

## A Peek at the Mystery of God

Fred R. Coulter—January 16, 2016

God has a secret plan that He is working out on the earth that the world does not know anything about.

God does that. You can read in the Bible where those who professed themselves to be wise are fools. Yet God has chosen the foolish things, those which the world counts as nothing. So here we are. He is doing a secret work in preparation for the two greatest events since the creation of the world.

Christ was the first one, so we'll say three events. His coming in the flesh. But these events that are coming, are going to affect the whole world. God has chosen people that the world would not choose. As you look around, God has also chosen people that you would not choose to be your friend or brother or sister either.

He has done that for a very special reason so that we learn to love each other and also to realize the ultimate work we are going to do is to save the world as servants under Christ. You think about that. That's a secret plan. He has to call us. The Bible says, 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' The Gospel goes out, many people hear it. They don't understand it.

Let's come here to Matt. 13 and let's see something that is central to the purpose that God is doing. Here is what Jesus told His disciples. When Christ came, when He suddenly appeared at the temple, He did not say, 'All the priests gather around. All the Pharisees gather around. You will be My disciples.' No. He went to Galilee and chose fishermen.

So important was their calling and so important was the work that God was going to do with them, that Christ directly was going to do with them, that He had reveal it bit by bit. They couldn't handle it all at once.

Here's a place where we have the parable of the sower. Christ is the sower, the seed is the Word of God. Stop and think about this. We know in Matt. 24 that God says He's going to give a witness to all the world, to all the nations.

We know there are people out there preaching bits of the Gospel here and there. We know there are people, not associated with the Church, or even any church that understand things are getting very complicated and ready to really be in a disaster and to collapse. So there are those warning.

Very few understand. I'll take that back. Even the pope understands this. Aliens are going to invade the earth. Who are those aliens? The ultimate of the secret work of God is first going to be the first resurrection. We'll be aliens to the world.

Then when they see Christ coming—and it says every eye will see Him. When you understand that the Bible is true. The Word of God is true. When Christ says every eye shall see Him, that means every living person on earth at the time. So if you want the answer to that, you can write for our book, *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*. It talks about the return of Christ.

In order for Christ to take over the world, He's not going to do it single-handedly. So down through the ages, beginning with the patriarchs, God has specifically chosen various individuals. He has used them, converted them, preached the Word. A generation comes; a generation goes; a generation comes, a generation goes. Now we're down toward the end of the last time. How much longer will it be? We don't know, because Christ said, 'No man knows the day or the hour.'

We're also learning that in understanding the prophecies, that the way we have understood them happening in rapid-fire sequence all the time is not true. So we'll have some sermons on that so we can understand what's going on.

Think of this. When Jesus was preaching, multitudes would follow Him. Why would multitudes follow Him? Especially in the first year of His ministry—as you will see in *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*—it was a jubilee year.

Jubilee is to release all Hebrew servants, rest the land. So there were a lot of people that could follow along and listen to Jesus. But He did a very inexplicable thing because most Protestants believe that God is working over time through the church to save everybody. 'If you don't come the Protestant way, you are doomed in hell forever.' That's not true. God is calling a few. 'Many are called, but few are chosen.'

So when He spoke to the multitudes, He spoke to them in parables. The disciples couldn't understand. 'Why are you talking to them in parables?' This will help you understand how God works in secret, yet in plain sight.

Matthew 13:10, after hearing the parable: "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...” (vs 10-11). To know the mystery of God—the mysteries. One of the great mysteries is working all the time, which is what happens next year.

He says, “...but to them it has not been given” (v 11). Now how can God give it to those that He called, but not give it to those who are not called? When we go through these things, always understand this: Always remember the second resurrection. That’s one of the biggest secrets the world doesn’t know.

The second resurrection is going to come at a later time when everyone who has been blinded, never had an opportunity for salvation, will be given a second physical life. Then have an opportunity for salvation. That’s how much God’s love extends to humankind.

So even in blinding them, and the blinding happens automatically. That’s another secret of God. It has not been given to them.

