

Count Your Blessings III

Fred R. Coulter—May 30, 2015

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services. While on the way to the Elders' Conference, I finished off this book, *Temple* by Robert Cornuke. He has the temple site right. He gets a lot of his information from Dr. Ernest Martin, plus other things. I think the way it's going to happen is the Jews will realize the correct place for the temple is south of the Mosque of Omar and they'll put it in the right place.

The other book I read was *Jesus on Trial* by David Limbaugh. I still have about a third of it to finish. This is not about the trial of Jesus, but presenting evidence for people to try so they can understand about Jesus. I suppose you could say, 'Give Jesus a trial,' would describe the book a little better.

However, it's very interesting with this book, because it shows something very important. Like one man asked me. He said, 'Why do I have to obey to understand?' I said, 'That's the way that God designed it.'

Think about this, because there were a lot of people following Jesus around. There were those who were actually using Jesus' name in casting out demons. So, it's the *name of Jesus*, not the power of the person. It also depends upon the faith of the one, or in the case of a child the faith of a parent, in casting out demons. But here is something very interesting, which I think fits the Protestants very well:

Luke 9:49: "Then John answered *and* said, 'Master we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbid him because he does not follow with us.' But Jesus said to him, 'Do not forbid *him*, because everyone who is not against us is for us'" (vs 49-50). That's an interesting statement because that really describes the Protestants today. They are *for* Jesus, but they don't realize that they're not *part* of the true Church. They may have a lot of things close to it.

So, the Protestants, and especially demonstrated by this book, they can understand the sacrifice of Christ and the forgiveness of sin, but they don't know the plan of God. They know God has a purpose, but they don't know what it is. With them, the major thing is having your sins forgiven. But having your sins forgiven is the first step.

Limbaugh goes a little further in the book, but he doesn't understand. He's got some good things concerning how reliable the Word of God is and so forth. That fits right in with the message I'm going to bring today, counting your blessings, which

has to do with the Word of God. This is quite a thing really, when you understand it.

Matthew 5:6: "Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

Dolores and I were talking just this morning how that we live in a very unique time in the history of the world and the Bible and everything like that. We were talking about things about the Sabbath. What did the children of Israel do on the Sabbath in the wilderness? *They stayed right in their tents!* They didn't do anything! It's unique to have services like this.

Nothing like this came about until after the Babylonian captivity and they came back. Ezra and Nehemiah then had to separate the Word of God from the rebel priests who went to Samaria and Sanballat, the Persian governor of Samaria, built them a temple very similar to the one in Jerusalem and they claimed the first five books of the Bible. Why do you suppose they did that and didn't claim the rest of the Bible, that is the Old Testament? *Because the rest of the Old Testament shows that Jerusalem is the place, not Samaria!*

Then what they did to undertake to keep the Word of God, they had what was called the Great Synagogue or the Great Assembly. That was headed up by Ezra—a priest and scribe—a ready scribe with the Word of God. They canonized the Old Testament.

What they also did, to distinguish it from the writings and the first five books of Moses that the Samaritans had, was this: The Bible was originally written in script. They used the Chaldean block letters of Hebrew. They copied down all of the Old Testament, later added to it Ezra and Nehemiah. They later added 1st and 2nd Chronicles written by Ezra.

Those were sent to all the synagogues in every country: Babylon, Persia, Asia Minor, Rome, North Africa, synagogues in the area of Judea, as well. They even sent a letter to another temple down on the island of Elephantine, in the Nile, where there were renegade Jews who set up a temple down there and had animal sacrifices. They told them to cease and desist.

Sidebar: It also conclusively proved with those letters going down there that at Jerusalem they were using the Calculated Hebrew Calendar. I could get into a little more of that down on the Nile, and so forth, but they didn't go by the observing of the new moon. They went by the calculation of it.

Hungering and thirsting after righteousness and the Word of God, we are in a unique situation. The early New Testament Church followed the setup of the synagogue by having the reading of the Prophets and the Law and then the letters and writings of the apostles. So, that's where we get down to services like we have them today.

Let's look at some things concerning the Word of God. Let's understand how important that it is. Righteousness comes from God.

