was a violently wicked person and so forth—which I believe is substantially true. So, this was something that was sin. This was something that God did not want brought—as we

read how the priests do in Mal. 1 & 2.] ...And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering, but He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering. And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell” (vs 4-5).

### 1) Angry against God

Verse 6: “And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen?’” He not only was angry but he probably figured whatever he did was plenty good enough for God, and if God didn’t like it, that was tough—and expected God to accept it.

“‘If you do well... [if you do what is proper—which then reflects back on the commandments of God] ...shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door....’” What Cain was doing—the *way of Cain*—is this: You accept my sin! It shows absolutely an attitude of no remorse, and absolute hardened heart toward God and toward sin. So God went on to show him.

“‘...Its desire *is* for you... [If that’s what you want sin is going to have its desire upon you. And that’s what God did; He turned him over to his own devices.] ...but you must rule over it!’” (vs 6-7). Even there God is saying that you are to overcome sin—not incorporate it, not make it part of your lifestyle and go along with it.

Now then, here comes something else—one sin leads to another. The whole example of the Days of Unleavened Bread is this: ‘a little leaven leavens the whole lump.’ Verse 8: “And Cain talked with his brother Abel. And it came to pass that when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.”

So, we have here just the savageness of going after those who are right. That’s part of the *way of Cain*—to kill those who are righteous. As we’re going through these things, I want you to think of all the different so-called organizations in the world that do that. We’ve got the Mafia; we have the Catholic Church; we have the Muslims; we have the voodooists; we have all of these people that get in and do these things. So, there’s murder involved.

Verse 9: “And the LORD said unto Cain, ‘Where *is* your brother Abel?’ And he said, ‘I do not know. *Am* I my brother’s keeper?’ And He said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries to Me from the ground.... [Tie this in with Gen. 18 where the Lord and the two angels came down and said, ‘We’re going to go to Sodom and Gomorrah and find if the ‘cry of their sin’ is as bad as what is ‘reaching Our ears.’ There is sin that cries out from the whole society.] (So here it is in

this particular case): ...And now you *are* cursed from the earth, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you, and you shall be a wanderer and a fugitive upon the earth.' And Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment *is* greater than I can bear'" (vs 9-13). Sometimes the worst punishment is not death. Sometimes the worst punishment—as in the case of Cain—is to let him continue on in his evil. And look what happened to the whole society.

Verse 14: "Behold, You have driven me out from the face of the earth today, and I shall be hidden from Your face..." Another thing concerning the *way of Cain* [transcriber's correction] is this: you're totally cut off from God. After Adam and Eve were put out of the Garden of Eden, they could still come to the entrance of the Garden of Eden and they still could put their offerings there, and they could still talk with God. They could still have that contact with God. But now Cain is removed even further; he's put away, he has no contact with God; he has not even allowance to come to the entrance of where the Garden of Eden was.

"...And I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth, and it shall be *that* anyone who finds me shall kill me" (v 14). There was at least a reasonable amount of population on the earth at that particular time.

Verse 15: "And the LORD said to him, 'Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.'..." We're going to see how bad it got that Lamech, of the seventh generation, he slew Cain and bragged about it and said that 'now seventy times seven be the curse upon me.' So that shows how bad it really got.

"...And the LORD set a mark upon Cain so that anyone who found him should not kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod... [land of wandering] ...to the east of Eden... [clear away from God] ...And Cain knew his wife... [he probably married one of his sisters] ...and she conceived and bore Enoch..." (vs 15-17)

I want you to notice one thing about the *way of Cain*: They have names very similar to the names of those of the people of God. It's a whole counterfeit way that leads to war; that leads to sin, which will eventually destroy the whole earth. That's why the *way of Cain* starts out with the *attitude* of Cain.

### **The way of Baalim**

Baalim is a very interesting example. Let's go to Numbers 22. Baalim was hired by Balak to come and bring a curse upon the children of Israel. We probably won't go through too many verses

here—we'll just sort of summarize it. What happened, the agents of Balak came to Baalim. Baalim had a temple in what was called Pethor. Now you take away the 'h' and you have 'Pethor.' And 'pethor' is another word for 'potter'; another word for 'father'; another word for pope. So here was the one who was the Babylonian religious leader at Pethor on the River Euphrates. And they came and offered him tremendous amounts of money.

So, he said, 'Well, I got to check with the Lord to see if I can go.' And the Lord said, 'No, don't go.' He came back and complained to God: 'Oh, look at all that money, God, I've got to go. Just please let me go.' So God said, 'Okay, fine, you can go, but you aren't going to say anything more than I say.' He got up and God said, 'Okay, I'm going to go with you.' Then God gave him another witness by causing an angel to stand right in the way as they were going to Balak, knocked him off his donkey, and so Baalim got mad and was beating the animal because he didn't think he was going to be able to get the money; and then the angel of the Lord spoke through the mouth of the 'dumb ass' and rebuked him. Well, that wasn't enough, he said, 'Oh, Lord, please let me go.' So the Lord said, 'Okay, I'll let you go.'

Numbers 24 brings about the curses and so forth, and Balak really got upset. What I want you to understand is that Baalim went up onto the high places of Baal to curse. Now you can go back and read chapters 22-24 (don't want to get all involved into that and get bogged down into it). He wanted to use enchantment. Enchantments are using the curses of Satan. God will not allow Satan to come upon you, or the curses of Satan to come upon you, because someone else wants to—even if you haven't been as good as you ought to be.

Numbers 23:20: "Behold, I have received word to bless. And He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it." What I want you do is put in there the word 'grace'; because that has to do with the New Testament. What's so important is that if you are under grace and in good standing with God, under grace, then these things cannot touch you. They may bother you, but they cannot touch you. There's a vast difference.

Verse 21: "He has not seen iniquity in Jacob, neither has He seen perverseness in Israel..." Yet, we read how that God in Num. 14 had to tell them, 'Look, you have tempted Me these ten times.' When it comes an enemy coming against the people of God, then God says: 'I haven't beheld iniquity, neither have I seen perverseness'

"...The LORD his God *is* with him, and the shout of a King among them. 22. God brought them out of Egypt. He has, as it were, the strength of an ox. Surely, *there is* no

enchantment against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel. According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, ‘What God has worked!’” (vs 21-23). ***So what God is working He is going to do!***

So, then he [Baalim] went up and he tried to curse and all he could do was bless. He did this four times and Balak just came out of his gourd and said, ‘Look, I hired you to curse.’ And he said, ‘Well, I can’t do anything but bless, because God won’t let me go beyond what He’s already determined that He’s going to do.’ What happened: Baalim said, ‘I can’t do it, but I can tell you a way that you can.’ This is part of the *way of Baalim*: That you devise a way to get around God cursing them directly, by teaching them to sin. Have we not seen some of that today? *Yes!*

- Well, the Sabbath’s not important
- Clean and unclean meat is not important
- Holy Days are not important

I read a letter that is so hard-hearted that it’s unreal, that was written—stating very clearly—that because we are not under the Old Covenant there is no sin! This is exactly what Baalim was teaching the people to do. He was teaching them to sin, while calling it ‘not sin’—***that’s the way of Baalim.***

He told Balak, ‘Look, I can’t curse them, but you do this: You get all of the fine girls over here and you get down there and you have a feast, and you tell them what to do and you tell them this is to worship God; and remember, they just came out of Egypt so all of this will appeal to them. So, that’s what he did. He caused them to commit fornication.

Numbers 25:1: “And Israel dwelt in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods. And the people ate and bowed down to their gods” (vs 1-2).

It’s almost like Adam and Eve— isn’t it? ‘eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil’—it is *to make one wise and desire and so forth*. So, here we have the same thing here. ‘Why, it’s all right to do this.

Verse 3: “And Israel joined himself to Baal Peor... [Baal-worship; right off the bat. That’s what all of these things and false doctrine come down to: various forms of Baal-worship.] ...And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.” When you do sin in spite of God’s blessing, then there’s correction coming.

Let’s notice what happened here, v 4: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take all the heads of the people and impale them before the LORD facing the sun, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.’.... [Go out there and slay them and cut off their heads.] ...And Moses said to the judges of Israel, ‘Every one of you kill his men

who were joined to Baal Peor.’.... [those were the judges in the tribes, they were to find out who it was.] ...And behold, a man of the children of Israel came and brought to his brethren a woman of Midian, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose up from among the congregation and took a spear in his hand. And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman, through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel” (vs 4-8).

