

Examine Yourself

Fred R. Coulter—March 24, 2007

Since we're so close to the Passover, we're going to look at some things that we need to do. I might also mention that several years ago in Opp, Alabama, that I did a sermon *Love of God—Second Calling*. This may be very helpful for many people because of having gone through all the trauma that has hit the Churches of God, **and having been betrayed by men!**

Lot's of times when that happens, you feel you've been betrayed by God. But the truth is that **you are never betrayed by God!** What happens is that **men take to themselves the prerogative of God and place themselves between you and God!**

When the men in the system goes bad, then it's almost like God has left you, God has deceived you. But that's not the case, God is always there. That's one of the wonderful things concerning the Passover coming up. The Passover is a special affirmation and rededication to the New Covenant through Jesus Christ. What you need to understand it is that:

- if you have felt insufficient during the year, which we all do
- if you have felt as though you've fallen short according to God, which we all do

That's why we have the Passover! We are renewing the covenant of eternal life so that we can be in the Kingdom of God!

God has created us in such a way that we are capable of receiving the Holy Spirit of God, the begettal from the Father. None of the other creatures of God, that God has made, are able to do that. We also, with the mind that God has given us, and with the Spirit that He's given us, we are able to comprehend and think beyond ourselves and beyond time and space as it were.

This is reflected in the fact that even though you know that there was a day that we were born and there's a day that we're going to die. Yet, you cannot remember anytime before you were born, and you cannot contemplate anytime very much beyond when you're going to die, but somehow it's awfully hard to understand that there was a point in time that you were born and there's a point in time when you will die, and that's because God has placed in man *the spirit of man* that allows a special connection between God the Father and Jesus Christ and all of those who receive the Holy Spirit.

This is quite a wonderful and tremendous thing, and that's what the Passover is all about, **to renew this New Covenant!**

I'm not going to go through the whole thing, but we are duty-bound to wash one another's feet. I want to emphasize two very important things. What does foot-washing have to do with our relationship with Christ?

John 13:8: "Peter said to Him, 'You shall not wash my feet, not ever.' Jesus answered him, **'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'**"

So, foot-washing is showing that you have a part with Christ. When heresy starts coming in:

- What is one of the first things that happens to the Passover? *There are many things that happen, but 'you don't need foot-washing!'*
- What is one of the things that happens with Unleavened Bread? *'You don't need to have unleavened bread!'*

"... 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'"

Let's understand that when any of the brethren in the foot-washing ceremony wash your feet, look at it this way: ***It is Christ in them that is washing your feet!*** So, Christ is doing it! You have a part with Him, a part for eternal life.

Verse 13: "You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak rightly, because I am. Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also are duty-bound to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, *to show* that you also should do exactly as I have done to you" (vs 13-15).

Here's the key: If people do not do the foot-washing—

- they may profess Christianity
- they may be nice people
- they may be sincere in what they are doing

—but unless they have the Spirit of God they are none of His!

However, if they do not have foot-washing... I don't know how many Protestant churches even practice it, or even think of it—I don't think there are very many, I'm sure they may be some few—however, we need to understand that those who do not do foot-washing put themselves in this category:

Verse 16: "Truly, truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor a messenger greater than he who sent him."

If people reject the very words of Christ and do not do foot-washing, what do they say? *I'm greater than my Lord! I'm greater than the Messenger!* They don't think of it that way, but what happens in their actions and responses reflect that. When they say you don't need to do this and do that and you get into a humanistic religion with the name of Christ attached to it. Those are the two things concerning foot-washing:

1. you don't exalt yourself above God
2. you have a part with Christ

We're also to examine ourselves before the Passover. We will examine some Scriptures that are important for us. We will see that the examination works both ways. In examining ourselves, if we come up short, *we're suppose to, because we're a long way from perfection, yet.* But we do have the desire to be perfected.

The Passover and the renewing of the New Covenant is a very important thing in that. Let's see what Christ did. We're not going to go through it in great detail, but just to cover why the Passover is so important and it is the reason why God starts the whole Holy Day year with the Passover.

John 15:12: "This is My commandment: that you love one another... [that's the whole goal of where we're going in this: love God and love one another] ...as I have loved you." *So, this is a progressive thing:*

- you grow in love
- you grow in dedication
- you grow in understanding

We always have our shortcomings to let us know that we still have things to change, grow and overcome. But as Christ has loved us! So, when we're going through this, what we need to do is ***examine our love and attitude toward God in relationship to Christ's love and attitude toward us, and what He's done for us!***

Verse 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, ***if***... [the condition is always on us] ...you do whatever I command you" (vs 13-14).