- His Word is righteous
- His Truth is righteous
- all of it combined together

Jesus said when He was tempted by Satan, Matthew 4:4: "... 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."'"

There wasn't the time to do it for the New Testament, so this is also a statement of fact for the Old Testament and a prophecy for the New Testament. We also know that Paul said that one of his jobs was to complete the Word of God (Col. 1). Let's talk about the Word of God and see what Jesus said about it and how important it is.

First of all, let's come to John 6. The people wanted to take Jesus and make Him king because they recognized that He was 'that Prophet.' They wanted the food, because they saw Jesus feed the 5,000 and there were a lot of them there who had it.

It shows human nature. You will say anything—you will be well-intended if someone is going to feed you three times a day—for free food. You don't have to work, you don't have to buy, you don't have to sell. Just think of how good that would be. But look what it leads to with all the lawlessness that we have today.

John 6:32: "Then Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven; but My Father gives you the true Bread from heaven.'" He's talking about Himself, and this ties in with hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Verse 33: "For the Bread of God is He Who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." Isn't that something?

John 5:30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge..." Think about how important the Word of God is that even Jesus did not go beyond or add to what the Father gave Him to do. The whole thing was so absolutely magnificent and large that He laid the groundwork and then inspired the apostles to write the New Testament, which is a very important thing for us to understand what that is.

"...and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me'" (v 30). So, He has no power to do anything of Himself.

Everything centers in on Jesus Christ with the New Testament. How does the Gospel of John start? We all know it:

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Nothing came into being that He did not bring into being; He's the Creator!

He's talking to them in a language that is difficult for them to understand, deliberately doing it. Because it is going to be for those that God calls to understand it. For the world, the Bible is a witness against it, a witness to their behavior.

Just like today. Everyone's trying to figure out what is the solution to the problems going on. 'We need this, we need more police, we need more laws.' **No! *There needs to be repentance***, because every single problem we are facing ***is a spiritual*** problem.

John 6:34: "Therefore, they said to Him, 'Lord, give this bread to us always.'" Then He said something that absolutely confounded them, because since we have the New Testament, and we have a measure of understanding, then we can discern what is being said. But picture yourself out there as one of those in the crowd of people and you hear Him say this:

Verse 35: "... 'I AM the Bread of Life; the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.'" To hunger and thirst after righteousness means that *you have to come to Christ* and only He and His Word and the Spirit of God can satisfy; nothing else can satisfy.

Verse 36: "But *as* I said to you, you also have seen Me, yet, you do not believe." That's a very important thing concerning the Word of God. *We must believe it!*

Verse 37: "All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me" (vs 37-38).

Then He makes an astounding statement in vs 44-45. The Father's going to draw us, and the Father is the One Who teaches us; we'll be taught by God.

How is that going to be done? Christ came down here, but the Father didn't. Christ laid the groundwork for it with the apostles. As I pointed out last time on Pentecost, Jesus instructed John to

‘write.’ Very first thing He said, ‘Write.’ Then He said to every one of the Churches, ‘Write.’ Then at the end He said, ‘Write.’ He put a curse and a blessing on the Word of God. Cursed are the ones who don’t believe; blessed are the ones who believe and obey. That’s pretty strong stuff. We know that this has to do with the Passover, as well, concerning the symbol of His flesh and the symbol of His blood being the bread and wine.

Verse 50: “This is the Bread, which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I AM the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (vs 50-51).

That’s a tremendous and profound statement. *Yes, indeed!* I don’t think that even though we’ve been in the Church as long as we have, that we fully grasp the magnitude of what Jesus did in doing what He did:

- to come down here and become a human being
- take on human nature
- never sin
- be faithful to God
- prepare for the New Testament Church
- willingly lay down His life

The first words out of His mouth on the cross was, ‘Father, forgive them for they do not know what they’re doing.’ Those are really mind-blowing statements when you come to understand it. But that sets the stage.

Verse 52: “Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, ‘How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?’ ... [Can you imagine what was going on here?] ...How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?” They knew that you’re not to eat human flesh. That’s only for the priests of Baal.

