

## “IF” Statement of the Bible VI “IF” Clauses in John #2

Fred Coulter—November 13, 2010

To give you a preview: in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>-Cor., there are 137 *IFs*. So there’s a lot having to do with conditions. What we will see is that none of these conditions are on God, because

- God is true
- God is righteous
- God cannot lie
- God is love

Therefore, His word is perfectly trustworthy. That’s why the Bible is His Truth. That’s why the Apostle Paul wrote that ‘all Scripture is God-breathed.’ And the Apostle Peter wrote that Holy men were moved of the Holy Spirit to write the Scriptures.

So when you have considered all of the writers of the Bible—God is the Author—there are only 40 men who wrote the Bible—New Testament only eight. And of those eight, 55% were by one man, the Apostle Paul.

John 8:31, this tells us an awful lot. Let’s relate these things to ourselves, as well as to whom it was directed by Jesus, to the Jews. “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him... [Now that’s an interesting statement—isn’t it? If you believe there is a God, that’s much different than believing *in* God or *believing* God. So you can take it:

1. you believe there is a God
2. you believe in God
3. you believe God

—and if you believe God you will do what He says. Let’s see what James wrote concerning belief:

- belief requires action
- faith requires action

Most of Christianity today believe in a faith that requires no action, no works. If that’s the case, then why did Jesus say He’s going to judge every man according to His work?—if there are no works to do! It’s talking about faith, and *faith* is a synonym of *belief*.

James 2:14: “My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him?” Well, it’s just like a combination of hydrogen and oxygen. If you have hydrogen isolated and oxygen isolated, you have two chemicals, which are very inflammable—correct? But God put them together and those two together in the right proportion—H<sub>2</sub>O, is water and guess what it does? *It puts out fire!* Isn’t

that amazing? So likewise with faith, it’s just like H<sub>2</sub>O, only this case we’ll call it F/W—*faith and works*; or B/W—*belief and works*.

Verse 15: “Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,’ and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it? In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself.... [What is the point of believing if you don’t have action?] ...But someone is going to say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ *My answer is:*... [this is the correct translation from the Greek] ...**You prove your faith to me through your works...**” (vs 15-18).

If you have faith without works, you’re absence of works is your work. So this is a ‘play on words.’ It’s like if you’re undecided, that’s your decision—you’re undecided. So if you have faith and you don’t have works, you cannot demonstrate your faith.

“...and I will prove my faith to you through my works. Do you believe that God is one? You do well to believe this. Even the demons believe—and tremble in fear. But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” (vs 18-20).

There are a lot of people who say they believe in Jesus. There are a lot of people who say that they are Christian, because they hold some Christian, what they call *values* or *principles*. But are they really disciples of Christ? Now that becomes another question. Let’s see what He said here:

John 8:31: “**IF**... [There’s the ‘if,’ big ‘if.’ In the one Harry Curley sent me they’re all capitalized and bolded.] ...**IF** you continue in My Word... [Isn’t that interesting. That means continue in the message of Christ.] ...you are truly My disciples.” Let’s take it the opposite way then. **IF** you do not continue in His word, you are not His disciples, regardless of profession.

Let’s look and see what the Apostle Paul said concerning that, 1-Timothy 6:3. Now this is what, some 31-years after Christ was resurrected. “**IF** anyone teaches any different doctrine... [That’s when they had all the Truth and everything that they should have, with the exception of the book of Revelation at this particular time. That’s why the

motto of Christian Biblical Church of God is *Restoring Original Christianity for Today*. How are we to take the original words of God and apply it today in our lives.] ...**IF** anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness, He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and are **destitute of the Truth**... [*if* you don't hold to the sound words of Jesus Christ] ...men who believe that gain is Godliness. From such withdraw *yourself*" (vs 3-5).

Let's see what we have here. I think we're going to find this really interesting. Now remember, these were the ones who believed in Jesus. John 8:31: "**IF** you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free" (vs 31-32). So here is a living principle in Truth.

- you must *believe*
- you must *obey*

—in order to know the Truth. If you don't believe and if you don't obey, you won't know the Truth, because you'll be *destitute of Truth*, as Paul said. They didn't like that, because here the Jews—this is at the temple when Jesus was teaching. Now Jews don't like to be told that, because they think that they sit at the top of the pinnacle of all humanity. But the truth is, unless you're really Christ's, doesn't matter what you think you are. Like Paul said, he is proud, vain, vain reasonings. Notice how they thought:

Verse 33: "They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, "You shall become free"?' " Well, today, you can't count your relative as the real means as to why you have the word of God. It's: Do you believe? What do you mean we'll be free? They didn't understand what Jesus was saying.