Verse 12: “For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given...” Why give more to him? Why not give it to the dunce? *The dunce can’t understand.*

Speaking of needing correction, I see my corrector right in front of me. Victoria Nelson sent me a nice email that I misspoke concerning the radiation protection, the Van Allen Belt around the earth. It protects us from the radiation from the sun, not from the meteors from outer space. We have Jupiter and Saturn to take care of that. So I stand corrected.

Back to this, v 12: “...and he shall have an abundance...” Brethren, that’s what we need to have today. We have the Word of God. We have the histories. We have everything that we need. There is no reason at all for the Churches of God to not understand the Bible, to not be excited about the Bible, to not be drawing close to God and learning and growing and overcoming. We’re preparing for eternal life. That’s a tremendous thing. That’s why we have this book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?*. We take Him all the way through.

“...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him” (v 12).

I need to give a sermon on the significance of 1893. You can find that by reading [Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants](#), Appendix N in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*.

The truth is, since 1893, down to this day, the Protestants have been going down, down, down. Where are they today? Ordaining homosexual priests and marrying them to lead the Episcopal church.

The understanding they had has been taken from them. Likewise the Catholics, where the Catholics were never in the ballgame anyway.

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...”” (vs 13-14).

Why? We will see what happens. There are things that happen automatically that people don’t understand. That’s why it’s a secret.

Verse 14: ““In hearing, you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest...””

Why would they close their eyes and close their ears? *Because they want to do what they want to do instead of do what God wants them to do.* That’s a very simple principle. All the world is in one degree or other of this.

Those who understand principles of the Bible and apply them will have more understanding. Those who live hedonistic lives will have no understanding of anything. Pretty soon they’ll come to a point that they won’t even know where to get their next fix.

“They have closed their eyes.” Have you ever talked to someone about the Sabbath? Shutters come down. First point, very first thing. They may want God, but the very first way you start finding out about God, start keeping the Sabbath. Then study the Bible on the Sabbath about the Sabbath and at the end of the month you’ll understand why you need to keep the Sabbath. That always works.

Notice what Jesus said: ““...lest they should see with their eyes... [Without obedience you can’t understand] ...and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them”” (v 15).

That’s a great mystery. Here, Christ the Savior of the world, coming in the flesh, to live a life, to be the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and He doesn’t want them converted. Is that not a great secret? Why? Is He against them? *No, He will save them in the second resurrection.*

So He still loves them, but He doesn't want them to come part way and give up. That's why the few are chosen.

Notice what He says here in v 16, and you will see this multiply in your life. It works both ways. Those people who are blinded can't see and can't hear, because they're not willing to obey. Yet they want all the blessings of God. They can't understand why things aren't working out. That's exactly what's happening in this nation. Nobody knows what's going on. Why?

I just did 5-1/2 minute little video, because America supports and upholds by law, and through government the deliberate killing of the most innocent, 3,000 or more every day. That's why. Have all these politicians, going to do this, going to do that, going to do the other thing? No, you aren't going to do a thing. You better pray you don't meet your Maker real quickly. That's what's wrong with this nation.

'Oh, but we have to run off and have all the news with all this terrorist attack, wherever it may be.' Remember the one here in San Bernardino, just recently? 'Oh, it's on the news, everybody talk about what are we going to do about it.'

You'll never have enough police. You'll never have enough spies. You will never have enough people to stop the terrorists unless you ban abortion. Because, you are killing the most innocent of the beginning of the creation of God, of a new human being, which requires the genes and chromosomes from father and the genes and chromosomes from mother, and the spirit of man from God. That's a secret as to why the world's in the mess that it is in, especially the nations of Israel.

It's easy to identify them today. Look at where all of the strangers are coming into which countries.

- They're not coming into China
- They're not coming into Russia
- They're not coming into Brazil
- They're coming into Europe
- They're coming into America
- They're coming into Canada

Do you suppose that God is sending one alien, so we are being invaded by aliens, for every abortion? I think if you do the math, you'll find it's pretty close.

So out of this God has called us so that we can learn, we can be taught. It's a secret because it comes with God's Spirit, which cannot be seen. It works in our hearts and our minds, which is a work that they do not even comprehend.