Verse 53: “Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you... [this is really grinding it in, think about this; standing right there saying]: ...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves.’” They thought that they had life in Moses. Jesus told them, ***‘If you would have listened to Moses, you would believe Me; but because you don’t believe Moses, you don’t believe Me and you don’t have the love of God in yourselves.’***

Verse 54: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in

him” (vs 54-56). A concept they had no thought of being able to comprehend.

Verse 57: “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father... [to eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood is this]: ...so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.” Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God. The Word of God was not completed at the time He said that. That is also a prophecy of the rest of the New Testament.

We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Let’s see some things and then we’ll come back to John 6. Stop and think about this for just a minute. How much of the New Testament did the apostles have to begin their ministry? *None!* They preached Christ from the Old Testament through the prophecies of His life, death, and resurrection. Very interesting!

Psalm 34:8: “O taste and see that the LORD is good...” That means you live your life with the Word of God and that brings you blessings and understanding. That is good!

Look at the world today, all lost out there and not knowing anything. Think about those poor people who live in the ghettos and all they’re doing now is shooting and killing one another. Where is God? *He’s not there! Lawlessness reigns!* So the answer is: You have to live by every Word of God.

“...blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. O fear the LORD, all you saints, for there is nothing lacking to those who fear Him” (vs 8-9). That translates into loving God.

Here is an amazing verse, Psa. 119:18. We will see why this is important, because the Word of God has more meaning to it than just what the written letters are there. We will see why.

Psalm 119:18: “Open my eyes...” What did Jesus do after He was resurrected and came back and met them in Jerusalem? *He suddenly appeared in the room!* ‘There He is. How did He get here? The door wasn’t open. He had walked through the wall. How did He do that?’ They were all frightened. He said, ‘Peace,’ and let them know it was He. He said, ‘Do you have anything to eat?’ They had some fish and honey. I don’t know how that works out on the taste buds. That’s what He ate.

Then ***He opened their minds to understand the things concerning Him in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms!*** God must open your mind to understand the Word of God. It just doesn’t come by reading. It comes by reading and when you first start, you start with the simple things. Then what you learn ***you need to do and obey***, you do. Then ***understanding follows with obedience!***

Think of how much more we know today going back in history. A whole lot more. Think about what it is to hunger and thirst after righteousness today. God has given us a full plate. Actually, boxcars full of Truth! So much so that Jesus even told the disciples, He said, 'You're understanding the things concerning the mystery of God that prophets and righteous men desired to know, and they did not know.'

Add that to everything that they have written and add that to what Daniel said, 'At the end the wise shall understand.' Think of how important it is in hungering and thirsting after righteousness to know the Word of God, which is pure righteousness.

Hosea 8 is really quite a prophecy when you consider that The Reformation began, for the English-speaking people, in England, which is Ephraim. This is really quite a fantastic verse.

Hosea 8:11: "Because Ephraim has multiplied altars to sin, altars shall be to him for sin." There are more atheists and witches in the United Kingdom today than there are Christians. Christians are so absolutely... I don't know how to say it, except they're double-Sardisites. Many of the churches of England are now turned into pubs and cafes.

Here's a prophecy and a fact, v 12: "I have written to him the great things of My Law, but they were counted as a strange thing." Isn't that something?

- Where did doing away with the Law come from? *The King James Version of the Bible!*
- Does the Word of God end up being fulfilled to the maximum every time? *Yes, indeed!*

Let's see what the Word of God is and why that we need constant study of the Bible. Don't think you're too full to study. It's like one minister I knew that I visited down in Oklahoma when we were there; I knew him before. I have mentioned this before. He had a stack of notebooks with all of his sermons. He said, 'Fred, do you see those? Those are all my sermon notes. Since they transfer every three or four years, I don't have to make another sermon. I just get out what I need to get out.' I thought, whoopee-do, that's not the way that it should be. Every sermon should be prepared for the time you're going to give it.

You will use Scriptures you've learned before, true. But do you have more knowledge than when you preached on it previously? *We should!* The work of anyone who is teaching is to teach the brethren to grow into the fullness and stature and the

measure of Jesus Christ. This ties in with the question: What did they use to preach?

