

Choices Matter

Let us approach God with a true heart!

Fred R. Coulter—November 12, 2022

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! It seems like this is the time of trouble in many places in the world—America and Europe—and sometimes when evil takes root it's difficult to bring in the truth, *because choices matter!* That's what's important! What we choose to do!

Let's see that God gives to every human being *free moral agency!* **He gives it to us and has sent His Word so we can choose His way!** Yet, as a demonstration of what I just said, there are more Bibles now in the world than ever before. But how many people are choosing to follow the Word of God? *They may take part of it!*

They all love the Word of God when it says, 'God is love.' But then they don't want God to correct them when they do wrong.

Deut. 30 applies today, because this was a prophecy back then and a prophecy for us:

Deuteronomy 30:14: "But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, **so that you may do it.**"

God didn't give His laws and commandments just as something to punish people! That's what Satan says. Remember, Satan didn't come to Adam and Eve and say, 'I'm the evil one.' *NO!* He came and said,

Look at what God said, He's not telling you everything, but I'm here to help you!

How many times have you heard that?

In the situation that we're going cover today, every single one who is affected by this situation ***is going to have to choose!***

Let's see what God says! What you need to do is get your mind set on what God has said and what God has commanded!

Verse 15: "Behold, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil."

That's true for everybody in the world, but more importantly for us, because we have to choose *life*—eternal life—or eternal death! So, the stakes for us are a lot higher.

Verse 16: "In that I command you this day to **love the LORD your God...**"

Everyone likes that first statement, but how many love God? They want to claim the love of God to themselves, *but they don't want to return the love back to God!*

"...to walk in His ways...[Do we walk in the ways of the Lord?] ...and **to keep His commandments** and His statutes and His judgments **so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it**" (v 16).

God knows how powerful human choice is. Here's this large two-letter English word ***IF***, which defines how we choose. So, as we go through this message today, I want you to:

1. be honest with yourself
2. be honest with God
3. listen to what God has to say

Then we can understand what we need to do!

Verse 17: "But **if your heart turn away so that you will not hear...**"

There are already some people will not hear! In this case, because Steven and Cynthia Greene got to you before we could bring this knowledge to you. So, sides are taken! Understand that ***the choice becomes very clear!***

- Do you want to follow God and His way?
- Do you want to follow those teachers and elders who stick to the Truth of God?

OR

- Do you want to let your emotions get carried away and—because you're approached gently and nicely and seemingly in love—that you choose that?

Not remembering that changing the Day of Atonement as it was done by Steven Greene: *Atonement Event* is still online at **truthofGod.org**. **Changing the meaning of Atonement the way he did is tantamount to justifying Sunday-keeping!**

We need to understand that, because **anyone who handles the Word of God deceitfully...** We know that this was done deliberately by Steven Greene because he preached it three times: once on Go To Meeting to everyone!

That's what this became a public thing within the Church and a big deal because it's the same as between Sabbath-keeping and Sunday. That was his error!

Now then, he allegedly repented; I've got it and I read the words. But then the test was: please send the list of all the brethren that you (Steven) have, with all their information that you have. I repeated it several times. ***But that was refused!***

Now we're dealing with a proposition that is really difficult, because Steven Greene *has gone back on his repentance*, which God says *you don't do!* Now the Greens are actively soliciting brethren sending e-mails everywhere! To compound it and make matters worse: Roger Kendall and his wife have joined the Greens!

Verse 17: "But *if your heart turn away so that you will not hear...*"

Everything we brought out, *we did by the Word of God!* As God wanted, *open and transparent!*

...but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them" (v 17).

You can say that you're not worshipping other gods, but when you change the Word of God, you repent of it and then go back on your repentance???? *How can you have the true God of heaven with you?*

...so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away..." *So God says:*

Verse 18: "I *denounce* to you..." *Let's take this individually:*

- What are we going to do?
- Are we going to keep the Word of God the way God wants?
- Or not?

God made this automatic!

Verse 18: "I denounce to you this day that *you shall surely perish...*"

Remember that our choice is between *eternal life* and *eternal death!*

Prov.6—What we're going to read here is being done at this very moment!

