

Faithful Until Death

*We all die in Adam, but we all live in Christ!
Press onward toward the goal of the Kingdom of God!*

Fred R. Coulter—January 22, 2022

This past week, as we will have more weeks ahead of us, was a difficult week. My best friend Carl Franklin passed away on Friday, Jan. 14th (transcriber's correction). We were friends at Ambassador College. We did projects together, and one of the projects we worked on was a whole genealogy of the Old Testament, beginning with Adam and Eve all the way down through the time of the first century Church.

We took each one and wrote down their age when they passed, and put it all together. Both of us got an 'A' from Dr. Hoeh for doing that; it was hard to get an 'A' from Dr. Hoeh. We still have some publications that Carl Franklin has written; a lot of research that he did in doing *The Christian Passover* book.

Through 'thick and thin' we were always good friends. We know that he's going to be in the Kingdom of God, which I'm going to talk about today, as well as many, many others that we all know.

Not only do we get the things that relate to us, but also that we get and keep in mind the *big picture!* King David had many things that are really good for us. He suffered and wrote of

- those sufferings
- his emotions
- how he felt
- the battles that he fought
- the enemies that he conquered

With the help of God! All of that is recorded in the Psalms.

Psalms 8:1: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!..."

Everything depends upon God! Every human being that is living depends upon God, whether they know God, reject God or partially understand about God, regardless of what it is. ***They all depend upon God!***

Paul wrote in Acts 17 that ***'in Him we live, and move and have our being'***! That's the thing that's important for us to understand and comprehend so that we have the *spiritual strength* to overcome the temporary troubles that we see.

"...You have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have ordained strength because of Your adversaries, **to silence the enemy and the avenger**"

(vs 1-2).

That's why we go through what we go through. There's another side of that coin, ***and that's what God is going to do in judging all of the enemies!***

I know we all do v 3 from time-to-time, but the older we get the more we think on it. Roger Tointon and I are the same age and we'll probably pass from the earth relatively close to each other. That's just the way it will be.

But remember that Abraham died; he was ***a friend of God!*** From the covenant that God made with Abraham, comes all the rest of the plan of God. Yet, he died; *died in the faith!* Then Isaac, Jacob, all the patriarchs, and down through time right down to our day.

Verse 3: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained."

The next two verses gets right down to what we need to be thinking about with everything that's going on.

Verse 4: **"What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?"**

God cares for us! Look out and see all the suffering and terrible things that are going on, you would think that God doesn't care for a whole lot of people; but He does! How is it that He cares for them when He lets them suffer and die? Look at the poor plight of the homeless that is in every city, especially the cities that are controlled by the ***satanist party!*** They give them just enough money so they can stay on their drugs and live on the street, and eventually die.

You say, 'Why does God allow this?' *Well, because He expects the people who are living to take care of situations like that!* If they don't, that's how it's going to end up.

- God is greater than all of that
- God is greater than every war
- God is greater than every murder
- God is greater than every trouble

I'm not just talking about those who are in the Church; that's another category we'll talk about in a little bit. But God is so mindful of all those whom He didn't call. Some people think that God

only calls certain people. Like some Baptists say, that if you're in the Baptist Church you're going to 'burn in hell forever.'

That doesn't show care for mankind. So, what is God going to do? *Something only those in the Church of God understand, called the second resurrection!*

Think about what it's going to be like when they are all resurrected to a second physical life, whole complete, restored and all of the sons of God down through all that time up to that time of the second resurrection. We'll be there to help them enter into the Kingdom of God. That's how much God cares and God loves!

John 3:16: "For God so **loved** the world that **He gave His only Begotten Son**, so that everyone who believes in Him **may not perish, but may have everlasting life.**"

That's how much God cares. But He's done one other thing, too. He's given us free moral agency so that we can *choose*. **He's given us:**

- thought
- emotion
- capacity for love
- His Truth
- His Word

All of that is to help us! Notice why:

Psalm 8:5: "For You have made him **a little lower than God...**" ***Made in the image of God!***

Most translations translate that wrongly as 'little lower than the angels.' That's a true statement, too, but the Hebrew is **God!** The angels represent the Septuagint. But in both cases it's correct.