This man who did this was one of the leading members of Israel. The way you get the ordinary people to sin is corrupt the leaders and have the leaders teach them to corrupt the people. Does this not sound familiar? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 9: “And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.” Now, Phinehas was not popular among those people who died. Whenever anyone stands up and tells the truth, you’re not popular. I mean, even in politics. Look at someone who stands up and says that the Catholic Church is the ‘whore’ of Rev. 17—you won’t last! Homosexuality is wrong—you won’t last! When someone stands up and says there’s sin within the Church of God, they get angry at the person and say, ‘Why you shouldn’t say that, speak to us smooth things.’ It’s the same way here with Phinehas. But he got a blessing from God.

Verse 10: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel in that he was zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel in My jealousy. Therefore say, “Behold, I give him My covenant of peace”’” (vs 10-12).

So, as we went through the covenants and studied that, this is a special covenant to all the descendants of Eleazar because of what he did. So God respects righteousness, just as we covered last time: Those who keep His commandments and love Him to a thousand generations.

(go to the next track)

Verse 14: “And the name of the Israelite who was killed... [so God names *names*—doesn’t He? *Yes, God names names*—sometimes you have to.] ...he who was struck with the woman of Midian, *was* Zimri, the son of Salu, leader of a chief house of the Simeonites.” Here he was a very important person. And somehow it always turns out true. Those who are important people end up—when you strip everything away—being great sinners. ***He who has an ear to hear, let him hear!***

Verse 15: “And the Midianite woman’s name who was killed *was* Cozbi, the daughter of Zur. He was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian.” Another *way of Baalim* is this: ***You get the leaders to sin and the people will sin.*** Isn’t that true? *Yes!*

I mean, even my kids, one day we came home and they were in trouble. The neighbors came over and said they were throwing tomatoes up alongside of our house. And when I asked them why they did that, they said, ‘Well, when you were a boy you threw rotten apples up alongside of the house of one of your neighbors.’ So whenever someone over you sins then that gives you license to sin. And they justified it. I didn’t tell the story for them to go ahead and do that.

God sent the children of Israel in, Numbers 31:6: “And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of *every* tribe. He sent them, and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war with the Holy instruments and the silver trumpets to blow in his hand. And *they* warred against the Midianites as the LORD commanded Moses. And *they* killed all the males. And they killed the kings of Midian, besides the rest of their slain: Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian. **They also killed Balaam, the son of Beor, with the sword**” (vs 6-8). So Baalim finally got his.

Notice though, the Israelites always wanted to do something other than what God said. God said, ‘Kill everything!’ What did they do? *They brought back all the women and children* and Moses said, ‘Why did you do this?’ They brought them back:

Verse 15: “And Moses said to them, ‘Have you saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit sin against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and the plague was on the congregation of the LORD. And now kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that has known man by lying with him. But all the female children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves’” (vs 15-18).

They made them servants. But you see, every time Israel wanted to go out and compromise against God. And it seems the same way in the Church, just over and over and over again. This thing with Baalim was a tremendous sin and sticking point with God all the way through.

Deuteronomy 23:3: “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD. Even to their tenth generation they shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD forever... [God really meant it!] ...because they did not meet you with bread and with water in the way when you came forth out of Egypt and because they hired

against you Balaam the son of Beor, of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. Nevertheless, the LORD your God would not hearken to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the LORD your God loved you. You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever” (vs 3-6). Tremendous lesson for us.

Now let’s go to Revelation, the second chapter, and here’s a spiritual lesson; because the *way of Baalim* affects the Church. That’s why Jude and Peter were writing about it. It was right there affecting the Church at that day, saying that: ‘a little bit of fornication spiritually doesn’t matter.’ We’ve had it today: ‘How far can a person innovate in their worship of God? If they do it with the right heart, surely a Christmas tree cannot be sin; surely observing Christmas in the right spirit can’t be wrong.’ That’s like saying, ‘surely if you go commit fornication with the right heart and spirit, surely that’s all right.’ You just be nice about it; that’s all. Have good thoughts in your heart; that’s all. ***You can’t separate the actions from the heart!*** The action is as evil as the thought, and the thought is as evil as the action.

Here, the Church at Pergamos—Revelation 2:14—notice they were right there where Satan’s throne was: “But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the **teaching of Balaam**... [which is: to do things for the sake of merchandise; to take money for doing religious work.] ...who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel... [We can also say that this is also combining the religions of Satan in with the Truth of God—have to have that combination together.] ...to eat things sacrificed to idols... [I believe that this is a direct reference to the sacrifice of the mass of the Eucharist, as the Catholics do it and explain it. That is completely against God!] ...and to commit fornication.”

That’s what they were doing. There is spiritual fornication; there is physical fornication—so it could be both! How can you have it so that you can give indulgences? Indulgences is *turning the grace of God into license*, as the Catholic Church does. You go to the priest and you buy ‘indulgences’ which then is: forgiveness of your future sins. So therefore, you can go and do anything you want to do, and it’s already forgiven! That’s how they built the St. Peter’s Basilica.

It’s the same thing the Jews do (Kol Nidre) on the Day of Atonement when they release themselves from any vows, especially any contracts with any of the Gentiles for the coming year. It is license to sin! For an orthodox Jew it is not a sin to commit adultery or fornication with a Gentile. It’s the same thing with the Catholic priest. When they

go to the houses of prostitution or go to the nunneries and they have adultery and fornication going on there, it is done in the name of God; so therefore it's okay; because the nun is married to Christ and the priest is a representative of Christ. So how could there be sin? Well, to them there's no sin, just open an orphanage. That's why God is so vehement against this thing! It is something! The Doctrine of Nicolaitans or the dictatorship over the people of God. That comes next, it's the only way.

Now we come over here to the Church of Thyatira and we have the woman who calls herself Jezebel—v 20: “But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication... [We have seen that happen within our lifetime just this past five years [1990-95], that that has happened within the Churches of God; to commit spiritual fornication] ...and eating things sacrificed to idols.... [Believe me, it's going to come.] (notice what God did here): ...And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death...” (vs 20-23).

The whole moral of the story of all of this, it doesn't matter who you are, what you are; it doesn't matter what organization you belong to; who your parents were—anything like that. If you sin, **God is going to hold you accountable!** If you turn it into a way of life then you're going to be in very, very bad shape, indeed!

### **Rebellion of Korah**

The rebellion of Korah is also very instructive and gives us some things we need to learn about here. This we can put in: demanding rights that God never gave. Today we have the same thing. Just because the Greek word for *serve* is ‘diakoneo’ from which we get the noun *deacon* and *deaconess*—from which also Paul said, ‘I am a servant’—a ‘diakoneos’—‘therefore all members are ministers’—**not so!** That's what Korah was all about. Again, we have leading, important people involved in this:

Numbers 16:1: “Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, took both Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben; even they rose up before Moses... [Here's a committee, appointing themselves to Moses] ...with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the assembly, chosen men of the congregation, men who were well-known” (vs 1-2).

This is a pretty impressive crowd—right?

*Yes!* It doesn't matter if there are important people involved. This is what God wants us to learn from this. It doesn't matter how important; it doesn't matter the numbers involved. It's what's right—not who thinks they're right—it's what is right! God is the only One Who's always right—we know that for sure.

Verse 3: “And they gathered themselves against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, ‘*You take too much upon you since all the congregation are Holy...*’” All are equal so here we are demanding rights that do not exist. Moses and Aaron weren't taking anything to themselves. How many times did Moses say, ‘Look, all these children of Israel, it's too much for me.’ Moses didn't walk up to God on the mountain and say, ‘God, here I am, I'm here, send me to Egypt because I know You've appointed me and You want me because I'm so important to take the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.’ NO! He didn't even want to go. He said, ‘I can't even speak.’ So this is a complete, wrong accusation.

“...every one of them [is Holy], and the LORD is among them....” (v 3). Just because a person has the Spirit of God doesn't mean that that person is a minister; doesn't mean that they are given to do a certain task; same way here. ‘Why, we're just as good as you.’

