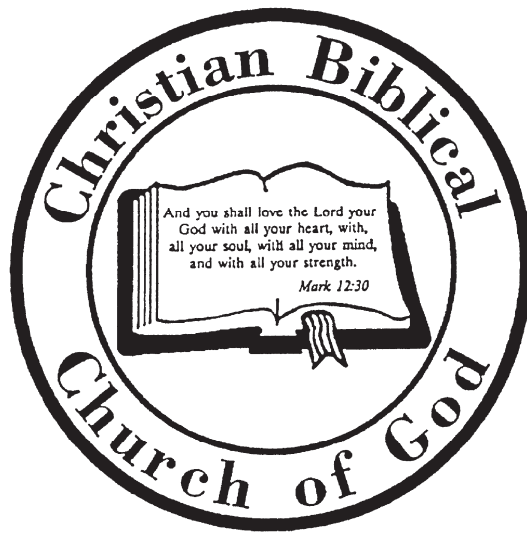


Rewards of God



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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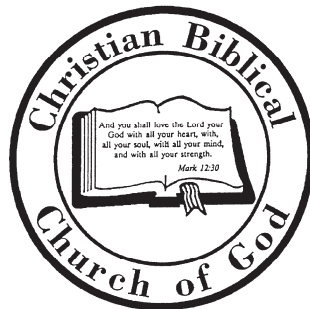
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Rewards of God

Series of 3 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

Date

- ☐ Rewards of God I
- ☐ Rewards of God II
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Rewards of God

Forward

The transcript book, Rewards of God, is composed of three sermon transcripts. These sermons were given by Mr. Fred R. Coulter, a minister of Jesus Christ for over 50 years, and cover in-depth the promises given by God. The reader will learn how important the promise of being in the first resurrection: Of just how great that promise is, and how the second resurrection dims in comparison with the first.

The first transcript, “Rewards of God I – Rewards earned for Good or for Evil,” focuses on how God determines what He will do with us, and for us, and to us. Important things also mentioned are:

- A reward is something that is given whereas a wage is something that you earn.
- One does not bargain with God by saying, “God, if You do this, I’ll do that.”
- People do not always know when a reward for their actions will come or a punishment will come for their actions – but assuredly in time they will receive it.
- People have free moral agency to make choices and do what they will do, and they are limited in what they do by death.
- God does not require something of men that He Himself has not first done.

The second transcript, “Rewards of God II – Receive Your Full Reward,” explains how God uses man’s free moral agency and choices made by men to determine what reward men will receive. Additionally, why the first resurrection is a better resurrection is covered. Important things also mentioned are:

- There are church’s that limit the reward that one can receive from God.
- To have the reward from God steadfast one must always love God with all their heart, mind, soul and being, and always look to Christ.
- In voluntary worshipping of angels, it involves not an angel of God because God’s angels do not let anyone worship them. The worshipping of angels is demon worship, demon spirituality and demon involvement.

The third sermon transcript, “Rewards of God III – Blessings of the First Resurrection,” gives attention to what God expects one to do in their lives to qualify for the first resurrection. Important points also covered are:

- There is conflict between living God’s Way or living the world’s way. If one is not having conflict with the world, maybe something is wrong in how you are living.
- Satan runs the world—sooner or later Satan is going to try to cause you to lose hope.
- People are to watch their spiritual condition more than the world conditions.

- Salvation is not between God and the Church and the individual. Salvation is between God and the individual.

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

Rewards of God I

Rewards Earned for Good or for Evil

Fred R. Coulter

I talked to a person one time who said, 'Why should I expend any energy at all for salvation, because after all, I'm going to be saved in the second resurrection?' That's quite a startling statement! He was a brave soul to mention it, but there are some who think it, but never express it.

- Is it worth it to be in the first resurrection?
That's another way of framing the same question!
- What is the reward of the firstfruits?

I think we're going to find this very, very provocative, interesting and some other things that perhaps we haven't really understood before.

- Why should a person rejoice in tribulation?
- Have you never had any tribulation in your life?
- Why should we enjoy being called to a life of tribulation?

Remember, Jesus said, '*In the world you will have tribulation; be of good cheer, I've overcome the world.*'

- What is it that God is going to give us—or offer us—that's going to make it all worthwhile?
- How do we know what it is?
- How can we work for it, if that is the case?

So, let's talk about rewards! We've heard about rewards, the reward of the saved. We've heard about the things that Jesus has said about reward.

First of all, we need to understand that there are the rewards of the wicked, and there are also the rewards of the righteous. Let's define a reward: *something that is different than you expect!* It's a little different than a wage.

- **a wage** is something that you *earn*
- **a reward** is something that is *given*

You can earn a reward in the sense that your own works will do a lot to help; however, you can't determine what that reward is going to be by your own determination, by saying, 'God, if You do this, I'll do that.' ***We don't bargain with God on that basis!***

Here we find some very interesting things concerning God's way; Psalm 109:1: "O God of my praise, do not keep silent, for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a

lying tongue" (vs 1-2). *That could also be a prophecy of what Jesus went through!*

When you stop and think about it, what was it that Jesus really went through? *That's another whole topic!* Lot's of times people feel this way, just like in v 2.

Verse 3: "And they surrounded me with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause. In return for my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer. And they have rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love. Set a wicked man over him, and let an adversary stand at his right hand" (vs 3-6).

That's getting into the reward of the wicked. There's another place where it says, 'O Lord, surely You have set them in slippery place,' but only when he went into the house of God to understand it.

Psalm 94:1: "O LORD God to whom vengeance belongs, O God, to whom vengeance belongs, show Yourself. Lift up Yourself, Judge of the earth; **render recompense**... [reward] ...**to the proud**. How long shall the wicked, O LORD, how long shall the wicked exult?" (vs 1-3)—*or triumph!*

This is part of the problem that people are confronted with:

- Is it worth it to keep God's Laws? *They are not looking at it in the way that they ought to!*
- Is it worth it to go through the trials that we go through?
- What good is going to do in the long run?

That's all part of the things that you may go through!

Psalm 91:8: "Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked." *So, the wicked have their reward!*

Sometimes the reward or the penalty doesn't come when we think that it ought to. ***But it surely is on its way!*** If you see these things happen to the wicked, then also look at the reciprocal. God's promises to you are also going to be fulfilled. ***God's way for you is also going to be done!***

Prov. 11—again we see this reward of the wicked and the reward of the righteous, contrasted back and forth. Here's one of the promises:

Proverbs 11:17: "The merciful man does good to his own soul, but *he who is cruel* **troubles**

his own flesh.”

We're see a lot of that today. There are people who are just cruel, not only to other people but to themselves in very vicious ways. Some of that gets down into disfigurement of the body, tattooing, walking on coals and things like that.

Verse 18: “The wicked makes a deceitful work, **but one sowing righteousness has a sure reward.**” *In this case, the reward is something you don't expect!*

When we get down to it, we will get close to what the reward is, but we won't be able to say exactly what it is.

- God is the One Who is going to give it!
- God is the One Who is going to provide it!
- God is the One Who is going to make it sure!

Verse 19: “As righteousness *tends* to life, so one pursuing evil *pursues* it to his own death.” *That certainly is absolutely true in the way that God has set it up!*

God told us to choose life, or to choose death. Let's see how this contrasted. Let's see how this bears an awful lot on what we do, and how we do it! It bears an awful lot:

- on our attitude toward God
- on our willingness toward God
- on our love toward God

or the lack thereof! Rom. 2 tells us how this is all tied to:

- our own thoughts
- our own attitudes
- our own way

It's very, very important in God's determining what He will do with us, and for us, and to us!

Romans 2:1: “Therefore, you are without excuse, O man, 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.”

I think we need to understand very, very deeply that human beings by nature are evil. In other words, most people are willing to accept for a human standard, partly good, partly evil and hopefully the good will come forth and that will do more than the evil.

That's the way that human nature is. However, there is no such thing as a truly righteous person in the sense that God is righteous, unless God gives that righteousness. We are not capable of

ourselves or with any might, will or self-strength to make ourselves righteous. That's the whole story of Job. As I mentioned before, the first time I read Job I thought God was wrong. I couldn't understand that.

But the biggest problem that you have—and you see this time and again—those people who stand up and do all the condemning, they've got a lot of skeletons in their closet. This is just a truism in life. The reason is that God is going to do the judging. Granted, we have to judge ourselves before God, but we take care of ourselves before God.

Verse 2: “But we know that the judgment of God is according to Truth upon those who commit such things.” *All the things that are listed in Rom. 1 that God is going to do!*

You can get a real good idea of what is going to happen in society. How long ago was it that we said that San Francisco was going to become the first AIDS ghost city in America? It's overburdened with crime, AIDS and it's going to fall on its own weight. Wait and see! *God will do it!*

Verse 3: “Now, do you think yourself, O man... [any human being] ...whoever is judging those who commit such things, and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God?”

God's judgment comes into the reward aspect of what has given, what God gives, whether for good or evil!

Verse 4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance**?” *That's quite a profound statement right there!*

It is ***God's goodness and grace*** that leads you to repentance. ***The Holy Spirit convicts you of sin!*** You don't know what sin is until God reveals that to you. It's by God's grace that He reveals this to you, that it is sin. So, it's God's goodness that leads you to repentance.

What makes you want to repent, other than the fact that you got caught? Just take the average person in the world, not convicted of God's Spirit, not having God's Holy Spirit. If they do something that is wrong, are they willing to repent? *No! They're just sorry that they got caught!* You can see that time and time again!

So, Paul is saying here, ‘Don't get so high and mighty in your thoughts and condemnations and think that you're so good. Because it is:

- God has called you
- God has brought you to repentance
- God that has done this for you

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” (vs 5-6).

We’re going to find that with reward, that works or deeds—same Greek word ‘ergon’—which means works:

- What you’re producing in your life?
- What you do?
- How you do it?
- What is it that God has to control?
Everything! The infinite and the finite!

Since He’s given free moral agency and choice to human beings. When you give choice, then you have to have parameters beyond which that choice cannot go, but still have it full and freely operating within those parameters.

- What is the parameter that God has given to human beings to allow choice? *His laws and commandments!*
- What goes along with that? *Choice, faith and belief!*
- What is the parameter, the outer limit of all this? *Death!*

Death is the limit that God has given on our choices! We can operate within that—for good or evil—to the point of death. That’s so that God is still in control, though He gives free moral agency. Otherwise He wouldn’t command us to choose.

Here we have attitude and works all involved in God’s judgment for a reward!

Verse 7: “On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works...”—*well-doing, not the ‘do-gooders’ of the world*, but well-doing according to God’s will and God’s way.

“...are seeking... [constantly doing] ...glory and honor and immortality—eternal life... [that is what God is going to give] ...on the other hand, to those who are contentious and **who disobey the Truth...**” (vs 7-8)—*which is a whole sermon in itself!*

God’s Word is Truth. Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.’ All of that ties in with it.

“...but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the Jew* first, and of *the Greek*” (vs 8-9). *God is no respecter of persons!* We’re going to see that:

- there are rewards in this physical life

- there are rewards in the spiritual life to come
- there are rewards and blessings for good, for what we do
- there are rewards and cursings for evil that we do

In between all of that comes the trial that the Christian has to go through, which also results in great reward!

Verse 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the Jew* first, and to *the Greek*, because there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned within *the Law* shall be judged by *the Law*” (vs 10-12). *The wages of sin is death!*

Verse 13: “Because the hearers of the Law are not just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified.” *In all of that comes the situation where that there is a matter of:*

- choice
- belief
- faith
- attitude
- works, and also degree of works

All put together! This is something that is not very easy to separate out. It all depends on how we yield ourselves to God.