"...and have crowned him with glory and honor" (v 5).

There's nothing greater on the earth physically speaking than men and women. God created the earth and everything there and gave it to us and said, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.' We know what happened because they didn't do it! Notice how important that this is, and think about this: When you look at what men have done, what they have built, what they have mined, what they have created from what God gave on the earth. There are some mighty words that they have done!

Verse 6: "You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet"—*the physical things on the earth!*

This is important for us to understand, because God is with us in everything we do:

- when we have troubles **He's with us**
- when we're going through sorrow **He's with us**
- when we're happy **He's with us**
- when we do things that please Him **He's with us**
- when we do things that don't please Him **He leads us to repentance**

That's quite a thing!

Psalm 15:1: "LORD, who shall dwell in Your tabernacle?..."

That's why we're made a little lower than God, because we're going to live with Him! But in order to live with Him, what has to happen? *We have to become like Him!* This is what it's all about that we're going through.

"...Who shall dwell upon Your Holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the Truth in his heart" (vs 1-2).

That's what we need to do, the Truth of God always to lead us!

Psalm 37:28: "For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His saints..."—***even though you may go through a trial where it looks like God may forsake you; but He's not!***

"...they are preserved forever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the earth and dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice. **The Law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide**" (vs 28-31).

That's how we stay strong! That's how it's done! There's a Psa. that says, 'O Lord, when I'm old and gray, do not forget me.' A lot of us are going through that! And in edition to Carl passing, this week also Willy Miller passed, Bill Keifman passed and recently George Neufeld passed.

- What are we seeing?
 - Is it that God forsaking us?
- or***
- Is it part of the plan of God?
 - What is actually happening with this?

I think we're going to be seeing more and more of it.

We read the ***every word of God is true, and it will come to pass!*** Here is some Word of God that is a mixture of sorrow and hope as we look at everything. We're going to see this. Look at the picture of any Feast of Tabernacles. There's a lot of gray hair out there. ***God is harvesting!***

Isaiah 57:1: "The righteous perish..."

When I got news of Carl having died, and he died sitting in his chair with his food right beside

him, but he had a serious kidney infection and he just closed his eyes and went to sleep.

I got out our wedding book, because Carl was the ‘best man’ at our wedding. I looked at that and here’s Dolores and I, young and thin, no gray hair, and we had one of the largest weddings at Ambassador College. We had about 500 people there.

We got married Jan. 13, 1965, so I wanted to look at a picture of Carl just to remind me of him. It’s good thing to have these pictures, but also it’s a difficult thing to have these pictures, because I was melancholy for a couple of days. That happens, that’s just the way it is.

Then I got out the Envoy of 1964, because that’s the year that both Carl and I graduated along with Michael Heiss (who is down in Pasadena) and we were the three that worked with Dr. Dorothy. I got out the Envoy and started looking at it. Look at all the pictures. It starts out with Herbert Armstrong and Loma—both gone. Then all the faculty, all of them are gone. Then the voice of the World Tomorrow program—Garner Ted Armstrong—is gone. So, it was quite a thing going through that, and then preparing for this message.

Isaiah 57:1: “The righteous perish and no one lays *it* to heart, and merciful men *are* taken away...”

Remember this whenever it talks about man or men, it also means women because woman was taken from man.

“...none considering that **the righteous are taken away from the evil to come**” (v 1).

That’s a promise and God is doing that. We are at a time in the Church that there are a lot who are going to pass. Then the what’s going to happen to the Church? Well, Who’s the Head of the Church? *Jesus Christ!* He’ll take care of it! He’ll open the doors, call other people. Remember that when the Apostolic Age was coming to a close they were beset with:

- troubles
- false prophets
- even on who dared to reject the Apostle John—*Demetrius*

So, you think you went through Church Wars and problems. What do you think the Apostle John felt like in his old age when that happened?

Verse 2: “He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds... [the grave] ...each one who walked in his uprightness.”

That’s an action that’s going to be taking place quite regularly. So, we’re going to look at the blessing that’s going to come from that.

(break@20:25)

It’s quite amazing, think about it: We live in Biblical times! We’re living in the times that many of those in the early church were awaiting. They had no clue that it would be 2,000 years later. That’s why Jesus didn’t give them a hint as to how long it would be.

