

How to Keep Faith in a Wicked World

Fred R. Coulter—June 18, 2016

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. We're just about ready to enter the summer time where the summer blahs come. Have you ever had the blahs? I wrote down the blahs:

- trouble
- weakness
- outrage
- sin

Maybe you feel like in your life you hit a brick wall. Sometimes you feel that way, too.

How do we cope with those things? *We cope with hope!* Jeremiah had a 40-year ministry and he also wrote the book of Lamentations. Today we will connect some of the book of Lamentations with the book of Jeremiah. God told Jeremiah, after he complained, saying, 'I'm just a youth.'

Jeremiah 1:7: "But the LORD said to me, 'Do not say, "I am a youth," for you shall go to all that I shall send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces; **for I am with you to deliver you,**' said the LORD" (vs 7-8). Quite a key statement! God is always with us to deliver us because He's dwelling in us.

Verse 9: "And the LORD put forth His hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, 'Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant'" (vs 9-10).

Verse 16: "And **I will pronounce My judgments against them regarding all their wickedness in that they have forsaken Me**, and burning incense to other gods, and worshiping the works of their own hands. You, therefore, must gird up your loins, and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not be dismayed at their faces, lest I confound you before them. For, behold, I have made you a fortified city this day, and an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against its rulers, against its priests, and against the people of the land" (vs 16-18).

You talk about a lonely job, one that was froth with great difficulty; Jeremiah certainly was.

Verse 19: "'And they shall fight against you; but they shall not overcome you. **For I am with you,**' says the LORD, 'to deliver you.'" These are the promises of God that Jeremiah had. We also have promises ourselves. Now we'll go forward 40 years:

- The children of Israel have been carried off into captivity
- Judah has been burned to the ground
- The temple is destroyed
- Jeremiah is wandering around the city
- Jeremiah writes the book of Lamentations

Here Jeremiah is recalling a lot of things that he experienced. All of us have experienced different things at different times, not on the scale that he did. He must have been about 16-18-years-old when he started, so here he is 40 years later.

Lamentations 3:1: "I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of His wrath. He has led me and made *me* go in darkness and not into light. Surely He turned, He has turned His hand against me again and again all day long" (vs 1-3).

You go back and all the things that he had to go through, especially when he was thrown into the sewer.

Verse 4: "He has wasted my flesh and my skin; He has broken my bones. He besieged me and has encircled *me* with bitterness and tribulation" (vs 4-5).

I want you to think about the things that you have gone through when we read this. This is a perfect example that it doesn't matter how bad things get all around us. Or even if they afflict us, God is still with us.

We are told we're entering the time of sorrows and are going to have things be worse than any time since the beginning of creation. We've got to be mentally strong—like God told Jeremiah, and to understand what he went through—to help strengthen us.

Verse 6: "He has made me live in dark places, like those who have long been dead.... [he probably had to hide himself time and time again] ...has set a fence around me so that I cannot go out..." (vs 6-7).

There was one time he said to this effect—'I'll just paraphrase it—'I have had it! I don't want anymore!' Then he said, 'But the Word of God in me is like fire in my bones.' So, he had to speak.

We need to think upon those because all of these are examples for us. I'm sure right now, the way things look, and Dolores has been telling me from day one: Hillary is going to win; it looks like she's going to win. If she wins, it's going to be just like Jeremiah.

Verse 8: “Also when I cry and shout, He shuts out my prayer.... [he didn’t even think that God was listening to him] ...He has blocked my ways with cut stone; He made my paths crooked. He *was* as a bear lying in wait for me, as a lion in secret places.... [these are pretty strong words] ... He has turned my ways aside and torn me to pieces. He made me desolate. He has bent His bow and set me as a mark for the arrow. He has caused the arrows of His quiver to enter into my inward parts. I was a mockery to all my people, their song all the day. He has filled me with bitterness and made me drunk with wormwood. He has also broken my teeth with gravel stones; He has made me to wallow in ashes. And my soul is removed far off from peace; I have forgotten happiness” (vs 15-17).