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). Then He explains the parable of the sower. We need to make sure that we are those who produce 30-fold, 60-fold, 100-fold.

Let's see how God does His secret work. I don't think there's one other person in Pasadena that knows we're here, except maybe a relative of yours that you told them where you're going. Why is it important that we are here? *Because God is training and teaching us.*

Church is not a militant organization, run by popes and cardinals and bishops, or apostles and evangelists, and so forth. We are to teach the brethren to grow in grace and knowledge and prepare for the return of Christ and the first resurrection.

God has set up His secret plan so well that He deals individually, with each one of us through His Spirit and through His Word. We have the Sabbaths of God so we can learn. We have the Word of God so we can be instructed. So that we can have a relationship with God to become His spiritual children.

Living in this evil world, how does God do it? Let's come back here to Eph. 2. Let me just mention this. There is also the secret or mystery of lawlessness that is also working, which is controlled by the god of this world, Satan the devil.

We all live in this world. Before God calls us, we're just out there. So I want you to stop and think, and I'm sure you can remember almost the exact reaction that you had when God first began to open your mind. There's a reason. That's when you began to answer the call.

But here is where everybody else is. Let's read it right here. Ephesians 2:1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins." What did Jesus say to the man who said, 'I'll go with you wherever You want to go, but let me go bury my father.' What did Jesus say? For some political correct people, they would say He was mean, nasty, obnoxious, because He said, 'Let the dead bury their dead; come and follow Me.'

The point is, living in the world, you're as good as dead. Notice there's a power behind it, an unseen power working. This unseen power also uses human beings and human instruments through government, education, finances, entertainment, all of those things.

You look at all of those things, is there any amount of understanding of God in any of those things? If there is, they're going to try and get rid of it. That's because of the prince of the power of the air.

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

All law-breaking, all things that are against human life, human thought, Satan is there. He lures, very temptingly, starting at an early age.

So how do you get out of that? *God has to intervene in your life.* How does God intervene in your life? There comes a time, somewhere along the line, that you realize that your life is in trouble and difficulty, and you're emotionally and physically and mentally all messed up. Somehow you cry out to God. That's your first prayer.

God has another secret at work. He knows what's going on in earth. How can God know what's going on in earth? Because He has seven, special spirits that are called the eyes of God, that go through the earth, day and night, to seek out those who are seeking Him.

So you remember the minute, you remember the event, when God first began dealing with you. The one of the seven spirits. Then God began calling you, drawing you. If you responded, He'll draw you more. That's the secret of God, how He does it. He does it spiritually.

No one can see it, not even your best friend. Sometimes not even your husband or wife. Because God is doing it in your mind and heart. That's an amazing secret. So you're all secret agents for the Kingdom of God, and the world doesn't know it. Better than the CIA.

Verse 3: "Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest *of the world.*"

"But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, Even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.) (vs 4-5).

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This grace is God's action in your life. He formulated this from the beginning. So as we're going through these various Scriptures, and so forth, I want you to understand and realize how fantastic and great this plan is. It's all laid out in the coming

book. But you are loved by God and He has called you to be one of the called, chosen, and faithful, to give eternal life to each of us. Just like all of us as physical human beings are unique and different from any other human being on earth, even including identical twins. There are some little variances.

So don't ever think that just because in this world we may not amount to nothing, as far as the world is concerned. But God loves you and has called you. That means you are important to Him. He wants you to prepare. Of any time in history we have the most tools available to learn and prepare.

I just talked to our piano player, who sits in the back, and he brought his digital Bible with him. As a matter of fact, two. Pulled out his cell phone and popped up *afaitfulversion.org*.

Just think, it's so important that God Himself, the Father, is directly involved. We are saved by grace.

Verse 8: "For by grace you have been saved..." This means—and it is past tense, past perfect—this means you have been saved from Satan the devil, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith..." (v 8). That means

- you love God
- you believe God
- you obey God

That's faith. Always remember this: it takes no faith to disobey God.