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. **All** Scripture..." (vs 15-16). This cannot be emphasized enough. This means each and every one, even those boring chronologies. Why? *Because they give legal genealogy of the principal people in the Bible so that it is established that God carried it out!*

What does the book of Matthew start with? *The legal genealogy of Jesus Christ down to Joseph!* Joseph wasn't his father. The genealogy in Luke 3, Eli is Mary's father. Eli was the father-in-law of Joseph. That genealogy goes all the way down through Nathan, the son of David—because Solomon disqualified himself with his sins—all the way down to Adam, to have the physical lineage from Adam. The first prophecy of the Messiah was given by God right after the sin of Adam.

Verse 16: "All Scripture... [each and every one] ...*is* God-breathed... [He inspired it; He caused it to happen] ...and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness... [that we hunger and thirst after it] ...so that the man of God... [put your name there] ...may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 16-17).

Peter writes of this, too. This is important for us today, especially because there are so many atheists attacking Christianity. The reason they attack Christianity is because the Christianity in this world is just like it is in this book by David Limbaugh. It has a lot of facts, but it is incomplete.

It's like saying, 'Here's a combination to unlock a vault that has more gold than Fort Knox.' That might not take too much gold to do that today. You take it and if you can open it, you own it. However, they didn't realize that they only had half the numbers. It's a vault that you can't blow up or drill through. But if you're a spirit being you could walk into.

There were a lot of people coming in and saying that a lot of this, just like they say today, was passed on by word of mouth, so you can't trust any of it. Remember what God did with Balaam, made him bless. If God can make someone who is dedicated to evil and cursing to bless, do you think He is able to control and help inspire those who love Him, who serve Him, who have His Spirit, who were given the authority to write the Word of God? *But of course!*

1-Peter 1:16: "For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made

known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory.”

If you would have been Peter, James, and John, and you are on the Mount of Transfiguration and you saw this vision of Jesus transfigured into being a spirit being, and then saw the vision of Elijah and Moses, don't you think that would burn in your brain the rest of your life? Do you think having experienced that you would have even thought of misrepresenting God's way? Now you know why Peter was corrected in Gal. 2 because he went astray following the traditions of the Jews to separate from the Gentiles. These are important things.

God called Paul to ensure that the New Testament Church would not be controlled by *Jewish traditions*, and Paul knew them all. So, there's a lot behind having a Bible that you can open up and read and understand and how we need to hunger and thirst after it.

Verse 17: “Because He received glory and honor from God *the* Father when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.’” What was also said? ***Listen to Him!***

Verse 18: “And this *is the* voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy mountain. We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word...” (vs 18-19); all the prophecies that were confirmed by the first coming of Christ. Everything that they wrote was confirmed by Jesus Christ.

“...to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place... [in the world] ...until the day dawns... [the return of Jesus Christ] ...and *the* morning star arises in your hearts... [the resurrection] ...knowing this first... [primary] ...that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 19-21). That's how it came about.

- Were they fallible men? *Yes!*
- Did they have their faults and problems? *Yes!*
- But did God use them? *Yes!*
- Did God preserve the Word of God? *Yes!*

The New Testament was written in Greek. They know that all of the manuscripts are 98% in agreement with each other. There are nearly 6,000 manuscripts from the area of Byzantium, the area of Asia Minor where there happened to be *the seven churches of Revelation!*

Let's see that there is a way to understand the Bible. I get things that people write me all the time. They take a Scripture out of context. So, why do you think we have Appendix A in the *Faithful Version*

Bible? It's the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*: how to study it; how to understand it.

One man just recently wrote me and said, ‘How can the Passover be a day of unleavened bread because Exo. 12:6 doesn't say so?’ Read another verse or two ahead and it says, ‘You shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.’ What did they have packed up to carry with them? *Unleavened bread!* What is the day of Passover called in the New Testament? *The first of the unleaveneds!* You have to do exactly what it says here:

Isaiah 28:9: “Whom shall He teach knowledge?...” What did we cover in John 6:45? *They will all be taught of God!* Everything you learn of the Word of God comes from God. He wants to teach us knowledge. He wants to teach us His character and love, and all of those things.