Proverbs 6:16: "These six *things the LORD hates...*"

- Are you doing anything that God hates?
- What do you think is going to happen?

"...yea, seven are *an abomination* unto Him: ^[1]*a proud look,* ^[2]*a lying tongue,* and ^[3]*hands that shed innocent blood.*" (v 17).

There hasn't been any innocent blood shed here, but *IF* people lose salvation because they make the wrong choice, *THEN* it becomes *guilty blood!*

Verse 18: "^[4]A heart that plots wicked imaginations..."

Steven Greene told me 'I don't want to start another church organization.' Then he denounced and said that he 'didn't want anything to do with

Christian Biblical Church of God' *in the strongest terms!* That took about 15 minutes for him to say so! Then we closed the phone conversation and he said, 'I'm going to continue to serve the brethren any way I can.' *So that's contradictory to his opening statement!*

...^[5]feet that are swift in running to evil... [didn't take long for that to happen] ...^[6]a false witness who speaks lies, and ^[7]he who sows discord among brethren" (vs 18-19).

This is what we are seeing right now, *unfortunately!* But that has happened in the past and it will happen in the future. In all of this, we're being tested.

Do we *really, really, really* love God the way that He says? *We can look at the world and see how many people are 'practicing religion'!* The religious channels are *becoming stupid!* Just watch them, they're *becoming stupid!*

Heb. 12:2—Here's what we must do when there are troubles and difficulties! Everyone that comes to God will have trials and difficulties! Isn't that what Jesus said? *Yes!*

Hebrews 12:2: "*Having our minds fixed on Jesus...[that's what it needs to be;* not fixed on what we want or what we think we will do, *but on Jesus]* ...the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the Throne of God. Now *meditate deeply* on Him..." (vs 2-3).

Think about all that He did so that the sins of all mankind—past, present and future, if you know the plan of God—He took upon Himself.

"...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself..." (v 3).

The whole world was against Him! Even His apostles didn't really believe until after He was resurrected.

...so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (v 3).

We will see that we have to have strong minds and make the right decisions!

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin."

I have yet to send out an anointed cloth or anoint someone because they have been resisting sin, and it's actually been a bloody mess! Think about all of those who have been martyred! Look at the age we live in, which is coming to an end quickly. We have had everything at our fingertips! Everything in

the world brought to us: in the stores, in whatever we have.

So, the next time you go to the supermarket, look at it and everything that is there. **God made it all! But** if it doesn't get there, how long are you going to last?

Verse 5: "And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son, **do not despise the chastening of the Lord**, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him.'"

So, all of this we can look at! This is part of the correction of God!

- Are we going to yield to the correction of God?

OR

- Are we going to take sides and follow someone who is untrustworthy with the Word of God?

OR

- Are we going to follow those elders and the Word of God who are trustworthy?

That's a choice all of us have to make!

Verse 6: "For whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as a *Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? **But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons**" (vs 6-8).

So, we're going to have those things come upon us! We're going to have trials and difficulties, and many of them are not in the manner that we think that they will come.

Verse 14: "Pursue peace with everyone, and Holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." ***That's quite a statement!***

- Do you hope to see the Lord?
- Do you hope to be in the Kingdom of God?

Of course! That's the whole purpose of why we're here and what we're doing!

Verse 15: "Looking diligently, **lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you**, and through this **many be defiled.**"

Isn't that what is happening? *One man!*

I want to tell you about what happened when Joshua was leading the children of Israel into the Holy Land (Jos. 7). They conquered Jerusalem and God told them to go to the city of Ai and conquer it.

But they lost the battle! Why? *Because one man—Achan—took what belonged to God.*

What was that? God said that all of the booty—gold, silver and every precious thing that was in Jericho—was God's and was to be brought to the priesthood, ***because God claimed it!***

Achan went against the Word of God! They lost the battle, the next one they would have at the city of Ai. Joshua came back and was moaning and groaning to God, saying, 'O God, why didn't we win?' **God said, 'Because Israel has sinned!'** I want you to think on that! When one man sins:

- Does it not affect a lot of other people?
- When there's no repentance or renegeing on repentance?