Psalm 71:14: “But I will hope without ceasing... [regardless of how things are, how difficult they may be] ...and I will praise You more and more. My mouth shall show forth Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, for **I do not know how many they are...**[of the enemies] ...**I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD...**[that’s what it is] ...I will speak of Your righteousness, even of Yours alone” (vs 14-16).

That’s why we have a life devoted to prayer and study and living, which is all wrapped up in that sentence.

Verse 17: “O God, You have taught me from my youth; and until now I have declared Your wonderful works. But now also **when I am old and gray-headed, O God, do not forsake me...**” (vs 17-18).

God and Christ are not going to forsake us and leave us alone!

Verse 19: “And Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You Who have done great things. O God, who is like You?”

When I went through the Envoy of 1964—the year I graduated—and looked at this picture showing hundreds and hundreds of people all crammed together at a Feast of Tabernacles in Jekyll Island, Georgia. There was a time when they had, before the fall, 120,000 attend the Feast of Tabernacles.

So, when I looked at that picture of all of these people jammed together, it thought: I wonder where they are? Probably a lot of them have passed the scene. It reminded me of Matt. 13. How many times have we read it? Like Roger and I were discussing, you read the Scriptures and you study them, and re-study them, and every time you learn a little more or you come to it with a different perspective, and it gives you much greater insight.

Let’s not be consumed with grief! Yes, it’s proper to have some grief when this takes place, but we need to look at the big picture overall, because we’re not done, God is not done, and when we pass from the scene we don’t know what God is going to do.

Think about those of the first century, they would never be able to conceive of what we're doing here today, to have a meeting here and have probably 700 people out online watching it live.

The Parable of the Sower

They wanted to know why Jesus spoke to them in parables.

Matthew 13:11: "And He answered *and* said to them..."

Look at this sentence and think about what you have, what you have learned, how long you have been living in the Truth, etc.

"... 'Because it **has been given**... [comes from God, knowledge and understanding] ... **to you**... [first person singular to everyone whom God calls] ... **to know**...' (11). *How many people in the world want to know:*

- What's happening?
- Why human life?
- How many don't believe in God?

Even in Illinois they're having 'Satan classes' for little kids. Who would have thought it would have gotten that evil? *Think about that!*

"...the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given.... [they have a blinder on] ... For whoever has *understanding* to him more shall be given ..." (vs 11-12).

That's a promise. God will fulfill it, but He will only fulfill it if we stay faithful and are always growing in grace and knowledge. Then He gives understanding. If we approach it from a lackadaisical point of view, or an ho-hum point of view, we'll never understand it, and the shades of blindness will come back down.

"...and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him. For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, **because seeing, they see not**..." (vs 12-13).

What's a perfect example of that? *Protestantism!* They have the Bible, they speak and preach from it, **but they don't see what they ought to see, because they cling to the lie of Sunday-worship!**

"...and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat...' (vs 13-15).

- What happens when we're converted?

- What is that changes this sentence right here? *We were once there, every one of us!*
- What is it that changes? *Baptism and the circumcision of the heart!*

When you have the circumcision of the heart, then you're mind is opened to understand!

"...and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed..." (v 15).

How many of them know about the Sabbath? I got a quote from Moody that he said that 'the Sabbath was made for all times and all places.' I'll bring that in a separate message. He was a noted Protestant, but they only go so far. Likewise with some in the Churches of God, they would only go so far! That's why never get caught up in personalities! Never be disappointed if people sin!

- Are you perfect?
- Do you still sin? *Of course!*

That's why we are to pray for one another! We are to love one another, because that's what God wants us to do.

"...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (v 15).

That's quite a statement! That shows that God is not trying to convert everyone in the world today. Because when the call goes out, those who answer the call and follow through are the ones who will be in the Kingdom of God.

Think about this and think about every time that we come across when someone passes away and awaits the resurrection. There's sorrow that they're gone, but there should be gratefulness and thanksgiving that they were faithful to the end. God will take care of them later.

Verse 16: "But **blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear**. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard" (vs 16-17).