Think about this. For Sunday-keepers to have true faith, because they don't have enough faith to keep the Sabbath. They tell Sabbath-keepers, 'You're trying to earn your salvation if you keep the Sabbath or keep the commandments, because Jesus did away with the law.' That makes God lawless, when He is the Author of law.

"...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves... [It's not your own work] ...*it is the gift of God*" (v 8).

What a fantastic thing that is. God gives it freely. What is the cost, though it's free? Your life and to love God with all your heart and mind and soul and being. He proved His love to you personally in sending Christ to die for your sins. That's another whole story in itself and we have it in the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?*. Why did Jesus have to die? That's another mystery of God.

Remember Jesus said, 'It has been given to you to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God.'

So there are many secret things the world does not understand.

Verse 9: “Not of works... [your own works. It is the gift of God] ...so that no one may boast.”

Notice what’s going on, v 10, because here’s another secret operation of God. Now it may be manifest in people seeing that you’re changed, you’re converted, but they don’t know what is happening. I want you to understand this too: that God the Father and Jesus Christ are actively involved in this process of v 10.

Verse 10: “For we are His workmanship... [He’s molding and creating in us the character we need to receive eternal life.] ...created ...” That is in ongoing sense: being created. So what is going on secretly in your heart and in your mind and in conversion through prayer, through study, through loving God, through living your life the way God wants your life lived, it’s all being shaped in your mind because the Spirit of God is united with the spirit of man in your mind. He is developing in you that character.

God wants all of His future children to be really understanding what He is doing. Let’s read it: “...being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works...” (v 10).

What are the good works? What’s the first thing that God says to the seven churches in Rev. 2 and 3? ‘I know your faith.’ *No, He says, ‘I know your works.’*

How can it be by faith, if it’s by works? Yet we’re going to be judged by works. The answer is simple. There are the works of men, which can never bring eternal life. There are the works of God, motivated in us by His Holy Spirit. So what He does in us is His work, His workmanship.

“...unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (v 10). It is a way of life. Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Me.’ That we might walk in them.

Turn to Revelation 2:26. This answers the question: What are the good works we are to do. We’re not to just lay back and say, ‘Thank you, Lord.’ He wants our full active participation. That’s described by loving God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all of our strength, with all of our soul. That’s a full-time job.

If you’re doing that, you’re going to agree with God and God is going to open your mind to understanding the Scriptures.

Revelation 2:26: “And to the one who overcomes...” Yes,

- we have to overcome self
- we have to overcome sin
- we have to overcome Satan the devil

But God gives us the strength to do it, with His Spirit, with His Word. Because Jesus said, ‘Man is to live by every Word of God.’ Not some, not most, not nearly all, but every Word of God.

“...and keeps My works unto *the* end...” (v 26). If you keep the commandments of God, whose works are those? *God’s*. When we do, we do it by faith. We do it in love and God blesses us. Even the trials and difficulties we have will turn out to be blessings in the long run. Everything that happens with us, with God’s Spirit, and doing the works of God in us, and molding us, ‘all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.’ All things, even the difficulties, even the tragedies.

Since we’re here in Pasadena, we can’t forget Pasadena. Even all the special trauma that everyone in Pasadena went through, when everything got corrupt and it had to be taken down, has that worked together for good? *Yes*.

- Are there more Churches of God?
- Is there more preaching of the Gospel? *Yes*
- Has it reduced down the corruption and false doctrine?

So that’s good. Have we learned to love God more, instead of the physical things that we could see: lands, buildings, gardens, and things like this? We all thought how wonderful, how beautiful, how great it was. God has something far better. That’s why He took it away. That was some of the idols He destroyed. He’s doing a good job of it, isn’t He?

What is He going to give us in exchange if we’re faithful? *New Jerusalem*. How’s that? The most beautiful city in the universe, made by God Himself for His sons and daughters. That’s another secret of God. That’s why don’t ever get discouraged.

“and keeps My works unto *the* end, I will give authority over the nations” (v 26). That’s to rule and to reign.

What was it that Paul wrote to Timothy about preaching the Gospel? Let’s back up a little bit further. Since the New Testament was not written when the apostles started their ministry, how did they preach Christ? *From the Old Testament*. God gave them His Spirit to understand all the different clues scattered throughout the Old Testament.