“...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine?... [there are doctrines that are difficult to understand] ...*Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts” (v 9). In other words, you're not a novice; you're not a beginner. If you're a beginner, you're a newborn babe in analogy, not that you're born again. But you desire the sincere milk of the Word. Strong meat belongs to those who are spiritually mature.

Here's how the Bible is put together, v 10: “For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little.” You never cease learning, because ***the Word of God is inspired by the mind and Spirit of God!*** We're going to see that God's Word works both ways: to give understanding and to withhold understanding.

(go to the next track)

We're going to learn something about the Word of God, which is perhaps one of the most fantastic things. We just read what it takes to understand it, but by the same process, just like a sword has two edges, to understand it takes love, obedience and God's Spirit; without that, to read it, you can't understand it.

Verse 11: “For with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people. To whom He said, ‘This *is* the rest He gives to the weary;’ and ‘This *is* the refreshing,’ yet, they were not willing to hear. So then, the Word of the LORD... [same process] ...precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken. Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD, you scornful men who rule this people in Jerusalem” (vs 11-14).

Let's see how it's spoken of by Paul in writing the book of Hebrews concerning the Word

of God; Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful...” The Word of God is always active, even if you don’t know it’s written down. Just like the law of gravity. Does the law of gravity affect everybody and everything in the world? *Yes! Same way with the Word of God!* It’s always working. However, when it is written down and we have it, it becomes much more of a powerful thing in working in people’s lives.

“...and sharper than any two-edged sword, 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).

Show me one modern psychology book that says, ‘Human nature is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and we, in the psychiatric community cannot understand it.’ *It doesn’t!* You might find some talking about the vanity of men, but there is no book in the world like the Bible because it is living.

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing...” No one can escape.

The other night I saw part of a Hannity news show. He loves to have debates. It’s hard to listen to him because they have so many debates. He had an atheist and then he had two believers. The atheist was just hostile and nasty and just right in your face. He can’t understand a thing about the Word of God. He was so forceful that the other two who were answering on behalf of the Bible were intimidated.

The Bible says that ‘the one who says in his heart there is no God is a fool.’ That’s what they should have told him. I don’t think that would have made it past the censors.

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight...” Anything physical, anything spiritual, any animal, any microbe, bacteria, ranges of mountains, whatever you want.

“...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must... [it’s obligatory] ...give account. Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” (vs 13-15).

There’s the other side of the sword. It cuts to repentance or it cuts to death. Either one. That’s the way it is.

“...but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with

boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 15-16).

We need that every day. The truth is, the longer you have the Holy Spirit and the more that you are working and overcoming the things in your mind—because it says ‘*we are to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*’ You just think about that this coming week. Think about how many evil things come into your mind, either by seeing or by thinking or by reacting. The only way you can come to understand that is with the Spirit of God. Before you were converted, even some of the worst things in the world were acceptable. That’s quite a thing! That is the Spirit of God!

Here’s why it is living, because the force and power behind the writing of the Scriptures is spiritual. Just like with anything that God does, since it’s living, that means there is a spiritual power behind it to make it work. Just like gravity. You can’t see it, or feel it, but you can’t live without it.

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives life... [the Holy Spirit of God] ...the flesh profits nothing...” That’s why man cannot add to the Word of God. That’s why the best thoughts of men end up being sin. Goes all the way back to Cain.

Cain thought, ‘I’m going to do a good thing for God. I’m going to do this,’ but it was contrary to the instructions of God. So, God said, ‘Sin lies at the door.’

Look at all the so-called good political things they’re trying to do. But since they do not know the spiritual cause of all of these problems that happen automatically when you reject the Word of God, they don’t know how to solve it. If they happen to stumble across some things that are in accord with the Word of God, it will work.

What should you do in a community? It doesn’t matter what the race is, it’s like Watkins, I forget his first name, a black football player. He said, ‘It’s not the color of the skin, it’s the sin within.’