Remember Daniel gave some of the most tremendous prophecies in the book of Daniel. In his old age he said, 'Lord, what is this going to be?' He was told, 'Daniel go your way, it's shut up and close until the time of the end. Many shall go to and fro.'

That's sure true! Everybody is going somewhere, coming from someplace! Think of that the next time you may have any doubts about the Word of God. Get on the freeway at heavy traffic time and make sure that you pass a rail station, an airport and a trucking depot and remember the

Scripture, ‘many shall be going to and fro.’ You will see it right there in front of your eyes.

Verse 18: “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart...” (vs 18-19).

So, he had a little bit of understanding. Didn’t last long. Don’t ask me what’s going to happen to these people. We don’t know! God is the One Who judges, and He’s the One Who is going to make the judgment on them.

“...This is the one who was sown by the way. Now, the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy; but *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended” (vs 19-21).

‘Well, I’m getting out of here if this is the way it’s going to be!’ We’re going to face those times.

Verse 22: “And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

We have this all today in the world. Look at the Church, the world, the wealth, everything that’s going on. These parables in Matt. 13 are right in front of us to see.

Verse 23: “But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands, **who indeed brings forth fruit and produces**... [that’s what we must be doing] ...one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold.”

How God applies that, we don’t know, we just have to wait and see. But the thing is that we have to be diligent, work hard, keep at it, and God will give us the strength. Let’s look at the end result of it.

It says of the wheat that ***He gathers them into His granary!*** (transcriber’s correction: Matt. 13:30—“...but gather the wheat into my granary”) What is the granary? *We have to go back to the book of Ecclesiastes where Solomon wrote ‘there’s a time to be born, and a time to die.’* It happens to everybody. The only One Who has escaped that, through the resurrection, is Jesus Christ. Where is the granary?

Solomon also wrote that when we die, the spirit [of man] returns to God. The spirit of itself does not have life, and does not have thought. Just like the recording of this message, the chip that it’s recorded on contains everything that we’re doing

here, everything that is said, every motion that is given. But you take the chip out and it’s on the chip but you don’t know what’s on the chip.

What if you had ten of these at home and you want to look up something in your computer and you have all of these chips and you wonder ‘which one did I put it on?’ that’s what the spirit of man is like. It goes back to God to the granary. Where is that?

Hebrews 12:22: “But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels. ***To the joyous festival gathering...***” (vs 22-23)—***the resurrection!***

I talked to a man the other day who just found out about the resurrection on Pentecost and the Sea of Glass. He says, ‘That makes more sense than anything I’ve ever heard in all the years in the Church.’

I said that overtaking the world is gigantic project! God is organized and we have to be organized. When we’re raised out of the grave—and think about all of those in times past—what are they going to think when they’re raised from the dead and they look down on the earth and see all these vehicles, planes, rockets, armies, guns and all of these things? *It’s going to be something!* That’s why we’re on the Sea of Glass. We all have to find out what’s going on.

“...and to ***the Church of the Firstborn...***” (v 23). *We will always be the Church of the Firstborn, because we will be in the first resurrection!*

“...***registered in the Book of Life in heaven...***” (v 23).

The Book of Life was there before the foundation of the world, but there weren’t any names written into it until there were righteous men and women to have their names written into it.

“...and to God, *the* Judge of all, and to *the* spirits of the just ***who have been perfected***” (v 23).

That’s what God is doing! Think about that every time someone passes from the scene and we’ve known for years. *They’re perfected!* It’s quiet interesting the way that that is written in the Greek. It is very beautifully done.

Verse 24: “And to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of* Abel.”

That’s where the granary is. Now then, how God is going to do the resurrection is still a mystery.

- How is He going to take the spirit?

- What is He going to do?
- How is that going to work out?

We know that something is going to happen on the earth, then we will be re-constituted as spirit beings with a full measure of knowledge and understanding to that point. Then the angels are going to take us up to the Sea of Glass. *That's going to be quite an event!* I think that the whole world is going to see it!

Think of the frenzy that they're going to get into, I think about what's going to happen then. Read Rev. 6, it says that 'when the heavens depart as a scroll and the sign of the Son of man appears, they will say *save us from the wrath of the Lamb!* It doesn't come right away so later they deceived into thinking that by the time of the resurrection comes along, that this is the work of the devil.