How about the last verse in Psa. 17? ‘I will be satisfied when I awake with Your likeness.’

- What does that mean?
- How is that going to be?
- Will it ever happen?
- What is that doing in the Old Testament?

That's a prophecy that is a clue. So when the New Testament comes along, you can put it together. Here's another one: Psa. 138. Let's read it. Notice the approach here:

Psalm 138:1: "I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods... [above every other god] ...I will sing praise to You. I will worship toward Your holy temple..." (vs 1-2). We do that directly when we pray to God. We are praying to the temple in heaven above. You can get a glimpse of that in Rev. 4 and 5.

"...and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness, and for Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name" (v 2).

You read that, the understanding of the New Testament, when Jesus said, 'I didn't come to destroy the Law.' Why? He never intended to.

Verse 3: "In the day when I cried, You answered me..." Think about that. The Father in heaven above, with Jesus Christ our High Priest at His right hand, when you pray to God on your knees, He hears and will answer. Many times the answer comes not in the way that you think it would come. It takes some time to where you look back and say, 'God answered that prayer.'

"...You answered me and made me bold with strength in my soul. All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O LORD, when they hear the words of Your mouth" (vs 3-4). When are they going to do that? *That's going to be in the Kingdom of God.*

Who are the kings going to be? *Resurrected saints, kings and priests.* Yes, indeed. Brethren, understand this. There's only one first resurrection and it is so fantastic that it's going to be the only one throughout all eternity. I want you to grasp how important the secret of God is. He's making it known to us.

Think how important the Sabbath becomes because God puts His presence in it wherever the people of God are, even if it's only two or three. Think how quickly things would fade away if we didn't have the Sabbath, and if we didn't pray and if we didn't study. Look what has happened to people who did that. Our prayer is that we hope God will still deal with them. There is a prodigal son.

Verse 5: "Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD..." You talk about singing. When we're resurrected, we will no longer make joyful noise, we will all be in tune. Wonder what it's going to be like

in New Jerusalem? We're going to keep the Sabbath somehow. I don't know exactly how it's going to be. But how about when we come before God the Father? We're going to see Him face to face. That's another secret of God. That's something. God has so many great things that He reveals to us.

"Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD. Though the LORD is high, yet He has respect to the lowly; but the haughty He knows afar off" (vs 5-6). That verifies what we read in Matt. 13.

Verse 7: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble..." What this Psalm is doing, it's telling us about our spiritual walk with God in the world, which doesn't understand the Truth. And it brings out that we will have difficulties as well. But remember, God is with us in our troubles, because when we have the Spirit of God, united with our spirit, He dwells here by the power of His Spirit. Just a bit of His Spirit. It's called the earnest, but that's enough for conversion.

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me... [Has God revived all of us who went through all the troubles going on down here years ago? *Yes, indeed.*] ...You shall stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies..." (v 7).

Sidebar on war. God believes in war against the enemies. But He told Israel, 'You only go to war when I tell you and I will fight for you.' You go back and see how He did that with Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat. How He did it in conquering the land. He'd send the angels and they would rustle the trees and then come down and kill all of the enemy.

Why? Because God promised that as a nation, 'If you obeyed My laws,' that was in the letter of the law, trust in Me, 'that five of you would chase a hundred and a hundred would chase ten thousand.' That's the first thing our generals ought to know.

Now what do we have because we're living in disobedience as a nation before God? One terrorist chases ten thousand. Don't think for one minute that the terrorists are just going to vanish and go away. They are not.

"...and Your right hand shall save me... [Notice v 8, New Testament doctrine:] ...The LORD will perfect His work in me... [His workmanship (Eph. 2). Isn't that something?] ...Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever; do not forsake the work of Your own hands" (vs 7-8).

That applies to us because spiritually we are the work of God's hands. Physically that's true as well. Think on this. When God created Adam and

Eve, He put in there all the genes and chromosomes necessary for all the human race. He formed them.

Therefore, through the process of procreation, all human beings are formed by the hand of God. Because He made the original genes, from which all of the descending genes coming down through every generation, have come. Ever thought of that?