“...Why then do you lift yourselves up above the congregation of the LORD?” (v 3). They were judging Moses. There are certain people who should not be judged. Now Moses, God judged—didn't He? *Yes, He did.* And He told him why he couldn't go into the ‘promised land.’

Verse 4: “And when Moses heard *this*, he fell on his face. And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, ‘Even at daybreak the LORD will show *who is* His, and who is Holy, and will cause him to come near to Him; even him whom He has chosen will He cause to come near to Him.... [God already decided the matter.] ...Do this. Take censurers, Korah and all your company” (vs 4-6).

You know the rest of the story. Those that rebelled—and their whole families—were swallowed up in the earthquake that opened up the earth and they were gone! So, we have:

- The way of Cain
- The way of Baalim
- The rebellion of Korah

Those things are all pointed to as the way that sin and heresy and unrighteousness enter into the Church.

Let's see something that's important here, 2-Peter 2:1 “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers

among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies... [These are the heresies that were introduced.] ...personally denying *the* Lord Who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.... [We've lived through and have seen that, too—haven't we?] ...And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed" (vs 1-2).

What is happening, Peter and Jude are comparing the *way of Truth* and the *way of God* with all of these who were coming through to destroy it. Since Satan is the adversary and the enemy and wants to destroy. The way he destroys is from within! That's something! We need to really think about that and understand it!

Verse 3: "Also, through insatiable greed they will *with* enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching." These are the things that were taking place—profound events! And I think we're seeing the same thing happen today for us—exactly the same thing. And when that happens, God always scatters the Church—always does for it's own protection. Whenever there is a static hierarchy into which men can come and gain power, then it's going to be subverted from within—that's the easiest way to do it.

Delores and I were watching this special on investigated reports and they started out and they showed the Weaver case and the Waco case and so forth, and something was very interestingly brought out: That in all of these subversive groups, the government sends their own subversive agents within, so they can find out what's going on, but also to tempt them, entice them, and bring them down. They tried this on a one-to-one basis with Weaver. They did it with the group down there with Koresh and the people down in Waco, Texas. This is why God scatters the Church. No one's going to be interested in this little group here. What power are they going to have? *None!* What authority are they going to be granted? *None!* That's why God does it.

We're seeing in the world today: merger, merger, merger, bigger, more, more—and with all of that comes control. So, when we're scattered God expects us to exercise the control between us and God directly so that we won't be affected by these things. Just think of how many brethren that you know whose lives have been turned upside down and made miserable because of all of these sins that we've just covered here; because of all of these different ways that have come through. So you see, it's part of God's blessing and cleansing and judgment and goodness that He does it this way.

Jude 12: "These are subversive stains in your love feasts... [and that's what the Feast of God need

to be—love to God, love to each other.] ...feasting in person together with you; fearlessly they are feeding themselves. *They are* clouds without water... [all can look good. When I'm reading this, I want you to think about all the good-looking, authoritative men who went through the Churches of God, that you knew of, who climbed up into important positions, who were evangelists, who had authority, and where are they today? You think about that. They looked good on the outside. It's 'like a cloud, but no water in it.'] ...being driven by the winds...[every 'wind of doctrine'] ...trees of late autumn, without *any* fruit, uprooted, twice dead."

What we are being told here is this: Those who do and perpetrate these things we've just covered are committing the unpardonable sin and are going to suffer the second death! And there are those who are doing right this very day! And God is not going to have any mercy upon them. Now maybe, it's possible, that repentance could come if they would choose so—but they *have to choose!* These are those who are beyond that choice.

Verse 13: "Raging wild waves of the sea, casting up like foam their own ignominious shame; wandering stars..." This tells you the power behind them.

Let's go to 1-John, the fourth chapter, for just a minute, because wherever there are false prophets, there are false spirits. They sound good. They sound spiritual. But here it tells us about it. We are to test the spirits. We are to find out—especially in the time when there are a lot of different ministers and preachers, different doctrines going around—it's amazing!

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit..." That means also, don't believe every doctrine that comes along. Just because they sound spiritual, just because they appear spiritual, doesn't mean that they are. They've got to really preach the Word of God in Truth.

"...but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (v 1). Wherever there are false preachers, there are false spirits that come along that inspire them, that make them look and sound so good.

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." That is a valid, absolute test! Every one of these false preachers that come along will not truly admit that Jesus Christ had the same kind of flesh and human nature that we do. They will always hedge on it. So, that is the true test.

Let's come back to Jude 13: "...for whom has been reserved the blackest darkness forever!"

They're going to be cut off from God. Whether they're going to go into the Lake of Fire and then in the blackness of darkness forever... Can God destroy a demon? *God can do anything; there's nothing impossible for God!* What is the will of God? Not whether it's possible or impossible for God to do; and He doesn't tell us precisely.

2-Peter 2:17: "These *false prophets* are **fountains without water**, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of the darkness forever." Isn't it interesting: "...fountains without water..."

Let's go to John, the seventh chapter. It's telling us they don't have the Holy Spirit—that's what it's telling us. If we put the rest of the Scriptures together, we will understand it. John 7:37: "Now, in the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and called out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said... [there's a qualification on how to do it] ...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.'.... [We're talking about those false prophets and preachers who do not have the Spirit of God.] ...But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified" (vs 37-39).

That's what it's talking about—"fountains without water." "...clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of the darkness forever." (2-Pet. 2:17).

Jude quotes from what Enoch said. The book of Enoch is one of the apocrypha books—you can get the book of Enoch, but I think the book of Enoch that is preserved today, though it has some of the things that Enoch may have originally written or said, is so totally perverted today that there's just a little bit here and there in it that even sounds a smattering like it would have anything to do with Scripture. I don't know about you, but whenever I read some of those books, you can almost tell there's a completely different spirit behind it than the inspired Word of God. I remember the first time I heard of the book of Enoch, I went over to the library and I said I'm going to read the book of Enoch. I started reading and said, 'this is strange.' So we just have to accept it for what it is here, and just realize that it's been perverted.

Jude 14: "And Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied of these, proclaiming, 'Behold the Lord comes with then thousands of His Holy saints.'" It doesn't say angels in the original—this is saints. Now, who's coming with Him? *Ten thousands*—that is myriads, means many, many, described as tens of thousands. That's talking about us when we come back with Christ after the resurrection. We are the Holy saints.

Verse 15: "To execute judgment against all... [Isn't that what we're going to do?] ...and to convict all who are ungodly of all their works of *evil* ungodliness that they have impiously committed, and of all the hard things that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" These are tough words when you really read them; it's really something! It's so powerful!

Verse 16: "These are complainers *and* critics..." Isn't that the way it always starts? *That's the way it always starts!* There are two words I hate. When someone wants to pry into your business, when someone wants to leverage you, they say, 'we are concerned.' Now you listen to that. Every group that comes to any kind of government thing, they get a little group together and they say, 'we are concerned.' And whenever I hear those words, I know doom is around the corner. I've had it executed upon me several times where people who say that. There is a time when it is good to be concerned, but when you come in, they're tipped off immediately complainers and critics, and they complain about something that is not worthy of being complained about. And they're criticizing something that they don't know anything about. That's a tip-off.

"...who are walking after their own personal lusts..." (v 16). In other words they have their own hidden agenda—they want to come in and leverage against you. That's another reason why a small group is just fine. It's not wrong to be small.

"...while their mouths are speaking great swelling words, flattering persons for the sake of advantage" (v 16). I could name names if I had to. Those coming around just giving all kinds of flattery to make you think you're something! I've learned one thing, when that happens, just back away, put the little barrier between you and the person. Now there's a sincere kind of acknowledging what a person has done, that's fine. But this is the flattery to get you, to control you, to use you, to manipulate you—that's what this is talking about.

2-Peter 2:18: "For *while* they are speaking bombastic words of vanity... [Oh, they're great preachers!] ...they are alluring through the lusts of the flesh—by granting indulgences to sin—..." That is so true; and I think part of it went this way: If you're an evangelist in the work of God, God gives you a special blessing; and God will not hold accountable to you any of your sins.' And I truly believe that's what was told almost all the evangelists that we know of. I have no other way of explaining their behavior otherwise—that's my opinion.