We find something that’s very important in God’s way. He said to Abraham, ***‘I will be your exceeding great reward’*** (Gen. 15:1).

1-Sam. 24—here we’re going to find the comparison of the rewarding of evil for good. This was at a time when David was on the ascendancy, while Saul was still chasing him.

1-Samuel 24:1: “And it came to pass when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, they told him, saying, ‘Behold, David *is* in the wilderness of En Gedi.’ And Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men upon the front of the rocks of the wild goats” (vs 1-2).

Here’s David who is supposed to be very righteous, a man after God’s heart, having been given the Spirit of God already, to be anointed as king by the prophet Samuel.

- What is David doing?
- What kind of reward does David have so far?
- *He’s being chased all over Southern Palestine!*

He's being chased by King Saul!

The Springs of En Gedi are very interesting and really very beautiful. However, it's in the middle of a desert! It is dry and hot; that's why it says, "...the rocks of the wild goats." Have you ever tried to follow a wild goat around? *This is not great living!*

Verse 3: "And he came to the folds of the flock on the way where there *was* a cave. And Saul went in to cover his feet.... [to take care of a normal bodily process] ...And David and his men remained in the side *chambers* of the cave. And the men of David said to him, 'Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, "Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand so that you may do to him as it shall seem good to you."' And David arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe secretly" (vs 3-4).

Imagine how sharp that sword had to be! Have you ever tried to cut cloth with a butcher knife? It would make a huge mess! But this was so sharp that David just reached over and swiped and it fell to the ground, and Saul didn't even know it. Can you imagine how softly they had to be breathing? Just picture yourself, if you were one of the 24 men in there with David, how quiet you had to be!

Verse 5: "And it came to pass afterward that David's heart struck him..." *In spite of all the faults and problems of David, he did have a tender heart! What do we have here? Attitude!*

"...because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said to his men, 'Far be it from me, by the LORD, if I will do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him, since he is the anointed of the LORD.' And David held back his men with these words and did not allow them to rise against Saul. And Saul rose up out of the cave and went on *his* way. Then David arose afterward and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, 'My lord the king!' And Saul looked behind him...." (vs 5-8).

You can imagine looking up on this rocky cliff and here's David up there saying, "...My lord, the king!..." *So, Saul looked up!*

"...And David bowed his face to the earth and prostrated himself" (v 8). *Talk about an attitude that was really something! Respecting the office that God had given!*

- even though David knew that Saul was condemned
- even though David knew that he would take Saul's place
- even though David was told that God would deliver the enemy into his hand

Verse 9: "And David said to Saul, 'Why do you hear man's words, saying, "Behold, David seeks to do you evil"? Behold, your eyes have seen this day how the LORD had delivered you today into my hand in the cave. And *one* said to kill you. But *I* had pity on you. And I said, "**I will not put forth my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD'S anointed.**" And, my father, behold! Yes, see the skirt of your robe in my hand... [David held it up to Saul for him to see] ...for in that I cut off the skirt of your robe and did not kill you, know and see that *there is* neither evil nor transgression in my hand, and I have not sinned against you. Yet, you hunt my life to take it. **May the LORD judge between me and you.**..." (vs 9-12).

This comes right down to almost the same thing that Jesus said; *We're to turn the other cheek!* Isn't this almost the same thing, where David had the opportunity to take it into his hands, and he didn't!

Verse 13: "'As the ancient proverb says, "Wickedness proceeds from the wicked." But my hand shall not be upon you. After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog? After a flea?"' (vs 13-14). *That's quite a taunt, but it's also quite a revealing attitude of David's thought to himself! After all, who was he? A dog? A flea?*

Verse 15: "May the LORD, therefore, be Judge, and judge between you and me, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of your hand.' And it came to pass when David had made an end of speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, 'Is this your voice, my son David?' And Saul lifted up his voice and wept" (vs 15-16).

Even though the evil spirit came upon Saul, there were times when he still had his own senses. He came to his senses here and he wept! A knife that sharp to cut off the robe could have gone right through one of his ribs, very quietly, and that would have been it. When they put in the knife in the fifth rib, and you put it at an angle, it goes right up into the heart and cuts the heart in two, and you're dead in just a short time. So, Saul came to his senses and said, 'Wow! Look at this!'

Verse 17: "And he said to David, 'You *are* more righteous than I, for you have rewarded me with good, but I have rewarded you evil.'"

We're going to see some things later on where God says that 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him! If he is naked, cloth him! In so doing you heap coals of fire upon his head.' Why? *Because God is the One Who is going to take care of the evil and the wicked!*

That doesn't mean that we just stand by let everything happen that can happen. It doesn't mean that we let everything go to pot in our lives and just wait for God to do everything. But when it comes time for God's judgment to come, that is in God's hands. *Here again we see the contrast between the reward for good, and the reward for evil!*

Verse 18: "And you have shown this day how you have dealt well with me because when the LORD shut me up into your hand, you did not kill me; for if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go completely away? And **may the LORD reward good for what you have done to me** this day. And now, behold, I know well that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand" (vs 18-20).

- what a way to humble the wicked
- what a way to really get to him

Lot's of times there are things that need to take place, and God needs to create the circumstances to bring them about so that everyone is going to understand.

Proverbs 25:21: "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for you shall heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward you" (vs 21-22).

Notice that it always is God Who is the One Who is doing the rewarding. How will God reward someone for doing what is right? We know that the reward of unrighteousness that Baalim wanted. Immediate benefit. Remember that in sin there's always a benefit, that Satan says will be yours.

Many people look at a benefit as a blessing when it's not. Where was a reward given that you can think of that went for all time, from that day forward? *Rahab the harlot, that's one!* What did she do? *She diverted the enemy from Israel!* There's a good example that you don't have to tell the enemy all the truth.

The thief on the cross is another example. I'm thinking of Eleazar when they had the problem of fornication with the Moabites and the plague hit the camp. There was a man who took a Moabite woman right in the eyes of Moses, and started committing adultery with her, and Eleazar came, took a spear and thrust through both of them. God said that He would always have someone of his line 'standing before Me,' to minister unto me. Somewhere before God—wherever there are those serving God—there is someone of the line of Eleazar who is serving God, because God said that that would be,

That was a reward, and that's why God said

to Abraham, 'I will be your exceeding great reward.' What were some of the things that were said to Abraham? *In blessing I will bless you! I will bless those that bless you, and I will curse those that curse you!*

- How is that done?
- Is it a measurable thing that he can say that there a hundred blessing over here and a hundred cursings over here?
- *No! It's an indefinite thing, but it's there and it's tangible!*

That's how it's going to be with the rewards! We can think of the fact that this built right into the Ten Commandments, and in particularly the second commandment. How is this reward given?

Exodus 20:4: "You shall not make for yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God *am* a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me**" (vs 4-5).

The next time you see any reports on other civilizations that we know of—in particularly more of the primitive ones—*ask yourself how much idolatry is involved!* Lot's of times they bring up all the sickness, all the disease, all the problems that these people have. Just look at India. What a terrible, horrible filthy rotten place to live, and they have all these diseases. But look at their 'religion.'

- How many of the commandments of God are they breaking?
- How much are they into idolatry?
- How much of these things go back over quite a period of time?

An awful lot of it does, because these are all *living, living laws!* These things continue to go on. But notice this:

Verse 6: "But showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments." *There you have the **reward to the wicked, and the reward to the righteous** built right into the Ten Commandments!* Then there's another reward built into one of the other commandments. We find that in the fifth commandment:

Verse 12: "Honor your father and your mother **so that your days may be long upon the land**, which the LORD your God gives you."

Are there people who honor their fathers and mothers, that God gives a blessing to them of long life? *That's a living law to all people!* Yes, there are

lives that are cut short because of other commandment-breaking, but you've seen that time and time again where you read of someone who has lived to be a great old age, generally speaking you'll find someone who has honored his father and mother; 99 chances out of 100 that's going to be the case.

There is a reward! What can a person do to earn, say another 20 years of life? ***Couldn't! You can't!*** So, there's the intangible factor of the tangible thing that God said that your 'days may be long on the earth.'

Now let's look at it the other way: How many young people get killed because they don't listen to father and mother, and go out and do what they want to do? Howbeit with cars, drugs and things like this. There's the opposite end of the scale! *It's a living law! These things work all the time, constantly!*

Proverbs 17:13: "Whoever rewards evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house." *Again, a living law!*

Can you think of an example where that happened in the Bible? Rewarding evil for good? *Evil departed from his house from that day forward!* We find that in the life of David (2-Sam. 12).

Why has the Bible been written? *So that we would have the Words of Life, on whom the ends of the world have come!*

You know the account of David and Bathsheba, and how that David brought in Bathsheba's husband—Uriah the Hittite—and said to 'go and be with your wife.' David wanted to cover up his little fiasco! But Uriah said, 'No, my lord, I won't go be with my wife, because my men are still in the field and there is still battle. I would not think of doing that.' ***So, David rewarded evil for that man's good!*** David told Joab to send Uriah right in the middle of the fight so that he die, *and Uriah died!*

When this was brought very vividly to David's attention by Nathan the prophet, and we know the account how that Nathan told David about the rich man and the poor man. The rich man had everything and the poor man had one little ewe, which was taken. When David heard this...

Sometimes you can trap someone in their own difficulties. This is exactly what Nathan did!

2-Samuel 12:5: "And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. And he said to Nathan, 'As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die'—*for taking that Lamb!* So, Nathan used quite an analogy here!

Verse 6: "'And he shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.' And Nathan said to David, **'You are the man!'**...." (vs 6-7).

I don't imagine that Nathan was looking out at the wall! I imagine that he was looking at David eyeball to eyeball, and said, "...**'You are the man!'**...."

"...Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'I anointed you king over Israel... [Was that a blessing? Was that a reward? *Yes, it was!*] ...and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. And I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if that *was* too little, I would have given to you such and such *things* besides'" (vs 7-8).

That shows the great breath of reward. It's something that God is going to determine. God in His goodness and love and mercy is going to do it!

- Does God delight in doing good? *Yes!*
- Does God delight in doing evil? *No!*

God says that He doesn't even delight in the death of the wicked, but there has to be judgment! There has to be reward with the judgment for behavior.

Verse 9: "Why have you despised the Word of the LORD to do evil in His sight? You have stricken Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife *to be* your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now, therefore, **the sword shall never depart from your house** because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife" (vs 8-10).

Verse 11: "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, **I will raise up evil against you out of your own house**...'"

- Does God control the finite?
- Does God control the infinite?
- *Yes!*

Notice the active word **I**: God, because that is a judgment that God has brought about.

- Is God capable of carrying out His judgments? *Yes!*
- Did God carryout His judgments? *Yes!*

Read the rest of 2-Sam., and how that by the time that David got to the end of his life, he was really a broken and horribly wretched old man, *unfortunately!*

"...and **I** will take your wives before your eyes and give *them* to your neighbor. And he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun... [starting

today] ...for you did *it* secretly, but **I** will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.' And David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD.'...." (vs 11-13).

Even notice in this, even in the judgment and bringing the reward of evil upon David, there was still the element of mercy involved.

"...And Nathan said to David, 'The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. Only, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, **this child born to you shall surely die**': (vs 13-14). *And it died, even though David fasted for seven days!*

There's a living example of rewarding evil for good. Can we see the difference here between the first account that we read when David was being chased by Saul, and God, in spite of it all, blessed and protected him, David had a good attitude.