How would God solve the problem in any one of these ghetto areas, be it black, Hispanic, Ukrainian, be whatever? You lay out the Law of God. First thing: We are going to have two weeks of courting. You either go back to the woman who bore your children and marry here or you will be executed. There will be no more single mothers. There will be no more gangs. That’s what we’re going to enforce when we take over the world. *It will be run God’s way!* The only way to solve the problems in the world is to identify the spiritual cause.

Verse 63: “It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life.”

That’s what’s so important concerning the Word of God and in hungering and thirsting after the Word of God, why we need to study it and re-study it and read it and re-read it. Lo and behold, every time you come back and read something you’ve read in the past, things jump out at you that you didn’t see when you read it. I don’t care how many times you have read it. That’s just the way it is. It happens to me all the time. I go along and I think: Look at that; what do you know about that. Today we have it all here.

Let’s see the conditions for understanding it. Let’s see the fantastic thing that God has done to separate us from the world. The world doesn’t know it. We go into a supermarket or we go into Costco or we go into Penney’s, or whatever it is and people don’t look around and say, ‘Oh, yes, there’s that person separated from the world.’ They can’t see it; it’s a spiritual thing. It operates on a spiritual basis.

John 14—here is how God does it. We’ve gone over this many times, but the reality and the impact of this is perhaps some of the most powerful verses in the Bible.

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” You add to that that He was the Lord God of the Old Testament, as well.

Verse 16: “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 16-17).

When you have things come along revealing in your mind some of your evil thoughts, it is the Spirit of Truth leading you to conviction against that sin.

“...which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you” (vs 17-20). That’s the day that He appeared to them on that first day of the week, the Wave Sheaf Offering Day.

Verse 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them...” It’s not the one who has nine of the commandments, but rejects the most important one, the Sabbath and the one against idolatry.

What did Jesus say about the Word of God? ***Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God!***

- not some of them
- not part of them
- not the most important
- not the least important

All of them! That is the separating barrier that God uses.

“...that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” (vs 21-22).

Judas didn’t understand, ‘What would that be? How is Christ going to reveal Himself to anyone?’ *Spiritually!* That’s why when people are searching for God, there are the seven spirits of God looking for them. If they’re sincere, then God will begin to draw them. If they are really sincere and repentant, then the Father will begin to draw them and lead them to repentance. That’s how He’s manifested, it’s a spiritual thing that God does.

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me...’” You go right back to the first commandment:

- loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being
- loving your neighbor as yourself
- loving the brethren as Christ has loved us

“...he will keep My Word...” (v 23). When it’s singular like that, that is all inclusive of His entire message.

“...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (v 23). This verse is one of the most astounding and powerful verses in the Bible and one of the most revealing things that Christ gives to us.

“...**My Father will love him**...” God loves us. His love is conditional, not unconditional. You must keep the commandments of God. That’s the first expression of loving God. Then the deeper expression of loving God comes with His Spirit.

“...We... [not I] ...will come to him and make Our abode... [dwelling place] ...with him.” Think how important that is! We need to capitalize on this in hungering and thirsting after righteousness, because God has done His part. The Holy Spirit contains two aspects: the begetting from the Father and the mind of Christ. That is the “...We...” dwelling within us! That’s why we need to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to grow in grace and knowledge even more.

I don't think that we have, even as much as we know, that we have a clue as to how important and profound that this verse is in relationship to our standing before God. God does not give His Spirit to those who disobey Him. God does not give His Spirit internally to those who are *for* Jesus, but do not love and obey Him the way *He* says.

They can be close. It's like this: When I was being sent overseas to Korea—I was real smart and intelligent, I joined the Army as a volunteer—I spent an extra year because of my great intellect. I could have volunteered for the draft and only served two. We finished boot camp, finished NCO training camp, and they signed the armistice in the 15th week of 16-weeks basic training. Here we are in about late November, first part of December. We're all brought to the dock. I think there were about 12,000 troops going over. Here's this big troop ship. You're standing there and you're looking at that troop ship. Man, this is a big ship. But once you got on it, it was different than when you were standing beside it.