We have to see these things clearly! So, let's look at them.

This is important because it happens quite often, and the apostles had to put up with it. Remember the first trial they had with a false teacher (Acts 8) with the apostles and Simon the Magician who said that he was 'the great power of God.' Peter was well aware of this, so he writes this:

2-Peter 2:1: "But **there were also false prophets among the people**, as indeed **there will be false teachers among you...**"

How do we know they're false teachers? ***Because they don't stay true to the Word of God!*** That's how we know!

We were hopeful that we could work things out, because there was repentance. But we also have to know

- Is it Godly repentance?

OR

- Sorrow of the world?
- Is it lasting?

OR

- Is it temporary?

Well, it turned out to be temporary, and now—because Greene wouldn't send the list to us, we don't know how many people he has contacted, nor how many more Roger Kendall has on the prayer list for those who need prayer when they're sick.

It's going to come out that, 'I raked them over the coals!' ***No, I didn't!*** No one did! We tried to handle it as openly as possible.

"...**there will be false teachers among you** who **will stealthily**...[sneakily] ...**introduce destructive heresies**, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* **their destructive ways...**" (vs 1-2).

So, here's the choice:

- What are you going to do?
- Are you going to follow God and those elders who follow the Truth of God?

OR

- Are you going to follow someone who:
 - ✓ mishandles the Word of God?
 - ✓ changes the Word of God?
 - ✓ changes the meaning of the Day of Atonement?
 - ✓ repents of it and then reneges on his repentance?

“...and because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed” (v 2).

When you change the Day of Atonement—which was changed by Steven Greene—is that righteousness? **No! That's blasphemous!**

Verse 3: “Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain...” *To themselves!*

Here is something we need to learn, and we need to do and recognize. **God alone is the heart-knowing God!**

- He knows the heart
- He knows the thoughts
- He alone makes the judgment

Isn't that correct?

So, what do we do? Since we can't read people's minds, we're told by Jesus that 'you shall know them by their fruits.' That means that ***we know them by what they do and what they say!***

Hebrews 4:12: “For **the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...**”

- Do you want to go against the Word of God?
- Do you want to believe people because they're so nice, tender, sweet and tell you how much they love you?

But they've already given up on their repentance! That's the choice you're confronted with! That's what it gets down to! **What are you going to do?**

“...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, and of both the joints and the marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (v 12).

The Word of God does that! That's why the Word of God can convict you to repent. If that repentance is from God, it will remain. ***It's not a repentance to be repented of! God despises that!***

I can tell you for sure that the two elders in

the area sensed from the beginning when the Greenes came to Missouri, that they were there to take over the area, which they did by getting names and addresses, etc. *that proved to be true!*

Let's understand and realize this: No one can fool God. We might be able to fool people, but sooner or later that comes out!

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but **all things are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.**”

That's why we must always stick with the Truth of God! When there are those who are causing division among the brethren, God says that ***He hates that!***

Let's see what Jesus told Peter. This is what it has to be for every elder, every teacher and we must be willing to be corrected by God, by His Word, by those elders that follow the Word of God when there is correction needed.

Stop and think about this: ***Choices matter!*** Every day we make choices! As a matter of fact, our mind God programmed to be able to do that. This way we can understand right from wrong, good from evil:

- ***IF*** we have the Word of God in our heart and mind
- ***IF*** we're willing to follow God the way He wants

Since Peter denied Jesus three times, and since Satan wanted to have Peter—as we find in the Gospels and Jesus prayed for him, that his faith would be strong—here's what Jesus did to Peter that He didn't do to any other apostle! ***This is the lesson for all of us who are elders!*** We will see what Peter said later after he learned this lesson.

John 21:14: “This was now the third time that Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples after being raised from the dead. Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter ‘Simon, son of Jonas, do you **love** Me...[‘agapaho’ the verb for ‘agape’] ...more than these?... [we're to love God above ***everything*** else] ...And he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I **love** You.’ ...[‘phileo’—brotherly love or affectionate love] ...He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’” (vs 14-15).