Then the reward came of being king! The reward came of all that God said would happen, and then David did what he should not have done and then the judgment.

(go to the next track)

- Could David have chosen not to get involved with Bathsheba? *Yes!*
- Could Bathsheba have chosen not to get involved with the king? *Yes!*

You can see how these things are very fluid within a person's life. There will be times when you will go through trials because it's going to be a trial of your righteousness to see whether you're going to be righteous to God. There will be other trials that you will go through, because of your own inadequacies and sins just like with David. But there is that element of choice that is always there.

Psalm 58:11: "So that a man shall say, 'Truly, there is a reward for the righteous; truly, there is a God Who is judging in the earth.'"

Right now I think we're living a time, with all of the prophecies that are taking place, God is apparently letting a lot of evil slide by. A lot of things are happening where there is not the quick hand of the Lord to come down and stop it off. But God says that He's reserving the day of judgment for the wicked.

- ***Surely it's going to come!***
- ***Surely it's going to happen!***

Let's look at the teachings that Jesus gave us concerning reward and how this is something that God has reserved for Himself. Surely there is a

reward for the righteous. We're going to look at that aspect of it with the teachings of Jesus.

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.'"

Blessings are generally what you call a reward. You do have to have your input into it, a certain amount of your works into it, but it is the reward that comes.

We'll talk a little bit about the Kingdom, differentiating between the kingdom of those who are going to come into the Kingdom of God during the Millennium and afterward, and those who go in as firstfruits. There's quite a bit of difference, as we will see.

Verse 21: "Blessed *are* those who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed *are* those who weep now, for you shall laugh. 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; for behold, **great is your reward in heaven...**" (vs 21-23).

Revelation 22:12: "'And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.... [tying in everything we said, that God controls everything that there is] ...Blessed are those who keep His commandments, that they may **have the right to eat of the Tree of Life, and may enter by the gates into the city**" (vs 12-14).

You can't earn it! God has to give it, but you still have to work for it. But your working for it does not earn it for you. It would be like this:

I'm going to hire you to work for me for \$6.00/hr. and I want you to do 'thus and such.' You do it and it comes time to be paid and I give you your \$6.00/hr and you worked 8 hours, so that's \$48. I look at you and say that, it's so nice to have you here and you did such a great job and did far more than what was really expected, so here's another \$40.

That's what a reward is like. It is something based upon your work, but it is more than you can earn. In a sense, if you worked eight hours and got the extra \$40, in a sense you were making substantially more.

Luke 6:23: "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy; for behold, ***great is*** your reward in heaven; 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!....” (vs 23-25).

- What is their reward for being rich and not doing what they should? *Emptiness!*
- What is their reward for being full and not sharing? *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 25-26). *Today it's called self-esteem!*

Same old human problem: *love yourself first, before you love God!* That's the opposite way that God wants it.

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 spitefully use you” (vs 27-28)—*very difficult things to do!*

Sometimes you may do it, and say, ‘I really don't feel like doing it, but I know that God said to do it. So, I might as well start.’ What does this do for your attitude? Maybe one of these days you will be in the same position that the one you considered your enemy is in, and you will want a little mercy. That depends upon how *you* are.

Verse 29: “If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other *cheek* also; and if anyone takes your cloak, do not forbid your coat also.” *That's virtually what David did in the cave!* He could have done it, but he didn't!

Verse 30: “Give to everyone who asks you; and if anyone takes what *is* yours, do not ask *for it* back. 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 [reward] 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, that they may receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; **and your reward shall be great...**” (vs 30-35).

The next phrase is going to be difference in the reward for those in the first resurrection and those who will be saved at a later time.

“...and **you shall be the children of the Highest...**” (v 35). *That's worth a lot of meditating, a lot to think on!* That's something you can't earn, but there are things you have to do so that you can receive it. Quite a reward! What could you do to

gain “...***the children of the Highest...***”?

Stop and think about how much money people would give to get some kind of advantage. But here God says the simplest thing. The hardest things are the simplest things! Do the things that He says. It's awfully hard to love your enemy! Maybe we can understand considerably more about the love of God, where it says that *God so loved the world!* Here's a big key! ***God does not require something of us that He Himself has not first done!*** Remember that!

For God so loved the world *when we were all enemies of God!* Did God love His enemies? *Yes!* If they don't repent, God is sooner or later going to have to bring judgment upon them! But if they repent and God brings them to repentance and leads them to it, then God is even:

- fulfilling His own law
- fulfilling His own commandment
- doing what He requires of us

Verse 36: “Therefore, you also be compassionate, *even* as your Father is compassionate. And do not judge *others*, so that you yourself will not be judged in any way. Do not condemn *others*, so that you will not be condemned in any way. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given to you. Good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, shall they give into your bosom...” (vs 36-38).

Those are all rewards based upon promises that you have to have your work in, but which you cannot set a price tag on.

Matt. 5 & 6 are an expanded version of what we read in Luke 6. But here again we have the thing of the blessings. Again, I want to bring to your attention that to receive a blessing is a reward. That reward then is what God determines.

We're going to see in part 2 of this series how that it's possible that you can diminish your reward, or you can increase your reward, depending on what you do. But how much it's decreased I can't tell you; how much it's increased I can't tell you. ***God alone has to make that determination!***

Matthew 5:3: “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed *are* those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed *are* the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled” (vs 3-6). *A reward that we have experienced!*

- Is there not satisfaction in that reward?
- Has God not blessed us with knowledge, understanding and grace because we have

sought His way? *Yes, that is true!*

I'm sure that it's repeated by hundreds, maybe thousands, of small little groups all over. I talked to a lady who said, 'The way the world is going...' *And the assault that is being done in the world against all forms of Christianity is a frontal assault!* It can be directly, by joke, by innuendo, by putdown, however it is!

Just analyze what they are doing to all forms of Christianity today, seeking to destroy it, to wipe it off the face of the earth. Where is the safest place for you to be so that you're not exposed? *That's why God is causing all these different little groups here and there!* At least that's what I think! There's a blessing!

Verse 7: "Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall find mercy." *Always temper any judgment you have with some mercy!*

There are times when I get huffing and puffing and roaring and steaming, and with three young adult boys there are times when you do that. I always remember that I need some mercy on the other end, too. So, by the time it comes down to what looks like it may be building up to some giant confrontation, it becomes rather quiet.

Verse 8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called *the* sons of God. Blessed *are* those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. 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...**" (vs 8-12)—*which Christ is going to bring with Him!*

There are some other rewards along the way that you may or may not want. It lies in how it is done, the attitude in which it is done, and your love of God that is behind it.

Matthew 6:1: "Beware *that* you do not bestow your alms in the sight of men in order to be seen by them; **otherwise you have no reward** with your Father Who *is* in heaven."

That will be one of the keys that we will come back to when we combine that with 1-Cor. 3.

Verse 2: "Therefore, when you give *your* alms, do not sound the trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, **they have their reward**"—*the very fact that people saw them!*

That's why Hollywood stardom is so

fleeting. They have their reward!

Verse 3: "But *when* you give your alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret **shall Himself...** [God the Father's direct intervention in your life] **...reward you openly**" (vs 3-4).

Verse 6: "But you, when you pray, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret **shall reward you openly.**"

- maybe that reward is going to be good health
- maybe that reward is going to be understanding of God's Word
- maybe it could be both or could be other things
- maybe it could be whatever you're praying for in the way of God answering a prayer
 - Is the answering of a prayer a reward? *Yes!*
 - Did your length of prayer earn it? *No!*

Your love of God, your faith worked into it, but you didn't earn it!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 109:1-6
- 2) Psalm 94:1-3
- 3) Psalm 91:8
- 4) Proverbs 11:17-18
- 5) Romans 2:1-13
- 6) 1 Samuel 24:1-20
- 7) Proverbs 25:21-22
- 8) Exodus 20:4-6, 12
- 9) Proverbs 17:13
- 10) 2 Samuel 12:5-14
- 11) Psalm 58:11
- 12) Luke 6:20-23
- 13) Revelation 22:12-14
- 14) Luke 6:23-38
- 15) Matthew 5:3-12
- 16) Matthew 6:1-4, 6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 1
- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Corinthians 3

FRC:bo
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Rewards of God II

Receive Your *Full* Reward

Fred R. Coulter

- What are the rewards that God has for us as Christians?
- Why rewards anyway?
- Why don't we have something that we can absolutely measure and absolutely know for sure that we're going to have?

We'll find out why, because it has an awful lot to do with attitude, motivation and is based upon the fact that God has given free choice. That free choice must be exercised so that a person is going to show their total devotion to God, or whatever degree of it they have. God then will reward us according to those kinds of things that we do. For example: Let's see some contrasting things right here:

Matthew 10:29: "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*. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are better than many sparrows. Now then, **whoever shall confess Me before men**, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven" (vs 29-32). ***What kind of confession is it?***

Example: The return odyssey from cancer surgery of Dave Dravecky of the San Francisco Giants. I saw it on one TV station, but not on KGO, because they're owned by Jews so they don't let the name of Christ on the air, either radio or television. But when Dravecky was asked what he attributed it to, he said, 'I attribute it to my faith in Jesus Christ,' and he said it four or five times in a very short interview.

Sine he is confessing Jesus Christ, even though he may not be being called to salvation at this point, do you suppose that there is some connection here where God said, 'All right, I'll heal him.' *That's possible!* I'm not saying that it's absolutely for sure, but I'm not going to deny it, because I don't know exactly how God works in every instance in everybody's life. He works at different levels with different people.

Verse 34: "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies *shall be those of his own household*" (vs 34-36).

Many times that's exactly true, especially in a Jewish family, especially at the time of Christ

when they were believing in Christ. Some of those Jewish families would be so absolutely divided asunder. Of course, it would be just like the Middle East today, *there's no peace at all!*

Verse 37: "The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it" (vs 37-39). *There are quite a few very extreme things here. It's either/or, one or the other!*

Verse 40: "The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me. The one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet..." (vs 40-41). *Prophet here is not just necessarily someone foretelling the future; this is one who is preaching.*

"...and the one who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive the reward of a righteous man" (v 41).

What is a 'preacher's reward' (KJV). *I don't know!* Nowhere does it say that 'this is a prophet's reward' or 'a preacher's reward' or 'a righteous man's reward.' God gives us generalities in it, because God is going to give 'according to our attitude and works.'

Verse 42: "And *if* anyone shall in the name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold water only, truly I say to you, **he shall in no way lose his reward.**" *He's showing just a small act of kindness!*

It has something to do with **not** losing your reward. It shows that God has great latitude, yet, very stern judgment in some cases. But very great latitude in the acts of kindness that people do one to another. We're going to see that this reward is in heaven. We will see some inkling of what the reward is in general terms. It will also show why the first resurrection is a better resurrection.

1-Peter 1:2: "*Who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto obedience and 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 unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible... [part of the reward] ...and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us" (vs 2-4).

Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be."

Again, the analogies drawn give us an understanding of it, but it doesn't tell us specifically. In 1-Cor. 3 it's going to tell us that you shall receive a reward, and you can lose your reward even though you may be saved.

1-Corinthians 3:11: "For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble" (vs 11-12). *The first three are materials that are improved with trials, or trials by fire!*

Gold—you can make gold more pure by refining it, reheating it and firing it and letting the impurities come to the top and clean that off, then you get fine gold. Remember what David said about fine gold: That he held the Word of God higher than fine gold. But here's it's likened unto character.