Likewise with God's Spirit. It is one thing to have God's Spirit *with* you. It's another thing to have God's Spirit *within* you. Let's look at some other things that are important along that line. This is the true Lord's prayer:

John 17:5: "And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.... [the Greek verb means exactly that] ...I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word"—because every word that Jesus gave came from the Father.

What we're going to see is how then God separates us from the world, though we live in the world. That's how important hungering and thirsting after righteousness is.

Verse 7: "Now, they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world..." (vs 7-9). Think of that! That's how you're separated from the world. That's part of it. This is a continuous ongoing prayer, because the Word of God is Spirit and Life.

"...I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.... [add to it everyone from that time forward on down to today] ...All Mine are Yours, and all Yours *are* Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world..." (vs 9-11). He was for just a little bit, but the work He was going to

do was so spiritual that it was not a part of the world, but a total part of God.

"...but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, even as *We are one*" (v 11). That's why we have to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

- that comes through the Word of God
- that comes through the Spirit of God
- that comes with the love of God

God's love for us—our love for Him.

So when you have a trial and are down and out and everything's at the end and it looks like you're about to be flushed out into the sewer, remember God still loves you. Come back to Him and He'll clean you up and straighten it out. We're going to see some very difficult days ahead. I want to finish this *Count Your Blessings* first before we get into all the dire things that are going to happen in the world.

Verse 12: "When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. I protected those whom You have given Me, and not one of them has perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them" (vs 12-13).

That is because God the Father and Jesus Christ dwell in each one of us. That is a tremendous thing, brethren. The world can't understand that. This is why we need to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness all the time. It's not a matter of 'being religious,' it's a matter of living the way God wants us to live.

Verse 14: "I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." You're not of the world if you have the Spirit of God in you and the two parts of the Spirit of God, of Christ and of the Father.

Verse 15: "I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [sometimes we wish] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one."

Sidebar: I've read a couple of books from Protestants. They are stuck with a problem. They have a lot of demonism in the Protestant churches and among the people, some more so than others, especially the Pentecostal. They can't figure out how a person can be converted and yet be possessed. The reason is, they don't have the Spirit of God within them and their conversion is superficial. They like the good things that God wants them to have, but

they're not willing to commit and they are not taught to commit. It's like trying to swim in the ocean while you're in a kiddies wading pool. It isn't going to work.

Verse 16: "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." If you don't fit in with the world, be happy; don't lament.

Verse 17: "Sanctify them in Your Truth..." Sanctify means to be made Holy. We are called *Holy brethren*. We are the children of God the Father and the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. That's how important that it is.

Remember the sermon that I gave on Day 49 with the seven churches and the different attitudes that are there. With all of this, everything that God has given:

- having His entire Word
- understanding what we have
- keeping the Passover and the Holy Days
- keeping the Sabbath
- living as much as we can by every Word of God

How do you think God looks down upon those of us who become lukewarm and complacent or nearly dead? *That happens because we're not hungering and thirsting after righteousness!* God is going to give us eternal life in glory forever, into the ages of eternity.

I don't know how to compare that to anything that we know in the world, because this is a heavenly gift with His Holy Spirit and heavenly promises by God. We can define it to a certain point, but think of the motivation that we need to have. That's a tremendous blessing.

We're going to add to it even more. Pretty soon you're going to receive a nice little package, probably sometime in December. It's going to have *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order* all recorded on CD's. Plus if you have any kind of device, be it phone, iPad, tablet, computer, whatever, we have the *Faithful Version* that will be made to fit any app. Jonathan knows what that means. That means any device. You can read it. You can hear it. Just think of what God is doing with all of these media devices. Remember, there are 270—we're number 270—Bible websites devoted to the Bible. Plus all that have been published. ***God is going to saturate this world with His Word in such a way that they will be completely without excuse***, especially those of us in the Churches of God. We're to be made Holy.

"...Your Word is the Truth.... [that's how we overcome the carnal mind] ...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*. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word" (vs 17-20).

So the word has to go out. Look at all the things that we have to get the word out today. It's an amazing thing. Even on television they have certain things about prophecies, which are pretty accurate. People are being saturated with it.

- they can reject it
- they can accept it
- they can believe it
- they can disbelieve it

But God is going to do it. It's going to be a witness.