What are you going to feed them? You can see that violated on all the religious channels that there are. ***They don't feed the lambs the Truth of God, the Word of God and nothing but the Word of God!*** They teach a lot of ideas and false doctrines and, in this case with Steven Greene, he has gone beyond that by reneging on his repentance.

Verse 16: “He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ ...[‘agapaho’] ...*And* he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love ...[‘phileo’] ...You.’...”

God wants ‘agapao’ love to God from us!

“...He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep’” (v 16). *That is ‘guide them in the way that they need to go according to My Word!’*

Verse 17: “He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ ...[‘phileo’—He came down to the level of Peter] ...Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep.’” *That’s what it has to be!*

Now let’s look and see what Peter wrote; he learned that lesson. Also, there are some other things in there that we can learn.

1-Peter 5:1: “*The elders who are among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed: **Feed the flock of God...** [that’s what Jesus said] ...*that is among you, exercising oversight...* [not overrule] ...**not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but with an eager attitude; not as exercising lordship over your possessions; but by being examples to the flock of God**” (vs 1-3).*

Now, Steven Greene resigned being an elder! We held back on accepting it to see what kind of repentance there would be, and we did accept his repentance.

Why—if you resign from your eldership—do you want to keep the list of brethren that you collected and collected way beyond the area where you were in Missouri and not turn it back over to us?

Let me tell you something about the list we have here in Hollister: We did this from the very start when we setup the office 21 years ago. To keep anyone from hacking the mailing list that we have, we have always kept it on a separate computer that is **not connected** with the Internet! If anyone would ask, which that happened a couple of times—‘Oh, can I have the list?’—they were denied the list! Why? *Because **those are the names of the brethren of Christ!***

When we have custody of the names that is to help us serve the brethren! ***They belong to God!*** When we treat the list as our private possession—which now can be used to bring people to ‘us’ in a way that should not be done—you’re treating the flock like your possessions. *Think on that!*

Verse 4: “And when the Chief Shepherd is

manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory.

Verse 6: Be humbled, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time.”

That’s what has to be! We cannot as elders exalt ourselves over the brethren! We don’t want that! We cannot treat them as our possession to do as we see fit. As Jesus told Peter, ‘Shepherd My lambs! Feed My flock!’

Verse 7: “Casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you. **Be sober! Be vigilant!** For your adversary *the* devil...” (vs 7-8). **Is the devil still here in the world today? Big time!**

Sidebar: The way the world is today, how do you like living in Satan’s world? *You can be guaranteed it’s going to get worse!*

Here is what Satan is doing, and who does hate the most? *Those who have the Spirit of God!*

Verse 8: “For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour.”

He’s not going to come with all teeth bared at first. That comes later!

Verse 9: “Whom **resist**, steadfast in the faith...” ***We have to resist those things***; we can have nothing to do with it!

“...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world.

Here’s a promise; v 10: “Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself... [God Himself] ...**perfect you, establish, strengthen, and settle you.**”

This is what we hope will take place!

(break@41:26)

Let’s understand that sometimes there are very difficult things that we have to handle. One of the important things in handling them is:

- we don’t get impetuous
- we don’t get emotional
- we get all the facts
- we put it all together

That’s what we endeavored to do with this situation!

We need to always remember that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church.

- He’s our Lord
- He’s our Master

- He's our Savior
- He's our soon coming King when He returns to this earth
- He wants all of those who follow Him to do as He has said

Remember that Jesus told us that all that He taught, all that He said came from the Father! When we're talking about these things, we're talking about God the Father and Jesus Christ and that's what is the important thing!

John 10:1—*Jesus said*: “Truly, truly I say to you, the one who does not enter the sheepfold through the door ...[Christ is the door; Him and Him alone!] ...**but climbs up some other way...** [meaning, obviously, with different doctrines and teachings] ...**that one is a thief and a robber.**”

I wonder what it was in taking the names of brethren that belong to God?