"...those who truly were escaping from those who live in deception" (v 18). So, we have that they come along and turn around the conversion of

people by telling them it's all right to do this; it's all right to do that—and it's really sin! They were escaping. They were coming out of the world. They were coming to God; and now they are put back in it. How?

Verse 19: “*While* promising them freedom... [And isn't that the word they always use!] ...they themselves are actually the slaves of corruption; because by whom anyone has been overcome, he is also being held in bondage.” With all the things that have gone on, we can just use a Bible phrase here: ***he who has ears to hear, let him hear!***

Now we're given some warnings here, by Jude, what we need to do: Jude 17: “But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because they said to you that in the last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts.... [they have their own secret agenda. Again, ***he who has ears, let him hear!***] ...These are the ones who are causing division... [so all the division that has occurred is because sin was discovered. That's why! And you have separate yourself from it.] ...*they are* psychic... [the Greek is ‘see kee’—now if you're psychic, you're *using psychic powers*. And it says in the Greek]: ...not having the Spirit of God” (vs 17-19). When they come along, they look good, they sound good, they sound spiritual, but they are using psychic powers and not the power of the Spirit of God.

2-Peter 2:20: “For if, after having escaped the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in *corruptions* and are overcome by them...” So, they qualified it; you're completely overcome by it. When a person goes back into the world and let's the world completely overcome him.

“...the final end is worse than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the ***way of righteousness***... [there is a ***way of righteousness***. There is a ***way of Truth***.] ...than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the Holy commandment *that was* delivered to them” (vs 20-21). We're talking about people who have crept in; people who have turned the grace of God into license; people who have dedicated themselves to evil and evil spirits. This is pretty powerful stuff!

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.” Couldn't have any better descriptive words than that.

Jude 20: “But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most Holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit... [This is an encouragement for us to do in spite of all of this going on. Because we've learned that it doesn't matter even if the whole world goes wrong. If you're right with God, then that's what counts!] ...*so that* you keep yourselves in the love of God...” (vs 20-21).

***Most important!*** And I think it's really profound that God is showing us and teaching His love at this particular time when all of this is taking place—isn't it? Keep yourself in the love of God. I know I talked to one person the other day and they were telling me about this and that with this split-off of the Church and so forth. And I said, ‘Look, just strip it all away. If you don't love God and love each other, it doesn't count. Just strip it all away; it doesn't count. If you loved God you're going to keep His commandments. And if you truly have the relationship with Him that God wants you to have, then you're also going to love the brethren. Take all this organizational thing and all these evil men that are involved in it and just realize before God, it's nothing! ***Keep yourselves in the love of God! That's what's more important.***

“...while you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (v 21). In other words, keep your eye on the goal. Put there Mat. 6:33—seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness—ties right in with it.

Verse 22: “Now, on the one hand...” This is how we're to deal with people that we know—brethren we know. I know people come along and say, ‘What should I do about the brethren that I know?’

Here's some instruction: ...show mercy to those individuals who are doubting... [about which is right and wrong] ...now on the other hand, save others with fear... [depends on their attitude; you have to go up and tell them, ‘Look, you're facing the lake of fire.’] ...snatching them out of the fire, hating even the garment that has been defiled by the flesh. But to Him ***Who is able to keep them from falling***... [again, get your mind back on God whenever these difficulties and problems come] ...and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be *the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity, AMEN” (vs 22-25).

What they're showing here all the way through, and these are two of the strongest chapters in the entire Bible, against false prophets and false teachers and those who sneak in and connive and have other agendas and political purposes and so forth to take away the people of God.

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

✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author's translation

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Ecclesiastes 8:11-12
- 2) Jude 5
- 3) Genesis 6:5-6
- 4) Romans 1:28-32
- 5) Genesis 6:7-13
- 6) 2 Peter 2:6, 9, 12-14
- 7) Jude 11
- 8) 2 Peter 2:15
- 9) Genesis 4:3-17
- 10) Numbers 23:20-23
- 11) Numbers 25:1-9, 12, 14-15
- 12) Numbers 31:6-8, 15-18
- 13) Deuteronomy 23:3-6
- 14) Revelation 2:14, 20-23
- 15) Numbers 16:1-6
- 16) 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 17) Jude 12-13
- 18) 1 John 4:1-2
- 19) Jude 13
- 20) 2 Peter 2:17
- 21) John 7:37-39
- 22) Jude 14-16
- 23) 2 Peter 2:18-19
- 24) Jude 17-19
- 25) 2 Peter 2:20-22
- 26) Jude 20-25

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Peter 2:4
- Jude 7
- 1 Corinthians 10
- 2 Peter 2:10
- Malachi 1, 2
- Genesis 18
- Numbers 22-24, 14
- Revelation 17
- Matthew 6:33

Also referenced: Book: *Josephus*

## Epistle of Second Peter & Jude IX

Fred R. Coulter

Let's read the last two sections beginning with 2-Peter 2:20—I think this is something that we really need to take to heart, because we are again going to see this happen with different people who are involved.

2-Peter 2:20: “For if, after having escaped the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in *corruptions* and are [defeated] overcome by them, the final end is worse than the beginning.” This is talking clearly, without a doubt—put in your margin: Heb. 6, the unpardonable sin—that they cannot be revived to repentance because they have crucified Christ. We need to understand something very, very, very important, which I'll emphasize as we get down toward Passover. When we are baptized with Christ we are co-joined into His death. We have made a covenant of death with Christ, that if we don't fulfill the covenant we die! It's that plain! So that's what he's saying here.

Verse 21: “For it would have been better for them not to have known the **way of righteousness**... [We're going to focus on the way of righteousness this time, as I said in the last section.] ...than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the Holy commandment... [When you see the Holy commandment, this means everything that was in the Gospel] ...*that was* delivered to them. 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*” (vs 21-22).

We're going to see that living examples happening today. I hate to see it, but we just have to define what is actually and really happening. And it's amazing, when all the constraints are lifted off—which is what God is doing now with the churches everywhere—He's lifting off all the artificial constraints so that ministers are not going to rule over the brethren so that you don't have carnal fears. But then you have to choose yourself. The ministers have to choose, too. This is why you see everything kind of like an explosion just coming up and pieces going everywhere—with every wind of doctrine, with every slight of hand, with every lying and ticking deceivableness that has ever come along.

Jude 20: “But you, beloved... [Here's what we are to do in the face of these terrible circumstances that we find in the world and in the Church.] ...*be* building up yourselves on your most Holy faith... [and this is one of those middle verbs—you are building yourself. It's something that

you are doing and the result will come back to you as Christ in you.] ...praying in the Holy Spirit, *so that* you keep yourselves... [again, middle voice] ...in the love of God...” (vs 20-21). Why does he say that? *Because this is the only thing that helps us to endure when there are troubles!* What helps you when you're really down? What helps you when you have really deep troubles?

- When you know that someone loves you.
- When you know that God loves you.
- When you know that Christ is there for you regardless of what the external circumstances may be.
- You know that everything's going to be fine.

That's what we need to do.

“...keep yourselves in the love of God, *while* you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now on the one hand, show mercy to those individuals who are doubting” (vs 21-22).

This is telling us how do we handle the situation with brethren that we know are being affected by false teachings and false prophets. There are some people who just don't know. They have become such Bible illiterates that they really don't know. And now we're dealing with skillful deception; skillful misapplication of Scripture, that it's hard to detect because it sounds so good. One of the things they keep saying is: we need to return to historical Christianity.

What does that mean? When you first hear that—back to historical Christianity—you think back to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—correct? *Yes!* But what that means—historic Christianity—is Roman Catholicism and the fathers of the Church: Athanasius, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Ignatius, etc., etc.—all of those. So, if they are doubting, you show mercy on them. And you say, ‘I understand that.’

Let's really look at the Scriptures here. You can ask them, ‘Do you really believe in the Scriptures?’ *Yes!* Like in writing the book, *Lord, What Should I Do?*—it was prompted by one man who said, ‘Would you please give me a list a Scriptures, because my wife will believe the Scriptures.’ That's how I wrote the book, it just got bigger and bigger and bigger. When it was up to about 25 pages; this has got to go to everybody. So that's how it came about—it sort of evolved. So, if they're doubting, show them the Scriptures.