Silver—it talks about silver refined seven times in the furnace. That's supposed to be strong, brilliant and fantastic.

Precious Stones—I never knew until some time ago that they took precious stones and semi-precious stones that to make them brighter they put them in a furnace and fire them, especially some of the sapphires. They put them in the fire and burn them and they become much more brilliant.

There are times that we go through trials, and they're not easy to go through. But if we maintain that love of God and do the things that we need to be doing—constantly through it—then that is going to increase the value of the character and attitude as far as God is concerned. *Then we find the next three: wood, hay and stubble!*

Wood—you can have some very nice precious wood. You can have some very fine furniture, solid whatever. Today you get mostly pressboard. Some have a photographic top on the pressboard. So, you can make wood look really nice, *but wood burns!*

Hay—I never will forget that as you're coming into Hollister, you have fields of crops of alfalfa. He got it all cut, dried and baled and stacked it up right close to the fence along the highway.

Some 'nice' smart aleck came along and threw three molotov cocktails on it. By the time the fire department got out there, his entire hay crop was gone! They couldn't do a thing about it except just stand there and watch it.

I drove by it the next day and instead of having this huge great big long stacks—stacked about ten bales high and six bales wide—of hay to feed his cattle, here was this big mound of ashes! I thought that is really illustrative of what happens when hay burns.

Stubble—this is almost worthless! This is different than hay. Stubble is the refuse leftover from hay, or from harvesting grain. It is also the separation of the grain and the chaff. That can even spontaneously burst into flame. That's why every once in a while have some of these fires that take place at the grain silos. They have the stubble there and just the right electrical thing and the right amount of natural gas given off, and you can have an explosion! Stubble is the lowest quality of all six of these! Isn't it interesting that there are three and three=six, the number of man!

Verse 13: "The work of each one shall be manifested... [revealed] ...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."

Example: I have in my office a secretary who is on a state training program. She is the second one that I've had that way, and there was a woman who knew the broker whom I bought the franchise from. She used to manage apartments for the other broker. I would see her come in from time to time, and thought she was just there to see the other broker. So, I never thought anything of it.

I came in the office and here's my secretary and she's got five stacks of copies about two inches high that she just made. I knew I didn't ask her to make any copies, so I looked at it and it said, 'New Age Channeling.' I said, 'What is this?' *This is for Lenora*, 'How come you made these copies for her?' Now we have solved the mysteries as to why we have had so many copies. It was a book she was writing on New Age Channeling.

So, I took the copies and later that day Lenora left the second manuscript for my secretary to start doing the second book. She's doing it on my time with my equipment in my computer and typewriter, whom I am paying the salary for. Then this begins unwinding a little more and the secretary before her was given a \$650 bed for doing part of the book.

I thought, I tell you, it's something! This New Age stuff is creeping in all over. So, I left a message on Lenora's message phone, and said, 'Please do not come into the office anymore! You're not welcome! You have used things that are unauthorized to use, and you can't come in.'

I kept the five copies, plus the original manuscript. So, she called before I left and said she would like to pick up 'my things.' I said, 'You're not picking them up until I determine how much you have cost me.'

She called the police because I have 'her stuff.' I got a little angry with the policeman on the phone, and I told him. He said, 'I don't know if that's necessarily against the law.' *Well, it is against the law!*

So, anyway, that was my little trial last week. Of all things! She was about ready to go down and press charges that I had stolen 'her stuff.' Furthermore, this was copied on *my machine without authorization!*

There is just a little example of some little trial that comes along. We can take other trials that we create for ourselves, which are not necessarily those kinds of things that is going to be based upon whether we receive a reward or not.

It says in 1-Peter 4 not to think it 'strange concerning the fiery trial that comes upon you, but rejoice if you suffer as a Christian. But let none of you suffer as an evildoer or as something is wrong.' You're not suffering for Christ, you're suffering for yourself.

That happened to me when I made a U-turn in a wrong place. I got a ticket and it cost me \$95. God had nothing to do with it. There was no trial from God, it was my own stupidity! I suffered as an evildoer. I was very angry with myself. I told the officer that I was out of town and misread the sign. It didn't make any difference, he wrote up the ticket.

There are differences in trials. Here in 1-Cor. 3 we are talking about trials by fire; here we have *work and reward*.

Verse 14: "If the work that anyone has built endures... [referring to the foundation of Christ] ...**he shall receive a reward**. If the work of anyone is burned up, **he shall suffer loss**; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet, as through fire" (vs 14-15).

The long and short of it is that salvation—even though it is still a gift—is a gift of eternal life that comes from God. But there is a reward in addition to that salvation, which is determined by **our** works and attitude, and by what **we** do. We can even get so vain and become like stubble—get lifted

up in **our** vanity in some gargantuan thing that we're going to earn or get from God—and just completely just cut ourselves off the other way.

It has to be based on what you're doing with God's Holy Spirit. We can all look back and see that we've come short of this, that, and we've sinned here and there, and just done stupid things. The only way you can reclaim those is get right back with God and build the right kind works and character.

Let's see who you can lose your reward. We've covered a couple of those referring to doing 'religious works' in public so that you can be seen of men. You have your reward, because you've been seen by them!

But if you do the things referred to in Matt. 6 concerning prayer, helping people, the things that we do in remaining in contact with God. That has a lot to do with it. How is our contact with God? That is a very important thing concerning what it is that we're going to receive as a reward. It has to be a reward that is in general terms, because God Himself, I am sure, does not know exactly what He is going to give us until we reach the point that the Apostle Paul did.

We don't know what it's going to be, but somewhere down the line we have a little inkling of what it may be.

2-Timothy 4:6: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. 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" (vs 6-8).

Even though we read that, it still doesn't tell us what kind of crown. We'll get some inkling a little later in Rev. 2 & 3. Let's see how it is that person can lose part of his reward, or lose his reward entirely.

Colossians 2:18: "Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize..."—*reward!* **Something that God is going to give**, but you don't know what it is, or the value of it.

You could be deceived out of receiving your reward, so therefore, your works become *wood, hay or stubble!* You could lose your reward, but maybe you haven't given up on God altogether, so therefore, you will be saved. We can look at God's mercy and say there might be an awful lot of people in that category, maybe some that you know. Maybe they've given up on men and churches, but they haven't given up on God. Maybe they quit doing the things that they ought to be doing, but maybe they

will be saved in the final analysis by a last minute repentance, realizing that all their wood, hay and stubble is gone, burned up!

Let's see how we retain that attitude toward God, and what to look to. Maybe we can get some clues on how people begin losing their reward or parts of their rewards, because they're not beholding Christ. You can take that one thing and to make sure that your reward is steadfast, you must always love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being, and you must always look to Christ.

This also tells us what we need to look for in the teachings within a church! Could there be some churches that are limiting the reward? *Yes, that is true, they can* (Rev. 2 & 3), because they are not teaching all the things that they really need to be teaching and they are not beholding the Head, Who is Christ, Head of the Church!

1-Corinthians 2:1: "Now, I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh; that their hearts may be encouraged, **being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding...** [that's a whale of a statement] **...unto the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ**" (vs 1-2). *Paul is really saying a lot with that.* This is what you need to be focusing in on, *God the Father and Christ:*

Verse 3: "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

I saw a minister out of Tennessee who does a lot of exposés on Catholics and atheists. He really does good regarding that fundamental knowledge. He was interviewing a Mason. He said that most in Masonry do not know that what they're doing is pagan. They do not know that this 'enlightenment in wisdom' that they are getting is just a different offshoot and branch of the old Babylonian mystery system.

The leaders of Masonry are told that it is perfectly all right to deceive the members at a lower level so that they may grow in the knowledge and understanding at a later date. That's why it says:

Verse 3: "**In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**" *You don't need these secret organizations with secret rights and mysterious things to do to have the knowledge of God!* That's just another old Babylonian mystery thing, which is coming out in a lot of the New Age stuff today.

Verse 4: Now, this I say so that no one may **deceive you by persuasive speech.** 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**" (vs 4-6).

Notice the emphasis, ***stay in Christ, walk with Christ!*** That should tell us an awful lot about the message that should be being taught, and that should be being heard by the congregation. If the minister is not teaching that, is he limiting some of the knowledge that he is responsible to teach the people? Isn't it a shame that sometimes a church can be so bad in its leadership and teachings that people have to leave the congregation to find Christ? *Yes!* Sometimes that happens. We've seen that many times it has occurred.

Verse 7: "Being rooted and built up in Him [Christ], and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. **Be on guard...** [tie in Matt. 24—Beware! For many will come in My name saying, 'I am the Christ.')] **...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.** For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and **you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power** in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (vs 7-11). *All the things that Paul is layering this. It starts out:*

- God the Father
- Jesus Christ
- knowledge
- teaching
- baptism
- forgiveness of sin
- watch that you're not spoiled

I looked that this New Age thing that this woman was writing and it says that the way you accept Christ is virtually all on your works. In other words, you choose Christ and you're going to do this good thing for God. That's one of the things to ***beware, lest any man spoil you through vain deceit!***

Verse 18: "**Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize by doing his will in self-abasement and the worship of angels...**"—*that's what New Age channeling is all about!*

- Can a person lose their reward if they don't worship God correctly? *Yes!*
- Could they lose salvation if they go so far as to rejecting God? *Yes, they could lose reward and salvation, everything!*

If people are drawn into angel-worship, are those angels of God? or Are they angels of the devil? It says in Rev. 12 that Michael and the angel fought 'the dragon and his angels.' What would a true angel of God tell anyone who attempted to worship the them?

Revelation 22:8: "Now I, John, *was* the one who saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who *was* showing me these things. But he said to me, '**See that you do not do this!** For I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. **Worship God**'" (vs 8-9). *A true angel of God would never have anyone worship them!*

In voluntary worshipping of angels, we are obviously talking about *demon worship, demon spiritually and demon involvement*. Obviously, having nothing to do with the angels of God.

Colossians 2:18: "...intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind."

I want you to think about how many movies today are based upon demonism, apparitions and all this sort of thing. It is so rife, so much in this society. Look at some of the goody-goody things that Walt Disney puts out. It always gets into it one way or the other. What does this do? *It sets up the psychology of the mind, and the education of the individual, that this is an alright thing to do!* But it isn't!

Verse 19: "And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God. Therefore, if you have died together *with Christ* from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves to *the decrees of men* as if you were living in *the world*?" (vs 19-20).

Obviously, they were living in the world. They were alive and on earth. This means that you are living in the world *as the world is living, in the way that they do things!* One of these days I know that someone is going to approach me and ask me to join the Elks Club. It's going to be all I can do to restrain myself to be civil. I'll just tell them kindly, 'No thanks!' and go on.

- Could I lose part of my reward?
- Could I lose my Christianity?
- If I said it was nothing?
- If I said an idol is nothing and tempt God?
- If I go sit with the Elks where they have 'the most worshipful master'?
- The exalted leader?
- Is that vanity?

Puffed up in the vanity of their fleshly minds, by intruding into things that they don't understand! If you ask some of those in the Elks Club, Masons or some of those things, 'Do you really understand?' *No!* In this case it is:

"...why are you subjecting yourselves to *the decrees of men* as if you were living in *the world*? *They say*, 'You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!'" (vs 10-21).