Psalm 119:73 is David speaking: “Your hands have made me... [That was only with personally with Adam. But because He put all the genes and chromosomes in Adam and Eve...] ...and formed me; give me understanding so that I may learn Your commandments.”

What is God going to do with us? *God is going to perfect us.* That’s exactly what He wants to do.

Let’s come to John 17. Let’s see what Jesus prayed. Let’s understand this with all of the Word of God, which is this: Your Word is the Truth. God cannot lie.

John 17 is Jesus’ last prayer just before He was arrested to be taken out and to be scourged and beaten and then later crucified. Let’s read part of this prayer.

This becomes very important. This is Jesus’ personal prayer for everyone that God calls. Will God answer that prayer? *Yes, indeed.* So think about it. Once you understand some of these things, and when you find yourself in difficulty and anxiety or feeling sorry for yourself, you know things don’t go right. You have a nice, big pity-party, tears come down. You’re feeling sorry for yourself, remember this: Christ loves you and has prayed for you. The Father loves you and you are going to be His children. That will overcome any difficulty that you are confronted with.

John 17:14: “I have given them Your words... [Everything that Jesus spoke came from the Father. Today, we have the whole Bible. So isn’t that fulfilled? ‘I have given them Your words.’ Think of it.] ...and the world has hated them because they are not of the world... [That’s where we started, come out from underneath the prince of the power of the air] ...just as I am not of the world.”

Verse 15: “I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [though there are times we wished He would] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one.”

It says in Col. 1 that the Father Himself has personally rescued you from Satan the devil. That’s a fantastic thing. Think of that. The whole world being deceived by him and God has rescued us from him. How?

- by His Spirit
- through His secret plan
- through calling us
- our answering the call
- through yielding
- through study
- through prayer
- through living
- through overcoming

All of these things then become God’s work in us to prepare us for the Kingdom.

Verse 16: “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your truth... [Sanctify means to make holy. We’re called in the New Testament holy brethren. Because we have the Spirit of God.] ...Your Word is the truth” (vs 16-17).

Verse 18: “Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your truth*” (vs 18-19).

“I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word” (v 20). That means to preach. That’s why everyone who is going to preach or teach, all ministers, elders, anybody who speaks, you better keep this in mind. ‘Preach the Word,’ that’s what Paul said.

Notice this prayer which will be fulfilled, v 21: “That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me... [spiritually speaking] ...and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me.” That’s what God wants. That’s Christ’s prayer for us, that we will be in the Kingdom of God with Him and the Father.

Verse 22: “And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me... [that is the Holy Spirit and the Word of God] ...in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one... [spirit beings. Notice v 23:] ...I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one...” (vs 22-23).

So conversion is a process. It says of Jesus in Heb. 5 that He was made perfect. Can you be perfect and be more perfected? Think of that. Isn’t that something?

“...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (v 23).

Think about how much that love is that God has, regardless of how difficult things may come. Who are men to think that they can come along and improve on it? An imperfect man, walk up to God and say, ‘God, I’ve got a great idea. Why don’t You

do this? Let's have crosses, just so everyone will know who we are. Oh, but the virgin Mary, she would be so nice. We could make her beautiful. We could have one of Christ and overlay it with gold and wouldn't that be fantastic? People walk into the cathedral and see all of this and they go, Ohhh.'

No, man cannot improve upon God, but God can improve upon man. May be perfected into one.

Let's come back to the book of Ephesians. So I'm giving you somewhat of a little preview of parts of the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* This first chapter, chapter one, chapter three are some of the most powerful and inspiring things that Paul has written. We'll see where it comes from.

Let's see what God wants to pour out upon us. Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God... [He didn't set himself up and take out a license and graduate himself.] ...to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus." That was written for us. God knew that He would give the Word, so it would be for us.

Think of what God has done in getting the Bible in how many languages? 450 languages you have the Bible. New Testament—2200 languages. God has done that. He's used men.

To top it off, God's plan is so secret that even some of the men who worked on translating the Bible, and did a good job of it, because God wanted it translated, still didn't understand. Think of that.

