

Seek the Lord

Fred R. Coulter—November 2, 2013

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! I don't know about you, but I know about me. After all the news that went on this week I feel kind of beat up, especially with all the things that go on. Every single time they catch the President in bald-faced lies there is a shooting. Makes you wonder. That's not the biggest or greatest of our problems.

Been a lot going on in the news. Have an article here: [Why ObamaCare is a Fantastic Success](http://foxnews.com/opinion/2013/10/21/why-obamacare-is-fantastic-success/) (foxnews.com/opinion/2013/10/21/why-obamacare-is-fantastic-success/) The sum of the whole article is that it's *doing everything to destroy* the American economy, the middle class, people's savings. Just wait till the banks fail and all of a sudden you will discover all the money in the accounts are *theirs*.

Here's an article: [Spiritual Treason Sunday—Dozens of Churches to Read from the Koran](http://lionandlambministry.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=41&t=752) (lionandlambministry.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=41&t=752). Also a group of Protestant churches and the Catholic ecumenical movement have agreed to accept each other's baptisms. So, here we are marching *slowly, incrementally* to one-world religion, one-world government.

Then there was another headline—because Obama with all of this going on with the healthcare couldn't go down to the meeting in Southeast Asia—the Chinese took the spotlight. The Chinese premier said, 'Now is the time to de-Americanize.' They are trying to get all of the gold that they can. They are buying gold while we are foolishly printing money. They have set up two giant vaults to store gold.

What they are doing to by-pass the tungsten bars overlaid with gold, which came out during Clinton's presidency, all the gold they are buying they are shipping through Switzerland to have it melted down and put into Asian-style bars. They are trying to get as many 'fortunes of gold' to be stored there.

Do you know what paper gold is? *It's a bet!* It's called an ETF (exchange-traded fund). The COMEX in America has set the price dollar-wise for gold along with the London Bullion Association market. An ETF is a paper gold. You go to broker and say, 'I would like to buy a future position on gold.' So, you put \$100,000. Not many people have \$100,000, but there are those who invest millions. The broker says, 'Okay, we'll do it.'

Now they know that for every ounce of gold that is claimed by an ETF, which on a certain date when the ETF comes due, it says they will pay you

in gold according to the price on the day that it matures.

However, there's one little slight problem. All of the wonderful, dishonest brokers and bankers have made ETF claims 50 for every ounce of gold. Remember when the gold dropped down all of a sudden? 'Naked short'? *That was to scare everybody out of the ETFs!* It scared a lot of people out of them, and they had to settle for cash.

Germany is not very happy with us, because they wanted to repatriate their gold from American vaults and they said, 'You can't do it. We'll pay you over a period of seven years at best.' So, the whole financial situation is going to really get very, very desperate.

Combine all of these things together and we will see what happens. In order to 'clear the air' in my mind with all of things that have been going on, we need to realize that when the society is ready to come down, there is stress on every side with everything. So we are stressed:

- financially
- health-wise
- mentally
- with crime

We find out that for all the 'good' things that we have had, here is an article: [The End of Antibiotics?](http://singularityhub.com/2013/11/07/the-end-of-antibiotics/) (singularityhub.com/2013/11/07/the-end-of-antibiotics/), because we have used so many. Yet, we have made people immune and the diseases that they carry immune to any antibiotic solution.

In taking care of your health, be sure and realize there are many, good natural things you can do. If you don't know about them, there are a 'jillion' books out there. If you are online, you can search out anything you need and you can find a natural thing to help you.

- What did they do in the past when they used those natural things? *They died!*
- What do they do today with all the modern medicines that don't work? *They die!*

Wonderful! Violent crime is up by 15% last year. Good news! [Crime Is Getting Worse: Violent Crime In America Increased By 15 Percent Last Year](http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/crime-is-getting-worse-violent-crime-in-america-increased-by-15-percent-last-year). (theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/crime-is-getting-worse-violent-crime-in-america-increased-by-15-percent-last-year)

Now they say lower gas prices are coming. That's only temporary. [Consumers rejoice: Lower gas prices are coming!](http://cnbc.com/id/101143756) (cnbc.com/id/101143756)

25 Stats That Prove That The American Dream is Being Systematically Destroyed

(infowars.com/25-stats-that-prove-that-the-american-dream-is-being-systematically-destroyed/) That is because of what we are seeing happen politically. Just remember this: **Every announcement by the White House, think the opposite**, and that's their goal.

They're also finding out that Silicone Valley may really suffer a lot in the tunes of billions and billions of dollars because of the foreign countries pressuring all of the computer companies and the cooperation of Google and Yahoo—all the search engines—and all the various other agencies that are responsible for the information on people and governments and what the government is doing to spy, that many of those foreign countries are withdrawing anything to do with the American system, especially 'the cloud.'