There are many, many different things both Gentile and Jewish. Read the book: *Code of Jewish Law* and see all the dos and don'ts that they Jews have. What about all the dos and don'ts that the Gentiles have? *Sure they did!* Read the book: *The Golden Bough!*

Verse 22: "The use of all such things leads to corruption, according to the commandments and doctrines of men, which indeed have an outward appearance of wisdom in **voluntary worship of angels, and self-abasement...**" (vs 22-23)—*will worship!*

I heard a minister say once that 'we have to set our will to be in the Kingdom of God.' Yes, that's true statement, we do! However, if we're not looking to Christ, all the setting of our will *is our own will-worship!*

(go to the next track)

"...and unsparing treatment of *the body*, not in any respect to the satisfying of *the needs* of the flesh" (v 23).

This covers a whole multitude of things. All of the dos and don'ts of touch this and not touching that, eating this and not eating that is not going to keep people from sinning. It's not going to do away with 'the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.' Those things are only handled *through conversion and the Holy Spirit, and the power of Jesus Christ within us!*

The key thing is that this shows us *a way* in which people can lose their reward, by getting into things and false doctrines that they shouldn't be getting into.

2-John tells us something very important on how we can receive the full reward rather than losing part of it.

2-John 1: "The elder to *the* chosen lady and her children, whom I love in Truth, and not I alone, but also all those who have known the Truth; for *the* sake of the Truth that is dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever: Grace, mercy, *and* peace shall be with us from God *the* Father, and from *the* Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (vs 1-3).

Those may sound like flowery words, but the more that I see this end-time Babylonianism taking over through the New Age this and that and the other things, I realize how important that the name of Jesus Christ is. I still keep hearkening back to the series that I did on the New Age Catholic Church and how Malachi Martin wrote one chapter: the Abolishment of Christ in the World. It's happening just exactly as he said, though he was a Catholic.

If a Catholic can see it and know it, how bad has it got to be? He said that it came through these ancient things that were in the past. That is exactly what is happening, and they are expunging the name of Jesus Christ. Notice that it is "...from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

- there are many people *using* the name of Jesus
- there are many people *using* the name of 'Father'

But there are not many people who will say that Jesus is Lord! That's a whole lot more. When we were young and growing up there were more people who believed in Jesus, so we didn't think that this was any phenomenal thing. Now I can see how important this is.

Verse 4: "I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking in Truth, exactly as we received commandment from the Father. And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have *observed* from the beginning, that we love one another. 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...** [see the contrast again] **...have entered into the world; those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh....**" (vs 4-7).

We find that more and more, not only just in these Eastern Oriental type of religions, but even within Christianity.

"...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**" (vs 7-8)—a full reward, not part of it!

I'm sure that there are some who would build with wood, and maybe not all of the wood will be burned up in a trial. With the hay there might be a little bit of hay on the fringes of, so there might be a little bit of reward left. I don't know too much about

stubble, because stubble is pretty well consumed real quickly. The key I want to hit here is that ***we receive a full reward!***

Verse 9: "Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God...."

- it doesn't matter how spiritual they sound
 - it doesn't matter how eloquent they may be
- They don't have God!***
- Does Satan—Lucifer—have God? ***NO!***
 - Can he be eloquent? ***Yes!***

Sometimes we just need to ask the most basic question that we can!

"...But the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 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. I have many things to write, but I do not wish to convey these things to you with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face in order that our joy may be *completely* full. The children of your chosen sister salute you. Amen" (vs 9-13).

This is where different groups have to go forward, and we have to go forward the best that we can. It's one thing to say, 'Okay, I have an open mind and I'm willing to learn.' *That's fine!* But there can be people who have open minds and willing to learn, but except error and false things, too. That's not the only thing.

On the other hand, you can't go to the other extreme and say that you know everything, and there's nothing new that you can learn and nobody else can teach you anything.

Those are the two extremes, and that's why it's so important. What did John emphasize here?. What did he say? ***He who is abiding in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son!*** Under those circumstances:

- What is the promise of Christ concerning things we need to know? ***The Holy Spirit will reveal all things to you!***
 - How is the Holy Spirit going to do it?
 - Because we're smart? ***No!***
- Because of the power of God's Holy Spirit in us! That's how it's done!***
- Does it mean that we just sit and wait and have it come as a funnel? ***No!***
 - ✓ God wants us to study
 - ✓ God wants us to think *correctly*

So that we can come to an understanding!

I think that some of things that we have suffered through, God has blessed us with grace, understand and knowledge. That's not saying that we're better than anybody else, because that isn't true. That's just where we may happen to be at any particular time, and does not necessarily equate to where anyone else may happen to be at any particular time, too. Not only do we want to attain to the resurrection, but we also want the reward.

- Why should you be willing to settle for wood, hay and stubble?
- Why not shoot for the gold, the silver and the precious stone?
- Why not?
- Is there anything wrong with that? *No!*

Because you're desiring the things—as Paul said—*that are more excellent!* That's what we need to strive toward.

Heb. 5 is talking about Jesus Christ and all the things that He went through. He's at the right hand of God and is our High Priest (Heb. 4) and we can come to Him at any time. He understands, and **boy does He understand** because He had to bear *the law of sin and death* within Him. He was perfectly righteous.

- Don't you think He understands every temptation?
- Don't you think He understands every pull of the flesh?
- How could He be our Savior if He didn't have that? *He could not be!*

Hebrews 5:11: "Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing."

- Here is a choice by circumstance!
- Here is a choice that was exercised by these people!

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...**"

- Were they letting thing slack and slide to where they weren't growing in grace and knowledge?
- What did Jesus say to the Church Era of Ephesus? *You have lost your first love!*
- What should our first love be? *The love of God!*

If you lose your first love, the love of God, you better repent or, as Christ said, 'I'm going to come and remove your candlestick.'

If you've lost that, would you become someone who should have been a teacher, but now had the very basic need to start with milk again? *Yes! We have it right here!*

"...and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food" (v 12).

It is true! People can go along and if they don't study and pray... Let's just analyze a couple of things. We came out of a church where we were ordered to study and hour a day and pray an hour a day. If you couldn't do it, set the alarm, a clock, and do it by the clock.

We can see the fallacy in that, because you can't legislate attitude and righteousness. But if a person did that, is he better off before God than someone who didn't pray and didn't study? *Yes, he's better off!* But what about the person who is motivated by putting God the Father and Christ first, who love God, who willingly pray every day ***from the heart***, and who willingly study every day ***from the heart***, not by an alarm? Is his attitude going to be more receptive for learning and growing in grace and knowledge? *Obviously, yes!* It's a whole different attitude and frame of mind, so we have the three:

- the sluggards
- the disciplinarians
- the volunteers

What is it that God wants? *A willing heart, a willing mind!*

Verse 13: "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 13-14). *There you have the difference between the rewards laid out a little differently than in 1-Cor. 3!*

- What is the most important thing that God is looking to?
- What is that God wants most of all?

The Jews have it that God wants law upon law upon law, ad infinitum, to control your breathing, your sneezing, your snoring, your waking, your sitting, your standing, all of your time! ***NO! That is not what God wants!*** The most important thing that God wants is right here:

1-Chronicles 28:9: "And you, Solomon my son... [when he was being given the charge to build the temple, when he was coronated as king] **...acknowledge the God of your father ...**" *How do we know Him?*

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4).

- Did Solomon end up that way? *Yes, he did!*
- What was the indictment that God gave to Solomon? *That his heart was turned from God!*

1-Chronicles 28:9: “...**acknowledge the God of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind**...”

That is the only way that you’re going to be able to have rewards of gold, silver and precious stones. God doesn’t want someone whom He has to make do something. God can command it. He can make people do it. But does He have pleasure in it? *No, God doesn’t have pleasure in it!*

It’s just like with our children, we can make our children do certain things, but oh how much nicer it is when they willingly do it. Same way with God. How do you feel toward your children when they willingly do something? You want to reward them with something they don’t know or expect is coming.

It’s not that they earn it and expect so much, because they’ve done so much. It is because they have a willing attitude and a willing mind, so therefore, that creates joy for them and joy for you, and you want to give them something.

This is what David was telling Solomon. Did David know? *Yes, David learned, as we covered about the reward of the wicked and what happened to David when he was rewarded for his situation with Bathsheba!* He knew!

“...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts....” (v 9). *Tie in Gen. 6:5; 8:21 about the imagination of the heart is evil continually!* This is what the reward that we’re going to see is going to be based upon:

- How is your heart before God?
- How is your heart set before God?
- Who sets it? *You do, by your own choice!*

“...If you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.... [loss of reward] ...Take heed now... [there’s always this challenge to inspire you to seek the highest and the best and to do what God wants, then God’s Word always with a warning] ...for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and do it” (vs 9-10).

Let’s see some of the things that we’re going

to find concerning choice, works and the things that are done with what we are given.

Matthew 13:13: “For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because **seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand**.... [it’s partly by their own choice. It’s partly by whom they serve] ...And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, ‘In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and in seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat...’” (vs 13-15).

I think we’re living in the same age today, and the epitome of it is reflected in the attitude toward AIDS. You’re not going to eliminate it altogether, but you can keep it down to a very low proportion of the society to teach all people, as they’re growing up that there should be no sexual activity outside of marriage—*period!* We know that’s a hard standard for a lot of people to try and keep. However, a greater majority of them would be doing that if it were taught.

But no, they want to do everything else other than teach that. Give them all kinds of birth control things, perfect the medicine, give condoms to everybody, find a cure for AIDS, but let us never stop our sexual activity. What does this do? ***This closes the ears, closes the eyes so they have no understanding!***

“...and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes **they** have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (v 15). *There it’s talking about a spiritual healing!*

That’s why it’s not *the only* day of salvation today. If it were, God is losing hands down! But here’s part of the reward today:

Verse 16: “But **blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear**. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard” (vs 16-17). *This a tremendous reward and blessing for us right here, right now, today!*

Let’s look at some of the parables and see what it is that happens. Most of the times these things take place because of our effort. Sometimes because of our weaknesses we are not able to do certain things.

Verse 18: “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the Word of the kingdom and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his

heart....” (vs 18-19).

- Satan is right there
- Satan hates Christ
- Satan hates God

Satan is going to do everything he can to keep people from receiving it. *God is allowing that for the time being!*

“...This is the one who was sown by the way. Now, the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy; but *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, **he is quickly offended**” (vs 19-21). *It doesn't say that he's lost, but he's lost his reward!*

Verse 22: “And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.... [we're to bring forth fruit] ...But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold” (vs 22-23).

There are some choices and determinations that we have to make. I think we're living in an age now where it's more like the thorns. The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke it out. When it's all easy going it's easy to go ahead and let those things happen.

Let's close with one thing concerning that, which really happened to strike home in my mind. I was reading something, and he was saying it rightly, where he was saying to the Protestants that a lot of *these so-called good* Protestants are expecting the rapture so they're not going to have to go through the evil.

It sounds a little bit like those who are going to a place of safety, so they won't have to go through the evil and contend with it because they're know they're going to go there. This person said, ‘They have their eye on the wrong thing!’ I got to thinking about this:

Luke 21:34: “Watch **yourselves** lest your hearts be preoccupied **with high living and drinking and the cares of this life**, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. **Watch, therefore, and pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy...to stand before the Son of man**” (vs 34-36).

I left out something! We have been told and there's even a magazine that's called *Watch* put out

by a Church of God. They are to watch *world events!* True, you're to look at world events, but what is the most important thing to watch? ***Your own spiritual condition!*** World events aren't going to save you, or lose you. ***You own conduct before God, your own spirituality, your own spiritual life is going to make it or break it for you!***

Verse 36—the whole verse: “Watch, therefore, *and* pray at all times **that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass**, and to stand before the Son of man.”