What Christ did in laying down His life, and what He went through is a tremendous thing for us to contemplate and understand.

In the books, *The Day That Jesus the Christ Died* and *A Harmony of the Gospels* you can go through the last part of Jesus' life and that will help you.

1-Cor. 11 is where the Apostle Paul wrote that we are to examine ourselves.

- if you find yourself a sinner, then you've examined yourself correctly
- if you find that you have fallen short, then you've examined yourself correctly

We're also going to see that this is a two-way examination or proving. You could also say, 'Prove yourself.' *Us to Christ and Christ to us!* It works both ways!

I'm not going to go into all the technical aspects of it, we have that in *The Christian Passover* book.

1-Corinthians 11:23: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and after giving thanks, He broke *it* and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body, which *is* being broken for you. This do in the remembrance of Me.' In like manner, *He* also *took* the cup after He had supped, saying, 'This is *the* cup of the New Covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in the remembrance of Me'" (vs 23-25).

I have a technical explanation of the Greek in the Passover book showing that there is a Greek particle spelled 'an' or 'alpha nu' pronounced *on*. Whenever that is there it can't be translated into the English because it shows that there are limiting factors in it. It shows that this does not mean as often as you desire to eat it or drink it, but as often as according to the restrictions, which are once a year on the Passover until He returns.

Verse 26: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes."

Why do we proclaim the death of the Lord? That doesn't mean that we ignore the resurrection. But God being manifested in the flesh, as Jesus was, was a tremendous and absolutely awesome thing for God to do. God came from the realm of living forever to become a man, and He pledged this to Abraham so that He could die for the sin of the world, beginning with His Church and also going back to all of those who He had called previous to them that He was crucified.

For God to enter into the human realm as God manifested in the flesh, is an awesome and tremendous thing for us to grasp. God made it possible beginning with the creation because we are made after the image of God, and after His likeness. Just as Christ came, so can we at the resurrection enter into the God realm.

That's quite a fantastic thing! Understand that of all the creation of God, only human beings were made to receive the Spirit of God. That's something! This is why we are to examine ourselves.

Verse 27: “For this reason, *if* anyone shall eat this bread or shall drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and *the* blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup accordingly” (vs 27-28).

If you said, ‘I’ve been perfect this year’ *you’re unworthy!* Or if you say that Paul didn’t mention anything about foot-washing and ‘we don’t need to do foot-washing,’ *it’s unworthy!* Knowing that Christ has made it all possible, because of Him. ***Granting forgiveness to us and granting the Holy Spirit to us is what makes us worthy!*** Not of ourselves!

Note John 8:28, 15:5^[transcriber’s correction]; of My own self I can do nothing} what He sees the Father do, what the Father has commanded Him to do, etc., that’s what He does. Likewise with us! If we understand that though we have the choice to make, eternal life comes from God.

- yes, we’re the clay
- yes, He’s molding us
- yes, He’s doing what He wants to do with us, that’s true
- yes, we have our part in it, that’s true

Since we have the law of sin and death in us, we have no inherent ability to give ourselves eternal life. Many have tried and never succeeded.

Let’s look and see how this examination takes place. What you’re doing with this is not just examining yourself by yourself alone to yourself. It also involves God and Jesus Christ, because you have the Spirit of God.

Let’s see what Christ said to all the Churches, and this is in particular to the Church at Thyatira, but it’s to all the Churches. Christ is going to render judgment to those who sin like they did in Thyatira and follow the teachings of the prophetess Jezebel.

I wonder how long a person would last on a nationwide television or worldwide interview if you told a Catholic priest that he was not Christian and does not represent Christ, and ‘what you do has nothing to do with God.’

I would imagine that the narrator would have what is called a ‘hard break’ and get that guy out there immediately. That is true. So, when the Church gets involved in becoming Catholicized or Hinduized—one way or the other, which is all the same thing—then there’s going to be punishment that will come. That’s why Christ says:

Revelation 2:23: “And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that **I am He Who searches the reins and**

hearts...”