Do you know what a 'cloud' is? Not the one you look up in the sky—the computer 'cloud.' The computer 'cloud' is a server somewhere in some building where you can store all your information *all available to the government*. Remember, there are clouds without rain, so the day may come when you go to go to your 'cloud' account and nothing is there. It'll pop up a little sign and say, 'rained out.'

All of these geniuses up in Silicone Valley with Raymond Kurzweil and the Singularity University—if you want a real interesting Google search, do that. Find out about Singularity University where they plan to create immortality for mortal human beings and 'the first thing we're going to do is to hook you up on all kinds of things. The way that we're going to help you gain intelligence and gain information is every night you can back up to a computer and any book you want to read we'll transfer it right to your brain.' Long article on that.

Here's a warning concerning the banking system again. I probably have received ten of those in this last week. Jim has a DVD from the fellow who wrote the book, *The Day After the Dollar Crashes*. I gave sermons on that some number of years ago.

For the future I got this wonderful book, *Killing Jesus*, by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard. I knew he didn't write all of it. I'm going to go through it very thoroughly, but what I've already discovered:

1. he did not check the Scriptures very thoroughly, if he checked them at all
2. he's got the wrong dates
3. he knows no purpose about why Jesus died

It is a *semi-mythical history* of the killing of Jesus from the Roman point of view and not from the Scriptures. I'm going to enjoy reading this so

you will hear some sermons as we get closer to Passover time. I think it's interesting that O'Reilly prides himself of being a historian and presenting the truth. He doesn't like people who 'cherry-pick' things for their own benefit, but guess what he did? *He 'cherry-picked' for his own benefit!* He did not know anything about the Hebrew calendar, had no understanding of why Jesus had to die, etc. So, it's going to be interesting reading.

But we have one book, *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, which sums it up very well. Those things will be there. I'm glad I didn't get the books, *Killing Kennedy* or *Killing Lincoln*. That may be more factual than this, but what I've seen, he takes certain things from certain histories and works those in and *weaves a tale* of events.

By the way, he says 'Christianity is a philosophy' and that the Gospels were not written down for several hundred years, so therefore, if something is only said once—I heard him say this on a program because he left something out and someone questioned him about it—he said, 'We don't know if that's historically true.' How about four eyewitnesses and many more, *written*? That's what happens.

Today we're going to cover why the world is in the mess that it is and especially in the United States. I've got two articles here:

- [The Failure of Christianity in America](#) by Phil Neal and Fred Coulter (me)—(coming soon)
- from *Christianity Today*: [Yawning at the Word](#) by Martin Galli
(christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/novemberweb-only/144-41.0.html)

They are complaining because those who come to church don't want the minister to give too many Scriptures. 'Hurry and get to the point and summarize it so we can get out of here.' Now you see the end result, the end fruit of Protestantism and Catholicism.

Let's come to Isaiah 30 because it describes it very perfectly. In the article he tells the account of a minister, or maybe it was even himself, who went to give a Bible study and after the Bible study the main deacon came up to him and said, 'If you give this again, don't give so many Scriptures.' It's interesting why people don't know anything, and why Protestantism is not in decline, it is in rapid collapse.

Isaiah 30:1: "'Woe to the rebellious children,' says the LORD, 'Who carry out a plan, but not of Me... [You can't preach the Gospel without the Word of God. You can't teach the things of God without using Scripture.] ...and who form an alliance... [How about the ecumenical movement?'

Something is going to happen to transform Islam temporarily to bring in a world religion.] ...but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin.”

Remember when Protestantism started out. They had most everything right except Sunday and then the holidays, even for a time. I think it was when Oliver Cromwell in England outlawed Christmas and all the pagan holidays. I don't know if he was trying to enforce Christmas and he actually beheaded one of the kings of England because of his arrogance and made his successor sign a document that the king does not have power from God to do anything he wants, which then helped open the way for the preaching of the Gospel. That only lasted 20 years in England because people cannot stand the Word of God.

Verse 8: “Now go, write it before them in a tablet, and note it in a book so that it may be for a time to come forever and ever.” That means to the end of the age and the return of Christ.

Verse 9: “That this *is* a rebellious people... [Yes, you mention to them concerning, ‘You know Halloween might offend me.’ *But it's all for fun!*] ...lying children. They are children who will not hear the Law of the LORD; who say to the seers, ‘See not’... [Don't read prophecy. When you come in to teach Sunday-school class, be careful; don't read too many Scriptures.] ...and to the prophets, ‘Do not prophesy to us right things, speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions’” (vs 9-10)—so that we may feel good.

It's like all the ads on television. You show me one ad on television that is sad, not a one. The nation is falling apart, crumbling down, and everybody's happy, *happy, happy!* Remember like that UPS ad? I'm happy, happy, happy! Then he found out a package wasn't going to be there when it should have been. ‘I'm not happy, I'm not happy!’ Then the clerk comes in and says, ‘You can have it deferred and have it delivered to where she is now.’ Everybody said then, ‘I'm happy, I'm happy!’ And the recipient of the package said when she got it at the house, ‘I'm happy.’ Those things *program people to not want to face the facts and truth of what is really happening!*

What they are affected and is doing, v 11: “Go out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.” They'll get away with that for a time. Look at everything we have in all the major institutions in America, and they are getting rid more and more of Christianity.