Do you think that you can watch world events and really understand them so you can escape them, and will know when to go to a place of safety? ***NO! Because God is going to make the selection, so you have to watch yourself! Take heed to yourselves that that day not come upon you unawares!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 19:29-42
- 2) 1 Peter 1:2-4
- 3) Revelation 22:12
- 4) 1 Corinthians 3:11-15
- 5) 2 Timothy 4:6-8
- 6) Colossians 2:18, 1-11, 18
- 7) Revelation 22:8-9
- 8) Colossians 2:18-23
- 9) 2 John 1-13
- 10) Hebrews 5:11-14
- 11) 1 Chronicles 28:9
- 12) 1 John 2:3-4
- 13) 1 Chronicles 28:9-10
- 14) Matthew 13:13-23
- 15) Luke 21:24-36

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 4
- Revelation 2; 3
- Matthew 24
- Revelation 12
- Hebrews 4
- Genesis 6:5; 8:21

Also referenced: Books:

- *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin
- *The Golden Bough* by Sir James Frazer

FRC:bo
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Rewards of God III Blessings of the First Resurrection

Fred R. Coulter

We have covered:

- rewards are for good
- rewards are for evil
- rewards in this life
- rewards that are going to come when Jesus returns

Those are all very important in understanding what the rewards really are, and what they amount to. Heb. 11 shows how these rewards are based; *they are based upon faith, and also based upon the contradiction of life as a Christian in the world*, or the contradiction of living life the way God wants you to live in the world vs the way that it is in the world. There is a conflict!

If you're not having any conflict with the world then there's something maybe not adding up quite right for you.

Hebrews 11:2: "For by this *kind of faith* the elders **obtained a good report.**"

Verse 13: "All these died in faith..."

Verse 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" (vs 24-25).

There is going to be many different kinds of suffering! There is going to be some suffering that you're going to go through, undoubtedly:

- there may be *physical suffering* because someone comes at you physically
- there may be *job suffering* because of keeping the Sabbath
- there may be *persecution* because you want to do what is right

Also, Satan is running this world, and sooner or later he's going to start chasing you down.

Whenever there is sin, there is always a benefit held out. There's always a seeming profit for you that is held out.

Remember when Jesus was tempted? *Satan said, 'If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all the kingdom's of the world, for they are mine to give!'*

A seeming benefit! It's the same way with gambling. Get something for nothing. You'll win

millions and millions of dollars. Sure enough, you see people winning millions and million of dollars. ***A seeming benefit!***

Verse 26: "For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt **because he was looking intently to the reward.**"

Rev. 3—we'll talk a little bit about the Laodiceans, since we are probably living in the Laodicean age. The riches of this world, especially the way it is today with all the wealth that is around us, *the seeming wealth, the apparent wealth!* How long this is going to last and how long things are going to go, we don't know.

I read an article about a man who says that in the year 2000 Christ is going to return. I also read a book that says it's going to be 1997. We have read books where it was 1975, 1988 and all along. We really don't know when it's going to be, but somewhere along the line this *seeming wealth* of the Babylonian system is going to come to an end. It's only going to come to an end when God knows that it has 'come to the full'!

Revelation 3:15: "I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot..."

When you have lot of physical goods around you, it's awfully difficult to jeopardize those to be a zealot for what is true, because you can lose them.

After all, now that you have them, you don't want to lose them. But you don't want to give up on God either, so you are not cold; ***you're lukewarm!***

"...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" (vs 15-16).

Rev. 18—here we have something very important for us to just contemplate and think about. Revelation 18:3: "Because **all nations** have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication..." *Wherever the Church of God is it's still going to be affected by this great Babylon!* It has to be, because it says, "...all nations..."

"...and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury" (v 3).

What does is say about wealth and economics and prosperity at the end time. We have wealth, economic prosperity, famine, droughts and

earthquakes at the same time. Isn't that true? ***It's all going at the same time!***

Verse 4: "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, '**Come out of her, My people...** [God's people] ...so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues."

- Is it because of the world's system that the Laodicean Church is lukewarm because of all of the abundance of the material goods that are available?
- How many have more than one car? *Almost everyone of us!*

I could say a lot of things about the things that we have, so we need to be careful that we don't let these physical things come between us and God, and that we become lukewarm. It's very easy to become lukewarm, because the physical things in and of themselves are not necessarily wrong. It is how that you use them is the thing and the point of character.

Are we cutting back on our love and zealous attitude toward God because of the things that we have around us?

I would have to say that the temptation is awfully easy and great, especially when you realize that God is not going to instantly lambaste you because you're not as zealous as you ought to be. It's really quite a situation that you're looking at. When you start thinking and analyzing all those things! We put the three of these together:

1. the pleasures of sin
2. living in the society of Babylon
3. the Laodicean Church

And I think we have a good explanation as to why the Laodicean Church is lukewarm!

There are so many things around, and it is so convenient and easy, and you don't have to dig your own garden, plant your own seeds, harvest your own crop, weave your own cloth, sew your own clothes, make your own shoes, *all these things you don't have to do!* You can buy them! You cannot one pair of shoes, but two, three or four.

In some cases I could go into the closets of some women—I don't know what it is about women—and you can find dozens of pairs of shoes. Imelda Marcus had 3,000 pair of shoes and she didn't have enough! And dresses, suits and clothes; it's absolutely amazing! Stop and think of those who have families, how much harder it would have been if we would have had to *made* all of those clothes, and how much more difficult it would be when they reach a growing spurt and go all the way through them.

We look at the more difficult things in life

and compare it with how easy we have it, and no wonder everything is lukewarm.

Revelation 3:17: "For you say, 'I am rich...'"

- Doesn't God say He will bless the righteous? Isn't that true?
- Haven't people in the Church been judged because they don't have enough and they haven't been right with God?
- *'If they would have been right with God, or tithed surely they would have been blessed!'*

Why are you rich? *Because you're living in Babylon!* God has determined that prosperity would come. What are we going to do spiritually?

"...and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing..." (v 17)—*increased with goods!*

If we want something to eat, walk into the kitchen and open a refrigerator and you have grapes from Chili, wonderful! You have all the tropical fruits. You're so busy and you open the freezer and pop out a microwave dinner. I've done that.

- What if I had to grow all this?
- What if I had to raise all our beef?
- What if I had to kill it and cut it?
- What if I had to take care of all of it?
- What should I do?
- Should I just throw all of it away? *Maybe, I don't know!*
- Is that what God requires of me? *I don't know!*

I don't think so! Not at this point, but maybe there will come a point when it would be! But Christ gives a solution here:

"...and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked... [referring to a spiritual condition] ...**I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire...** [tie in with 1-Cor. 3] **...so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed...** [white is a type of righteousness] **...and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. **Therefore, be zealous and repent**" (vs 17-19).

Let's compare that with some of the things that were done in Heb. 11. quite a different thing. Our greatest chore in getting to church is plowing through the traffic. Sometimes it's bad, and sometimes it's not so bad.

Hebrews 11:26: "For he [Moses] esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the

treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward”—*but he didn't know what it was!*

What was Moses' first reward in following God? *He had to stand up and he had to resist an Egyptian from beating one of the Israelites, and Moses killed him!*

So, he fled across the desert and he spent 40 years in the desert. How's that for a reward? *Shepherding goats. And being chased by the seven daughters of Jethro!* There's a practical side to it, and I think that was well-done in the movie *The Ten Commandments*. I imagine that Moses sat out there for 40 years staring off into space of Sinai and watching these goats. It was nice and quiet, but can you imagine some of the memories that he had of Egypt?

His first reward was to spend 40 years in the desert on Sinai. Then he finally went back to Egypt.

Verse 27: “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. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through a dry *land* in which the Egyptians, while making the attempt, were swallowed up by the *waters*. By faith the walls of Jericho fell...” (vs 27-30).

He missed a whole 40 years wandering in the wilderness. Moses second reward was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness. That was tough; *for 40 years!* It got so bad that they wanted to kill him several times! *That was his reward!*

But just think of the rewards that Moses is going to have when the Kingdom of God is on earth! Can anyone remember what the Mount of Transfiguration showed? *Jesus Christ as He would be in the Kingdom talking with Moses and Elijah!*

Once you get into that realm of it, what worth is all of Egypt? What hardship was all of Sinai? *Though it be for 80 years!* That's a long time; 80 years just in Sinai! That's a long time! An awful long time!

Today the modern person wouldn't stay out there five minutes! So, what kind of reward does Moses have, that Christ is going to bring with Him when He comes with His Kingdom? *Fantastic reward!*

Verse 31: By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who disobeyed *because* she had received the spies peaceably. Now, what more can I say? For time would fail me to relate *the accounts of*

Gideon, Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets; Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions, quenched *the* fury of fire, escaped *the* edge of *the* sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, **that they might obtain a superior resurrection**” (vs 31-35). *It is a better resurrection!*

Verse 36: “And others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated” (vs 36-37).

That's quite a different picture! Now you know why God says to the Laodiceans, ‘Repent and be zealous!’

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

In other words, they were not to be perfected before the time of the completion of God's plan, which included us.

Let's see some things that we have concerning what we are to do, and how it is to be done. We have our responsibility in it. A lot of what we're going to receive in reward is going to depend on how we conduct our lives. Yes, we have grace that we will be saved. Yes, we have works, but are they going to be gold, silver and precious stone, or wood, hay and stubble?

A lot of them thought that the Kingdom of God should appear immediately; Luke 19:12: “Therefore, He said, ‘A certain nobleman set out to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and to return.’”

Obviously, a parable about Christ returning to God the Father, to have authority to bring the Kingdom and return!

Verse 13: “And after calling ten of his servants, he gave to them ten pounds, and said to them, ‘Trade until I come *back*.’ But his citizens hated him and sent an ambassador after him, saying, ‘We are not willing to have this man reign over us.’” (vs 13-14).

Isn't that the first thing that happens? People do not want the Word of God telling them what to do. So, they figure out a nice way around it so that they can do it the way *they want to!*

Verse 15: "And it came to pass that when he returned after receiving the kingdom, he directed that those servants to whom he had given the money be called to him, in order that he might know what each one had gained by trading"—*working, producing, making, doing the things that need to be done!*

Verse 16: "And the first one came up, saying, 'Lord, your pound has produced ten pounds.' Then he said to him, 'Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities'" (vs 16-17). *He didn't know that he was going to receive the ten cities. But it was given to him!*

Verse 18: "And the second one came, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made five pounds.' Then he also said to this one, 'And you be over five cities.' But another came, saying, 'Lord, behold your pound, which I kept laid up in a handkerchief. For I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man. You take up what you did not lay down, and you reap what you did not sow'" (vs 18-21).

In other words, it was his responsibility to do it. What was he doing? *He was immediately blaming God!* This sounds an awful lot like the Garden of Eden: It was the woman! No, it was the serpent! 'Well, God, if you hadn't put the woman and serpent here we wouldn't be in this mess.' That's pretty much what it's saying here. 'You're not sowing this, Lord, why should I reap it?'

- it was his job to do it
- it was his job to make it happen
- it was his job to carry out his responsibilities

This is a good example of how we are to be responsible. How are we to be responsible? *Without supervision!* That's the hardest thing in the world! Try some people on the job. Sometimes I offend people because I expect them to do things that I should not have to tell them to do. They get all bent out of shape!