What a sad state of affairs—a servant of God directly.

Verse 18: “And I said, ‘My strength and my hope from the LORD *are* perished.’ Remember my affliction and my anguish, the wormwood and bitterness of gall. My soul vividly remembers and is bowed down within me. **I recall this to my mind; therefore, I have hope** (vs 18-21).

Notice when he it gets right down to where all is lost, ***there’s the hope of God!*** Remember how I started out the *Love Series: Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You.*

After all that complaining, v 22: “***It is by the LORD’S mercies*** that we are not destroyed, because His compassions never fail. *They are* new every morning; great *is* Your faithfulness. ‘The LORD *is* my portion,’ says my soul; ‘therefore, ***I will hope in Him.***’ The LORD *is* good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. ***It is good that one should hope*** and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. *It is* good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth” (vs 25-27).

So he said, ‘After it’s all said and done, all the things I’ve gone through, all the lessons I have experienced, ***the hope is with God.***’ Quite an interesting thing.

If you read through all the book of Lamentations, that’s one of those books you can’t just sit down and read through. It is all very heavy, like this in chapter three. Nevertheless, it’s there and it’s there for a purpose.

We see this on a little different scale with David. He had a lot of things come upon him because of the way that he did not serve God. Half his life was fantastic; the other half was nothing but trouble.

Here’s the attitude we need, Psalm 31:1: “In You, O LORD, have I taken refuge, let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Your righteousness....

[showing total reliance upon God in everything] ...Bow down Your ear to me; deliver me quickly; be my strong Rock, a fortress of defense to save me” (vs 1-2). If you’re going through troubles, if you have difficulties...

Just recently there was a minister in one of the Churches of God who committed suicide. I knew him and his wife. Went to school with them. I don’t know what the circumstances were that happened, but ***you can never let yourself get to the point that you give up on God!*** That’s why these things are here in the Bible so that we can have hope in God.

Verse 3: “For You...” David was not relying on himself, he’s not relying on what he could do, though to enact the hope in his life, he had to get up and have full participation afterwards.

“...are my Rock and my fortress; therefore for Your name’s sake lead me and guide me. Pull me up out of the net that they have hidden for me, for You are my strength” (vs 3-4). That’s where we get the strength.

Then here’s a prophecy of Christ. Think about what Jesus went through. I’m going to follow this up with a couple of sermons on *Who Was Jesus Christ Before He was a Man*, because it never, never, never ends that there are those who do not believe that He was God before He became a human being. I don’t know how they can read statements like: ‘I’m from above, you’re from beneath’ and ‘what if you see Me go back from where I came.’

Verse 5: “Into Your hand I commit My spirit; You have redeemed Me, O LORD God of Truth.’ I have hated those who take heed to lying vanities, but I trust in the LORD. I will be glad and rejoice in Your loving kindness, for You have looked upon my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul and have not given me over into the hand of the enemy; You have set my feet in a broad place” (vs 5-8).

Notice the very things that we need to go to God and praise Him for:

- His love
- His strength
- His graciousness
- His goodness
- His mercy

All of these things come into play when difficulties of great magnitude come along.

I thought about this the other day coming back from the store. I went to the store, and I was on my way home and I drive through the neighborhood. I think, what’s going to happen, look at all of these people, these houses. I remembered in Isaiah it says, ‘Woe to you who put house to house and land to

land.’ I was thinking, do any of them know anything about producing food to eat? I wonder if any of them have even more than just a few days of food?

Then I remembered that Dolores told me about the report on television that if difficult times come most people don’t even have a spare \$1,000. What are they going to do when they cut off all the digital money?

I was thinking: What’s going to happen? How will these people behave? I get home, run upstairs, take care of the stuff we need to take care of, have our dinner, and go on. Just think what it’s going to be like in some of these cities where they are stacked, three, four, five, six, eight, ten, twelve stories high. How is it going to be? I just shake my head and say, ‘O God.’