Think about what it says there in Matt. 24, 'This Gospel shall be preached in ***all*** the world to ***all*** nations, then the end shall come.' Since God does it to the maximum, looks like He's doing a pretty good job—right? We can be thankful we're part of it. So that's something!

Here's the goal, here is why we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, v 21: "That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me."

They won't believe it until we're manifested and come back on the earth to rule. Wonder what it will be like, because there probably will be some people alive who will get through the Tribulation that we know. They will say, 'Really? You? I never knew that.' *Well, here I am.* That's going to be something!

"...that they also may be one in Us..." (v 21). That's quite a thing! Those in the first resurrection are going to be in the Family of God. All of the rest who come in after that will not be in the Family. They will be in the nations that are saved.

You get down and discouraged, you get lackadaisical, you slack off and don't do the things you know you need to do and your conscience is bothering you, you better answer your conscience because God's Spirit is telling you, 'You better get with it because these are the greatest and most profound and important things that we can possibly understand.'

Verse 22: "And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me..." *The Holy Spirit!* What's it going to be like to have glory to shine as the sun? That's going to be an amazing thing. ***You cannot have sin in the Kingdom of God***, because at the spiritual level things are so profound and so powerful that there cannot be sin, that there will not be sin. That's why we go through everything we do:

- to learn to hate sin
- to learn to get rid of sin
- to learn to overcome sin

“...that they may be one, in the same way that We are one; I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one...” (vs 22-23). I submit that unless we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, how are we going to be perfected. The Spirit of God needs to have working with it the Word of God. That needs to be written in our heart and in our mind.

“...and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (v 23). That is a powerful thing! There are other things we can add to it, but we can just say that this is why God has had His Word *written* down.

How did we get the Ten Commandments? *God wrote them on the tables of stone and gave them to Moses!* The children of Israel sinned and made a golden calf while Moses was up on the mountain. He was so angry he threw them and broke them *to show how worthless the commandments of God are to those who are dedicated to sin!* And to show it was a prophecy that the Aaronic priesthood would come to an end. The only reason the children of Israel and Aaron survived was because Moses in his love and kindness prayed for them, and God forgave them.

Then God had everything written down. Moses had to write it down: the history, compile it all together, the first five books of the Bible. Then we have the history that goes on from that, all written down. Then we come to the Psalms, we come to the prophets, all written down. Then we come to the Gospels and Acts, all written down. Let me tell you about the epistles, they are special. Even those who write about the Bible are amazed at the style of the epistles. It's not like, 'Thus saith the Lord,' in the same way that it is in the Old Testament. An epistle is a letter, which means it's personal.

Eph. 1 is exactly how Paul starts out every epistle; so does James, Peter, John, and Jude.

Ephesians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints... [those who are sanctified] ...who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus.” A prophecy for all of the faithful down through all time.

Verse 2: “Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father... [Who dwells in you] ...and *the* Lord Jesus Christ... [Who dwells in you and is our Savior] ...Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ; according as He has personally chosen us for

Himself... [Think how absolutely powerful that is. This is His plan] ...before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will” (vs 2-5).

With that in mind: ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 9:49-50
- 2) Matthew 5:6
- 3) Matthew 4:4
- 4) John 6:32-33
- 5) John 1:1
- 6) John 5:30
- 7) John 6:34-38, 50-57
- 8) Psalm 34:8-9
- 9) Psalm 119:18
- 10) Hosea 8:11-12
- 11) 2-Timothy 3:15-17
- 12) 2-Peter 1:16-21
- 13) Isaiah 28:9-14
- 14) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 15) John 6:63
- 16) John 14:15-23
- 17) John 17:5-23
- 18) Ephesians 1:1-5

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Colossians 1
- John 6:44-45
- Matthew 1
- Luke 3
- Galatians 2
- Exodus 12:6
- Matthew 24

Also referenced:

Sermon: *Day 49, Spring Holy Days 2015*

Books:

- *Temple* by Robert Cornuke
- *Jesus on Trial* by David Limbaugh

From *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*:
Appendix A: *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*

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