There were those who believed, but they didn't believe to repentance and they didn't believe to forsaking their ways. So here's what He says, v 34: "Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.'" They hadn't repented of their sins. This also tells us something else. Just put in your margin there Mark 7 about traditions. The traditions violated the laws of God and so therefore, they're practicing sin, but they think they're righteous. That's why Phil Neal wrote the book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?* They think they're righteous and

practicing God's way to this day, yet they reject the one Who brought the Truth and the spiritual standard for it. A real difficulty indeed!

"...Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.... [If you are a servant of sin, **who is your god? Satan the devil, the author of sin!**] ...And the servant does not live in the house forever, *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, **IF**... [So this is, how do you get rid of sin.] ...**IF** the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free" (vs 34-36). Set you free from what? *From sin!* How? *By repentance and forgiveness*—correct? So it is Christ Who has to set you free, because now the standard is not who you descended from—from Abraham that may be true—but it has no standing before God today, have no standing before Christ.

Notice what He says, v 37: "I know that you are Abraham's seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.... [This is getting into a deep heated debate here. Notice, there's God the Father, and then there's Satan, the false father.] ...They answered and said to Him, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them, '**IF** you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham'" (vs 37-39). So there's the **IF**.

Let's see something very interesting that Paul wrote concerning Abraham and how it connects to our baptism, Galatians 3:26 "Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.... [Internally, the mind of Christ; externally, the works of Christ.] ...There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for... [*Standing* before God for salvation. We're still men and women. We are still who we are, but who we are and who our ancestors were have no standing as far as making us righteous.] ...for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And **IF** you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (vs 26-29).

This is what He's trying to teach them back here in John 8. 'I know you're Abraham's children, for if you are Abraham's children you would do the works of Abraham.' Let's look at this again here, John 8:37: "I know that you are Abraham's seed.... [That is the physical descendants from Abraham.] (v 39): ...'**IF** you were Abraham's children... [If you've been baptized you've put on Christ and 'you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.'] ...you would do the **works** of Abraham.'" There's the thing again—*works*. Now what did Abraham do? *He believed God! He obeyed God!*

We're going to see how it was and what it was that Abraham did to obey God. Now, here—Gen. 26—God is ready to pass the blessing on to Isaac from Abraham and He gives him the reasons why He's doing it. Remember, the promises went to Abraham, physical and spiritual, and Isaac was the result of the promise of a physical son. The blessings went to Isaac because of birth, but what were the works of Abraham?

Genesis 26:3, God is telling Isaac: "Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.... [one man: Abraham] ...And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens... [The spiritual seed. Jesus said that at the resurrection the children of the kingdom 'shall shine as the sun.'] ...and will give to your seed all these lands.... [physical seed] ...And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.... [Why? Here are the works of Abraham that he did. I want you to pay special attention to the first category]: ...**Because Abraham obeyed My voice...** [Today we have the voice of God all right here recorded in the Bible. If you want to do a quick study on your computer, punch in 'obey My voice, obey the voice of the Lord, obey the voice of the Lord God,' and 'did not obey.' See what you come up with.] ...**obeyed My voice and kept My charge...**" (vs 3-5).

Now *charge* is not quite as strong as a commandment, but charge means that *you ask someone to do something and they do it*. What was the greatest thing that Abraham did that God asked him to do that you would say was a charge? *When he was asked to offer Isaac*—right? *Yes!* 'Kept My charge.'

"...obeyed My voice and kept **My charge**... [He did. He said, 'Go take your son, offer him for a burnt offering and I'll show you where to go.] ...**My commandments**... [Isn't that interesting? So if you're Abraham's seed, whose commandments are you going to keep? *The commandments of God!* Are the commandments of God any different today than back then? *No!*] ...**My statutes**... [The statutes of God are no different today than they were then.] ...and **My laws**" (v 5).

So when Jesus is talking to these disciples, John 8:39—let's see something that's really profoundly important here: "...**IF** you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham." Now let's ask a question concerning Isaac. Isaac was the only son by promise to Abraham. Yes, there was Ishmael, that's true. But what did Isaac do being the child of Abraham? *He did exactly like his father* and was blessed for doing so. So we have the parallel here.

"They answered and said to Him, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this'" (vs 39-40).

- What do you do with the Truth?
- How do you view the Truth?

A lot of people view the Truth as, 'Well, you're picking on me.' *No!* God's not picking on you. He's revealing something tremendous—**His Truth!** Now, put the shoe on the other foot and ask the question this way: Would you want people you deal with to pretend with you, to renege on business agreement, to cheat you in employment? And when you ask them for an explanation, lie to you, tell you something else? or Do you not want someone to tell you the truth? And actually

- *truth* is what makes friendship
- *truth* is what make people trust each other
- *the Truth*, as Jesus said, will set you free from sin

So we have it right here, spoken the Truth to you.