That’s why we need here like v 9: “Be gracious unto me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eye is consumed with grief, yea, *even* my soul and my body; for my life is spent with grief and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones have wasted away. Because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach...” (vs 9-11).

Even his own son, Absalom was trying to take over the throne from him. Then right on his deathbed, another one of his sons tried to proclaim himself king before David took his last breath.

“...but especially among my neighbors, and a dread to my friends; those from outside who saw me fled from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind; I am like a broken vessel, for I have heard the *whispering* slander of many; terror is on every side; they plotted together against me, they planned to take away my life. But I trusted in You, O LORD; I said, ‘You are my God.’ My times are in Your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Make Your face shine upon Your servant; save me in Your loving kindness” (vs 11-16).

Verse 23: “O love the LORD, all you His saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud doer. **Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the LORD**” (vs 23-24).

That’s quite a thing, even in spite of what’s going to come, or what has happened. In Psa. 146 we find that a close relationship with God is the very important thing when troubles and difficulties come.

Psalms 146:1: “O praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live I will praise the LORD ... [this changes our thought process and this changes our attitude; this brings us close to God] ... I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being” (vs 1-2).

Remember what happened when the Apostle Paul and those with him were thrown into the stocks and in the jail? What did they do? They were singing hymns that night at midnight. There was a great earthquake and knocked the stocks off. So great was the earthquake that the jailer got up, took his lantern and went out there. He was very trepidatious and was afraid that everybody had escaped. Paul said, ‘We’re all here.’ He came up to Paul and said, ‘What do I have to do, to be saved?’ You talk about turning the tide completely.

An important verse for today, especially with the elections coming up; Verse 3: “**Do not put your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no salvation**. His breath goes forth; he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose **hope is in the LORD his God**, Who made the heavens and earth, the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps Truth forever...” (vs 3-6).

What’s that one promise that we have in Heb. 13? ‘*I will not ever leave you or forsake you; no, I will never you.*’

I don’t know the circumstances, but if anyone gets close to the point of despair, like this poor minister who took his life, ***you need to trust in God regardless of what happens or the circumstances*** what they may be.

The other day I was watching NatGeo. I spend a lot of time there, but I have to tell you, I was watching about WWI and all the killing. Then they had the deadliest animals, and they were killing each other. Then I turn on the television and here’s this two-year-old boy that’s taken off and drowned by the alligator. So, I turn on the news and here’s the shooting. I said, ‘It’s everywhere!’ I just turned it off!

Then later I came back to NatGeo and they were showing the wonders of the ocean, absolutely fantastic. Here we are standing on the seashore, you’ve done that, we’ve done that out here in Monterey Bay, and you look out there, and you don’t have a clue as to what’s going on under the water.

What a tremendous creation of God with all of the creatures, large and small. So that gave me great relief. Kind of like here:

Verse 6: “God Who made the heavens and earth, the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever.” Even then, when these things come upon you, figure out a way to handle it.

Verse 7: “Who carries out justice for the oppressed...” *He will!* What is the greatest justice? *The second resurrection!* (Ezek. 37), and you think, this is fantastic, but it said there of Israel, they said,

'Our hope is lost,' when *the second resurrection is the beginning of their hope!* Quite a tremendous thing! We need to think beyond the immediate disaster and beyond the immediate difficulties we are in.

You'll get in a situation where the only thing you can do is say, 'God, help me. Here I am, what do I do?' He'll help you.

Verse 8: "The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD raises up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous; the LORD preserves the strangers; He sustains the fatherless and widow, but the way of the wicked He turns upside down. The LORD shall reign forever..." (vs 8-10). *Tremendous!*

Psalms 147:11: "The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, who hope in His steadfast love. Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion" (vs 11-12). This is how we need to approach that.