We are to exercise our own initiative, and be responsible in taking care of it in a proper and right way! This one didn't, so he was judged out of his own mouth:

Verse 22: "Then he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant! You knew that I am a harsh man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow. Then **why didn't you deposit my money in the bank, so that at my coming I might have received**

it with interest?' And he said to those who were standing by, 'Take the pound from him, and give it to the one who has ten pounds.' (And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten pounds.')" (vs 22-25).

Isn't that always human reasoning? This would not go down well in San Francisco, believe me! Absolutely not!

Verse 26: "For I tell you that to everyone who has, *more* shall be given; but the one who does not have, even what he has shall be taken from him. Moreover, bring my enemies, those who were not willing *for* me to reign over them, and slay *them* here before me" (vs 26-27).

- there it shows our responsibility
- there it shows the reward of the righteous
- there it shows the reward of the wicked

Let's follow through on how the Kingdom of God is going to come.

Matthew 24:36: "But **concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows**, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

I read a book where someone said that Christ was returning in 1997, and I received another study paper where someone says that it's going to happen in the year 2000, and we don't have long to wait, because in the beginning of 1990 something was supposed to happen; I forget what it was. But here it clearly says that of 'that day and hour knows no man.'

Verse 37: "Now, as *it was in* the days of Noah, so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. Someone always challenges and says, 'Can't we know the year?' *I said that it's possible to know the year, but I still haven't seen anyone hit it right, yet!*

Verse 38: "For as in the days that *were* before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark." *Everything is going to go along until all of a sudden the mathematics of chaos hit!* Then it's all going to go in disarray, *everything!*

Verse 39: "And they were not aware until the Flood came and took *them* all away; so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man. Then two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left; two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Watch, therefore, because **you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming**" (vs 39-42).

What are we to watch? *We're to watch our spiritual condition more than the world conditions!* Too many people are watching the world conditions so they can escape, or as the Protestants have it:

being caught up in the rapture.

Verse 43: “But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think” (vs 43-44).

What is it that they say? *For when they shall say ‘peace and prosperity’ or ‘peace and safety,’ then sudden destruction comes!* (1-Thess. 5:3^[transcriber’s correction]).

Verse 45: “Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord has set over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he comes **shall find so doing**” (vs 45-46).

- Doing what? *Doing what he’s supposed to be doing!*
- How is doing it?
 - ✓ out of love for God
 - ✓ out of following the commandments of God
 - ✓ out of doing the things that God says

Verse 47: “Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his property. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, ‘My lord delays *his* coming’... [tie in with Luke 21:34-36^[transcriber’s correction] ...and shall begin to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken” (vs 47-49)—*tie that in with Rev. 18:3, made drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication’!*

Verse 50: “The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know. And he shall cut him asunder and shall appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vs 50-51).

I believe that Jesus means what He says. I really do! It’s going to happen! Most of us are here as the result of the fact that there some evil servants who were ‘beating and smiting’ the fellow servants. *We’re all servants of God!* We’re not all ministers but we’re all servants of God. That’s exactly what was happening.

Matt. 25—talking about the Kingdom of God and the we have the Parable of the Ten Virgins and there are some very important things that we are to learn out of this.

Matthew 25:1: “Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish” (vs 1-2).

Compare that with 1-Cor. 3 where we have 3+3=6, and here we have 5+5=10, but what is the ratio that we see? 50%, half!

Verse 3: “The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them.”

Today it’s like going off in the boonies and you get out there where it’s dark and you forgot the matches! Or if you took the matches, you didn’t bring batteries for the flashlight. Or you left the food back at base camp instead of carrying it up in a pack because it was too hard to carry. You could draw a lot of different parallels with this.

Sidebar: My mother was down last week and she gave us—which my wife hung in the hall—an old Russian oil lamp. If you’re going to have lantern that you’re going to take with you, and you have oil in this little basin, how far are you going to go with that light burning with just that oil? *As long as it burns, that’s all!* You have to take extra oil with you.

Verse 4: “But the wise took oil in their vessels *along* with their lamps. Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time... [longer than they expected] ...they all became drowsy and slept. But *in the middle of the night* there was a cry...” (vs 4-6).

There is a light that is called the ‘light of darkness’: *if the light that be in you is darkness, then great indeed is the darkness!* So, to the world when it looks like everything is just about ready to be solved, the light of great, wonderful, marvelous and loving, kind human nature comes to the fore, that’s midnight to God! Just at the time when it looks the brightest for the world, it’s the darkest spiritually!

Verse 7: “Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.... [they were setting them to get the right kind of light] ...And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are **going** out’” (vs 7-8). *They’re not yet out! There is still some light!*

Verse 9: “But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest *there* not be enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’” Again, *getting to the individual responsibility!*

Why does there have to be individual responsibility in it? Here’s why God puts it on an individual basis:

1. because of choice and free will
2. salvation is independent and is between God and the individual

Not between God and the Church and the individual.

The Church is only a collection of individuals who have been called of God! The Church can help everyone, that is true. We gain strength every week when we come together on the Sabbath. I do. When we come together on the Sabbath, by being together we gain strength that way.

But I can't walk home and say that today I took a little bit of Martha Anderson's righteousness with me, and I've got it made for the next week. It isn't going to happen!

3. each person is responsible
4. God has to know what you are going to do

God knows what He's going to do, but He has to know what you're going to do!

5. you can't legislate righteousness or character; impossible!

That's why when you look at this parable, it seems a little brutal! It seems awfully definite and brutal!

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'"

Someone could look at that and say that they were good Christians. What does the Bible say? *If you see your brother in need, give it to him!* So, we're not talking about physical goods. We're talking about the oil of God's Spirit, the Light that that produces in our body. We're talking about the Light of God's Word all combined with the responsibility of growing and overcoming, and taking care of the things we need to.

Verse 10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut. And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered *and* said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you'" (vs 10-12). *This is really a brutal, brutal parable! This is pretty tough!*

Verse 13: "Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming."

The bridegroom comes and what takes place? *Obviously, the marriage takes place!* The basis of this parable is that the fiancé stays in her father's house and waits while the young man goes off to build the house for them to live in. He makes a contract of marriage, a betrothal. Then he has to prove that He's going to take care of her, so it takes about a year, and he builds a house for his wife and himself. When he gets that built, then he comes back to the father's house and he gets the bride.

Generally, it would be setup so that he would come at midnight. The bride would be sitting there at midnight waiting for him to come. Then he would whisk her off and take her to his house and the marriage would begin.

That's what we have here in this particular parable. There's a little bit more to this: The custom was that the father of the bridegroom would tell the son when to go get the bride. Not even the bridegroom knew the hour when the father was to tell the son when to go get the bride. The bride didn't know and the bride's father didn't know, but he would show up and take her away. That's part of what this is all about.

We know that our reward also has to do with a marriage covenant between Christ and the Church. When people first get married, you never know what you're going to end up with. What does the marriage covenant say? *For better or for worse, rich or poor!* Not like today's world: if we like it we'll stay, if we don't we'll leave. Then it was for better or worse, and the ones who didn't want to be loyal or faithful took it to mean that *you're stuck!* That's not exactly the way that God means it to be at all.

Too many people take a presumptuous decision and run off and get married and it's not like they figured it would be.

2-Corinthians 11:2—Paul says: "For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband..."

Now we're getting into the reward aspect, the blessing's aspect. Also, I am sure that the father of the bridegroom helped the bridegroom build the house. Let's see how this follows through exactly with John 14. Let's tie this all together and see that there is something that God is doing above and beyond what we expect.

(go to the next track)

John 14:1: "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places..." (vs 1-2).

Some people say, 'How can one man marry so many people?' That's not the point. The point is that it is a marriage covenant, the likeness of the covenant is what it is important. It is not trying to compare it to the physical analogy of one man having many wives. It's the kind of relationship that is important. Notice that it is in *His Father's house!* Father is the One Who is preparing; Christ the One Who is preparing. *They're both doing it!*

- How is God going to do it?
- How is God going to handle it?

- What is that place?
- Does God have a place that He lives? *Yes!*
- Though He owns the whole universe? *Yes!*

In Rev. 4 & 5 we can see a little bit of what that is like. But God has a place for us, being built for us. Isn't it interesting that when Jesus came to the earth he was a carpenter? *Now He's building the spiritual things in heaven above for us!*

"...if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.... [as the bridegroom does with the bride] ...And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also" (vs 2-3).

2-Corinthians 11:2: "...I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ." *So, there's going to be that marriage relationship!*

Nowhere in all of the Bible does it show that those who come into the Kingdom of God—starting with the Millennium after Christ is here—are in the same relationship as Christ and the Church. That is part of the reward. You will have a different relationship with God forever! That's something to really consider.

Just like there's only one Son—Christ—He has a relationship with God the Father. We will have a relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father—all of those in the first resurrection—that none of the rest who are saved will have. Lest anyone misunderstand that we're just talking about one small group here or there.

We will see that this brought out in the same way in Eph. 5 concerning the marriage covenant. It shows in the marriage covenant—husbands and wives—what Christ is doing for us.

Ephesians 5:22: "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; and He is *the* Savior of the Body" (vs 22-23).

I submit that we can say how much better society be if it were that there were father/mother, no divorce, everything properly taken care of. That you have a society where women wouldn't have to work. Wouldn't that be nice so they can take care of the children?

In this society, when kids go to school, and you can work it out and go to work when they're in school. That's perfectly fine, you don't neglect your children. But how many people don't even care for their kids at all. They get up at five in the morning, slam the kids to the babysitter's at six in the morning

as the commute to work, and pick them up at six in the evening and slam them in front of the TV and throw in a microwave dinner and sit down and eat, shout and yet at each other, and go to bed and when you get up in the morning and that's the existence of their life until summer time. Then all hell breaks loose and no one knows what to do with any of the kids. It's one of the reasons why we have so many gangs in different areas of the country.

But the NOW organization could not have it that women would have a rightful place, or that men would have a rightful place. That's not to put down women anymore than to put down men.

Verse 24: "For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, **and gave Himself for it**" (vs 24-25).

How much does Christ want the Bride? *So much so that He gave Himself for it!* That's a lot!

Verse 26: "So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of the water by *the* Word." *That's how we are purified and made white and clean!*

Verse 27: "That He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame. In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. 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... [through the crucifixion] ...and of His bones" (vs 27-30).

In other words, the closeness! We are not of His physical bones or spiritual bones, but this is an analogy showing just like Eve was created from a rib of Adam, so are we created out of the innermost being of God. That is the spiritual creation as the sons of God. This is a really very deep analogy.

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. This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church" (vs 31-32).

Let's unravel that mystery just a little bit more, and see exactly what it is that God is showing that He is going to do for us. We know several things:

- when Christ returns we will see Him as He is; that's what we're promised (1-John 3)
- what He looks like in power, splendor and

glory (Rev. 1)

Let's see a little bit more the part of the reward that we are going to have. I may have touched on this briefly at one time, but I'm going to make a statement, which I'll back up a little later on. That is *search the Bible from cover to cover where it say that those who are given salvation—beginning with the Millennium, forward—are going to enter into the same relationship as we do with God! They don't!* Nor, we're going to find out, do they have the same inheritance. They're going to have an inheritance, *but it won't be like ours!*

Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying that we are the children of God.*"

There's going to be another *Family of God!* Did you know that? *That's going to be all of those who are saved through the everlasting covenant of Christ and the Church!*

- we know that there is God the Father.
- we know there is Jesus Christ the Son

Isa. 9—Here's an acknowledged prophecy of Jesus Christ. There is one interesting statement in here that talks about Christ in a way that most people can't figure out, because they haven't carried out the step far enough to understand it.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, **The Everlasting Father...**"—*How can that be?*

If God the Father is God the Father, how can the Son be the "...Everlasting Father..."? *Because the children brought into the Kingdom through the marriage of Christ and the Church are going to be the children of that marriage!* Jesus will then be a Father! *Think on that!* It's the only way it can be explained.