Verse 12: “Therefore, thus says the Holy One of Israel...” Because God knows, God understands. God knows what's in the minds of everyone if He has to, at any minute, anytime, anywhere, but He's

given us choices and He wants to see what we are going to do. He doesn't bring down a tyrannical government to catch you at every thought. He wants you to use His Word so that *you* will have the right direction where you need to go. *You* police your own mind, and *you* are responsible for your own actions. That's what God wants. But He has that capacity.

“...‘Because you have despised this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely on them’” (v 12). If that doesn't sound like our whole society from top to the bottom. ‘You are sick from the top of your head to the sole of your feet, wounds and bruises and putrefying sores’ (Isa. 1).

Verse 13: “Therefore, this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall... [That is describing exactly what is going to happen. Everything is mounting up that way and especially the more and more trillions of dollars that they are going to print.] ...swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant.”

I remember when we were up in Salt Lake City and I had to drive from Utah to Wyoming and into eastern Idaho. You come up eastern Idaho, then after you get through the cities there, there's a road that goes to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. There are the Teton Mountains that are really tall when you're on the Jackson Hole side looking west. But as you come from west going east, they are raised up at a more gentle slope. Then when you get to where Jackson Hole is the face of the mountains go up very steep. As you are coming in, you have to come in the valley because the valley comes around. As you get outside of the last town going north and going east in eastern Idaho, there is the Teton Dam. This was a very interesting dam because it was one of these earth dams. You come along and the highway comes up and you come up around the top of it and all of a sudden here's this lake going 30 miles back, clear all the way to Jackson Hole.

Every time I would go up that I would think, what would happen if there was an earthquake and the dam broke? Well, it did! That dam broke, wiped everything out. I think that's the best description that we can have here. It starts with a little leak not discovered, and it erodes away. Then you get a lot of rain and you get a lot of stress on it. Then all of a sudden the dam goes POOF! and trillions of tons of water come crashing down, wiping out everything in its path. No one had any warning. All of a sudden it was there! BOOM! That's going to happen to us! *That's why we have got to stay close to God!* Notice how it's going to happen here:

“...whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant. And He shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that *is* smashed in pieces. He shall not spare, so that there shall not be found in the

fragments a shard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit. For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, **‘In returning and rest you shall be saved; and in quietness and hope shall be your strength.’ But you were not willing.**” (vs 13-15).

Let’s see how Jesus brings this out in Matt. 13. People do not understand this. They think that the Bible is like any other book. They think that the Bible is full of myths. They think and they’ve been told from the pulpit—and of course the Catholic Church has to perpetuate it because they have no authority over the Bible unless they perpetuate that it was word of mouth for 200 or 300 years and they canonized it. Not so, they didn’t canonize it. That’s why with the Bible that we put out [*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*]:

- How was the Old Testament canonized?
- How was the New Testament canonized?
- How did we get it?
- How can we depend on it?

Matt. 13 is where Christ was speaking in parables. The Bible, unless you start with the easy-to-understand verses, can be very hard to understand. How about if you’re like these people:

- Oh, give us a nice verse or two and we’re out of here.
- I’ve got a date for the golf course
- I’ve got an afternoon football game
- I’ve got a mid-afternoon hockey game
- I’ve got to take my kids for this thing
- My daughter’s a cheerleader and she’s got to be there

What has Satan done with the Sabbath? Filled it with activities starting Friday night. All the parties, all the dancing, all the night clubbing, all the drinking, drugging, and all of this sort of thing goes on starting Friday night, then all the sports on Saturday. Those in the Church of God are happy that professional football is on Sunday.

Matthew 13:10: “And His disciples came to Him and asked, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given’” (vs 10-11). There is a warning for those in the Church as well—correct? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 12: “For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him.” He speaks in parables. Here’s why: *Because the people don’t want to hear; they*

automatically blind their eyes and their minds and stop their ears!

Verse 13: “For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. 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... [as well as the rest of their bodies] ...and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...” (vs 13-15). *Don’t read it to us!*

- What does that produce?
- What did Jesus say it would be like?

Look at all the things that are going on today. Look at all the difficulties and problems that occur.

- How does it apply to ministers, whether Sunday-keeping or Churches of God and Sabbath-keeping?

If you do not maintain a daily relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ—for all of us through prayer and study—then things will begin to drift away. When that happens even the understanding that they have will be taken away.