That’s why it’s so important for us to understand and grasp that our relationship directly to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Just like I’m sitting on the sideline here, ***I’m not between you and God!*** Using the Word of God and the Spirit of God to teach everyone to come close to Christ, because He’s the One Who is doing the searching or examining.

What are the reins? We know what the heart is, but what are the reins? If you look it up in the Hebrew it comes out ‘kidney.’ You think: What on earth does God have to do with a kidney? *When I heard that, that’s what I thought!*

Then one day when I was watching a television documentary on the human brain, and it showed the two halves of the human brain—they did a full 360 degree around—I said that they looked like kidneys. So, *it’s your brain*, not your kidneys.

This is the tremendous thing we need to understand. Our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit is direct! That’s what the Passover and everything that God is doing is all about. That is fantastic when we grasp it. But nevertheless, notice what He says here:

“...and I will give to each of you according to your works” (v 23).

God is merciful, kind and understanding. God will forgive! That’s why in examining ourselves, we repent, because God says to those who repent and overcome that He will give them eternal life.

Let’s look at this and see where this comes from. Let’s see about examining our selves, examining our reins and what God is doing. God is doing this for us, and then we are reciprocating back to God. Remember that what Jesus did for all of us was complete all out wholehearted absolute love, complete devotion to God the Father and complete love to all of those whom He calls. Yes, eventually to the whole world.

I cannot help but think—and I’ve preached on the Last Great Day so many, many times—what is it going to be like when all of those people are resurrected to a second physical life. Talk about joy, crying, happiness, exhilaration, especially those who died traumatic deaths. It’s going to be something!

Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” ***God can!***

Isn’t it true that when people get involved in doing things that end up really terrible and they say, ‘I don’t understand what I’ve done?’ *That’s because they don’t understand the depths of the deceitfulness*

of human nature! **Only God can!** Only God can change that! That's what God has called us to, to change that.

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, **I try the reins**, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." *An almost direct quotation in Rev. 2!*

Now let's look at some Psalms and as we're going through these things, let's understand that this is a two-way thing *between you and God, and God and you!*

Psalms 26:1: "Judge me, O LORD..." *God is always judging us!*

As I mentioned in the sermons: *Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison #s 1 & 2* that no one is free from God anywhere at any time on the face of the earth. You're either under the blessings of God, or under the cursings of God, whether you're in the Church or not. You either have the Spirit of God or you don't have the Spirit of God.

We are the ones who are being judged! But remember what Paul said; that if we eat of the bread and drink of that cup—after examining ourselves—then God will not judge us with the world (1-Cor. 11). What is our judgment if every day we repent of our sins? Our judgment is God grace and mercy. It doesn't mean that we won't have trials and difficulties to overcome. So, we need to keep that in perspective.

Verse 1: "Judge me, O LORD, for I have walked in **my integrity**.... [which has to come from God] ...I have trusted also in the LORD without wavering. Examine me, O LORD..." (vs 1-2).

Here's the two-way examination; we examine ourselves and God examines us.

"...and prove me; **try my reins and my heart**, for Your loving kindness is before my eyes; and I have walked in **Your Truth**" (vs 2-3). *Let that be our prayer that we're walking in the Truth of God!*

What are we dealing with? *God is the One Who is doing the examining; He's proving, trying the heart and the reins!* 'Your loving kindness is always before me,' *always loving God!* That's where our relationship is continually.

Let's remember that David who was always a man after God's heart. The Bible is unique in this way: It is the only book that brings out the weakness of those whom God is dealing with.

Example: I don't recall when I read the Koran if there was anything about any adulteress affairs of Mohammad or not. I don't recall any, but there is about David. There is about everyone whom

God has dealt with. Same way with the New Testament; look at Paul's confession. Look at who he was before he was called, etc.

It's the only book in the world that brings out the sins and weaknesses of those whom God deals with. Not from the point of view to be scandalous about them, but so that all of us who read the Bible we have hope because if we repent that we can likewise be forgiven. That's what's important to grasp and understand.

