

Overcome Through God's Purpose for You

We learn obedience from the things that we suffer with action, thought and emotion and doing what God wants; then perfection will come at the resurrection!

Fred R. Coulter—December 14, 2019

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! (Fred rings his cowbell) Someone started a nasty rumor that I was in the hospital with a heart attack! So, just to let you know, I'm alive and I'm well. If I were sick and down, I would have Jonathan up here bringing the sermon!

Calendar Question:

I've gotten some comments on the Calendar booklet—*Which is the True Calendar of God?*—and we're going to look at a framework. I'm going to study it and put it in proper perspective.

Genesis 7:11: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life... [he became 600 sometime before this] ...in the second month, **on the seventeenth day of the month**, on this day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of the heavens were opened."

Verse 10: "And it came to pass **after** seven days..." *Noah and the family were all in the ark for seven days before the Flood started!*

So, let's look at how long there were in the ark, because that is the main framework for everything else; everything else has to fit into that framework. This means that if they were in there for seven days that they went in on the 10th day of the month and "...on the seventeenth day of the month" everything cut loose. They went on 10th day of the 2nd month.

Genesis 8:14—this is the next year: "And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the land was *fully dry*." *They left out of the ark on that day!*

They were there 1 year+7 days +10 days. How long was that year? 360? 385? or 355? *That's what I'm going to have to determine to make it absolutely clear!* But there's one thing that this establishes. The time that they were in the ark was clearly established, wouldn't you say? *That's clearly established!*

How all of the other days fit in refer to the water. So, you have the ark and the family in the ark for 1 year, 7 days ahead and 10 days after the water.

How all the days of the water fit in, that's the question. Someone just sent me something showing that if you add up all the days it's 360. Well, you have to do your math correctly, and counting the water, the days of the water, does not necessarily equate to the length of the time that they

were in the ark. So, we'll leave it at that and let's see what you can do.

What I'm going to do is take the calendar framework for 385 days, for 355 days, and for 360 days and see how it all fits.

A Little Politics:

Delores and I were talking about this nonsense of impeachment going on. I talked to someone the other day who said, 'All Trump does is lie.' I asked. 'Why is that?' *Well, he never settles on anything.* I said, 'You mean like he told the Chinese that if they don't make a deal he'll do it after the 2020 election.' *Yeah, that's what I mean.* I said, 'That is negotiating.'

- Tell me which lie Donald Trump has deliberately spoken to deceive? *Can't find any!*
- How many lies did Obama give that caused trouble?
- What happened after Obama told the Medvedev to **'tell Vladimir (Putin) that I will have more flexibility after the election'**?
- What happened? *The Russians invaded Crimea, took it and invaded Eastern Crimea, and Obama sent blankets and pillows to the Ukrainians for defense!*

Obama didn't raise anything about invading and taking Crimea.

- What happened after Joe Biden and his 'wonderful' son Hunter went to China and came back and had that \$1.5-billion set up in an investment company in America?
- What happened?
- Does anyone know?

Nothing was done by Obama!

- What major thing happened? *The Chinese developed that disputed island in the South China Sea and made an airbase out of it!*

Obama didn't even lift an little finger, or open his mouth for a single word! Two things need to understand about America:

1. the Congress does not run the Presidency
2. the 'deep state' does not run the Presidency

This is the battle that you are seeing! The Democrats are full of lies!

- Was this similar to what Satan was doing to try and convince a third of the angels to follow him?

'God is mean, nasty and harsh and He won't let us do anything. Look I have glory almost like God! If we go to war and take over the throne, we'll run the universe!'

- Did that happen? *Yes, it did!*

That's why truth is so all important!

Now, because of politics a lot of people are depressed. If you watch the news and everything is all mixed up. Some people never search for the truth. A lot of people believe the lies, and a lot of people don't believe the lies. It's all mixed up and it leaves people depressed.

There's a man who delivers some things to our house and he's said that he'd been so tired for so long that it's hard for him to get along and even function. It affects you, doesn't it?

- What do we need to do to keep from letting the world depress us?
- What do we need to do to keep the focus of what we need to be doing?

That's what we're going to cover today!