Verse 23: “Now on the other hand, save others with fear...” In other words, they’re so far over the edge, you’ve got to really tell them that things are going to happen! God’s judgment is going to come upon you.

- Do you really want to fight God?
- Do you really want to challenge God?
- Do you really want to say that God lied?
- Do you really want to say that Christ did everything for you so you have nothing to do?

“...snatching them out of the fire, hating even the garment that has been defiled by the flesh.... [That’s a pretty strong attitude you have to have for some people who have gone that far.] ...But to Him... [now then, here’s what we need to be doing] ...**Who is able to keep them from falling**, and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy... [always looking to the goal; always looking to being a son or daughter of God in the Kingdom of God in splendor and glory. Remember, we are not adopted; **we are the sons!** We received the Spirit from the Father.] ...to the only wise God our Savior, be *the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity, AMEN” (vs 23-25).

Let’s look a little bit concerning the **way of righteousness**, which will be:

- the way of life
- the way of God
- the way of love

vs

- the way of falsehood

Let’s go back to 2-Peter 2:2, because first of all, one of the things that they will start doing: “And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed.” That means *evil spoken of*.

When you consider some *little things*, consider Lot’s wife, to her it was just a *little thing* to look back; after all, she was just curious. But she was told not to look back and she turned into a pillar of salt. You can go through many examples similar to that in the Bible—take the two sons of Aaron: Nadab and Abihu. What did they do? *They got slovenly and sort of ‘half-lit’ and they let the fire go out!* They figured well, we better get the fire up here. So they put ‘strange fire’ on the altar. That was the fire that was started by God when He put His presence in the tabernacle; and He said to keep it burning.

They should have gone to their father and said, ‘Look, we’ve let it go out, ask God what should be done.’ Maybe He would have spared their lives,

but they said, ‘Oh, no, we’ll put fire on’—they put ‘strange fire’ on it, so what happened? *ZAP! The fire got them.* So, before people consider blaspheming God and calling Him a liar and calling the way of Truth the wrong way, they need to consider there’s some great, great consequences that are going to happen.

Let’s come to something which is very important, and this is a very basic Scripture—John 14:6—and this is one of the profound Scriptures of everything that we do in following Jesus Christ. This is done in a very emphatic way; many of the things here are done in an emphatic way.

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am **the way**... [If there’s a way of Truth, it’s Christ; if there’s a way of righteousness, it’s Christ.] ...and **the Truth**, and **the life**; **no one comes to the Father except through Me**.’” There’s only one way; Christ is *the way*. What did He say about the sheepfold and the shepherd? *He said, ‘I am the door of the sheepfold. If any come up some other way—there’s only one way—the same is a thief and a robber.’* It says, ‘narrow is the gate and straight is the way that leads to life—and **few** there be that find it. But broad is the way and broad is the gate which leads unto destruction—and **many** are going in at that gate’ (Matt. 7:13-14) This is the way. We’re comparing the way of righteousness vs the way of the world.

One of the things that Abraham was commended for was because he was always going to go in the way of God. As you examine that, you will see that he had certain sins, but the one I like the most is where he went down to Egypt and even though he didn’t tell the truth concerning his wife, God worked it out so he walked off with all kinds of loot. That was something!

Genesis 18:19: “For I know him... [God speaking of Abraham. Does God know us? *Yes, He knows us*—doesn’t He? *Every bit!*] ...that he will command his children and his house after him, and **they shall keep the way of the LORD**... [That’s important!] ...to do justice and judgment, that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which He has spoken of him.” (vs 18-19). So even Abraham was walking in the way of righteousness, in the way of God.

Let’s go to Psalms 25, and we’re going to find that we have the **way of righteousness**, which includes

- life
- salvation
- all right doctrine
- all right behavior
- faith
- hope
- love

—and all of these things together.

Psalm 25:9: “The meek He will guide in judgment; and the meek He will teach His way.” Keep that in mind, brethren. It’s really struck me. Trying to see and understand what God has had us do in helping the brethren.

I’ve got a whole stack of letters of people writing and saying they’re just thankful for the things that they get. But I tell you one thing, when that care package comes and they open it up, and it is full (trust me) and they see that, what we are telling them is this: We love you, God loves you, this is vital important information that you need for your spiritual salvation. Then when they start getting into the tapes and studies that are there they let their friends know. Kind of like the widow woman who found the coin that was lost. She’s happy and invites everyone over.

So, I have people writing me and saying, ‘I am making five copies of your tapes and sending them out to other people. It’s going out. We are reaching out. God is helping us with the little bit that we have. But I tell you one thing that I’ve learned in this whole thing, is that if we can have the meekness, that we need to ask God for—it’s a spiritual quality which comes from God; you can’t work it up, you can’t humble yourself, you can’t fast it in, you can’t think it in, *it’s a gift of God*—have the meekness of Christ and the true humility that we understand that the only way we’re going to understand the Word of God is with His Spirit and with rightly dividing it and with loving God. That is the only way.

I know what’s going to happen, brethren. *God is going to give us understanding that we are going to*, though as small as we be, *confound the mighty*; confound the experts. I just know it! Just pray for all of us that we can stay in this attitude. That’s what God wants. He doesn’t care how tall we are, how short we are, how thin we are, how fat we are—now maybe we’re concerned with that because we’re in the flesh—God does not care whether it’s male or female, young or old, but He cares that we love Him and that we’re humble before Him; and that humility comes from Christ. And in the final analysis, when you truly, truly understand it, God the Father is the most humble being in the universe. That is amazing when you come to really understand that!

“...the meek He will teach His way. All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies” (vs 9-10). Every way of God; all the ways—but you have to keep that covenant and keep His testimonies.

Let’s go to Psalm 119:1; you can give two or three sermons just off this first verse. I did a series in Psa. 119 once and I felt inadequate when I did it.

Once you go through all of it—if you’re having troubles with the laws of God, whether we ought to keep them or not—you do this before you throw them away; and you can tell this to your friends who are ready to throw them away: David is a man after God’s heart and he’s going to be in the Kingdom of God—he wrote this, was inspired to write it—suggest to them that they fast and they pray and they study this whole Psalm on their knees word for word and ask God for understanding. And if they’re truly sincere, I think God will bring them back. There is no way you can read and study this Psalm without just marveling at the tremendous and wonderful things that are in here.

Psalm 119:1: “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD.” There’s a blessing, not a cursing.

Verse 27: “Make me to understand the way of Your precepts... [the way of righteousness is the way of the law; the way of the commandments; the way of the precepts; the way of judgments. If these all come from God—Who is Truth, Who is good, Who is right, Who is love—are they not all good? *Yes! They’re good and marvelous, indeed!*] ...and so shall I speak of Your wonderful works.”

Verse 29: “Remove from me the way of lying... [and boy, that’s sure true. This ‘old tricky-dicky’ human nature. We all have this human nature.] ...and grant me Your Law graciously.... [through mercy and goodness] ...I have chosen the way of Truth... [the way of righteousness encompasses many things—doesn’t it?] ...I have laid Your judgments before me. I cleave to Your testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame. I will run the way of Your commandments... [not just walk, not just crawl, but **run**! A little excitement and zeal!] ... for You shall enlarge my heart. Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep Your law and observe it with all my heart. Make me to walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in them” (vs 29-35). And on and on and on through the whole 119<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

Let’s go to Proverbs 16:29. This is something! ***The way of God, there can’t be any greater way!*** The reason we have so much difficulty is because we’re doing it in a world that is hostile and contrary to it, that’s why. That’s why the Sabbath is so important if we treat it as the time of Holiness that God wants us to and really fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ and drink in of the Word of God, drink in of the Spirit of God, then are we not going to be lifted up? *Yes!* Can we not face the world greater next week? *Yes!* Will we fail sometime during the week? *Yes!* That’s why Sabbath is coming next week, too.

- It helps us!
- It inspires us!
- It uplifts us!
- *God wants that*

Proverbs <sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup> 16:29: "A violent man lures his neighbor and leads him into a way *that is* not good. He shuts his eyes to devise perverse things; and moving his lips, he brings evil to pass. The gray head *is* a crown of glory *if* it is found in the way of righteousness" (vs 29-31).