- What did Jesus say of the last days?
- What would they be like? ‘*As it was in the days of Noah!*’
- What was that like? *The earth was filled with violence and corruption!*
- Is that happening? *Yes, indeed!*

Let’s see the cause of it; let’s see what is the main cause. 2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come.” Jesus said they would *be the worse times since the creation of the world!*

In thinking about how I felt *beat up* by the news that was going on, I thought to myself: How are you going to stand up when it really gets tough? How tough is it going to get? Anybody remember the riots in Greece, the riots in Cyprus? ***We better stay close to God!***

Here’s the cause of it, v 2: “For men will be lovers of self...” We have that epitomized in almost all of the politicians today, with the exception of a few. There are a few trying to do right. There are a few Protestant ministers trying to go against the flood of all the ecumenism and the immorality that is coming into the churches. A few! But unless they quit their Sunday operation, they are never going to do very much; just apply a little whitewash over it.

They get into a desperate situation because if they own a building—remember those mega churches they had in the ’90s? They could get loans

just like that and they built these big mega churches. Guess what? *Attendance is dropping!* How do you get people to come? You appeal to carnality. You need the money because you still owe the bank. It becomes a terrible problem for them.

Today, especially the young people, they don't want anything to do with God. They don't want anything to do with church. 'Hey, I want to go have a party and have a good time.' We can throw in that all the media devices that we have today. A lot of people have cell phones. Cell phone is not evil. Television is not evil. *It's what you watch and it's what you do with it!*

So, you have to ask yourself this question concerning a cell phone if you have one. Is it a blessing or is it a curse? Just like good things can come over your cell phone. All the worst evil in the world can come over your cell phone, as well. So again, it's a matter of your choice, but it's all lovers of self; everything for me.

"...lovers of money..." (v 2). It's on both ends. How many have watched CNBC, *American Greed*? You go watch that. There are con men out there. I've watched those programs off and on for quite a while. They say, 'He was so sincere. He was so convincing.' How much money did you lose? *All of it!* How much was it? *\$300,000!*

They've even had church scams. One of the worst of them was, they went to all the black churches down south and these are the poor black churches that need money. They said, 'Here's how you can make money.' They set up this ponzi scheme and it collapsed because there are people who are liars for themselves, who are thieves and robbers. There are people filled with lust that want money. There's always someone to say, 'There's more to be had.' When I talk about that, think of the bankers.

"...braggarts... [look at any of the sports] ...proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God... [now they are even dropping this]: ...having an outward appearance of Godliness... [they just don't care anymore; look how much out there is with Satan the devil] ...but denying the power of *true* Godliness..." (vs 2-5).

Let's see some more things that help us understand what needs to be done. For those of us, here's a good one in Luke 13. Lots of times we watch the news and look at the things, see what is happening, and we see the difficulties that come along. Here is a really good explanation of how a lot of people think and how when disasters come we

like to rationalize why it happened to them and why it didn't happen to us. Have you ever done that?

Jesus covers that here, Luke 13:1: "Now, at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I tell you; but if you do not **repent**, you shall all likewise perish.... [that is the key—repentance] ...Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish'" (vs 1-5).

Let's see how that works. Here is where we are in the society today, Micah 7:1: "Woe is me!...." That's what I was saying after watching all this stuff on the news.

Last year I got 19,000 e-mails, saying nothing of letters. A lot of those are news reports. I had a whole stack. I went through them this morning. As I was getting ready for the sermon Dolores came over and said, 'You're not going to read all of those, are you?' I said, 'No, I'm not going to read them.' But there were just stacks! I've got to clean off my dresser. I have a stack here and stack here. A lot of them are some of the 19,000 e-mails that I got last year. I felt *woe is me!*

"...For I am like the gatherings of summer fruits, like the grape gleanings of the vintage. There is no cluster to eat; *but* my soul desires the first-ripe fruit. The good man has perished from the earth..." (vs 1-2). Where are you going to find anyone who is good? I know, start in the Senate of the United States. Oh, no, go to all the bureaucracies of the administration, especially HHS. (said sarcastically)

"...and there is none upright among men, for they all lie in wait for blood; each one hunts his brother *with* a net. They use both hands diligently to do evil. The ruler asks for a bribe..." (vs 2-3).

'Will you please donate to my re-election campaign?' *How much would you like?* 'A couple hundred thousand would really be good.' *All right, what are you going to do for me?* 'You tell me what you want'.

"...and the judge for a reward; and the great man speaks the evil desire of his soul. Thus they weave it together. The best of them *is* like a briar; the most upright *is sharper* than a hedge of thorns. The day of your watchmen *and* your punishment comes; now they shall be confused.... [How bad is it going to get?] ...Put no trust in a friend; put no hope in a guide; keep the door of your mouth from her who lies *in* your bosom" (vs 3-5)—especially if you

aren't married. Most people are living together. That's one of the great sins in the so-called Christian church today. They are not preaching against live-in fornication. 'Oh, well, that's okay. You intend good.'

Verse 6: "For the son dishonors the father; the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies are the men of his own household. Therefore, I will look to the LORD... [that's what we need to do to keep our senses and perspective] ...I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me!" (vs 6-7).