So, the whole world has got to gather together to fight the aliens that are going to invade the earth. That's what the book of Revelation is really about. That's going to be quite a battle, especially the seven last plagues. All the saints are there, and we will all see it!

Now, the letter that I just mailed out this week has to do with the funeral message for those who die in the faith. I'm going to cover part of this right now, because it's important for us to understand.

The best way to not get trapped into wrong emotions, the best way to not let emotions spring up where there may be a root of bitterness, *is to have the Truth! And to have the Spirit and love of God!*

Here we are! One thing for sure, God looks at death differently than we do.

Reading from the letter to the brethren of January 14, 2021

The Lord declares, Psalm 116:15: **"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints."**

What happens with us? *We shed tears! We're sorrowful!* God looks at it as *there's another faithful one who made it!*

Proverbs 15:32: **"...but the righteous, even when he is brought to death, has hope."**

Revelation 2:10: **"...Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life."**

Isaiah 57:1: "The righteous perish, and no one lays *it* to heart, and merciful men *are* taken away; none considering that **the righteous are taken away from the evil**

to come. He shall enter into peace; they shall rest..." (vs 1-2). *We will see that!*

Here's the difficulty, because we have love, emotion and all of these things, and connections that they really never come into play until someone dies. Just like when I found out about Carl dying, I was two days melancholy. Why? *Because we were close, did things together!* Same way when Dolores died. It's taken me quite a while to overcome that. Same way with everyone who has lost a husband or wife.

Pray for them, that they can adjust and come back to God with the right understanding. So, we have that grief, but what that does is bring us to the reality that this human life is temporary. Isn't that amazing? How that when we're alive, we really don't think of death. When we're really young and full of 'vim and vigor' we have no idea about what is called death. We're young and strong, and we're here and doing all of these things.

What it does is bring us to the helplessness of human beings, that when death comes it's final! ***We all die in Adam, but we all live in Christ!***

When the Apostle John was given the vision in Rev. 1, right toward the end here's what Jesus said to John:

Revelation 1:17: "...Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the One Who is living; **for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity.** Amen. And **I...** [Jesus Christ] **...have the keys of the grave and of death"** (vs 17-18).

That's why our hope is in Him! It also shows us that death is an enemy.

continuing from letter: During this age , only a few have been called of God to receive the gift of eternal life at the first. Resurrection—because they have repented, love God, obey His Word, and keep His commandments. These are the ones who are the **"called, chosen and faithful..."**

He's called the weak of the world, the poor of the world, not many wise, not many mighty; once in a while someone. Look at some of the men who came into the Church who had 'credentials' three feet long.

- Where are they today?
- What happened to them?

So, we're the ones who love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being.

- What did Jesus say? *He had the keys of the grave and death!*
- What was one thing He told the disciples on that last Passover? *He wanted them to*

know that 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father except through Me!'

That's quite a thing for us to understand!

1-Cor. 15 is the resurrection chapter. Imagine that even in this epistle that Paul had to rebuke some of the Corinthians because they didn't believe in the resurrection. Think about that right in the Church. Would you say that that might be a possible tare? *Could be!*

1-Corinthians 15:12: "But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?"

Think about this for a minute. Look at all the Protestants and Catholics, they believe that their souls go to heaven.

- Have you ever heard a Protestant preach someone into hell to burn forever?
- Have you ever heard a Catholic priest say, 'We're here gathered together and bury this man because his soul is burning in hell right now'?

They didn't even say that of the Mafia that they buried!

Verse 13: "For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain. And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised. For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised" (vs 13-16).

There are some people who believe that He never died. That's called *The Brotherhood of the Blood!* You can watch that on the American History Channel every once in a while. They're the most dangerous, horrible, cruel people executing the martyrdom of the saints during the time of the Waldensians. Killing them and pulling them apart limb from limb, ripping breasts off of women making blood flow. They are so evil and hateful that they can't reveal who they are.

When they have their ceremonies and have them today blessed by the pope and the Catholic Church, they have their faces covered and arms covered. They walk along in a cadence; *The Brotherhood of the Blood!*

Here's the point; v 17: "But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable" (vs 17-

19).