Remember what Jesus said, 'You're all going to suffer persecution' (Matt. 10). Didn't He say that? *Yes, He did!* He said, '**Don't fear him who can kill your body, but they can't take away your life.**' What do we find in Rev. 5? *Beheading of the saints!* Isn't it interesting that beheading is in vogue again today?

Let's see how we can have hope in God, in spite of the circumstances, in spite of the difficulties. Psa. 119 is all broken down into eight verses, each section and by the alphabet of the Hebrew language.

Psalms 119:41: "Let Your mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even according to Your salvation, according to Your Word."

Let me just pass onto you a couple of words that you always need to remember:

1. God, You have promised
2. God, You cannot lie

We can claim those promises. Rather than saying, 'God, what are You doing?' *He knows!* So, keep that in mind, just like He did here.

Verse 42: "That I may have an answer for the one who reproaches me, for I trust in Your Word. And take not the Word of Truth utterly out of my mouth, for **I have hoped in Your judgments**.... [see how everything circles around *hope*] ...So shall I keep Your Law continually forever and ever" (vs 42-44).

Verse 49: "Remember the Word to Your servant upon which **You have caused me to hope**. This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your Word has given me life" (vs 49-50). Interesting, isn't it? *Yes, indeed.*

Verse 73: "Your hands have made me and formed me..." If you're really low and discouraged, get out the book you just received, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* and read what God has in store.

Look at it this way: This physical life you can liken it to a plant, liken to a flower, and so forth. Of course, there are a lot of us in the Church who are old. Just this past month we've had two who have been on the list who died. There will be more. As I've said before, every Christian who has ever been, who is not alive right now, died in the faith. So, we need to keep that in mind. There's nothing different that happens to us, that hasn't happened to other people. He made us.

"...give me understanding so that I may learn Your commandments. Those who fear You will be glad when they see me because **I have hoped in Your Word**" (vs 73-74). *God has promised!* 'Lord, You have promised.' If nothing else, if it's right at a situation that maybe this is it, you never know, then you just say, 'Lord, I'm in your hands.'

Verse 81: "My soul faints for Your salvation; **I hope in Your Word.**"

- that's why we study
- that's why we pray
- that's why we understand the Word of God

Verse 82: "My eyes fail for Your Word, saying, 'When will You comfort me?' [he was in difficulty] ...For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, yet, I do not forget Your statutes. How many are the days of Your servant? When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me? The proud have dug pits for me, men who do not act according to Your Law. All Your commandments are faithful..." (vs 82-86).

In every circumstance: mind back on God, mind back on the commandments of God. Just like with Sabbath services. Today it's almost a struggle to get from one Sabbath to the next Sabbath and get away from all the things going on. But that's why we have the Sabbath that we can come and be:

- instructed from the Word of God
- encouraged with the Word of God
- lifted up with the Word of God
- lifted up with the Spirit of God
- lifted up with each other all together

Verse 89: "Forever, O LORD, Your Word is settled in the heavens.... [no one is going to argue against God] ...Your faithfulness is to all generations... [not yet been delivered, but it is] ...You have established the earth, and it stands. They continue to this day according to Your

ordinances, for all are Your servants. Unless Your Law had been my delight, then I should have perished in my affliction” (vs 89-92).

See how that works? *Yes, indeed!* So, we don’t get all consumed with the things that are going on, and so forth.

Verse 113: “I hate those who are double-minded, but Your Law do I love.” If there’s any one thing about God, God is single-minded in His purpose and plan and everything. But those who are double-minded change their minds.

Speaking of the coming convention, they’re trying to unseat Trump as the one who received the nomination. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, says, ‘I wouldn’t tell them to not vote their conscience.’ That sounds like a wonderful statement, but it’s lawless because the rule is that the delegate is bound to vote for the one that he is representing. Double-minded. Makes you wonder about a lot of the other politicians starting right at the top office.