Verse 2: “But the one who **enters through the door...** [Christ] ...is the shepherd of the sheep.... [that's why we must always teach the Words of God] ...To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” (vs 2-3).

That's what it needs to be with us! Remember what Jesus told Peter:

- shepherd My sheep
- feed My lambs
- feed My sheep

That's what we are to do! Paul says, ‘In season and out of season.’ We are to preach and teach the Word of God.

Verse 4: “When he brings the sheep out, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger for they will flee from him because they do not know the voice of strangers” (vs 4-5). *That applies in this case with what is happening!*

Let's see what God wants from us, how it should be and what we should do! Then we will see some other Scriptures on how important that it is.

Mark 12:28: “And one of the scribes who had come up to Him, after hearing them reasoning together and perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, ‘Which is *the* first commandment of all?’”

The Greek for *first* is ‘proto,’ which means above everything, above all!

Verse 29: “Then Jesus answered him, ‘*The* first of all the commandments *is*, “Hear, O Israel....[that applies to us because we're spiritual

Israel] ...Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart...”” (vs 29-30).

Some people just go by the heart, but He didn't stop there. It's important to love God with all your heart:

- with your emotions
- what you think
- what you do

“...and **with all your soul...**” (v 30)—*your whole being!*

That's why He wants us to take care of ourselves, so He can use us as a temple of the Holy Spirit!

“...and **with all your mind...**” (v 30). **We need to think with the Word of God and the Spirit of God as a demonstration of our love to God!**

Yes, love is keeping His commandments (1-John 5). His commandments are not grievous, that is true. How many times do we have that we are to keep the commandments of God?

“...and **with all your strength.**’ This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (vs 30-31).

Now let's look at the parallel account, because Matthew adds something a little different. This is what God wants from us. We read the Scripture that says:

God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son that whoever believes in Him may not perish but may have everlasting life.

Everyone likes that! But here's what God wants in return. Think of it this way:

Did Jesus Christ come and give His all? *Yes, He did! He never sinned!* Look at all the opposition He was up against.

Matthew 22:35: “And one of them, a doctor of the Law... [highest level of knowledge of the Law] ...questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, ‘Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?’... [tie in Deut. 6] ...And Jesus said to him, ‘**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.** This is *the* first and greatest commandment”” (vs 35-38).

Verse 39: “And *the* second *one is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ **On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets**” (vs 39-40).

We need to always remember that! How are we to respond to God with this kind of love? *He redefines it in a couple of places!* Let's see how He explains it here, and what kind of love that that is. What do we do when there are difficult circumstances? What Jesus brings out in Matt. 10 and in Luke 14, are very difficult Scriptures, indeed! Here's what God wants and how the love is to develop; that love is absolutely above and beyond any other thing in our life.

Matthew 10:24: "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher..." (vs 24-25).

That's the whole process of conversion, the whole process of studying the Word of God: ***to be like our Teacher: God the Father and Jesus Christ!***

"...and the servant as his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub...[referring to Himself] ...how much more *shall they call* those of his household? Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops. **Do not be afraid of those who kill the body...**" (vs 25-28).

That day is coming real soon! Next Sabbath you're going to find out how much prophecy has unfolded just in this past week.

"...but do not have power to destroy the life; **rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna**" (vs 25-28).

The *King James* says *soul*—'psuche'—translated life in the New Testament more times than it's translated *soul*.

Verse 29: "Are not two sparrows sold for a coin? And *yet* not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father *taking account of it.*"

Think about that! God can do all of these marvelous things!

Verse 30: "But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are better than many sparrows" (vs 30-31).

Verse 32: "Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven" (vs 32-33).

Now He gets to the difficult times, *because He knows they're going to come.* We're facing a pretty difficult time with this challenge that we've

been going through.

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

That's close in this example of what we're going through today.