Now notice what He says, v 41 and here it is right here, this is really powerful. Now remember, He was talking to the Jews who believed Him, and they were all at the temple. What is one of the favorite things of Satan the devil that he loves to do? *Worm his way in and get those who are in charge, lead them astray a bit here, a bit there, and so forth.* He does so by flattery, he does so by vanity. He does so by offering a benefit which when people follow and fall for that line receive the benefit. They are deceived into thinking it's a blessing from God, but it's not.

How many people when they win the lottery say, 'Oh, thank you, God.' Which god? Who did the benefit come from? How many people were robbed of their money so you could win the lottery? And how many people did they rob to get excess funds to put in the treasury?.

Verse 41: "You are doing the works of your father..." Now the truth is, you have two choices:

- 1) to do the works of God and Jesus Christ in truth and deed and in love
- or
- 2) you do the works of Satan the devil that can be a counterfeit that on the surface looks really close to the real thing, but it's not, because he's a liar and cheater, deceiver and counterfeiter

Notice how they answered. This also becomes very important, v 41: “Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication.... [Was it well known about the virgin Mary? *Yes, indeed!* But that was not fornication. *That was by Divine will!*] ...We have one Father, *and that is God.*” Isn’t that interesting? How did they know the Father? If their father was Satan the devil, how did they know the Father? Well, the only one that they heard about the Father from was Jesus.

Now let’s come here to Matthew 11, and let’s see one of the missions of Jesus coming in the flesh. A lot of people think, ‘Well, God the Father was the Lord God of the Old Testament.’ The truth is, ***God the Father did not reveal Himself*** to Adam and Eve, to any of the patriarchs, to anyone in the Old Testament. Later we have a few prophecies which indicate that there is another One Who is called God. But ***Jesus came to reveal the Father.*** So anything that they heard of God, being a Father, they had to be listening to Jesus, because He was not revealed until that time.

Matthew 11:25: “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this.* All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except and Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*” (vs 25-27). Unless you believe Jesus, unless you obey the Truth, do you think that Jesus is going to reveal the Father to you? *No!* You would be serving Satan the devil, believing he is the father.

Now let’s go back to John 8:41 and let’s see that again: “You are doing the works of your father.’ [Satan the devil. Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication. We have one Father, *and that is God.*’ Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘***IF*** God were your Father... [Meaning, that God was not their father.] ...***IF*** God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me” (vs 41-42).

So those are pretty powerful words—aren’t they? Think of this, here is a whole group of those claiming to be disciples of Jesus, claiming to believe on Him, but let’s see where the truth of what they really were came to and let’s see how they responded then. Nowhere do we find that they repented. Nowhere do we find that they said, ‘Oh, yea, we’ve got all of these things that we shouldn’t have done. Yeah, you’re right. Satan the devil was our father.’ *No!*

Verse 43: “Why don’t you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words.” You can’t hear it. People respond that way concerning many things. You say the word ‘Sabbath’ and they just go absolutely in convulsion fits. ‘Oh, don’t you know that was done away?’ *You’ve got to keep the commandments of God.* ‘Oh, that old law!’ True, it is an old law, it’s eternal and it’s perfect. So what you need to do is ask them something. If you had something perfect, would you throw it away? *Oh, of course not!* ‘Well, then, why do you say that God did away with His law? If God did away with His law, you don’t exist and I don’t exist, so why should we continue this conversation?’

**“...You cannot bear to hear My words.”** Christmas is of the devil. *Oh, you scrooge.* What do Easter eggs have to do with the resurrection of Christ? *You’re just being against children. You don’t want them to have any fun.* **“...You cannot bear to hear My words.”** Or like someone said, ‘Well, I read the law of clean and unclean meats, but I sure do love those pork ribs barbecued. I think that’s just right, that’s okay for us.’ That’s what Satan does. He likes to take every abomination and make it taste delicious. So, I suppose barbecue sauce would do that.

He comes right out and says it in no uncertain terms, v 44: **“You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice....”** Over here He said, ‘If you practice the Truth, the Truth will set you free.’ So if you practice what the devil tells you to do—you’re what?

- all wrapped up in lust
- wrapped up in self
- wrapped up in Satan the devil and all of his ways
- you’re blinded

Like it says there in Rev. 17 that all nations have drunk of the wine of the fornication of her wrath and they can’t see straight. You don’t know right, you don’t know wrong.

“...He was a murderer from *the* beginning... [Which means Satan inspired the murder of Cain.] ...and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him....” (v 44). That’s an interesting statement—*isn’t it?* Can Satan take partial truth and pervert it? If he does, which he does very often, that’s no longer Truth, because it’s isolated from the rest that connects the whole Truth together.

“...and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him....” (v 44). So he is the one who will come along and say, ‘Now how can I phrase this in such a way that people will believe that this is really true?’