Psalms 7:8: "The LORD shall judge the people; judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness..."—**the righteousness of Christ**—which is tremendous for the New Testament. If we are Christ's and we love God and are walking in the way of God, what does God do for us? He imputes the true righteousness to us! Not that we deserve it, but He does it to put us in this right standing with Him, so we can have this connection with God *spiritually!*

"...and according to my integrity within me. O let the evil of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous, for **the righteous God tries the hearts and reins**" (vs 8-9). *So, it works both ways!*

Psalms 10:9: "He lies in wait secretly like a lion in his den. He lies in wait to catch the helpless; he catches the helpless and drags him off in his net. He crouches and bows down, and the hapless fall into his mighty grasp. He has said in his heart, 'God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see!'" (vs 9-11). *This is the attitude of the unconverted!*

Verse 12: "Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up Your hand; forget not the humble. Why do the wicked spurn God? He has said in his heart, 'You will not call into account.' You have seen it, for You behold mischief and vexation to repay it with Your hand. The poor commits himself to You; You are the Helper of the fatherless" (vs 12-14). *This is coming to God to let Him fight our battles for us!*

Let's see how this is to work. When I first read Gal. 6 many, many years ago, before I was baptized. We all have vanity: 'Vanity, vanity, all is vanity! Man at his very best state is altogether vanity.' That's all part of learning.

Galatians 6:3: "For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing... [I thought, what if he is something? It doesn't mean that. Man is nothing] ...he is deceiving himself. But let each one prove his own work... [before God] ...and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another" (vs 3-4)—*because God will give you the joy, the help and strength to do it!*

Here's how we do it. Let's put it all

together. Not only does God prove us, not only does God try us, but we also examine ourselves and try ourselves and prove ourselves. Let's see how this works together.

Romans 12:1: "I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy *and* well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind...**" (vs 1-2). *There is the heart, the mind and the reins all combined together!*

"...in order that you may prove... [by doing, experiencing, living] ...what *is* well-pleasing and good, **and the perfect will of God**" (v 2).

Those two verses are quite a statement! It really tells us and gives us our goal in what we are doing. We can prove that. We're to prove ourselves and examine ourselves, and God likewise does the same thing for us. This helps us when we're getting ready for the Passover.

Let's see another aspect of trying and proving what God does. That is proving us through circumstances, through difficulties. I want you think about your life and the circumstances that you have gone through. Or look at this way: What is *the wilderness of the world* that you have gone through? Why? A lot of us have been through a lot of things! Remember this, keep this in mind: ***All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose! Everything!***

When you are going through a real deep trial—which all of us will experience in our Christian walk—you keep the faith and understand that when you come out at the other end you will understand.

Deuteronomy 8:1: "All the commandments which I command you this day shall you be diligent to observe *and to* do that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers. And **you shall remember all the way, which the LORD your God led you these forty years...**" (vs 1-2).

Today we're to be led of the Spirit of God. All of our lives have individual and separate circumstances in it. In all of our lives we have experienced many difficult problems and problems that are greater than us. The reason that God puts us through this—always remember what Christ went through—regardless of the difficulty involved, ***eternal life is worth every bit of it!***

Always remember that so you won't get discouraged or despaired!

Verse 2: "And **you shall remember all the way, which the LORD your God led you these**

forty years in the wilderness in order **to humble you, to prove you...** [God proves us] ...**to know what is in your heart...** [that's a very important thing. God wants to know what's in our heart] ...whether you would keep His commandments or not."

- Do you love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being?

or

- Have you reserved a little place of your heart for yourself?

You need to think about that! Some of us have, simply because of the need of protection from men who come in and cause problems within the Church. The system was setup so that you commit yourself to the hierarchy or to men ***rather than to God!***

Because of that—and that system was wrong—many people have reserved a place in their heart for themselves, ***rather than committing to God all the way!***

That is what you might call is a natural protective device that 'I'm not going to be taken down by any man.' ***God wants to know what it is your heart!*** "...whether you would keep His commandments or not."

Verse 3: "And He humbled you and allowed you to hunger, and then He fed you with manna, which you did not know, neither did your fathers know *it...*"

They ate manna for 40 years! They had it fresh picked. They had it baked, boiled, and there's one place that in boiling it's boiled in oil, so they made donuts out of manna. Think about that! For 40 years and they still didn't know what it was. Psa. 78 says that it's angel's food. So they had 'angel food donuts' every day.

Put it all together. When I read this next statement, I want you to kind of have a panorama in your mind of some of the things that you have experienced. Some of the things that have been traumatic for you.

"...so that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone... [manna was the closest thing to the real thing] ...**but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live"** (v 3).

Let's translate that to the New Testament, as well! That's why in *A Harmony of the Gospels* we have: **How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets.**

You will see that what He fulfilled He replaced with a higher standard. For example:

circumcision He replaced with a higher requirement, not in the flesh, but in the mind.