- How much are we to love God? **With all our heart, mind, soul and being!**
- Why? **So that we can attain to the Kingdom of God!**

Verse 37: "The one who loves father or mother more than Me **is not worthy of Me**, and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me **is not worthy of Me.**"

- Are those words true?
- Did Jesus mean what He said?
- *Of course!*

Verse 38: "And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me **is not worthy of Me.**"

Whatever troubles come along we need to rely on God! Some of them are going to be difficult! Think about what the Christians did when they were being burned at the stake and having their heads lopped off. ***Think about that!***

If you have ever studied about the life of William Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English, which was done before England became an empire. They had the Word of God, although even as Tyndale said, there were imperfections in what he did. He counted on other who came after him to make the corrections.

But Tyndale finished translating the New Testament when he was in prison in Vilvorde in Belgium. From there the Catholics gave the order to the civil servants of the land to take Tyndale and kill him.

So, they took him out and put him on the stake and set all the wood around the bottom to burn him. They had a rope that went through the stake that he was tied to with a noose so they could pull the rope and strangle him before they burned him.

His last words were: **"Lord, open the eyes of the King of England!"** and that prayer was answered in less than two years when Henry VIII rejected Rome as the head of the church. The only difficulty that still remains with that, he made himself the head of the church.

But that caused the Word of God to prosper,

be printed, be spread out. People were dedicated in turning to God, changing their lives as much as they could.

Verse 39: “The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it.”

Luke 14—the word *hate* here means to love less in comparison. But when these things come up and there’s division within the family, the family members think that you hate them. You really don’t; ***you love God more!***

Everyone really needs to think about this and ponder this, and ask themselves: Am I doing this?

Luke 14:26: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate... [love less in comparison; tie in Matt. 10] ...his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, **he cannot be My disciple.**” *That’s quite a statement! Our own lives!*

- Do we really hate the sin that’s in our lives?
- Are we struggling to overcome it? *Yes, indeed!*

That’s what God wants us to do with His Spirit! With His Word!

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me **cannot be My disciple.**”

We have to always make the right choices! It’s easy to make choices if you’re in a group and all the people are doing what God wants. ***But:***

- What if you’re in a trial?
- What if you’re alone?
- What if there’s no one else around?
- **What are you going to do then?**
- **Are you going to be faithful to God?**

That’s what it has to be!

Heb. 10—here’s what God wants to do for us and with us. We need to understand it. Let’s understand how important that this chapter is, and the things that it really, really tells us. We need to learn the lessons that are here, and let God work in our lives, and the disciple to become like the teachers. That’s what all of this is about with the Word of God. These are the words of life. This is what we need to follow.

*All of those who are elders need to—as we covered in the message **True Doctrine vs False Doctrine**—rightly divided the Word of God so that Truth is compared to with Truth!*

Hebrews 10:7—Christ talking directly: “Then said I, **‘Lo, I come** (as it is written of Me in

the Scroll of the Book) **to do Your will, O God.’”**

We find in Isa. 50 Jesus made His forehead and mind like flint in order to stay perfectly yielded to God and obeying His commandments against all the adversaries. Lo, there were many!

Verse 8: “In the saying above, *He said*, ‘Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin (which are offered according to the priestly law) You did not desire nor delight in.’ Then He said, ‘Lo, **I come to do Your will, O God.**’... [the second time] ...He takes away the first covenant in order that He may establish the second covenant” (vs 8-9)—which is the *Covenant to Eternal Life* that we are under!

Living in this world that is run by Satan the devil, we have more difficulties, more trials and more problems than it’s going to be with people in the Millennium. That’s why the first resurrection is a better resurrection. We have more to overcome and we have to fight against Satan the devil and against false prophets We have got to stay true to Christ!

Verse 10: “By Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

That’s why the whole temple service was taken away and replaced with a higher level.

- instead of circumcision of the flesh, ***it’s circumcision of the heart***
- instead of living a long life in the flesh, ***it is the promise of eternal life***
- many are called, ***but few are chosen***

Think about that! We have to be ***the called, the faithful and the chosen!*** God has chosen those who are His! That’s why dividing the flock, causing problems among the brethren, God despises that! the ***Because the goal of eternal life is so great, nothing can be compared to it.***

Verse 10: “By Whose will... [God the Father and Jesus Christ to each one of us] ...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

Verse 12: “But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet” (vs 12-13).