Notice this, v 2: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ."

Most of the time when we're reading the Bible we leave off the first words of the epistle, but that's what blesses—if I could put it that way—the whole epistle, because it's coming from God the Father and Jesus Christ. So we can have grace,

- that access to God
- that access to forgiveness of sin
- that access to growing and overcoming

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ." That is present tense and also prophetic.

"According as He has personally chosen us for Himself..." (v 4). I think *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* is the only translation that has it personally. Why did I do that? There's a special verb in the Greek called middle-voice verb, which is this. In English you have subject and verb and object.

This special verb is the subject does the action, but coming back to benefit the subject. So

how could I translate that? So I translated it *personally*, because God has personally called us to Himself. For our benefit and His benefit, so He can expand His family.

That's why the Word of God is so great, because it just multiplies everywhere in meaning when you put it together.

"...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [He had this plan, ready to go. Not that you existed before the foundation of the world, but He had the plan before the foundation of the world to choose those who would repent and come to Him.] ...in order that we might be holy and blameless before Him in love: (v 4).

That's a fantastic condition to be in. To be holy—that means to be a spirit being. Before that, to receive God's Holy Spirit. To be blameless before Him, means that you have your sins forgiven. You have access to God all the time to have your sins forgiven, because you are being perfected. You are not yet perfected.

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself... [That's why I said *personally*. Notice, it is v 4 'for Himself.' Verse 5, 'to Himself.' See how God is working in our lives? That's tremendous, brethren.] ...through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will."

Our minds can hardly handle that. What is it going to be? That's why I tell you every once in awhile....

Sidebar. I don't know what happened. I went to that very expensive men's department, called J.C. Penneys, every heard of that? They had shirts on sale, two for the price of one. So I said, 'I need some shirts.' So I got two for the price of one. I felt really good about it, ran out with my plastic bag, having my shirts in it. Get in the car and I go ahead and get the shirt ready to put it on. You take the pins out and you take the collar off, you take the tags off and you take the stickers off. Takes you ten minutes just to undo the shirt.

I put it on this morning and it looked pretty good. Put the tie on, ready to put my suit coat on and I generally carry my wallet in my pocket. Cheap shirt, no pocket. No wonder they're selling two for one. I laughed at that. That teaches you to be a cheapskate. No pocket, no place to put a pen. Stick it on your ear, or something.

Notice, v 5: "...sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to

the riches of His grace, Which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence” (vs 5-8).

Verse 9: “Having made known to us the mystery of His own will...” Isn’t that something? The world can’t understand it. They don’t know it. They think they know this and that and the other thing, but they don’t know this.

“Having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9). Notice. God Himself.

- Is God involved in your life directly?
- Is He involved in the lives of all the saints?

Today He wants us to really be motivated and inspired and to diligently apply ourselves. You think anybody over in the area where the wars are going on in the Middle East that they can study the Bible? That they can pray? They don’t even have the Truth, and yet they’re willing to be beheaded for the name of Jesus. They’ll be resurrected in the second resurrection, because they had a false Christianity. But they understood the name of Christ.

We’re confronted with virtually kindergarten problems, as it were, compared to that. That’s why having the whole Bible... Now He wants us to be inspired. He wants us to be uplifted. He wants us to see the hope that He has laid out for us.

Starts with the calling. Then repentance and baptism. Laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit.

We’re going to have a baptism later on. Melissa is going to be baptized. That’s Randy’s sister. She probably thought years ago, ‘Randy, what are you doing in kooky church? Sabbath?’ Yes, God has called her. She will be baptized, receive the Holy Spirit. Then she will begin growing in grace and knowledge.

Here’s the ultimate purpose. The best way to really always keep yourself grounded is to always know the goal. So let’s come to Eph. 3. This lays out a lot about God’s plan.

It’s just like this. When things are made, let’s just take an automobile. You’ve got a pile of iron ore. You’ve got a pile of coal. You need a factory to melt that down and make it into iron. Then that has to be made into steel or aluminum.

Then you’ve got this pile over here. What is that? That’s various kinds of plastic, which is getting close to 90% of the car now.