Verse 114: “You are my hiding place and my shield; **I hope in Your Word.**” That’s why we need the laws and commandments written in our hearts and in our minds. In trouble

- we can call upon God
- we can call upon His Word
- we can call upon His promises

and God is there!

So, we can say, v 115: “Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according to Your Word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold me up, and I shall be safe; and I will always have respect unto Your statutes” (vs 115-117).

(go to the next track)

In reading and studying a lot of these Psalms, you have to figure David was really in a lot of trouble, a lot of difficulties, almost daily. That is all recorded for us.

How do we handle it when there are difficulties? What do we do? This is a good Psalm:

Psalm 77:1: “I cried to God with my voice... [**you pray**] ...to God with my voice... [there are other places where **you sing**] ...and He gave ear to me.... [God listens] ...In the day of my trouble I sought the LORD...” (vs 1-2).

That’s how to avoid difficulties that come along. What do I mean? That is to avoid getting yourself into more trouble, when troubles come along because you don’t follow what God wants you to do.

“...my hand was lifted up, and my tears ceased not in the night... [he was praying with his hands in the air] ...my soul refused to be comforted” (v 2). I don’t know if he got up and paced up and down, whatever.

Verse 3: “I remembered God and was troubled; I moaned, and my spirit fainted... [God, why is all of this happening?] ...Selah.” Wherever you find that word, that means stop and think on it.

Verse 4: “You keep my eyes awake; I am too troubled and I cannot speak. I have pondered the days of old, the years of ages past. I remember my song in the night; I commune with my own heart, and my spirit made diligent search” (vs 4-6).

We all do that; we talk with ourselves all the time, and we answer ourselves all the time, too. Sometimes yea, sometimes nay, sometimes good, sometimes bad. So this is what he was going through. Isn’t this amazing? Think about what people in the world, how can they handle some of the problems they’re going through when:

- they don’t know God
- they don’t have the Word of God
- they don’t understand the promises of God

Difficult! Some are almost too hard to handle. That’s why you need God.

Verse 7: “Will the LORD cast off forever? And will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy gone forever?...” (vs 7-8). David has another Psalm, ‘His mercy never fails,’ 26 verses—every half part of the verse—‘*And His mercy never fails.*’ See what he was going through.

“...Has His promise failed for all generations? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger shut up His tender mercies? Selah” (vs 8-9). I tell you with the times coming on the world, there are going to be a lot of people thinking that.

Verse 10: “And I said, ‘This is my grief, that the right hand of the Most High could change.’ I will remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your doings” (vs 10-12).

- What’s the key here? *Get your mind off yourself!*
- Can you without God save yourself? *No!* Get your mind off yourself and on God.

Verse 13: “Your way, O God, is in Holiness; who is so great a God as our God? You are the God Who does wonders; You have declared Your strength among the people. You have with Your arm redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and

Joseph. Selah” (vs 13-15). Remember the great works of God.

Then he talks about them walking through the Red Sea. I understand that the latest edition of the Exodus has a pretty good version of going through the Red Sea. Only problem is they always have to have them going through the mud puddles.

Verse 16: “The waters saw You, O God, the waters saw You; they were afraid; the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound; Your arrows also flew here and there.... [that’s lightning] ...The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind... [there’s going to be some whirlwinds coming along] ...the lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook” (vs 16-18).

If that’s not the end-time, I don’t know. I tell you what, next time you watch anything about mountains, the tallest mountains on earth have strata from below the sea. So you figure that out. How did that happen? Every time they talk about ‘evolution created.’ How could evolution create anything? *It can’t!*

Verse 19: “Your way is in the sea, and Your path in the great waters, and Your footsteps are not known. You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron” (vs 19-20).

Psa. 37 is a great Psalm. This tells us more on:

- how to handle difficulties
- how to have hope
- how to look to God
- how not to trust in ourselves

Psalm 37:1: “Do not ¹fret yourself... [don’t get frustrated, you probably will, but get over it] ... because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb. **Trust in the LORD**, and do good... [whatever He says to do, do] ...dwell in the land and cherish faithfulness. **Delight yourself in the LORD**, and He shall give you the desires of your heart” (vs 1-4).