Let's go to Romans 5:17 to understand why. It is so profound that when they go against and blaspheme the way of righteousness, that there is no longer any sacrifice for sin, because God has done something, as we have mentioned before, which is very profound, and to be very uplifting for us, which is this:

Romans 5:17: "For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one... [we all die in Adam; we have 'the law of sin and death' because of Adam and his sin] ...how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.)" Which God gives to those who love Him, who have His Spirit—to inspire us.

God wants you to understand this: He's saying, 'Yes, I know you have human nature. Yes, I know you're overcoming. Yes, I know you have difficulties. Yes, I realize that, but I want you to know that if you're loving me with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, all your being, and you're living within My grace, I'm imputing to you the *righteousness of Christ—the absolute perfection of Christ*. Now, that's something to really think on! That is a concept you have to grow in understanding to grasp more fully. That is the *gift of righteousness!* 'shall reign in life by the One, Jesus Christ.'

We can look at the way of the wicked and all of that—we won't get into all of that except to just give you some Scriptures. What are the two things concerning human nature: Proverbs 14:12; 16:25: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death." Isa. 59 talks about all the way and the schemes and the problems of wickedness.

Romans 3:10<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup> defines it, the way of the world; there it is, we can look out and see it: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one... [that is *of himself*] ...—not even one! There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God" (vs 10-11).

Yea, go to and fro up and down the streets of San Jose here today, ask in the shopping malls, ask in the parking lot, ask them:

- Are you seeking God?

- Where is God?
- Do you believe in God?
- Do you know Jesus Christ?

They did this in China, and they found that most Chinese say, 'We don't believe in God. We don't believe in any god.' *None is seeking God!*

Verse 12: "They have all gone out of the way... [the way of God—tie this in with Gen. 6, that they corrupted God's way.] ...together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood" (vs 12-15). Bosnia, Herzegovina, Middle East, Rwanda, on and on and on—*yes!*

Verse 16: "Destruction and misery *are* in their ways." Next time you watch this peace effort that's going on over there in the former Yugoslavia, it's destruction and misery—those people are miserable! Hating each other; killing each other; vengeance! Five-hundred years, inbred in every generation! What has it resulted in? *Death, misery, rottenness!*

Verse 17: "And *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes" (vs 17-18). That's the way of the world *vs* the way of righteousness.

Now, after we get done with all the way of God and everything else, let's come to 1-Corinthians 12:31—here's something that we need to understand. When it's all done even within the Church, brethren. When it's all done with everything that we are doing, the underpinning, as we finished off there in the book of Jude, 'but keep yourselves in the love of God.'

1-Corinthians 12:31: "But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts; and yet I show you a way far surpassing *all these*." *That is the way of the love of God.*

And I tell you what, people are beginning to understand, once they hear these sermons and listen to them. I got a letter from a man in South Africa and he said, 'I've gone over the things that you have sent me and thank you for sending them.' He said, 'I was beating the flesh to overcome and I could never overcome. I never could understand why I couldn't overcome. I was told to work harder. I was told to fast more. I was told to pray more. I was told to study more. But I was never told to love God. I was never told to seek His love. I was never told that you are under the umbrella of grace and that if you seek to love God you're going to overcome more because you're loving God.'

And you're going to find the same thing that is true: So are all the other brethren. That's why it's more excellent. You can take all the qualities of men, you can read 1-Cor. 13—we've gone through that in the *Love Series*—you can read it. It doesn't matter how great you are, how smart you are, how intellectual you are, doesn't matter what you do; if you don't love God and if you don't have the love of God, it's all going to come to nothing! That's the true way of righteousness. If we can have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, let it also be His love for the Father, His faith in the Father, His hope what the Father was going to do.

There's one thing that's very important, let's go to Galatians 2:20—this becomes very profound. "I have been crucified with Christ... ['ego' your ego, yourself] ...yet I live.... [when you're baptized you were joined into His death] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God... [the Son of God's own faith within Him—that's what we need to come to: the faith of Christ, the hope of Christ, the love of Christ *within us!* Then we can do the things that are really pleasing to God.] ...Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain" (vs 20-21). We'll understand that even more fully when we get to it.

- We're to hate every false way.
- We're to turn aside all these ways.
- Live the way that Christ wants us to live.

Now let's come to 2-Peter, the third chapter, and we'll finish here today. After all of this, Peter is inspiring them. We know that he's writing this because he knew that he was going to die shortly—he said so in the first chapter.

2-Peter 3:1: "Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you; in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds... [Isn't that wonderful? It's one thing I pray for, brethren. Wouldn't it be nice to have an absolutely pure mind? What a thing!] ...by causing you to remember.... [How do you do this?] ...*in order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the Holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles" (vs 1-2).

Now, let's talk a little bit about *pureness*. I'm not going to go in great detail into it, but in some. What is pure? *The Word of God is pure! The commandments of God are pure.* And the Word of God is purified like silver seven times.

Let's go to Titus, the first chapter, because there are some things here that are important for us

to know. There are some people you can just never convince. The reason being is that God hasn't called them. I'll tell you one thing though, when we have a pure mind, we still need to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves' because with the pureness of mind there also comes an innocence and naivety that some people can leverage to themselves. So you need to guard that carefully. But *pureness of mind* should be toward God and toward each of us.

Titus 1:15: "To the pure, all things *are* pure... [One of the most dastardly sins that have ever been done against the people of God is to take that *pureness of mind*, to take that innocence and naiveté and being to leverage it to men to accomplish what they want. God is going to bring them into judgment for that.] ... but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing *is* pure; rather, both their minds and consciences are defiled. They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work" (vs 15-16). There's the contrast.

Isn't that something! Brethren, one of my desires is *to know the deep things of God* (1-Cor. 2)—*by His Spirit* He'll reveal the deep things of God—and to be able to teach this to the brethren. That's what I truly desire. And also, I'll tell you one other thing: My greatest joy is when I can sit down and teach the Word of God. That's one of the joys in my life. So if we can view God's way that way, and let it be something that can inspire us, because I don't think we really grasp the fullness of the blessing of having all of the Word of God available to us. We can sit in Sabbath services and everyone of us can have a Bible; and everyone of us can study it, and everyone of us can drink in of it; and that God would send His Spirit so we all understand together, to lift us all to the understanding of Christ, so that we can have the pure mind that God wants us to have. That's all part of conversion.

Psalms 18:21: "For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God... [Doesn't that describe us? *Yes, it does!*] ...for all His ordinances were before me, and I did not put away His statutes from me. I was also blameless before Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity.... [Whatever your great weakness is, God will help you keep yourself from that.] ...Therefore, the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His eyes. With the merciful, You will show Yourself merciful; with an upright man You will show Yourself upright; with the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the crooked You will show Yourself cunning" (vs 21-26). So He renders back to each person. That is tremendous!

Can we let God stir up our pure minds, as the Apostle Peter wrote here—2-Peter 3:3: “Knowing this first... [something primary that we need to know] ...that in the last days there will come mockers... [we expect that in the world—don’t we? Isn’t it a shame when it happens in the Church? And it has happened!] ...walking according to their own personal lusts... [and I tell you before God, in Christ’s name they do!] ...and asking, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For since the forefathers died, everything is continuing exactly the same from the beginning of creation’” (vs 3-4).

There’s a tremendous lesson for us. We need to be ready because we don’t know when Christ is going to come. But also there’s a lesson in there for us. I’m not going to say He may come tonight, because He’s not, I can guarantee you that! But none of us have any guarantee how long we’re going to live—not a single one of us! Every year, when we look in the mirror, and we see a little more gray up here and we see a little more wrinkle here and other things that come along, we know we are a day closer to the grave—don’t we? Now, a lot of people do a lot of things to keep that from happening, but no one has done it! Not even the Pharaohs who did it for immortality; but they take out these skeletons that are there—all still wrapped up—and what are they? *Dead!* There’s no immortality! So, we need to let God work with us now, while He can.