Think about your coming out of the world, think about your trials and difficulties that you've gone through as we're reading:

Verse 15: "Who led you through the great and terrible wilderness *with* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where *there was* no water, Who brought forth water for you out of the rock of flint."

Overcoming every trial and circumstance! This is to give us the confidence, trust and faith in God that will lead us out of any trial and circumstance that we come across or that comes, regardless of how devastating that they may have been.

Verse 16: "Who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, so that He might humble you and that He might prove you to do you good in your latter end."

Remember that God intends to take every difficulty and tragedy in your life and to make it for good for you for all eternity. That's something! Only God can do that! That's why in everything that we do, we need to focus in on what God is doing:

- how He can be with us
- how He can help us
- we examine ourselves
- He examines us
- He tries our reins

To see if He's going to respond to Him!

- Will we be led of the Holy Spirit?
- Will we follow wherever He goes?
- Will we love God under all circumstances?
- Will we trust God in everything in our lives?

That's what it's all about! All of this is to develop *faith, hope and love! Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!* That's the whole summation of it.

Psalms 11:1: "In the LORD I have taken refuge; how *then* can you say to me, 'Flee like a bird to your mountain'?" *Sometimes you wish you could!*

But Jesus prayed that God would not take us out of the world—that doesn't come until the resurrection—but that He would keep us from the evil one!

Verse 2: "For lo, the wicked bend their bow; they make ready their arrow on the string, so that they may secretly shoot at the upright in heart."

That's why we need to liken that unto Satan the devil! Who is Satan interested in more than any other people in the world? *The people of God to try and trip them up!*

Verse 3: "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" *Sometimes you may feel like that!* What is the true foundation? *Jesus Christ!*

Verse 4: "The LORD is in His Holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven. His eyes behold; His searching gaze tests the children of men."

Don't think you're the only ones being tried! What does it say in Rev. 3? *The temptation that is coming upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth!* That's the big end-time thing that is coming.

Verse 5: "The LORD tries the righteous..."—*for our good!*

- to give us of His Spirit
- to give us of His strength
- to give us of His faith
- to give us of His hope
- to give us of His love
- to give us of His character

"...but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.... [here's the ultimate of the wicked] ...Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone... [Rev. 16] ...and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup, for the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; the upright will behold His face" (vs 5-7).

Now let's look at something else that may be a prophecy of Christ. In the Psalms we get some glimpses of the thoughts of Christ. In other words, God wanted us to know what Christ was thinking and what He went through when He was a human being. This is why David was put through some of the most unusual experiences, because he actually brought forth some of the very words that were prophesied that Christ Himself would say, and some of the things that He would do.

Let's look at this if we can and see how much this may be some of the thoughts of Christ when He was in the flesh.

Psalms 16:7: "I will bless the LORD Who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the nights."

Have you ever in your sleep or while you're trying to sleep in praying and thinking on God, had a deep spiritual experience? *I know that I have!* And I remember them from the point of view that those experiences were additional steps for turning points in drawing closer to God. What it is that many times God is dealing with you at night. If you haven't experienced that, there will come a time when you will. That's what David is saying here: "...instructs me in the nights."

Verse 8: "I have set the LORD always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I shall

not be moved. Therefore, My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in safety...”

Hebrews 12:2: “Having *our minds* fixed 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...” so that He might be our High Priest

Psalm 16:10: “For You will not abandon My soul to the grave... [quoted by Peter in Acts 2 referring the resurrection of Jesus Christ] ...neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”

This was part of the covenant between God the Father and Jesus Christ when Jesus came to the earth.

Verse 11: “You will make known to Me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” *That’s how Jesus was able to endure what He went through!*

Now let’s look at some of the other experiences that we could say that maybe Jesus went through, similar to it.

Psalm 17:1: “Hear the right, O LORD; attend unto my cry; give ear unto my prayer, for it is not from lips of deceit. Let my judgment come forth from Your presence; let Your eyes behold things that are upright. You have tried my heart; You have visited me in the night...” (vs 1-3).

Remember the famous prayer of Jesus was a night (John 17). It says that He ‘rose up while it was yet night’ and went out to pray (Mark 1). So, this may relate directly to it.

“...You have tested me, and You shall find nothing... [He was without sin] ...I have purposed *that* my mouth shall not transgress” (v 3).