You look at all of that in its raw state. Then the tour guide takes you over to show you the finished product. Here’s this magnificent car.

It’s kind of like the same way with us. We’ve got a pile of this; we have a pile of that; we have a pile of other things. We have things we need to overcome. We have problems. That’s why God called us. He didn’t call us because we’re perfect. He called us because we are sinners, so that we can be perfected. But that takes the resurrection.

Notice Paul. Paul’s a very interesting character. He was the high priest’s right hand man. He got orders, petitions, arrest warrants, even to go up to Damascus, Syria. To bring back those Christians who left Judaism and ‘we are going to put them in chains. If they don’t go along with us, we’re going to kill them.’

When God called Paul, that was interesting. He was on his way to Damascus. I don’t know how God called you, but not like this with Paul. Here he’s going along with this entourage and all the deputy Pharisees with him, to do the arresting, to put them in bonds and take them back.

So he’s going along his way. ‘I’ve got the authority of the high priest. I have all of these things. I’m a very important man.’ And BANG! God knocks him to the ground.

Jesus said, ‘Saul, why do you persecute Me?’ *What do you want, Lord?* That’s how God called him. Notice his converted attitude here.

Ephesians 3:7, talking about the Gospel: “Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which was* given to me through the inner working of His power.”

All of us who teach and preach, we need to know that it all has to come from God. It can’t come from us, because we are just charged with the stewardship of God’s Word, to preach and teach the Truth, to feed the flock, to serve the brethren, because of God’s great plan.

Verse 8: “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints...” He became progressively more humble through his lifetime. I can tell you it does happen.

“...was this grace given, that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—*even* the unsearchable riches of Christ; And that I might enlighten all *as to* what *is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ” (vs 8-9).

Think of it, brethren. We understand even more than what the Apostle Paul had at that time. With the book of Revelation, with the opening of the

Word of God. We don't need to get exalted about it. That lays upon us, like Paul said, 'Woe be me if I don't preach the Gospel.'

Verse 10: "So that the manifold wisdom of God... [From God, what God is doing. His plan, His purpose.] ...might now be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places*, According to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, In Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith" (vs 10-12).

- God gives us faith
- God gives us hope
- God gives us His Spirit
- God gives us His life

All of this comes from God. Isn't that a marvelous thing? Isn't that something? To take something as sinful and wretched as we are as human beings and to make us perfect and give us eternal life as the sons and daughters of God. What can be greater than that? *Nothing*.

Verse 13: "So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working for* your glory. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (vs 13-15).

You're part of that. You're going to have a new name. You'll have on you the name of Jesus Christ, the name of God the Father, the name of the holy city Jerusalem, have a new name, live forever.

Verse 16: "That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man." It all happens right here in the mind and in the heart.

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *And* that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be able to comprehend..." This is what God wants us to do and we can do it even more in the last days than at any time in the history of the Church. Think of that, brethren. That ought to

- inspire you to study
- inspire you to pray
- inspire you to see what God has done and worked in your life

Not just to make you a better person here in the world, which He will, but to give you eternal life—which He will.

"...with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, *And* to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge... [Here's the purpose, the rest of the sentence. This is the mystery and secret of God that the world can never understand and won't until we teach them.

Think about this. This is what God wants for every one of us:] ...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (vs 18-19).

Let that sink in. *From a speck of dust to a son of God, with all the fullness of God.*

Will it happen? Yes, it will, v 20: "Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think... [How great is that?] ...according to the power that is working in us, To Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen." (vs 20-21).

*So that's a brief glimpse into the secret of God that the world does not know.*

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 13:10-17
- 2) Ephesians 2:1-5, 8-10
- 3) Revelation 2:26
- 4) Psalm 138:1-8
- 5) Psalm 119:73
- 6) John 17:14-23
- 7) Ephesians 1:1-9
- 8) Ephesians 3:7-21

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24
- Revelation 2, 3
- Psalm 17
- Revelation 4, 5
- Colossians 1
- Hebrews 5

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah* by Fred R. Coulter
- *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* (coming soon)

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

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