I love to watch Fox News and as I've said, Glenn Beck is going to meet the Truth—the burning bush—one day concerning the Bible, because the Mormons say, 'We believe in the Bible as far as it is accurately translated.' And they have the *Book of Mormon*. So maybe I should send one of these to Glenn Beck—I won't do it, but I'm just talking here. Dolores would not let me do it and I don't want to do it, so I'll take care of it right now—I won't do it. But what if he received one of these Bibles with a little a note: 'Dear Glenn, We know you're a very sincere Mormon and we're know that you're trying to do your best to save this country. And we know that you have been faithful to your Mormon Church and the principles that you have learned there. However, what are you going to do with your Christmas book when you find out about Christmas? What are you going to do with Sunday?'

In Utah, they are really deceived. I'll tell you one concerning Sabbath and Sunday: We lived out in a nice little community of Granger, which was out from Salt Lake City, when I pastored the Church up there in Salt Lake City. Of course, that's 99.9% Mormon territory, so you have to learn all of the doctrines of it. We hadn't been there very long, and I'm driving to go down and visit some brethren. So I'm going down this back country road and here's a big sign, 'Remember the Sabbath to keep it Holy.' And I thought how'd that sign get up there? Then I looked again, smaller print, 'See you in church on Sunday.' That's how Satan likes to deceive you. He will do that. So he appeals to the lust, he appeals to *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the mind, the pride of life* and all of that sort of thing.

Verse 44: "...there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it.... [Now then, He lays out a choice for them there. Let's see how they respond. And in this also, were some of the priests, some of the Levites, the Pharisees.] ...And because I speak the Truth, you do not believe Me.... [So then He gave them a challenge]: ...Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin?...." (vs 44-46).

And don't you know, that if they could have, they would have. *Yes!* They tried to when He healed the man who had been infirmed for thirty-eight years. They accused Him of breaking the Sabbath. No, He healed a man in love and mercy on the Sabbath, which is what you should do. And He told him pick up his bedroll and walk. And the Pharisees with their beady-eye of inspection saw him walking around and said, 'What are you doing carrying your bedroll on the Sabbath?' He said, 'The one Who healed me said pick it up and walk. What do you want me to do?' *Who was it?* 'I don't know.' Then

Jesus found him and said, 'Now that you're walking, go and sin no more.' Then the Jews knew who He was.

...But **IF** I speak *the* Truth, why don't you believe Me?.... [The Truth is hard to bear—isn't it? Especially if someone says you're of Satan of devil and you think you're righteous.] (here is the key): ...The one who is of God hears the words of God.... [Those who are not of God, will not hear the words of God. Now they'll take some of them that they agree with, but God says *all or nothing*.] ..For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God" (vs 46-47).

Think of that! Here, they were the descendants of Abraham. They were right there at the temple of God. They were the ones who were supposed to be teaching the Word of God as far as the Pharisees and scribes would go. And the other disciples probably figured, 'Well, yeah, we know the word of God. We've been going to synagogue all our lives, coming to temple all our lives.'

"For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God'.... [Look at the retort]: ...Then the Jews answered and said to Him, 'Are we not right in saying that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?'" (vs 47-48). Rather than look at the truth, they hurl an accusation to destroy the man—right? Sound a little bit like something we call media? *Yes!* Religious leaders? And isn't it true, think about this: The world's Christianity calls those who obey God, keep the Sabbath, keep His commandments and Holy Days, a cult. But they're the cult, because they're following Satan. We are following God. Jesus did all of those things, didn't He, and are we not to walk in His footsteps? *Yes!*

"Jesus answered, 'I do not have a demon. But I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. Yet I do not seek My own glory; there is one Who seeks and judges. Truly, truly I say to you, **IF** anyone keeps My words, he shall not see death forever.... [Oh, what a statement at the end of all this arguing back and forth and verbal combating—huh? They rejected His words, so Jesus then He laid it on real heavy.] ...**IF** anyone keeps My words... [Keeping means what? *Faith and obedience*—correct? *Yes.*] ...he shall not see death forever'" (vs 49-51). *King James* says 'he shall not die,' but that's not correct. We all die in Adam, but we won't see death forever.

"Then the Jews said to Him, 'Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; yet You say, "If anyone keeps My words, he shall not taste of death forever." Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, who died? Whom do You make Yourself *to be*?' Jesus answered, 'If I glorify Myself, My

glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, of Whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him; but I know Him. And **IF** I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you... [Now what does this tell us? *Jesus could sin, but always chose never to sin.*] ...**IF** I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I know Him, and I keep His Word. Abraham your father was overjoyed to see My day; and he saw *it*, and rejoiced.' Then the Jews said to Him, 'You are not even fifty years old, and You have seen Abraham?'.... [Imagine MSNBC reporting this!] ...Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM'" (vs 52-58). So He told them Who He was—I AM. That's the name of God in Exo. 3—right? *Yes!*

Now notice their love for Him, 'Oh, thank you for telling us. We're falling at your feet to repent.' *No!* Verse 59: "Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed." Who knows, maybe He just blinded them and just walked out. 'Where is He, where is He? Cast a stone.'