Don't have to worry about the enemy. What can be done? Remember when the food stamp thing went down for two hours? Did you see that on the news? All food stamps, and they have the card, went down for two hours and there was no limit. What did the people do in Wal-Mart? *They got cart after cart!* Instead of buying food to tide them over, they put in flat-screen televisions, clothes, everything—no limit! These are the wonderful people that are just down and out and we are trying to help them.

We condemn the bankers because they're greedy. It happens in Wal-Mart with the poor if they have a card. Are they going to be honest and say, 'Maybe something happened'? *No*, they said, 'Hooray, it's down. Let's buy everything and get out of here before it comes up!'

Jeremiah 6:13: "For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain;" and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely. They have also healed the hurt *of the daughter* of My people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when *there is* no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed..." (vs 13-15). They were proud of it. Today they get on television. *Yes, indeed!*

"...nor could they blush; therefore they shall fall among those who fall. At the time *that* I punish them, they shall be cast down,' says the LORD" (v 15).

It's going to happen! We need to be prepared, first of all, *spiritually*, so that we are strong in the Lord. Then we need to be prepared to a good degree *physically*. As I have warned concerning money and the bank. Be very careful, because the day is going to come and they will close down the banks and you know it's going to be Friday.

Just like in Cyprus they closed it for two weeks. Everything over a certain amount—and you can read it when you go to put your check in the bank, unless you take a picture of your check and do it that way, they have it that way now—it says,

'Every *depositor* is insured to \$250,000.' I know all of you have a great deal of money out there in your bank so be very careful. *No!*

Verse 16: "Thus says the LORD, 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way *is* and walk in it... ['Oh, no, don't read to us Scripture.'] ...and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk *in it*." Also, I set watchmen over you, *saying*, "Hearken to the sound of the ram's horn." But they said, "We will not hearken"" (vs 16-17).

How many warnings have we had? I started talking about the banking system 15 years ago. I know there were some people in the Church at that time that had close to half-million dollars in the bank. I don't know what they did with it. I don't advise them. I only heard this from those who deal with them. They were afraid to take the money out of the bank and put it into real money—gold and silver, because 'We don't know it's going to happen.' You just wait.

Verse 18: "Therefore, hear, you nations, and know, O congregation... [that's the Church of God in the midst of it] ...what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it" (vs 18-19).

That's where we stand with all these things today.

(go to the next track)

Now let's see what we need to do, both those within the Church and those not yet in the Church, and especially for those who are kind of sitting on the sidelines. Today we have an unusual thing that takes place with those who come in contact with us. Many, many times they check out all the Churches of God. They take their time. Many of them have been burned in the Catholic Church doctrinally and likewise with the Protestants so they are being very cautious. I'm glad to see that they are.

However, there comes a time for every one of us that we have to admit that our nature really, really is—as the Bible said—*deceitful and desperately wicked*. As human beings we really, really do not know how to live our lives even though you can be in the society considered a very good person. God expects everyone to be a good person in the society. That's why He has given His laws to show right from wrong, good from evil, and so forth.

Let's see what we need to do, where we need to start. It's where we left off—*repentance*. God says

- if we will repent

- if we will rend our hearts and not our garments
- if we will ask God for the understanding to see your own faults and difficulties

Lots of times even the good that we do doesn't turn out as good as we thought it should be.

Here is the setting: Ezekiel was in the concentration camp, captivity camp, over at the River Kebar with the children of Israel. They were sent off because of their sins. Stop and think!

- What will it take to change a mind?
- What will it take to change *my* mind?

We can ask each one of us ourselves. We have a good example here because God wants us to start with the *inside*. Even a con man can do well with showing goodness on the outside.

Ezekiel 14:1: "And some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me.... [Let's go to the prophet and find out what he has to say.] ...And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts...' (vs 1-3).

- What is my idol in my heart?
- What part of me am I not willing to admit to God?
- *He knows!*

"...and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I at all be inquired of by them?" (v 3). That's why there is no answer of God sometimes.

Verse 4: "Therefore, speak to them, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Every man of the house of Israel..."'" That means every woman as well because the last three letters of woman spells man.

"...who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face... [that cuts you off from God] ...and comes to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him according to the multitude of his idols, so that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart because they have deserted Me for their idols—all of them.'" (vs 4-5). That's what we see today—don't we? Don't we have lots and lots of idols? Doesn't have to be churches; they can be things; they can be activities; they can be days of worship.

If we went on, say for example: I'll just use Bill O'Reilly, because he is a crusader for Christmas and Christmas trees. He would never accept the fact that God says those things 'are an abomination to Me.' O'Reilly would never, never accept the fact that the Christmas tree in reality is a celebration of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Yet, he

demands truth in his presentations, *but he doesn't give the truth in his book!* All of us are like that because that's human nature. Just like little kids when they got caught doing wrong, 'he did it, not me.' *No, she did it!*

Verse 6: "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "**Repent...**"'" That's what God wants, *repentance*. After all that's in the model prayer, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive others,' and that's on a daily basis just like our daily bread.