There are those who are mocking; they did with Jesus. This is actually a prophecy of Jesus. If you’ve taken anything from someone mocking you, I don’t think anyone was more mocked than Jesus Christ. What did they say when He was on the cross dying? *If You be of God, and God delight in You—and they shot out their lip (Psa. 22)—come down off the cross and then we will believe.*

Psalms 35:15: “But in my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered themselves together; the attackers whom I did not know gathered themselves against me. They slandered without ceasing. As profane mockers, they gnashed at me with their teeth” (vs 15-16). You go back and see what happened during some of the Feasts that Jesus kept. Just before He was crucified, what did they do? *They had all the hypocrites and all the mockers come up—yes, they did!*

Verse 17: “Lord, how long will You look on? rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions.... [v 18 is a very interesting one, and that ties in with Heb. 2 also] ... I will give You thanks in the great congregation; I will praise You among a mighty throng” (vs 17-18). This is actually a prophecy of Christ. He’s not ashamed to call us ‘brethren.’ And in the great congregation—that is at the resurrection—there is going to be the praise of God. I tell you, that’s one thing I’m looking forward to; that is the resurrection.

There are many other that have to do with ‘the last days shall come’; the end-times, so forth. Paul was also focusing in on the last times. It’s interesting, that every one of these that we have recorded here in the Scriptures, they all focus in on the last times—don’t they? Somewhere, one place or other, they focus in on the end-times and the return of Christ.

2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come.” It’s perilous! If you want to know how perilous they are for some people, talk to someone who has an environmental allergy—they could not walk in this room without having some reaction, because of all the chemicals in the rug, the floor, the electricity coming out. Just try walking down the street—perilous times everywhere.

(go to the next track)

Verse 2: “For men will be lovers of self...” This is the whole philosophy of the world. What is the thing that’s taught in schools today? *Self-esteem, love yourself!* Then comes: get in touch with your helper. You can’t see your helper, but you can call upon your helper. They’re teaching witchcraft and demonism in the second, third and fourth grade.

When I was in Nashville, they had a big 8-1/2x11 book, about two inches thick, on witchcraft—you can go buy it. I’m not going to, but I thumbed through it. It shows you everything about witchcraft. It says how to form a coven. What it means to get in a circle and hold hands? What do these symbols mean? What does a cross mean? What does a dagger mean? What these certain squirrely little letters mean? And I think if we really knew everything that was in there, we would see that 20% of the women walking around that we think are just normal, natural women, are really witches! Unreal! I was dumbfounded! I was just aghast! Here it was in a public bookstore, you can buy it—\$39.95! Needless to say, that’s one book I didn’t buy.

But it all starts out: ‘lovers of yourself.’ That’s the worst thing. What does God say: ‘Love God first, your neighbor as yourself.’ So you are third! If you start being first: you’re selfish, you’re self-centered, you’re conceited, and all of those things come along with it.

“...lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection... [No! Nothing is right anymore! No such thing as a wonderful marriage any longer.] ...implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good... [Oh yeah! You try and do good and you end up being hated.] ...betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God... [they sure are] ...having an outward appearance of Godliness...” (vs 2-5). You will see

this, I guarantee you, whichever team wins the Superbowl, they're going to say, 'Thank God; God gave me this and my Lord Jesus Christ made it possible.' *Form of Godliness!* I don't think Christ had anything to do with who wins or loses.

"...but denying the power of *true* Godliness. But *as for you*, turn away from *all* these... [We're not to fellowship with them,; associate with them and all of this.] ...For from *men such as* these come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed *gullible* women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust.... [Just reveling and banqueting and adulterating and fornicating and all of that going on] ...*They* are always learning but *are* never able to come to the knowledge of *the* Truth" (vs 5-7). Isn't that true?

I mean, they just now have a brand new photo from the Hubble telescope that they have learned there are things out in space they never knew—but did it bring them closer to God? *No!* Did anyone of them say, 'Oh, God, how fantastic You are! That You created all of this! That now we can see the greatness of Your work!' *NO!* 'Now we can figure out the evolution and maybe the beginning, the origin, of the universe.' *Nonsense!* They're never going to figure it out on their own. ***God did it!***

Let's come back here to 2-Peter 3:3: "...walking according to their own personal lusts, and asking, 'Where is the promise of His coming?.... [There are some people who say you don't even need to read the book of Revelation anymore; that's already fulfilled.] ...For since the forefathers died, everything is continuing exactly the same from the beginning of creation.' But this *fact* is hidden from them—they *themselves* choosing to *ignore* it—that by the Word of God the heavens existed of old, and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water" (vs 3-5). That is sure true!

I found out myself. I climbed to the top of a 11,000-foot continental divide in Wyoming. I didn't have to climb very high. I got up on the top of this mountain and, lo and behold, there were fossils of trilobites and everything all over the place. You just run around and pick them up by the handfuls, right up there, 11,000-feet, that was once under the ocean and now it's lifted up. Yes! Yes, indeed!

Romans 1:18—they knew God once, they knew the Divinity of God once. "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness." How do they hold it back? *We won't let any Bibles into the schools. We will not allow any discussion of God in the schools. We will not allow any presentation of creationist-scientists.* Yet, the creationists-scientists know that no doubt that it was created. So they're holding it back! They

are deliberately blinding the people and keeping them in ignorance.

Verse 19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them... [Can you not help but look out and see the heavens and the glory of God and the wonderful things that are there. Marvelous, indeed! And to say, 'Oh, this just sort of happened by an accident!'] ...for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse" (vs 19-20).

Now you know why God is going to have the synagogue of Satan come and worship before our feet. That's going to be part of their repentance. Isn't that going to be something! Think on that!

2-Peter 3:6: "*And* by which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, was itself destroyed.... [Just wiped everything out] ...But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, *and* are being reserve for fire in *the* day of *the* judgment and destruction of ungodly people" (vs 6-7). That's telling us an awful lot.

Let's understand that ***by the very Word of Jesus Christ He is upholding this entire universe!*** You think of that now! Our very existence, our very life, our environment, our solar system—the whole universe—is depending on the Word and the Truth of Christ! That's why it's impossible for God to lie.

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son." You think of that! How many people have said, 'I'll believe God if I could talk to Him.' God sent Christ. Did they believe Him? *No!* Would they believe Him today? *No!* That's a phenomenal thing! Wonder what it was like to be one of the twelve disciples, to be the twelve apostles; to be with Christ, to walk with Him, to hear Him? Oh my, that must have been something, brethren!

Verse 2: "Whom He has appointed heir of all things [the universe], by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power..." (vs 2-3). There's going to come a time by the Word of God that it's all going to be folded up and made new.

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

12). Now, that's some power! Aren't you glad you have Christ upholding it? Could you think of any other person you would have holding it up? Any man? *No! No!* If they had the power to do that, oooo!

There was this ad with Jimmy Jones and Deion Sanders advertising for Nike shoes, I think it was, and it showed Deion wanted defense and offense and baseball and football, and then it showed Deion running some great play and Jimmy Jones, after he got done seeing that, he said, 'Hot damn, if I had eleven men like that I could rule the world.' How would you like to have Jimmy Jones sitting at the controls of the universe—at a whim he could fold them up. NO!

2-Peter 3:7: "...and are being reserved for fire in the day of the judgment and destruction of ungodly people." What happens is this: When the ungodly, who have not repented, rejected salvation, are cast into the lake of fire, the lake of fire then consumes the whole earth and the immediate atmosphere around us. It's going to be awesome! It won't affect the sons of God. Why? *Because we're going to be spirit beings!* And God is going to purge everything that there was of the physical earth; purge everything that there was of all human activity—good and bad—and then He's going create a 'new heaven and new earth wherein there is no sea'; but where there is righteousness! And then it's going to be fit for New Jerusalem. Now Peter did not have the understanding of Revelation at this point, so he kind of kaleidoscopes these events together.

Verse 8: "Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you; that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This is where people get the 7,000-year plan, especially where you have in Rev. 20 about we will rule and reign with Christ a thousand years, picturing the Millennial Sabbath.

However, if you go back and try and construct the time out of chronology—which you can—and Archbishop Usher did this and he came up with a chronology that Christ was going to return in 2004 (I believe that's the correct date that he set). Well, we know it's not going to be 2004, because Christ said 'no man knows the day.' So it isn't going to be.