I said there were fourteen **IFs**. I miscounted because I parked my car in the wrong place. There are only thirteen.

(go to the next track)

Now let's continue on in the Gospel of John with the **IF** clauses. Let's come to chapter nine, because chapter nine is one of my favorite chapters in the gospel of John. Now, the **IF** clauses are pretty much to the end of it, but you need to understand the beginning of it.

John 9:1: "Now *as Jesus was passing by*, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'.... [What kind of question could that be from this point of view. What child could sin in the womb—how can that be? *They can't!* So it was really kind of a nonsensical question.] ...Jesus answered, 'Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, this blindness came so that the works of God might be manifested in him'" (vs 1-3). Now think about that for a minute! He was born blind deliberately for the purpose of Jesus healing him. That's something!

"I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is still day. When *the* night comes, no one is able to work. As long as I am in the world, I am *the* light of the world.'.... [Remember what Jesus said that if you are His, you come to the light. If you are not, you run from the light.] ...After saying these things... [Now how's this for an anointing? I can imagine, if I did this, and people

saw me, they'd say, 'You know what Fred Coulter did?' Notice what He did]: ...He spat on *the* ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to the eyes of the blind man. And He said to him, 'Go *and* wash in the pool of Siloam'... [That was a narrow little path from where they were going down alongside of where the temple was and it was very difficult to go to. So he went down there and washed.] ...(which is, by interpretation, 'Sent'). Then he went and washed, and came *from there* seeing. Therefore, the neighbors and those who had seen him before, *and knew* that he was blind, said, 'Isn't he the one who was sitting and begging?'" (vs 4-8).

This is just like typical reporting today—correct? Just like Fox News is out here with their camera and CNN is out here with their camera, and now they're going to interview everyone: What do you think? Let's run a poll on it.

"Some said, 'It is he.' But others said, 'He is like him.' He said, 'I am *the one*.' Then they said to him, 'How were your eyes opened?' He answered and said, 'A man called Jesus made clay, and applied *it* to my eyes, and said to me, "Go to the pool of Siloam and wash"; and after I went and washed, I received sight.' Then they said to him, 'Where is He?'.... [Because they probably wanted Jesus to do a miracle for them.] ...He said, 'I do not know.' They brought him who was once blind to the Pharisees" (vs 9-13).

Here is the *board of interrogation* of the Pharisees on the Sabbath. "Now it was *the* Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.... [It would be interesting go in the *Code of Jewish Law* and see about spitting on the Sabbath and making clay on the Sabbath, see what you come up with.] ...Therefore, the Pharisees in turn also asked him how he had received sight. And he said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes, and I washed; and *now* I see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath'.... ['If He spits and makes a spittle and a little clay, He can't be from God, He broke the Sabbath.'] ...Others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?' And there was a division among them" (vs 14-16).

"They said to the blind man again, 'What do you say about Him since He opened your eyes?' And he said, 'He is a prophet.' However, the Jews did not believe *this* about him, that he was blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the one who had received sight.... [This is a real interrogation—right?] ...And they asked them, saying, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered them and said, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now

sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.' His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves that if anyone confessed Him *to be the* Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue? For this reason, his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.' Therefore, they called a second time *for* the man who had been born blind, and said to him, 'Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.' Then he answered and said, 'Whether He is a sinner, I do not know. One *thing* I do know, that I was blind, and now I see.' And they said to him again, 'What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?'" (vs 19-26).

"He answered, 'I have already told you, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you desire to become His disciples, too?' Then they railed at him and said, 'You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.... [But remember what Jesus said, 'Had you believed Moses, you would have believed Me. Because you don't believe him, you don't believe Me.'] ...we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this man, we do not know where He has come from'" (vs 27-29). *Oh, yes, they did!* You go back to Matt. 3 when He was born, Herod called for all the Levites and the priests and said, 'Where was the King of the Jews to be born?' They said, 'In Bethlehem.'

"The man answered and said to them, 'This is truly an amazing thing, that you do not know where He has come from, yet He opened my eyes. Now we know that God does not hear sinners. But if anyone is God-fearing and is doing His will, He hears him. From the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that anyone has opened *the* eyes of *one* who was born blind. If this *man* were not from God, He could do nothing.'.... [I'll tell you, that was like throwing a hundred octane gas on a bonfire!] ...They answered and said to him... [Instead of seeking the truth, notice, they always accuse and ridicule.] ...'You were born wholly in sin, and you are teaching us?' And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He found him, He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?' He answered and said, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?' And Jesus said to him, 'You have seen Him, and He is the one Who is even now speaking to you.' Then he said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped Him" (vs 30-38).