Wouldn't that be so? If you were called and those who weren't called would never have a chance, you would say, 'God, I'm glad you called me, but You're not fair. What about my family? My relatives? What about all of these millions of people in the world? *Billions today! They'll be in the second resurrection!*

Verse 20: "But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die... [no one escapes that] ...**so also in Christ shall all be made alive**" (vs 20-22).

We know that's divided down into the first resurrection and the second resurrection, part one and part two.

Verse 23: "But each in his own order: Christ *the* Firstfruit; then those who are Christ's at His coming."

That's quite a thing; that's what we look forward to! So, when we see these things come along and close ones to us die, yes, we will have grief for a while, but remember that they have made it! ***Now it's up to us***, if we want to see them again, ***to make it!***

Verse 24: "Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. ***The last enemy to be destroyed is death***" (vs 24-26).

In the first part of Philip. 3 Paul tells us to ***forget the things that are behind.*** Learn the lesson, have a good memory. Forget the things that are behind and press forward to the goal of the resurrection.

Philippians 3:13: "Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—***forgetting the things that are behind...***"

He had to forget about all the people that he had persecuted and martyred. But he still had guilt complex over all of that all of his life, which he used to work harder than any of the other apostles.

"...and reaching forth to the things that are ahead, ***I press toward the goal for the prize*** of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (vs 13-14).

We can't become perfected as perfect like we will be as spirit beings, but we can be perfected in attitude, in service and in love through the things that we experience.

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind....[pressing forward, always going ahead] ...And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you....[so you can repent] ... Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind” (vs 15-16).

Verse 20: “But for us, the commonwealth of *God* exists in *the* heavens... [He’s going to bring it to the earth] ...from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ, **Who will transform our vile bodies...**” (vs 20-21). *They are! When you die this flesh corrupts instantly!*

“...that they may be conformed to His glorious body... [John wrote that *we will see Him as He is*] ...according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (v 21). *That’s quite a thing!*

This was the last revelation from Christ to all the apostles and prophets that we would be as God is! That’s quite a thing to look forward to; that’s something!

Ephesians 3:14: “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named... [tie in Rev. 21-22] ...that He may grant you... [this comes from God for each one of us] ...according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man” (vs 14-16).

Let there be grief for a little while, but look forward to beyond that. Understand that all of those who die in the faith, ***God looks upon that a perfect completed work!***

Verse 17: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love...” (vs 17-18).

That’s what it has to be! No vanity of self-exaltation. No serving the things of the flesh. But serving the things of the Spirit!

“...you may be fully able to comprehend...” (v 18). *God wants us to know, to fully comprehend, and that takes time to do so!*

“...with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height” (v 18).

How great is God’s plan going to be?

Verse 19: “And ***to know the love of Christ...***—*first hand, person to person!*

What is that going to be like? With the Father? With all the saints?

“...**which surpasses human knowledge...**” (v 19). *We have to enter into the Kingdom of God to*

have that fulfilled for us!

“...**so that you may be filled...** [this is the goal, the end] ...**with all the fullness of God**” (v 19).

Think of that! So, as you get old and weak and gray, you get up in the morning and look in the mirror, remember, it isn’t going to be that way all the time. ***He wants us to be filled with the fullness of God!***

Verse 20: “Now, to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly... [way beyond anything we can think about] ...above all that we ask or think... [can’t be anything greater than that] ...according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations... [from the time of Christ down to the resurrection and beyond that] ...*even* into the ages of eternity. Amen.” (vs 20-21).

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 8:1-4
- 2) John 3:16
- 3) Psalm 8:5-6
- 4) Psalm 15:1-3
- 5) Psalm 37:28-31
- 6) Isaiah 57:1-2
- 7) Psalm 71:14-19
- 8) Matthew 13:11-23, 30
- 9) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 10) Psalm 116:15
- 11) Proverbs 15:32
- 12) Revelation 2:10
- 13) Isaiah 57:1-2
- 14) Revelation 1:17-18
- 15) 1 Corinthians 15:12-26
- 16) Philippians 3:13-16, 20-21
- 17) Ephesians 3:14-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 17
- Revelation 6; 21-22

Also referenced: Book:

The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

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