Now, consider this within every chronology: So-and-so lived to be so long and begat so-and-so and lived to be, say, 500-years and he died. Did he die on the day of his 500<sup>th</sup> birthday? Did he die two days before he was 501? How many months slide-time do you have? *Eleven!* So there's an average of six-months slide-time on every genealogy that you go through. So, though you can layout genealogies and you can get things fairly accurate, unless you know precisely the exact age of the individual, you

don't know how much slack-time there is involved in it. So, God has already built in plenty of time that's necessary to finish the time to get to what He knows is 6,000-years.

Verse 9: "The Lord is not delaying the promise of *His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, *He* is longsuffering toward us..." Some people got made because Christ didn't return in 1844, 1918, 1947, 1975, 1988. There was book put out in 1986 that said '88 reasons why Jesus Christ is going to return Feast of Trumpets 1988'—did any of you ever see that book? Quite a book! Well, we're still here, He hasn't returned! He's doing this because He's giving us time—whatever time there is!

"...not desiring *that* anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (v 9). That's why! God can choose when He wants to—right? *Yes!* God is not going to come at the demand of any man!

Verse 10: "However, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the universe itself will disappear... [Here's where Peter brings all the forces together. He didn't understand the difference there of the thousand years as we have in Rev. 20.] ...with a mighty roar... [Now there's the inversion of 'big bang'—right? *Yes!*] ...and the elements will be dissolved, burning with intense heat, and the earth and the works in it will be burned up. Since all these things are *going* to be destroyed..." (vs 10-11).

He's giving this so we can understand something. You think about this the next time you watch a special on volcanoes and you see all this lava burping and rolling down. It shows some that specialize in going up there and they have to have this special protection so they can withstand 2,000-degrees. They go dip out some of the hot lava. You think: how long would you last in the lava? And then you have a good idea of what the lake of fire is going to be like. I know every time I see those it just sends chills down my spine! I can almost feel the heat coming out of the television set. Now, this is not my version of Dante's *Inferno*! Please understand, but this is trying to get a reality of what it's going to be like.

"...what kind of persons ought you to be in Holy conduct and Godliness" (v 11). Remember, there's going to be a time when it's going to be too late. Remember Lazarus and the rich man. The rich man said, 'Oh, Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord!' Sorry, there's a great gulf fixed between us and you. Too late! At the lake of fire there's going to be what? *Weeping and gnashing of teeth! Too late!*

"While you are looking forward to and striving for the coming of the Day of God, during

which *day* the heavens, being on fire, will be destroyed, and *the* elements, burning with intense heat, will melt?... [Man! He really has gotten on to that here—hasn't he? *Yes!*] ...But according to His promise, we are expecting a new heaven and a new earth... [So he understood that after that it's coming] ...in which **righteousness dwells**.... [And that's where we want to be, brethren.] ...For this reason, beloved, *since* you are anticipating these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless" (vs 12-14).

Let's see what the Apostle Paul said about that and what we need to be doing constantly, on an ongoing basis. We've got enough of our own problems and difficulties going along, that we need to be inspired on the Sabbath. I tell you what, brethren, if we can't come to services on the Sabbath and be inspired and uplifted, what are you going to do the rest of the week?

Philippians 3:7: "Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ." You sit down and think about that sometime yourself. What is that I really want to keep? If you have Christ, do you not have everything? If you have the Holy Spirit, do you not have everything? Do you not have more than the richest person in the world, who in his own secret little world is lonely and miserable and shriveled up? *Yes!*

Verse 8: "But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung ['skubalon'] that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him... [that's what we want, brethren] ...not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by* the faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith... [that you can be perfect and Holy and blameless—no fault!] ...That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (vs 8-10).

I guess Paul went through so many things, I still have a hard time grasping that. That he said, 'being conformed to His death'; rejoicing with all the suffering that he went through. My! My! He sure had a good grasp of it—didn't he?

Verse 11: "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving... [this is what we need to do on a daily basis; on a weekly basis] ...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained..." (vs 11-13). No one has it made—even the Apostle Paul didn't have it made.

I remember one man who claimed to be an apostle, and I was sitting in the Bible study when he said it—he said: 'You know, I've been faithful for so long and I've overcome so much that Satan has no more interest in me.' And guess what? BAM! Satan came and got him. Not like the Apostle Paul—he says 'I haven't made it yet.'

"...but *this* one thing *I do*—... [this is what he's doing] ...forgetting the things that are behind... [you've got to forget the past; you've got to forget the sins; you repent of them, but you've got to put them away] ...and reaching forth to the things that are ahead" (v 13).

- eternal life
- spirit, glorious being
- son and daughter of God
- living in New Jerusalem
- seeing God the Father face-to-face

Verse 14: "**I press toward *the* goal** for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.... [Then he tells you how to be perfect]: ...So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind.... [If you're striving with the love of God in you—and the Holy Spirit—you're perfect in God's eyes! Even with all your weakness! Isn't that marvelous? *That's great! That encourages me!*] (Then he gives this promise): ...And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you" (vs 14-15).

God is the One Who reveals the inner sins of your mind so that you can repent of them and get rid of them. Isn't that marvelous? ***The graciousness of God leads you to repentance.*** So when you have this inner struggle in overcoming, God is there revealing it so you can overcome. People in the world, without God's Spirit, don't have that same bell—they just don't! Nothing bothers them. Everything is just fine. Once in while someone with some conscience it would bother them; but that's a tremendous thing.

That's what the Apostle Peter is saying here, too. 2-Peter 3:14: "...be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless. And bear in mind that the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation... [that's what God wants through it all—through all the examples of everything] ...exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, also wrote to you; also, as in all his epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand... [some of them are] ...which the ignorant also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction" (vs 14-16). So, if you don't properly put it together, you're going to end up destroying yourself.]

Verse 17: "Now therefore, beloved, *since* you know this in advance, be guarding yourselves

against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones... [all of those that we read about in 2-Peter and Jude, to lead people astray.] ...*and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. AMEN” (vs 17-18).

***So that’s something!***

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

✓ Exception: 1& 2-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter—author’s translation

### Scriptural References

- 1) 2 Peter 2:20-22
- 2) Jude 20-25
- 3) 2 Peter 2:2
- 4) John 14:6
- 5) Genesis 18:19
- 6) Psalm 25:9-10
- 7) Psalm 119:1, 27, 29-35
- 8) Proverbs 16:29-31
- 9) Romans 5:17
- 10) Proverbs 14:12
- 11) Proverbs 16:25
- 12) Romans 3:10-18
- 13) 1 Corinthians 12:31
- 14) Galatians 2:20-21
- 15) 2 Peter 3:1-2
- 16) Titus 1:15-16
- 17) Psalm 35:18:21-26
- 18) 2 Peter 3:3-4
- 19) Psalm 35:15-18
- 20) 2 Timothy 3:1-7
- 21) 2 Peter 3:3-5
- 22) Romans 1:18-20
- 23) 2 Peter 3:6-7
- 24) Hebrews 1:1-3, 10-12
- 25) 2 Peter 3:7-14
- 26) Philippians 3:7-15
- 27) 2 Peter 3:14-18

### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 6
- Matthew 7:13-14
- Isaiah 59
- Genesis 6
- 1 Corinthians 13, 2
- Psalm 22
- Hebrews 2
- Revelation 20

### Also referenced:

Book: *Lord What Shall I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Love*



***Christian Biblical Church of God Offices:***

***United States***

Post Office Box 1442  
Hollister, California 95024-1442

***Canada***

Post Office Box 125  
Brockville, Ontario  
K6V 5V2 Canada

***Australia***

GPO 1574  
Sydney 2001  
Australia

***United Kingdom***

Post Office Box 6144  
Kings Langley WD4 4DY  
United Kingdom

***New Zealand***

Post Office Box 8217  
Cherrywood  
Tauranga 3145  
New Zealand

***Republic of South Africa***

Post Office Box 494  
Frankfort 9830  
Rep. of South Africa

***La Verdad de Dios***

[www.laverdadedios.org](http://www.laverdadedios.org)  
Post Office Box 831241  
San Antonio, Texas 78283

[www.truthofgod.org](http://www.truthofgod.org)  
[www.churchathome.org](http://www.churchathome.org)  
[www.afaithfulversion.org](http://www.afaithfulversion.org)