So that shows He had to be God manifested in the flesh. Now here's the part, here's where the **IF** clause comes in. "And Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world so that those who do not see might see, and those who see might become blind.' And those of the Pharisees who were with

Him... [there were Pharisees with Him.] ...heard these things; and they said to Him, 'Are we also blind?' Jesus said to them, '**IF** you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, "We see." Therefore your sin remains'" (vs 39-41).

So those are some pretty powerful words. That was quite a thing that was done for the purpose of healing that man. Now I wonder when you go back to Acts 1 and there were the hundred and twenty there, I wonder if this man was among the hundred and twenty? I don't know, we can't prove it, but we can certainly say, well, if he followed Jesus then he became acquainted with the rest of the apostles and disciples and could have been one of the hundred and twenty.

There are some important things in John 10 for us. Maybe this will help us understand why God did what He did when He did it; John 10:1: "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who does not enter the sheepfold through the door, but climbs up some other way, that one is a thief and a robber." So there is *one way* into the sheepfold and that is *through Jesus Christ*. Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' Now here He's talking about Himself and the sheep and that is the flock of God, which He told Peter to 'Feed My sheep,' three times, and that goes to everyone who is a teacher and minister. So if you try to become a Christian some other way, you're a thief and a robber. That's what Jesus said.

"But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (vs 2-3). Christ knows every one of us.

- He knows our names
- He's going to give us a new name
- He's going to give us eternal life
- He loves us
- He dwells in us with His Spirit
- The Father dwells in us with His Spirit

Calls them all by name. "When he brings the sheep out, he goes before them.... [Jesus went ahead as the forerunner. Jesus is the one Who went first.] ...and the sheep follow him **because they know his voice**" (v 4).

Now when someone else is doing the preaching, how are you going to know it's the voice of God or the voice of Jesus? Yet you can't hear the voice of God or hear the voice of Jesus? *Very simple!* The one who is of God teaches the Word of God and you will hear the voice of God through the teaching of the Truth. That does not make the minister anything exalted, nor does it make him anything above the brethren, because we are to edify the flock so that we all together grow in grace and

knowledge and ‘come to the fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ.’

“‘But they will never follow a stranger for they will flee from him because they do not know the voice of strangers’” (v 5). Let’s put this in context in a real situation. When a church begins with the teachings to corrupt the teachings, those who know the Truth will say, ‘That sounds strange to my ears.’ They will be able to recognize the subtleties of someone trying to deceive.

Now we all experienced that in the 1990s—didn’t we? When they came and they said, ‘Oh, we’re never going to change the Sabbath. We’re going to keep the Sabbath, but if you want to play golf on the Sabbath, that’s fine, because you’re outside enjoying God’s creation.’ *DING!* Not the voice of Christ. *Wrong!* ‘We think that the Protestants have it right with the trinity.’ *DING!* A little bell goes off or a light goes on. They do not know the voice of strangers *nor will they understand the false doctrines.*

Now this week I had an opportunity to go a funeral, one of the tellers that waited on me a lot of times over in the bank got pancreatic cancer and in six weeks it spread to her whole body, so she died. So I went to the funeral. Everything was just fine, read the Scriptures—okay. Sounds really good—yes. Jean’s in a better place now and in heaven. And I thought—BINGO!—you can say all the right things up to a certain point and then when you know the truth, as Jesus said *the Truth is going to set you free* from that kind of thing, because you know that when you’re dead and you go to the grave, you know nothing.

But I thought it was very interesting and it was a Protestant funeral. I was thankful for that. I thought for a while it may be Catholic and everybody’s on their knees and up and back down on their knees, bells ring, and all that sort of thing. He gave a pretty message other than that. But as I was sitting there it struck me, how close of a counterfeit will people accept as the authentic thing?

A lot of people were there and, of course, they loved her and she loved a lot of people. She was a nice woman and everything like that. All of her co-workers were there and knew her. I was sitting there thinking, ‘Well, look, all of these people really don’t know anything and so they hear these words and they love her and they cry, and they repeated the words about accepting Jesus and that sort of thing at the end. Everyone felt better because they did that. So I was thinking here John 10, the voice of a stranger they won’t follow.

So Jesus brought it out a little bit more, v 6: “Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them. Therefore, Jesus again said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers...’” (vs 6-8). That fits in with the same thing that happened with Elijah and the prophets of Baal. Elijah let all the prophets of Baal go first, then he came last. Same thing when you study history about all these false messiahs going clear back to Nimrod and Semiramis and Tammuz and all of the different names of those three. So if you’ve never read the book, *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, you need to read it, because that will be an eye-opener for you.