"...and turn yourselves from your idols..." (v 6). The hardest ones to get out are in the mind. You can take some stupid idol and throw it away. I think it's interesting, remember when the Philistines captured the Ark of God because of the sins of Hophni and Phineas, the sons of Eli? They captured it and it was a great and joyous day when they captured it because they took down all the Israelites. They didn't realize that they took down the Israelites because of the sin of the children of Israel. God gave them the victory.

They took the Ark and put it in the house of Dagon. They got up in the morning and guess what? *Dagon fell flat on his face before the Ark of God!* Here is their god. What a witness to them. 'We better put Dagon back up where he belongs.' So, they picked him up and hoisted him back up where he belonged. Then early the next morning they go to check in and here he is again. This time his hands are cut off and his head is cut off. *A testimony of the power of God!* Unless you get rid of the idols in your mind...

You might start identifying 'what are my idols'? It can even include time. God says, "...Repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations'" (v 6). That's what God wants.

- What do you do?
- What do you do after that?

God was saying, 'I'm going to send you off into captivity, then Amos 5:4: "For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel, ^[#1]**Seek Me...**" How do you seek God?

- repentance
- prayer
- seeking the Word of God

"...and you shall live. But do not seek Bethel... [What was Bethel? *That's where they had their idols!*] ...nor enter into Gilgal, and do not pass to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing. ^[#2]**Seek the LORD and you shall live...**" (vs 4-6).

What kind of life are we seeking? *Eternal life!* We need to live physically, but we need to do it. The reason we have a physical life is so we can develop the *spiritual character*.

“...lest He break out life a fire *on* the house of Joseph and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel” (v 6). Think of Britain and U.S. on that, and the commonwealth countries. If you think it’s bad in America, think how bad it is in Britain.

Verse 7: “You who turn judgment to wormwood... [That sounds like the Supreme Court—doesn’t it?] ...and leave off righteousness in the earth!’ Seek Him Who created the Pleiades and Orion, and Who turned the deep darkness into the morning, and Him Who darkened the day *into* night. ^[#3]**Seek Him** Who calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out on the face of the earth—**the LORD is His name**” (vs 7-8). *That’s Who we are to seek!* This is true.

We have a lot of people on our mailing list—you need to stop and think:

- What are you going to do?
- What is your life?
- What is your relationship with God?

God says to **repent, seek Him!**

Verse 11: “Therefore—because of your trampling upon the poor...” What do we have now? We have had how many trillions of dollars to get rid of poverty and we have more poverty and they are trampled upon. There are parts in Chicago that you cannot go because they shoot everybody.

“...and because you take tribute grain from him—though you have built houses of carved stone, you shall not dwell in them; though you have planted desirable vineyards, you shall not drink wine from them. For I know your many transgressions and your sins. They afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate. Therefore, the prudent shall keep silent in that time; for it *is* an evil time” (vs 11-13).

That’s what I want us to understand: **We are living in an evil time!** Just because it hasn’t come to your front door yet, doesn’t mean that everything is well.

Verse 14: ^[#4] **“Seek good and not evil**, that you may live and so the LORD, the God of hosts shall be with you, and you have spoken. Hate the evil... [turn from it] ...and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious *to* the remnant of Joseph” (vs 14-15).

What do they have to forsake? Let’s start right here with the end of Amos 5. You’re religious?

You’ve been going to church Sunday for years? You been keeping Halloween, Christmas, Easter, New Years, and all of those things? We have a lot of material on the Feasts of God.

- **IF** you want to get right with God, *then you have to understand what God says!*
- **IF** you want to know how to have your mind changed, *you have to know how God thinks.*
- **IF** you want to really identify the sins that you have and want to get rid of them, *then you have to understand what the Word of God is and how He views things; even what is accepted as good in the society!*

Verse 21: “I hate...” You may love it. You may go into the store here pretty soon and you will hear Frank Sinatra singing, ‘*Christmas is the best time of the year.*’

But God says, v 21: “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.” That’s why no one dare read a Scripture in the Sunday school anymore.

- tell us good stories
- give us good things
 - ✓ don’t tell us that Sunday is wrong
 - ✓ don’t tell us that Christmas is wrong
 - ✓ don’t tell us that God hates and despises Halloween

Isn’t that the first one in the year for the occult holidays and why do they do it, you always bring it up? *For the children!* Oh, yes, indoctrinate them into death and destruction, but feed them all kinds of candy and goodies. Isn’t it interesting, two weeks after Halloween, what do you have? *The flu season!* I wonder if there’s any connection?

Verse 22: “Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings...” Though you stand up pray and say what a wonderful thing this is. How great this wonderful choir sings every Sunday morning. There’s a world-famous choir, it’s called the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. They are really, really good. They can sing a lot of very inspiring songs, but

- Does that make Christmas good?
- Does that make Sunday acceptable?

Think about it. What does God say?