This is part of the reason that we go through these things like Christ it so we can have purpose, resolve. When we examine ourselves before the Passover, part of it is so that we can have:

- resolve
- purpose
- rededication
- renewal

God made us, as human beings, so that we need to be renewed. That’s why it says, ‘Be renewed in the spirit of your mind (Rom. 12).

Verse 4: “Concerning the works of men, by the words of Your lips, I have kept *myself* from the paths of the violent.”

Did Jesus not have His temptation with Satan the devil, who is the destroyer? *Yes, He did!*

Verse 5: “My steps have held fast to Your paths, my feet have not slipped. I have called upon You, for You will answer me, O God; incline Your ear to me; hear my speech. Show Your marvelous loving kindness...” (vs 5-7).

The greatest love was the giving of Christ in sacrifice for the sin of the world.

“...O Savior of those seeking refuge in You; by Your right hand *save them* from those who rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings from the face of the wicked who oppress me—my deadly enemies who encircle me. They have closed their pitiless hearts; with their mouth they speak proudly. They have now surrounded us in our steps. They have set their eyes to cast us down to the earth, they are like a lion that longs to tear his prey, and like a young lion stalking in secret places. Arise, O LORD, confront him, bring him down; deliver my soul from the wicked by Your sword, from men by Your hand, O LORD, from men of the world whose portion is in this life, and whose belly You fill with Your treasure. They are full of children, and will leave their riches to their babes. As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Your likeness” (vs 7-15).

Psa 22 has some of the words of Christ and I want to focus just on a couple of verses that has to do with the lion. This has to do with some of the very words that Christ said on the cross, and some of the innermost feelings that He had while He was there hanging and dying.

Psalm 22:1: “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me...”

Let’s understand one of the experiences of conversion that we will all go through to test our faith and our trust in God. Have you ever gone through an experience that you feel like God has left you? Forsaken you? *Yes! You wonder what’s going on!*

- O God, what is happening?
- O God, where are You?

Christ went through this very experience Himself. Because God the Father and Jesus Christ had such a close relationship, the impact upon Jesus must have been so much greater. Remember, it’s quoted that He said this while He was on the cross.

Verse 7: “All who see Me mock Me; they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!’” (vs 7-8). *And that’s what they said!*

They came around where Jesus was crucified and saw Him hanging on the cross. Not a

cross like in the movies. It was a pole, which was a tree, upon which they put a cross bar that His hands and arms were nailed to and tied to. They lifted Him up and put that in a slot on the tree. That's why it says that He was crucified on a tree, but it's still a cross.

What did they say? *You trusted in God, come down off this cross and we'll believe that You are the Christ! You delivered others, saved others, save yourself then we'll believe!*

No, that didn't happen, because it had to be finished the way that God wanted. What were Jesus' thought then?

Verse 9: "For You are He who took Me out of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts." {Note Isa. 50 where Jesus was taught every day of the Father, beginning at a very, very young age.}

While He was there suffering, Jesus remembered His birth, His childhood and that He was God's from the very instant of conception.

Verse 10: "I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb. Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help. Many bulls have encircled around Me..." (vs 10-12)—*referring to the demons who were circling around the cross!*

I just cannot help but think that Satan thought that he had done it! You could just picture the demons circling around the cross in hideous laughter and so forth.

"...strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion" (vs 12-13)—*tie in with Psa. 11!*

Verse 14: "I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint... [you can imagine the terrible pain that He was going through] ...My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels."

He just feels everything going out, and the final thing that took the life of Christ is the spear that was thrust through from the right side to the left and it pierced His heart so that all the blood would be shed.

Verse 15: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled Me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. I can count all My bones; they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture. But You, O LORD, be not far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver My soul from the sword, My precious life

from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth... [Satan is depicted as a 'roaring lion devouring whom he may] ...yea, and from the wild ox's horns. You have answered Me. I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise You" (vs 15-22).

Then Christ depicts projects forward to the resurrection and to the completion of God's plan. Isn't that going to be something? That's why when you follow through and understand that the first resurrection is on Pentecost, and all the things that need to take place there. Isn't that going to be something? Imagine standing on the Sea of Glass after being resurrected.

We can anticipate this the way that Jesus did. Ask God for the spiritual help to do so. But imagine what a fantastic thing that is going to be. Here's the Sea of Glass and all the resurrected saints are there. Christ is there and then He presents us all to the Father and says, 'Behold, Father, the children that You have given Me.'