Christ came last, and at a time of history that was not lost. You see everything going way back into ancient Babylon, and all of those different civilizations back right after the Flood, all of that history is lost. So God waited until the time that this history would not be lost. He waited until a time when all of the false messiahs would have already come on the scene, and now He comes on the scene

- preaching the Truth
- bringing the true miracles
- healings
- raising the dead
- preaching the Gospel

And it’s very interesting; you read about all the multitudes that followed Jesus when He was first preaching. Why was that? Because the first year of His ministry was the Jubilee and no one was working, so they could all follow Him. Perfect year to come—right? So He came!

“All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door.... [Another place He said, ‘I am the way.’] ..If anyone enters **through Me**... [Because Jesus said, ‘None can come to the Father except through Me’—right?] ...he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and shall find pasture.... [Now we’re not going to be eating grain or fodder. The pasture we’re talking about is the Word of God. This is what happens.] ...The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy....” (vs 8-10).

Isn’t that what happens? *Yes, indeed!* Have you lived through that? *Yes, indeed!* You don’t have to literally murder someone; you can kill them by killing their reputation and things with words. That’s what they tried to do to Jesus before they killed Him. Now the time will come when they kill those who are true Christians, you see, and it’s going to be at the hand of the thief, probably the one at Rome.

“...I have come so that they may have life, and may have *it* more abundantly” (v 10). Not

necessarily in this time while we are in the flesh. But if we have the Spirit of God and we have the Word of God, and we know that there is nothing that this world or anyone can do to us, then we can have joy and our life will be abundant enough that we're looking forward to the resurrection, and then we'll receive the true riches—won't we? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 11: "I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. But the one who is a hireling, and who is not *the* shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf seizes the sheep and scatters them.... [Now notice, doesn't devour them. The true sheep are scattered and then re-gathered. Now there are a lot of us who have had that church experience—isn't it? Why? *Because we've had to stand for the Truth!*] ...Now the hireling flees because he is a hireling and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who are Mine, and am known of those who are Mine. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep" (vs 11-15).

That's an example for all ministers and teachers to follow. You lay your life down for the sheep by

- serving
- teaching
- helping
- praying

You can know that things are going to go bad when you've got a hierarchy and everybody's all saluting the upper mucky-muck, the middle mucky-muck, the lower mucky-muck, and those with stripes.

"And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd.... [That's the Gospel that's going to go to the whole world down through time.] ...On account of this, the Father loves Me, **because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again**.... [The *King James* says 'take it back.' *No, receive it.* Because if you're dead in the grave and have to be resurrected, you don't take it back, you receive it back. That's what the Greek really is 'receive it back.'] ...No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father" (vs 16-18).

All of this is leading up to the *IFs*. So sometimes it's very good to get all the background before you come to the next *IF*. First one here we saw in v 9: "**IF** anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved." Notice, all the conditions of the *IF* are on

us. Never is there a condition of *IF* that we question God.

Verse 19: "Therefore, there was a division again among the Jews because of these words. And many of them said, 'He has a demon and is crazy. Why do you listen to Him?' Others said, 'These sayings are *not* those of one who is possessed by a demon. Does a demon have the power to open *the* eyes of *the* blind?' Now it was winter, and the feast of dedication was taking place at Jerusalem" (vs 19-22).

This is probably not Hanukkah, as people like to think, because the Feast of Dedication was the dedication during the days of Ezra, and you will find that they had the Feast of Dedication in the month of Adar, which is the last month before Nisan and is still winter. So nothing here tells us that this was Hanukkah. In giving the sermon on Hanukkah, which I should probably put up on line again, I read the Book of Maccabees and there is no place where it says that they started the Feast of Hanukkah because of the way that the one candle burned for seven days even though it only had enough oil for one day. Doesn't say that. So again, it's another thing of the Jews. But some people read this and say, 'Oh, it's all right for Christians to keep Hanukkah because Jesus was there during Hanukkah.'

Verse 23: "And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, 'How long are You going to hold us in suspense? **IF** You are the Christ... [*IF*—challenging Him.] ...tell us plainly.'.... [Well, He did, all the way through—I AM, I AM, I AM.] ...Jesus answered them, 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.'.... [If you don't, then you won't listen.] ...And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one" (vs 23-30). They knew exactly what that meant. *They knew exactly* what that meant! So what did they do?

"Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him. Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God.'.... [If you're the Son of God, you are God.]

...Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, "You are gods"?"' (vs 31-34). That's Elohim.

Let's go back and read that—Psalm 82. What is the whole purpose of salvation for those in the first resurrection? *To be the sons and daughters of God*—right? *Yes!* There are some things that you can't understand in the Old Testament without the New, because the New interprets the Old.

Psalm 82:1: "God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods. How long will you judge unjustly and respect the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; save them out of the hand of the wicked. They do not know, neither do they understand; they walk on in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken out of course. I said, 'You are gods... [Elohim] ...and all of you are sons of the Most High'" (vs 1-6).