That’s going to be done in a couple of phases, as we know. But those who are against God will not be there. Look at all the Protestants, they’re going to be surprised! They’re thinking that they’re doing a great work, but Jesus is going to say, ***‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who work unrighteousness.’***

Verse 14: “For by one offering...[because He was God manifested in the flesh] ...He has obtained eternal perfection **for those who are sanctified.**”

If you have the Holy Spirit you are sanctified by God, meaning you are being made Holy through the process of growing and overcoming through the grace of God. There can't be anything greater than that! God doesn't like this treated lightly, and for there to be fights over the brethren to see who's right and wrong. ***If we all don't repent for our own sins and our own faults, all of that is in vain!***

Verse 15: “And the Holy Spirit also bears witness...”

The Holy Spirit is there to convict our mind and heart, to convict us of Truth! The ideas of men are never going to supersede the Word of God. Doesn't matter how logical it may seem; like all of the philosophers who think that they know everything there is to know. Paul said that:

You don't know everything, in fact, when I came into Athens and I saw this monument to The Unknown God, I've come to preach Him to you!

He told them the fantastic Truth! This 'Unknown God' made the heavens and earth and everything that there is in it. He put the nations where He wants them to be. Every human being ***lives, moves and has their being because of Him!***

Those statements are higher than all the writings of all the philosophers in the world. So, they heard and it's now written for us. Here's what Paul says:

“...to us; for after He [Christ] had previously said, ‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the Lord...*” (vs 15-16).

Here is the covenant between each one of us and God the Father and Jesus Christ; here's what God wants:

“...I will give My Laws into their hearts...” (vs 16).

The Protestants ought to read that to understand that they cannot say that the Law has been abrogated or abolished, or fulfilled!

“...I will give My Laws into their hearts...”

- Why? *Because we love God!*
- How? *With all our heart, mind, soul, being and strength!*

That's the only way the Word of God can be inscribed in us!

“...and **I will inscribe them in their minds**” (v 16)

Those are the first two things of loving God with all your heart and all your mind! With that we have to have choices. With it, **WHEN** it's written in our heart and mind, **THEN** we use the Word of God:

- in thinking
- in making our choices
- in understanding what we're doing
- in understanding what the Word of God is
- in understanding what God wants us to do

Yes, it's difficult when these times come and what they had to do, even in that day!

Verse 17: “And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”

When we truly repent, and God forgives us, they're never going to be remembered again! This helps answer the question as to the model prayer that Jesus gave. He said that 'we're to pray after this manner':

Our Father Who is in heaven, Holy or Hallowed is Your name. You will be done on earth...

meaning in your life

...as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

He provides every drop of water, every morsel of food, and every breath of air that we have!

Forgive us our debts...

the debt incurred because of sin

...as we forgive those who are indebted to us sinned against us

Today we also have the problem of all the things that come to us visually. Everyday whenever we turn on the television, the world comes into our house! All the machinations of the world are there, with all the commercials, all the things that are there. These things do get into our mind. We need to also have those erased. Notice how important it is:

Verse 18: “Now, where remission of these *is*, it is no longer *necessary to offer sacrifices for sin.*” *Any animal sacrifice cannot compare with:*

- repenting from your heart to God
- receiving the Holy Spirit from God
- having His Laws written in our heart and inscribed in your mind

They know that's what actually happens to the mind! It's like it's being written right there on a the very

cells and synapses of our mind so that we learn to think like God wants us to. *So that we can qualify for eternal life!*

Verse 19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus.”

What kind of entrance that is, right into the presence of God is where our prayers go. Direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 20: “By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God...[Who is the Chief Shepherd? *Jesus!*] ...**let us approach God with a true heart...**” (vs 20-22).

- no reservations
- no hesitations
- no what ifs

With a true heart!

“...with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 22-23).

Then Paul gives a warning: *Don't go out and willfully sin!* Let's see that!

Verse 26: “For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins.”