The way that you endure these things when you're tried, tested and proved to the nth degree is to keep your mind focused on that.

All during Jesus' life He was being tested, tried and proved. While we may think that His life was not difficult, it must have been very, very difficult, and especially in the time leading up to the crucifixion and the crucifixion itself. Especially knowing that here was God in the flesh Who prophesied every one of these words; Who prophesied all the events that were to take place. He *knew* that it was going to happen, and He *knew* how it was going to happen. Let's see how He felt.

Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death..." *He had to be saved from death, because He took upon Him the law of sin and death and died!*

That's why He had to have full faith and confidence in God the Father, full love toward God the Father and God the Father toward Him. This is a tremendous thing to understand what God has done. Let's also understand that during Jesus' life He was tried and tested—His heart and His reins—moreso than us!

"...and was heard because *He feared God. Although He was a Son, yet, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered*" (vs 7-8).

Even though God is perfect, He is still learning, and Jesus learned from the things that He suffered.

Verse 9: “And having been perfected...”
*That’s an amazing statement, and that’s what Christ is trying to do with us: **perfect us!***

That’s the whole process! That why with the Passover and the renewal of the New Covenant that we do what we do because we love God, because He has:

- called us
- forgiven us
- loves us

So much so that Christ laid down His life in a most horrible and gruesome way! So that no man could ever say, ‘Lord, I suffered more than You.’ Not even Job!

Let’s see what God is doing in us! He is doing the same thing. This is way in examining ourselves that we yield to God with all our heart, mind, soul and being. That’s what it is; *not to any man, but to God!*

We know these verses, but sometimes when you go back to verses that you know and read them in the context of something else, it gives you a greater understanding.

1- John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him...” This is what God wants us to do: *to know that we **know!*** It’s one thing to know something, but it’s another thing *to know* that you know!

As we grow in grace and knowledge and understanding, we come to a greater depth of knowledge so that *we know* that we know! This is where God wants us to come. That is being:

- perfected in faith
- perfected in hope
- perfected in love

“...we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4). *That’s the test! It’s simple!*

Verse 5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [not selective obedience, but all of it] ...truly in this one... [this is what God is doing] ...**the love of God is being perfected**...”

Since it’s a process, God is trying the hearts; God is trying the reins! He is examining us, proving us, and also we are proving God and we are proving ourselves.

After all, God wants us, in the things that we do, to know that we need God in everything that we do. When we yearly examine ourselves before the Passover, all of this has to do with recommitting

ourselves to God, *because we are being perfected!*

“...in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [that’s what God wants] ...By this *means* **we know that we are in Him**.... [we’re in Christ, and Christ is in us] ...Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 5-6).

- there is the pattern
- there is the way

That’s why Jesus said on the Passover night, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.’ All of this has to do with how we are examining ourselves.

Now let’s see what this did for Jesus Christ and what this does for us. It comes from God to us and from us back to God. It also say that ‘the just shall live by faith, from faith unto faith,’ which is a continuous operation that comes from God. With His Spirit to us, giving us His faith, and *our faith*—growing and developing and being perfected in love, faith and hope—*going back to God! **From faith unto faith!***

In what Jesus did prepared Himself and qualified Himself through living in the flesh to be our High Priest.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and powerful, 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.” *That’s God trying the reins!*

If God finds something that needs to be removed, then He will help you remove it. That’s what repentance is all about. God knows that as long as we’re in the flesh:

- we have things that need to be perfected
- we have things that need to be removed
- we have sins that need to be forgiven
- we have thoughts that we need to have erased
- we have experiences that need to be taken out of our heart and mind

and give us the greatest experience of conversion with God!

That’s what this is all about with examining ourselves before the Passover. Let me just add this to it. When you know you have sinned:

- Does God know it? *Yes!*
- When should you repent? *A quickly as possible!*

We can never wait long enough to make ourselves right unless we repent. We can’t be made

right unless we repent. God is merciful, kind and long-suffering. That's why God called Saul as an example of forgiveness! Taking the #1 enemy of the Church and converting him. That did more to upset Judaism than anything else that has happened, even to this day!

I have asked those who have been Catholic, 'When you went to the confessional booth, did you really, really tell the priest everything?' *No!* But when you go before God the Father and Jesus Christ *you can!* That's why personal prayer to God the Father and Jesus Christ is so important.