Verse 23: “Take the noise of your songs away from Me; for I will not hear the melody of your harps.” During the Christmas season when they go shopping, it’s all the days of Baal—isn’t it? *Yes, it is!* They keep everybody indoctrinated and brainwashed Satan’s way with good-sounding music and wonderful little skits. ‘We’ll have the children

have a Christmas play at school.’ *The way of the world!*

Verse 24: “But let judgment roll down like waters... [Find out what’s right and wrong; good and evil; make a right judgment.] ...and righteousness like a mighty stream. Have you offered sacrifices and offerings to Me forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?” (vs 24-25).

Even when God was right there with the cloud in the daytime and the pillar of fire by nighttime, what did they do? *They went off and secretly offered to their gods!* So, God says, ‘You’re going into captivity.’ **How do you return to God?**

1. *you have to repent*
2. *you have to ask God to help you understand all the idols in your mind*
3. *you have to be willing to change your thoughts, your practices, and your way of living to walk in the way of the Lord*

Micah 6:6: “With what shall I come before the LORD, to bow myself before God the Most High? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?....” (vs 6-7). Yes, a great sacrificial thing that you can do.

“...Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression...” (v 7). That’s what the children of Israel did. ‘Oh, we’ll cover our sins by offering our firstborn to Moloch. Aren’t we good people? Aren’t we dedicated?’ *Yes!*

“...the fruit of my body for the sin of my life? He has shown you, O man, what *is* good. And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God?” (vs 7-8). ***That’s what God expects!***

Let’s see how we need to do this. This doesn’t cost you anything; this is gracious and free from God. He will lead anyone who seeks Him. Here’s what God wants us to do and we need to seek God early every day in our lives—don’t we? How many people come along and say, ‘Oh, God, I’m in such a hurry, I’ll get to You tomorrow.’ Then what happens tomorrow? *Something else happens!* ‘God, I intended to. I’ll get to you tomorrow. I’ll pray while I’m driving my car.’ That’s not exactly on your knees. It’s better than ignoring God. ***You have to come to God!*** Remember what the Beatitude is: ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled!***

Isaiah 55:1: “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters... [the water of life; the waters of Truth; the waters of healing] ...and he who *has* no money, come, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and

milk without money and without price.” Those are all descriptions of the Word of God. It is true and it is righteous. He’s given us a way of life.

Verse 2: “Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread? And your labor for *what* never satisfies? Harken diligently to Me...” That’s what God wants. Hear the Word of God and harken means *hear and do*, diligently, not forgetfully.

“...and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Bow down your ear, and come to Me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.... [the New Covenant] ...Behold, I have given Him *for* a witness to the people, a Prince and Commander of people” (vs 2-4). That expands out to Christ.

Verse 5: “Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know... [This is the calling going to the whole world instead of Israel.] ...a nation *that* did not know you shall run to you because of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.” That’s what God wants.

Look at all the people today that ‘play church’—all the Sunday-keepers and even Sabbath-keepers—there are a good number of them. They ‘play church.’ God wants to give you *glory, honor, eternal life!* That’s what it’s all about. All the churches have done so many things contrary to that, that it’s very difficult for some people to really believe that that is true; but it is.

How to do it, v 7: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts...” There’s got to be a change of thinking. That can only come with the Spirit of God.

“...and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (v 7). Here is the whole key that God wants. What does it say there in Phil. 2:5? ‘Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus’—correct? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 8: “‘For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,’ says the LORD.” God wants to educate you and give you the greatest ability to think and understand through His Word. Greater than all the geniuses in all the world, the great elite of the world, whom God calls *fools* because they reject Him.

Verse 9: “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth... [That’s how God wants us to have our thoughts lifted to.] ...so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” There has to be that change. ***God’s Word is going to go out and it’s going out and it’s going to produce what He desires. He says so!***

Let's see what else God says we need to do and we also find here the very first thing we need to start doing. Remember how God says He hates the feasts and religious celebrations of this world, whatever the religion may be. *God has His own!*

Isaiah 56:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'Keep justice and do righteousness... [righteousness is the way of God] ...for My salvation *is* near to come... [Are we living in the last days or not? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this... [You want a blessing from God? You want proof from God? Here's what He says to do.] ...and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps the Sabbath..." (vs 1-2). That is a start; that is not a finish. We have a lot of things concerning the Sabbath.

I got a letter from a man the other day who said, 'I used to be a Seventh Day Adventist and I have discovered that almost everything they say and do except the Sabbath deviates from the Bible, some a little, some a whole lot.' *Because* the SDAs have not been vigilant to keep Satan out! That's where you start.

"...who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it; and keeps his hand from doing any evil" (v 2). Then we saw otherwise in Ezek. 14 to *repent of the idols and return to God*.

Verse 4: "For thus says the LORD, 'To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths... [now it's expanded out to God's Holy Days too] ...and choose things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; Even to them will I give within My house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off'" (vs 4-5). Then He talks about those of the strangers who do so.