Here is a prophecy of the fulfillment of the covenant with the Church, called the New Covenant. When we're resurrected, what's going to happen? *Our bodies are going to be changed from flesh to spirit, from mortal to immortal!*. And Christ is going to transform our bodies to be made fashioned and conformed to His glorious body. "...You are gods." Now the Jews didn't know how to handle that, because they supposedly believed only in one God, and they still can't answer the question of Gen. 1:26, 'Let **Us** made make man in **Our** image after **Our** likeness,' after **Our** image. They can't figure out the 'Us,' but the 'Us' is defined in John 17. This is an important point to bring this out, because we're talking about the sons of God being called gods.

John 17:17: "Sanctify them in Your Truth... [Now stop and think about that for a minute. How can you have lies in your worship of God Who is true, how can you worship God with lies? You see the vanity and futility of Sunday-keeping? You really got to understand that. Sunday is a lie! Can you worship the God of Truth with a lie? *No!* What happens when you try to?

- you're not doing it in truth and sincerity
- you're not doing it in true love

What are you doing then? You're trying to make God serve with your own sins. Because you don't believe the Truth. "...**Your Word is the Truth**.... [That means everything that God does for us is through His Word and Truth, and everything that we are to do is through the Truth of God, 'proving all things, holding fast to what is good'—right?] ...Even as You did send Me into the world..." (vs 17-18). Nowhere is the Holy Spirit mentioned as a

person. The true relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is this:

- God the Father is God
- Jesus Christ is God

There are two Who are God, right now, and the Holy Spirit is the power of God, so that God can accomplish the things on the earth that He wants to accomplish. There's another set of spirits, called the *seven spirits of God*, which go to and fro through all the earth so God knows what's going on and seeking out those who are seeking Him. In this prayer, if the Holy Spirit were a person, then Jesus completely neglected the Holy Spirit as God—correct? *Have to be!*

Verse 18: "Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your Truth*. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word" (vs 18-20).

Verse 21 answers the question of Gen. 1:26—Who are 'Us'? I recently was reading a book that was written by a Jewish rabbi and he quoted Gen. 1:26. How did he answer the 'Us'? He said, 'Oh, well, we can't answer that question at this time. We'll move on.' Look at the conundrum that they are in. They have the Old Testament, but they only have half the Truth and they don't have the answer.

"That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in Your; that they also may be one in... [Who?] ...**Us**... [That's Who the 'Us' are! **God the Father and Jesus Christ!** And the Father was not revealed in the Old Testament.] ...that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me'" (v 21).

Let's finish up chapter ten, and we will have gotten through a good portion of the *Ifs*, but also many other lessons that we are to learn. Come back to John 10:35: "**IF** He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)." In other words you're not going to change the plan of God just because you believe something else. You think God is going to accommodate you by following your thoughts, by following your doctrine, by saying, 'Oh, Pythagoras, oh, you're such a wonderful philosopher. Yes, I'm going to follow you.' Or as the Jews have it that the rabbis are so good, that God has to acknowledge when they correct Him! *Never happen!*

"...(the Scriptures cannot be broken), *why* do you say *of Him* Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am *the* Son of God'? **IF** I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me" (vs 35-

37). There's the big **IF** and they had Him standing right in front of them.

- they knew the miracles
- they knew the teachings
- they knew of John the Baptist
- they knew it was time for the Christ to be here

But they won't acknowledge the plan of God, because there is enough in the Old Testament as the Apostle Paul said to make you wise unto salvation. I'll bring some sermons on that a little later when we get closer to Passover time.

Verse 37: "**IF** I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me. But **IF** I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.... [Now that tells us an awful lot, too—doesn't it?] ...Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands... [Boy! They were frustrated. That's why when Judas came and said, 'How much will you give me?'] ...And departed again beyond Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing; and He remained there" (vs 37-40).

How many **IFs** do you have in your life that need to be answered by the Word of God? **You can find them! God will bless you in it!**

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) John 8:31
- 2) James 2:14-20
- 3) John 8:31
- 4) 1-Timothy 6:3-5
- 5) John 8:31-39
- 6) Galatians 3:26-29
- 7) John 8:37, 39
- 8) Genesis 26:3-5
- 9) John 8:39-41
- 10) Matthew 11:25-27
- 11) John 8:41-59
- 12) John 9:1-41
- 13) John 10:1-18, 9, 19-34
- 14) Psalm 82:1-6
- 15) John 17:17-21
- 16) John 10:35-40

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-2 Corinthians
- Mark 7
- Revelation 17
- Exodus 3
- Matthew 3
- Acts 1
- Genesis 1:26

Also referenced:

#### Books:

- *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal
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