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."

This is not given to put fear into you, but to give you confidence that when you repent you know you will be forgiven. To know that when you are striving and overcoming, and working on things to change and grow. Christ is there to help you every step of the way, every thought of the way.

Verse 14: "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, **but One Who was tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet, He was without sin**" (vs 14-15)—*and magnified that much more because His sacrifice represented the sins of the whole world!*

When we come to God in prayer, we can have the full faith and confidence:

- that Jesus knows
- that Jesus understands
- that God the Father will forgive

So, this is why in examining ourselves we know that we have access to God. That's what's important!

Verse 16: "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." *Of course, time of need is always right now!*

This is the perfection that God wants us to have. This is the lifetime goal taken day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month, year-by-year. If you've been in the Church a long time, decade-by-decade. When we come to the point, if there's enough time, as the Bible says that 'we are full of days and years' and we are ready for the final exam, which is being faithful unto death. A lot of brethren are coming to that point. God intends it. Death is miserable, and death is weakness. It's a sorrowful

thing to go through, but remember, it is your final exam, and God will not leave you alone.

- He's there!
- He's with you!

So, here's the perfection that we need to come to:

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... [there's always someone with a trick question, and they're not restricted to scribes or Pharisees] ...'Which is *the* first commandment of all?'" The Greek for first is 'protos' that means *primary, the most important one of all!*

Verse 29: "Then Jesus answered him, 'The first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel.... [put your name there because God wants it to be personal to each one of us] ...Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'" **This is the first commandment**" (vs 29-30)—*the primary commandment!*

This is what we are being perfected into. So, as we examine ourselves, acknowledge the things you are weak in, the things that you have sinned in, repent of those, of course. But in examining yourself and God examining you and trying and testing you, ***ask for more of the love of God! For more of the faith of God*** so that you can truly be perfected in the love of God this way: *that it becomes the very basis on which you live, breathe and conduct your life.* To love "...God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength."

Then it extends out beyond you to, v 31: "And *the* second *is* like this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."...."—*whoever that may be!*

Then it extends beyond to the brethren, *to love each other as Jesus Christ has loved us!* He died for us in His great love. There's no greater love that anyone can have than to give his life for someone else. We need to love each other as Christ has loved us.

Unfortunately, because of all of the trauma that's been in the Church, and all the world that is around us with all the things that are going on, loving the brethren has become a difficult proposition, in some cases, indeed! But nevertheless, we need to love the brethren.

Then the last category we're to love is our enemies. That's difficult. There are two ways you can pray for the enemy:

1. that they would repent

2. that if they don't that God would deal with them, and let God judge them with His judgment

Therefore, this takes away from you all anger, hatred and bitterness. That's why God wants us to love our enemies. They're in God's hands. Who knows they may become converted.

This is why we are to examine ourselves. It is to be a *personal prayer session between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ!* That you are to be completely open with God. Ask God for:

- His Spirit
- His mercy
- His forgiveness
- His strength
- His hope
- His inspiration

Then when you come and take the Passover, you can take it in full faith and confidence that you have a part with Christ:

- that He has called you and given you His Spirit
- that you renew the New Covenant unto eternal life
- that you will be there at the first resurrection when Jesus returns

- 1 Corinthians 11
- Psalm 78
- Revelation 3; 16
- Acts 2
- John 17
- Mark 1
- Romans 12
- Isaiah 50

Also referenced:

Sermon: *Love of God—Second Calling* (#7 *Love of God* series)

Books:

- *The Day That Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermons: *Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison* #s 1 & 2

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2-28-19

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 13:8, 13-16
- 2) John 15:12-14
- 3) 1 Corinthians 11:23-28
- 4) Revelation 2:23
- 5) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 6) Psalm 26:1-3
- 7) Psalm 7:8-9
- 8) Psalm 10:9-14
- 9) Galatians 6:3-4
- 10) Romans 12:1-2
- 11) Deuteronomy 8:1-3, 15-16
- 12) Psalm 11:1-7
- 13) Psalm 16:7-9
- 14) Hebrews 12:2
- 15) Psalm 16:10-11
- 16) Psalm 17:1-15
- 17) Psalm 22:1, 7-22
- 18) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 19) 1 John 2:3-6
- 20) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 21) Mark 12:28-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 8:28; 15:5