"...The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this" (vs 6-7).

Let's think of this as husband and wife in that relationship; Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying that we are the children of God.* Now, if *we are children, we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." (vs 16-17).

- What is Christ going to inherit?
- What has He already inherited?

- *The universe! And we are joint heirs!*

When you're an heir, you're an owner. When you receive something through an inheritance, did you earn it? *No, it was bequeathed to you!* That means given by gift. You're "...joint heirs with Christ..."!

"...if indeed we suffer together with Him, **so that we may also be glorified together with Him.** For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time... [that we read in Heb. 11] **...are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us**" (vs 17-18).

There are going to be times when you're going to go through some suffering and some things that are going to make life really miserable. Some people will get to the point of Job's wife, remember what she said when Job was going through all his trials.

- Did Job deserve it? *No!*
- What did he lose? *Everything!*
- What did his 'encouraging' wife say? *Curse God and get it over! You've had it, give up!*
- What did His 'friends' say? *Job, we know you're evil and wrong!*

Job said, 'No, I'm not evil in wrong!'

- What was the final message? *Job, you don't understand God!*

When he finally understood God he was blessed with twice as much as he had. So, you don't look at the suffering at the present time and get discouraged and blame God. *Don't blame God for things that are not His fault!* Even if they are, it's for a purpose!

Too many times, people take the position that if God is on your side, then surely He ought to perform a miracle for you. That sounds a little bit like the people standing at the foot of the cross and looking at Christ and saying:

If You be the Son of God, get Yourself down off there. Since You haven't gotten Yourself down off there, You aren't the Son of God.

Don't look at the suffering of the present time, because they "...are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" (v 18). *Then it goes on showing that the whole creation is waiting for the expectation of the return of God and of the saints!*

Heb. 1 will tell us a little bit more about the inheritance of Christ and what He is doing, and what we are going to inherit. The disciples must have understood a little bit more about the inheritance. Even the mother of James and John must have understood a little bit about it, because even she

asked that James sit on one side and John on the other side of Christ. Jesus told her, 'Woman, you don't know what you're asking!' It's the Father Who is going to give all of it. They must have understood that there's something fantastic and great that is going to happen.

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..." (vs 1-2).

If we are joint heirs with Christ, what are we going to inherit? *All things!* That means the universe! Think about it! Is there any trouble, suffering, difficulty, pain or trial in this life that's worthy to be compared to jointly owning and sharing the universe? *Not a thing!* It will be just like some little speck out in space, that's about all it's worth. Yet, look at how many billions of dollars that people are spending now to try and go into space. It's amazing!

He has inherited all things, "...by Whom also He made the ages.... [of time] ...Who, being the brightness of *His* glory and the exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them" (vs 2-4).

- Are we going to have a new name? *Yes!*
- Are we going to have a new existence? *Yes!*
- Are we going to have a new relationship? *Yes!*
- Are we going to have a new place to live in? *Yes!*

We're going to see where that's going to be! This is very important to keep this in mind as far as a reward goes. Rev. 21 ties in directly with Heb. 1:1-4.

Revelation 21:7: "The one who overcomes shall inherit all things..."—***co-heirs with Christ!*** Christ has inherited all things; we are going to inherit all things!

"...and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (v 7). *There is not going to be a change in relationship through all eternity!*

That is going to be so fantastic and important to keep in mind. That's why it's worth going through what we go through. Of course, when we look back and see what others have gone through, we haven't even started, yet. We haven't even gotten into the 'sandbox' let alone out of it! No one has locked me up for keeping the Sabbath. No

one has chased me... I have said a few things to people to make them mad at me, but... I've been persecuted for some things within the Church, but that's a different story.

Now then, we come to the colossal thing of New Jerusalem. That's where we're going to live. We're going to live in New Jerusalem! That's enough to really blow your mind when you sit down and think about it.

During the Feast of Tabernacles I will try to more graphically portray what it's going to be like in New Jerusalem. Talk about a beautiful setting, made by the very hands of God. Christ has prepared a place for you! It has your name on it, and your address also includes ...

Today we have addresses. We have city, state and zip code, three things. We could eliminate the zip code and say *country*.

Revelation 3:12: "The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God... [forever] ...and the name of the city of My God... [where we are going] ...the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him My new name*"—***because we will be the Bride of Christ!***

That's really something! I don't know what it's going to be like to be in New Jerusalem, which is going to 1500 miles square! I don't know where our niche is going to be, but any place in there is going to be wonderful.

The thing that's going to be important is that God the Father and Christ will live in New Jerusalem, and we will live there.

Revelation 21:24: And the nations that are saved... [I take this to be the nations beginning with the time of the Millennium] ...shall walk in its light... [containing God the Father, Jesus Christ and the saints—Old and New Testaments] ...and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it."

It doesn't say that they live there. They come into the city, but they don't live there, because they rest of earth is not going to be a barren desolation. It's going to be part of their inheritance, so they will live in different cities as it were, but only the saints—Old and New Testaments—with God the Father and Jesus Christ are going to live in New Jerusalem. *That's a tremendous reward!*

There's also an indication—which I won't get into now—that perhaps their form of eternal life is not exactly the same as ours will be in the first

resurrection. There is also that indication. I say *indication* because there's nothing you can say absolutely dogmatic about it.

Let's see a couple of other things that are important in relationship to the firstfruits, or those who are in the first resurrection.

1-Chron. 5 is a very important section concerning birthright. There's another thing that you have being in the first resurrection. There is a birthright, or a right of birth that none of the other children have. It's a matter of inheritance.

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...** *Very clear!*

No denial of Gen. 48 & 49, but a conformation! Why was the birthright given to Joseph and his sons? *Because Joseph was the firstborn of the second wife!*

“...and the genealogy is not to be reckoned according to the birthright; for Judah prevailed among his brothers, and from him *came* the chief ruler... [the king line] ...but **the birthright was Joseph's**” (vs 1-2).

Let's see how Abraham handled the birthright. It was taken away from Reuben because he committed adultery with one of the concubines that belonged to Jacob, the kind of incest that should not be. Here's another way to solve the problem of wills. You take care of the inheritance before your die, that way no one can fight over it, as it is today.

Genesis 25: 1: “Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bore him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah” (vs 1-2). *Then it shows the different ones that were begotten by them!*

Verse 5: “And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.” **Do we have jealousy to this very day?** *Yes, we have jealousy to this very day!* That's why nothing in the Middle East is ever going to be solved. It runs so deep and so historical and so filled with hatred, it's incredible! Anything that anybody has is better than anybody else. They either go slaughter them, take them or they're hated, whatever. It's just impossible!

Verse 6: “But to the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts. And he sent them away from Isaac his son while he still lived, eastward to the east country.” *He made sure that it was done right!* It was a good thing that he did, because all they would have been doing is fighting and warring over what was given to Isaac.

Isaac received an awful lot. You go back and read how much that Abraham had.

With all of that, let's go back and review what we need to do. We are going to receive and inheritance from God. We are going to be in the first resurrection and given the reward of living in New Jerusalem and being in the same level of existence as Jesus Christ. ***We shall see Him as He is, for we shall be as He is!*** That is something! That's really fantastic to keep your mind on! Exactly what is it that it's going to be, other than those broad things that I have given? *I can't tell you!*

In Mal. 3 we will show you God's thinking and how He does it; Malachi 3:13: “Your words have been all too strong against Me,” says the LORD. ‘Yet, you say, “What have we spoken *so strongly* against You?”.... [He gives the answer]: ...You have said, “It is vain to serve God; and...”’ (vs 13-14).

It happens so many times to so many people. *It's vain to serve God! Why? They've got their eyes on the wrong thing!* They've got their eyes on the physical things that are right here. They have endured maybe a teeny-weeny bit of suffering and really haven't gone through anything except that they had their feelings hurt. They throw God out because of that.

“...‘It is vain to serve God; and... [they look at you] ...what profit *is it*... [to you, and you can't explain that to them because they don't understand] ...that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? And now we *are* calling the arrogant blessed. Yea, they that work wickedness are built up, they even tempt God, and are delivered”’ (vs 14-15).

It seems as though that sometimes in society that that's the way it works. Those who are righteous get the short end of the stick all the time.

Verse 16: “Then those fearing the LORD spoke together, *each* man to his neighbor. And the LORD listened and heard. And a Book of Remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the LORD, and for those who thought upon His name. ‘And **they shall be Mine**,’ says the LORD of hosts, **‘in the day that I will make up My own special jewels.** And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him”’ (vs 16-17).

God is going to make up a crown. We're told that we're going to have a crown, and God is making up that crown right now with those jewels. Exactly how it's going to be, we don't know, but it's going to be magnificent, indeed! It's going to be a wonderful thing, brethren!

What do we need to do? *Philip. 3_[corrected]*

brings us right down to today, what we need to do today! Here is how the Apostle Paul looked at everything:

Philippians 3:7: “Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them as dung...**” (vs 7-8). *There are many other adjectives or words you can use, but it all comes out the same, rotten manure!*

“...that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is *derived* from law, but that *righteousness*, which is by the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God *that* is based on faith; 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).

The Apostle Paul was really setting a high standard! He was made conformable to it; so was Peter!

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, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (vs 11-12).

This is what we always need to understand. We can never say we have it made, because when we do, we’re running out of oil. The call may come to go forward and we have no oil. *That’s why we have to forget the things behind and go ahead!*

Verse 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, I press toward the goal for the prize...** [the reward; the same Greek word] **...of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus**” (vs 13-14).

It’s going to be a great and magnificent reward. It is so great and magnificent that God has only given us some outlines of it. But:

- Can we, in faith, trust God that it’s going to be great and marvelous?
- Can we, in faith, go for the gold?
- Can we, in faith, overcome, change and put the things behind us? *Yes!*
- Can we, in faith, set aside all the physical things around as nothing but dung?

Yes, we can! We sure can, we can go forward! **“I press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”**

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind” (vs 15-16).

That’s what we need to always keep focused right in the forefront of our mind:

- What is the blessing?
- What is the reward?
- Why is it worth doing what we’re doing and having to go against the world as we do?

It’s worth every bit of it, regardless of the cost!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 11:2, 13, 24-26
- 2) Revelation 3:15-16
- 3) Revelation 18:3-4
- 4) Revelation 3:17-19
- 5) Hebrews 11:26-40
- 6) Luke 19:12-27
- 7) Matthew 24:36-51
- 8) Matthew 25:1-13
- 9) 2 Corinthians 11:2
- 10) John 14:1-3
- 11) 2 Corinthians 11:2
- 12) Ephesians 5:22-32
- 13) Romans 8:16
- 14) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 15) Romans 8:16-18
- 16) Hebrews 1:1-4
- 17) Revelation 21:7
- 18) Revelation 3:12
- 19) Revelation 21:24
- 20) 1 Chronicles 5:1-2
- 21) Genesis 25:1-2, 5
- 22) Malachi 3:13-17
- 23) Philippians 3:7-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:3
- Luke 21:34-36
- Revelation 18:3
- 1 Corinthians 3
- Revelation 4; 5
- 1 John 3
- Revelation 1
- Genesis 48; 49

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