Not immediately, but in His way and in His time. Also, a lot of that is going to come at the resurrection. Have you heard of the true riches? If you get discouraged, go back and read about New Jerusalem. Look at it this way: You are reading the description of where you are going to live. Think about what you have around you now. How does that compare with everything made out of jewels? streets paved with gold? ‘Desires of your heart.’

Verse 5: “Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him... [whatever it is you do, however you do it, you commit yourself to Him]

...and He will bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD... [another way of putting it is to wait on the Lord] ...and wait patiently for Him; do not ²fret yourself... [it’s easy to get frustrated] ...because of him who prospers in his way, because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger...” (vs 5-8). That means you got angry.

What does it say back there in Eph. 4? ‘Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath.’ Remember, whenever the sun goes down, stop being angry. If you haven’t yet, go pray to God so you can get it out of your system before you go to bed so you don’t lie there in bed and toss and turn.

“...and forsake wrath; do not ³fret yourself... [because you see what happens?] ...it only leads to evil, for evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the LORD, ¹**they shall inherit the earth**” (vs 8-9).

Think about what God is going to give us. Think about the greatness of the first resurrection. There will never be a repeat of that. God has called us to get in on the ground floor of the first resurrection.

Verse 10: “It is but a little while, and the wicked shall be no more; yea, you shall diligently consider his place, *but* he shall not be *there*... [ultimately they are all going to be ashes] ...But the meek ²**shall inherit the earth** and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (vs 10-11).

Living in this world, the way it is with the ‘law of sin and death’ within us, and overcoming and all of this, the way that the society is, and so forth, stop and see if you can contemplate what will it be like:

- to have complete peace
- to have a nature that is not sinful
- to inherit the earth
- to have all the blessings of God
- to be the very children of God the Father
- to be brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ

If you can contemplate on that, then look at the troubles that are surrounding you, and they will be less important.

God says, though the wicked, though they plot, He’s going to laugh at them. Verse 22: “For those blessed of Him ³**shall inherit the earth**... [the whole thing here concentrates on *inheriting the earth*] ...and those cursed of Him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are made firm by the LORD, and He delights in his way” (vs 22-23). Ever thought about it?

- If we do the things that please God, does He delight in us? *Yes, indeed!*
- How about for those who have children?
- Are you happy when your children do good things? *Yes, indeed!*
- Are you unhappy when they don't do good things? *Yes!*

Think about it! **If** we do the things that please God, He delights in us. That will help wipe away any worry, any doubt, any fear that comes along.

Verse 24: "Though he fall... [sometimes that happens more than once a day] ...he shall not be utterly cast down, for the LORD upholds him with His hand.... [spiritually speaking] ...I have been young, and now I am old... [I can say that's true of me] ...yet, I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging bread. All the day long he deals graciously and lends, and his children are blessed. Depart from evil... [that's one of the things that we learn because of what we go through] ...and do good; and live forevermore" (vs 24-27).

That's a simple verse. Makes you wonder why the Protestants haven't figured it out. They've got to insist on their Sunday.

Verse 28: "For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous ^[#4]**shall inherit the earth...**" (vs 28-29). What are we going to inherit? *The earth, the new heavens and the new earth!*

"...and dwell in it forever" (v 29). If that is not a description of New Jerusalem, I don't know what it is.

Verse 30: "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 30-31).

That's why it says there that the covenant that we have, we don't have the laws of God just up there on the wall, we have them written in our heart and mind; the most important place.