We need to understand that in all these cases when they come up, like we're going through right now. This is what we need to do. Let's look at some things that we need to follow when incidences like this come up.

In the case of Steven Greene and his wife Cynthia, *they disfellowshipped themselves!* We did everything we could to try and help them. But they wanted to do it their way rather than the way we should do it in the Word of God:

- to take our time
- get all the facts
- to know what the whole situation is
- understand what has occurred

So we know what we are doing, so we can operate—not in emotion, not in vindictiveness, not in hatred—with the Word of God and Truth to solve it. If it isn't solved then we also have to follow the Word of God. We find that in Titus 3.

Back in the time of the apostles, they had arguments over genealogies and over who should be elders, because there were Levites traveling around

and everything like this. There were false teachers, it was really quite a thing that was going on. That was occurring without all of the instant communication like we have today.

Titus 3:9: “But avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and debates and quarrels about law, for they are unprofitable and vain. After the first and second admonition, reject a man who is teaching heresy” (vs 9-10).

We thought there was repentance, but that was backed out of; God doesn't want anyone to do that. If you repent Godly repentance, you're not going to repent of repenting.

Verse 11: “Knowing that such a person has been subverted and is sinning, **being condemned by his own words**” (vs 9-11). *That's part of what it is!*

Verse 10: “**After the first and second admonition, reject a man who is teaching heresy.**” *That's what we have to do! God made it very clear!*

Let's see what we are to teach and what to do and how to handle it when things like this come up:

- It's difficult!
- It's not easy!
- It's not something to be taken lightly!

It's something to really learn from!

In addition to loving God, here's what we are to do. This needs to be our conduct:

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving” (vs 1-4).

Verse 5: “For this you know, that no fornicator ...[either physically or spiritually] ...or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. **Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words...**” (vs 5-6).

Don't say, ‘Oh, we're the victims!’ when they were the perpetrators. Isn't that the way to deflect the truth when you become the victim and you are actually the perpetrator? *That's what has happened!* We're sorry that it's happened. We didn't want it to happen, but choices are made and choices matter!

So, we have to deal with it as it is. We wished it weren't this way. We wish that it didn't

have to happen this way. We've been praying that it wouldn't happen this way. But the choice is made by those involved, and it did not follow along with the repentance that was necessary.

Verse 6: **“Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words** for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of Light. Because the fruit of the Spirit...(vs 6-9).

We are to judge by the fruits! We cannot judge the heart. *We're not to say:*

- I think; *when there's doubt you have to prove*
- I feel; *feelings don't count*

It's what is the truth!

“...*is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth, proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*” (vs 9-11).

That's what we've had to do! We would rather that it had been solid repentance and it could have all been buried and forgotten. But learn the lesson of it.

I don't know how many of you are going to received from the Greenes or the Kendalls. If they come you have a choice you have to make! I hope that you choose the way of God!

So, that's where we are today. There are other Scriptures we could bring out on it, but I'd like to bring this up and ask all of you to please do this sometime this coming week: Take a day for fasting and:

- bring all of this before God
- ask God to help you to help us
- help the Greenes
- help the Kendalls

Maybe if there's any chance of repentance, we would hope that would be the case! If you would take a day for fast that will work in your life in the schedule that you have, *then please do that!* We will beseech God for His Spirit and for His understanding, so that we can accomplish what He wants us to do with this difficulty that we are confronted with.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 30:14-18
- 2) Proverbs 6:16-19
- 3) Hebrews 12:2-8, 14-15

- 4) 2-Peter 2:1-3
- 5) Hebrews 4:12-13
- 6) John 21:14-17
- 7) 1 Peter 5:1-4, 6-10
- 8) John 10:1-5
- 9) Mark 12:28-31
- 10) Matthew 22:35-40
- 11) Matthew 10:24-37
- 12) Luke 14:26-27
- 13) Hebrews 10:7-10, 12-23, 26
- 14) Titus 3:9-11, 10
- 15) Ephesians 5:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Joshua 7
- Acts 8
- 1 John 5
- Isaiah 50

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 11/16/22

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