That's where to start! If you're kind of sitting on the fence wondering: What should I do? How should I live my life? I look out there and I see all these churches and they all claim to be right:

- check it with the Bible
- check it with the Truth

Understand this too: *God never gave a ministry to exalt itself over the brethren, to exalt itself and take great titles and names to itself*. If they claim that they are the only one, or if a man says 'I am this great so-and-so,' even though they do some of the things of God, you need to understand that you better go a little further in checking out.

Remember what Jesus said right there in Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21: 'Beware for many false prophets shall come in My name saying I am the Christ. But you shall know them by their fruits.'

We have many, many things we can help people with. The reason that we have the Bible the way it is, is because it explains a lot of things for you to understand and to understand the Word of God. Because it has been so maligned and so pushed aside and so ridiculed by Satanists within religious organizations that it's hard to really believe the Bible. God can open up your mind. He has the power of His Spirit to do it.

Let's talk about some of those who have been in the Church a long time. There are a lot of us. Remember, don't be like the one man who was so arrogant, who said that he was an apostle of God and that he actually—I heard him from the pulpit—said, 'I have been faithful to God for so long that Satan no longer has any interest in me.' *Gotcha!*

You have to be faithful every day that you draw breath! Never brag on your accomplishments *that God has worked* through you.

Revelation 3:14: "And to the angel of the church of *the* Laodiceans, write... [Laodiceans are those who are rich and increased with goods, as we will see.] ...These things says the Amen... [the finality is coming] ...the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God. I know your works... [He says that to all the seven churches. God knows our works.] ...that you are neither cold nor hot..." (vs 14-16).

God would rather have you totally unconverted and out in the world so that you could make it to the second resurrection, than to be lukewarm in the Church and have your own idols in your own minds, and leaders and teachers who water down the Word of God and change it, make it sound nice and smooth. What's going to happen?

"...I will spew you out of My mouth..." (v 16). For those who have been in the Church a long time, has that occurred? *Yes, indeed!* It's a historical fact.

Verse 17: "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy... [I have all these blessings from God because I have been so good.] ...and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." You become spiritually blinded! You become satisfied!

You don't have to condemn yourself. You don't have to go around with a guilty conscience. **But *never be satisfied with where you are before God!*** Maintain your relationship through prayer and study and be zealous for the Word of God and God's way.

God says, v 18: "I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." Gold is the highest quality of character, so God wants us to have the

highest quality of character. Not just things in goods, but the gold in character that comes from God.

“...so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the same of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see” (v 18). See clearly through the lens of Scriptures, through the Spirit of God.

God loves you. He says, v 19: “As many as I love... [‘I love you,’ Jesus said of Israel. ‘I have an everlasting love for you.’] ...I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.” That’s what God wants and that’s where we started with the whole thing—isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 20: “Behold, I stand at the door... [close to the end] ...and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door... [you have to respond to God] ...I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Shows that the relationship got so far out of whack that Christ is not there on a permanent basis and He’s got to come back in.

To sup with Him and He with me means that *you have a personal relationship with God!* Just like you sit down at a meal and eat and you talk. You talk about your life and things and whatever it may be and this is a spiritual thing that we do with Christ.

He’ll give you the power to overcome, v 21: “To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne... [That’s pretty awesome indeed, isn’t it?] ...even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches” (vs 21-22).

Let’s understand this. The letters to the seven churches are direct quotes from Christ, Who is the Head of the Church. These are not written without God speaking directly to John to write this. He told him, ‘Write and send it to the seven churches.’

This is a prophecy and history of the Church. It begins with the churches at the time that John wrote this, carries down through the eons of time until the return of Christ. At the end, I believe it describes all the attitudes of the Churches of God *as God sees them!*

If we listen to that, *God always accepts repentance*—always, if it’s from the heart and if you ask God to give you the understanding so that you can; *He will!* This is why God is there. This is why when you get like I felt, beat up, feel exhausted just listening to the news and all the crazy stuff that’s going on, come back to God. Turn that silly thing off because it will be the same thing tomorrow. You aren’t going to miss anything.

Also pray this. I think next week I’m going to bring the 14 things that have to happen in prophecy before Christ returns. I’ve given this many times periodically through the years. It’s possible, and I hope it may occur, that there are enough people trying to do enough good in the society—remember, God looks at the nations differently than He looks at the Church, because they are not converted—that everything we see happening will have a reprieve for a while so that the Churches of God can preach the Gospel the way they need to. That’s part of my prayer; I hope that happens.

But whatever comes, comes. However it falls, *it falls! We have to make sure that we are right with God!*

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- 3) 2-Timothy 3:1-5
- 4) Luke 13:1-5
- 5) Micah 7:1-7
- 6) Jeremiah 6:13-19
- 7) Ezekiel 14:1-6
- 8) Amos 5:4-8, 11-15, 21-25
- 9) Micah 6:6-8
- 10) Isaiah 55:1-5, 7-9
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