I had someone write me and ask me, because there are some people who get involved with Messianic Jews. You need to learn a lesson: Messianic Jews are still Jews and they have their traditions. They said, 'You have to write in and buy this expensive Ten Commandment plaque to put on your doorpost.' I've only met one Jew who is not involved in Jewish traditions, and that is Michael Heiss. He's the one who did the Old Testament for us. Most of these Messianic Jews are:

- part Judaism
- part New Testament
- part Jesus Christ

One of the famous ones, Jonathan Cahn. They always get into sacred names. I dare anyone to find anything other than the Lord Jesus Christ and our Father; those are the sacred names from the New Testament.

We've got a series of *The Names of God*, but those pertain to the Old Testament. We need to recognize and understand those names, but we don't need to pronounce those names. It's not the pronunciation of what you say and what you do, and the truth is this: The Jews do not even understand the pronunciation of YHVH. If it's in English, they spell God: G-d. How are you going to call on God if you don't call on Him *as God*? So, you don't need sacred names.

You don't need to put the plaques on the wall. If it's not here in your heart and mind, what good will it do on the doorpost of your house? Was it not on the doorposts of the houses of the Jews in Germany when Kristallnacht (Crystal Night) took place? There were some Jews who were smart. As soon as trouble started, they got out of there. They lived.

Verse 27: "Depart from evil and do good; and live forevermore. For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His saints..." (vs 27-28). Remember, God will never, *never, never ever* leave you. You might feel alone, but He hasn't left you. You might have a very difficult trial that you have to look to God to trust and to overcome, and you feel that you're alone, but God has never left you.

"...they are preserved forever, but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off" (v 28).

Verse 31: "The Law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. The wicked watches the righteous and seeks to kill him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the LORD and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to ^[#5]**inherit the earth...** [what a Psalm this is on what the reward is] ...when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it." (vs 31-34).

Let's come here to the New Testament and look at some things. We're always to have this hope in front of us and always trusting in the hope.

1-Thessalonians 5:4: "But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day of the Lord should overtake you as a thief. For you are all children of the light and children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of the darkness. So then, we should not sleep, as others do..." (vs 4-6). Don't get caught in the blahs; don't get caught in the difficulties and consumed by them.

"...but **we should watch, and we should be sober**. For those who are sleeping sleep in the night,

and those who are drunken get drunk in *the* night. But we who are of *the* day should be sober, having put on *the* breastplate of faith and love, and **for a helmet *the* hope of salvation**, because God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 6-9). That’s quite a thing. That’s what we need to do and follow and understand.

So important, v 10: “Who died for us, so that whether we *remain* alive until *He* comes or we *fall* asleep before *that* day, together we may live forever with Him.... [those are the promises we need to keep in front of us] ...Therefore, encourage one another, and edify one another, even as you are already doing” (vs 10-11).

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, **having been justified by faith...**” *Put in right standing with God!* Think about that! You don’t have to worry about how you stand with God. You are in right standing with God. He’s working with us, with His Holy Spirit:

- so we overcome the sin within
- so we overcome the world around us
- so we put in the righteousness of God and the Truth of God
- so we grow and overcome

“...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand... [How do you stand before God? *By grace, in grace, with love, and Truth!*] ...and we ourselves **boast in *the* hope of the glory of God**” (vs 1-2).

This brings us to a point of mind that is very difficult for us to grasp, which is: How can you have joy in tribulation? *You can only have that by having peace of mind with God’s Spirit!* Trials are not joyful, but look at it this way: Go back and examine all the trials and difficulties that you went through, especially for those who have been in the Church for years. When you first understood the magnitude of the problems within the Church, within the leadership, and within the local Church you were in, think of all of those things.

- Has God brought you through them all? *Yes, He has!*
- Has it worked for good? *Yes, indeed!*
- Do you love God more? *Yes!*
- Do you understand more? *Yes!*

That’s how God deals with us. How many other people have learned what you have learned as well? *Many others!* What did it also do? *It also got rid of all of the pretenders!* All of those who were there because they saw, ‘This is a wonderful place, a wonderful college,’ all of this sort of thing and they came because of that. Rather than coming because

the Word of God was being preached. Think of that, realizing that **tribulation brings for endurance**. Did we have to endure? How long did we have to endure? *Some cases a long, long time!*

Verse 3: “And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and **endurance brings forth character...**” (vs 3-4). What is the thing that it brought forth in you? *The character that you will be faithful!* Can there be anything more than that? *Yes! The love of God, the Truth of God!* Everything about it brings forth the character.

“...and **character brings forth hope**” (v 4). This is why, in spite of all the troubles, all the difficulties, and everything that are in the world, that have been in the Church, that have been in our lives personally, we can overcome every bit of it.

Verse 5: “And **the hope of God never makes us ashamed** because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.”

Those are quite some promises there! This is *the hope of the world: the people of God*, and the first resurrection, so that we can solve the problems in the world. Think about it, this world is going to be in terrible, terrible shape:

- all the wars
- all the earthquakes
- all of the killing
- all of the death
- all of the destruction

The very worst of everything! God is going to give us the blessing of being able to straighten it out.

- How does God view me? *He knows you!*
- Do you not have His Spirit in you?
- Doesn’t He know everything? *Yes, He does!*

Romans 8:9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...” **God is looking at you for what you will become!** Yes, we look at ourselves for what we are now—so that we can change, repent and grow—but is looking at us for what we will become. That’s why all of these troubles around, everywhere. This is how we keep our minds and our emotions and our perspective by understanding this.

“...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness” (vs 9-10). This is what God wants us to continue doing.

Verse 11: “Now, if the Spirit of **Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within**

you...—which it is. Don't we have that promise? *Yes!* Both dwelling *within* us (John 14). That is fantastic!

“...He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh” (vs 11-12). The things of the flesh are only so we can continue to live as long as God wants us to live, so we can grow and develop the character and love of God. That's it!

Verse 14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vs 14-15).

This is what is so important for us to really grab hold on living in the days we're living in now. We don't know what it's going to be in the future, but there are so many things...

Have you seen this where there's a big plateau and then a real steep cliff on both sides? The world is like this herd of buffalo running to the edge of that cliff. How soon will they get there? How soon will these things be? There are so many things that on the horizon, we've got to be fortified in strength and to hear, because they are going to come and they are going to be difficult.

Dolores and I were talking the other day. We're very thankful to live in this part of California. A little town; not very well known. We were driving on one of the back roads coming home from Costco and we were commenting that for the forty years we have lived here, this road and the scenery has not changed. I'm very thankful for that.

You likewise can be very thankful you're not living in New York City; you're not living in London; you're not living in Mexico City; you're not living in Tokyo. When these things hit, it's going to be absolutely mind-boggling. This is how we keep our perspective.

Verse 16: “The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that **the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us**” (vs 16-18).

Here is quite a thing that John has written, 1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us... [think about that] ...**that we should be called the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did

not know Him. Beloved, now **we are the children of God...**” (vs 1-2). Think on that. That will help you more than anything else.

“...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be... [think at the resurrection what that's going to be like] ... but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (v 2). Then will be the complete true reality.

Verse 3: “And **everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself**, even as He is pure.”

Don't worry about the troubles coming or that you are in. ***Ask God to help you get through them and to be faithful!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Jeremiah 1:7-10, 16-19
- 2) Lamentations 3:1-27
- 3) Psalm 31:1-16, 23-24
- 4) Psalm 146:1-10
- 5) Psalm 147:11-12
- 6) Psalm 119:41-44, 49-50, 73-74, 81-86, 89-92, 113-117
- 7) Psalm 77:1-20
- 8) Psalm 37:1-11, 22-31, 27-28, 31-34
- 9) 1-Thessalonians 5:4-11
- 10) Romans 5:1-5
- 11) Romans 8:9-12, 14-18
- 12) 1-John 3:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 13
- Ezekiel 37
- Matthew 10
- Revelation 5
- Ephesians 4
- John 14

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- Love Series (#1 Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You)
- Names of God

Book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* by Fred R. Coulter

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