Here's the first thing to keep in mind, because God is greater than us and His graciousness is greater than anything we have every imagined. We're going to cover the things that will help us, to inspire us to overcome any of these things that tend to drag us down.

You don't like to watch the news and then see something like 'shifty, nifty' Schiff blither and blather lies, and everybody believe it! Here's what you need to keep in mind:

2-Timothy 1:7—Paul is in prison: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, **but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness.** Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner" (vs 7-8). *Here Paul is in prison waiting to be executed.* How is he keeping his spirits up there?

"...but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of the Gospel, according to the power of God*" (v 8). *We're going to suffer some things! We're going to go through some difficult things!*

Verse 9: "Who has saved us and called us with a Holy calling..." All of the saints are called *the elect*—Greek: 'electos'—*meaning selected!*

If you get down, depressed and 'woe is me,' *remember that God has selected you! God loves*

you! And we will see what we need to do in return, and what God will do in return. Here Paul is in a desperate situation inspiring Timothy.

"...**not according to our works...**" (v 9). What was Paul before he was converted? *A top Pharisee!* The Pharisees had a closed knit circle and he was one of the chief among them. Everything they did for approval was a work, *a work, a work!*

He's showing here "...not according to **our works...**" We'll look at the work of God's a little later. I want you to apply this to yourself:

"...**but according to His own purpose and grace,** which *was given us...* [***God had this all planned how many eons before we even existed***] ...in Christ Jesus before the ages of time" (v 9).

How far back does that reach? The main thing here is to remember how important it is what God is doing that involves us. Everything else doesn't matter. We know that we're going to face a lot of difficult times.

I just did a couple of Church At Home {churchathome.org} *Why is Evil Rampant?* This is kind of a little sequel to it. How do you get along once you know that?

God's purpose and timing: What is God's purpose for us? *Christ states it very early on!* Matt. 5:48 is summary of everything that he brought up there. Everything in Matt. 5 has to do with *how you think!* That's what conversion is all about. Before we were called and answered the called and are baptized, receive the Holy Spirit, we have what is called a carnal mind, ***which is enmity against God!***

There are some people who are real nice and don't think that they have enmity toward God. But they just can't give up their Sunday-keeping and Christmas. ***That is enmity against God!*** It doesn't matter if you say it nicely or shout it with acrimony! ***It's still against God!***

Matthew 5:48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect..." ***That's God's goal!***

Think about when a baby is born. The only thing a baby knows when it's born—because breathing comes automatically, the body is already working, the heart and everything else is working—and had a little practice in the womb by sucking its thumb, is to nurse. It knows nothing else. It may, by intuition and by the beginning of the forming of the working of the brain, understand/recognize the mother's heartbeat and her voice. *Everything else comes after that:*

- How did we grow up?
- Where did we grow up?
- What did we do?

I look back on my growing up, and I remember just certain things. I knew nothing about God. I heard a little bit here and there. One of our neighbors was Pentecostal and my aunt was a Sunday-school teacher. Whenever she would come over and visit us, she would bring her 'cloth board,' which was covered with felt. Then she would tell Bible stories with little cutout felt pieces: lamb, children, Jesus, and so forth. That's about all I ever knew.

One time I was delivering papers early in the morning up in Seattle, and I went through a park and it was Easter morning. There were a lot of people there, so I went over and watching. Here are all the people, and when the preacher raised up this wafer of bread I didn't know what it was, all the people bowed down. I wondered what this was; I knew nothing about it.

So, then I also remember after I got out of the Army I was at my sister's and it was a Sunday, and I thought I'd go down to church. The only thing I knew was that the Catholics and Protestants were always at odds against each other. I go into this Episcopal church and they read the Apostle's Creed: 'We believe in the Holy Catholic Church.' I said, 'How can that be, these are Episcopalians and are Protestant and they say *we believe in the Holy Catholic Church?*' I thought that this was crazy!

I knew nothing! Then I was going to college, had a job as a cook, and had my own little apartment. The truth is that

- human beings were made to need God
- He made us deficient
- He made us incapable of solving our own problems our own way

When you have problems you look for help. The only thing I remembered was that 'if you ask you receive.' So, here I am walking at night and I could see a star or two and I said:

O God, the only thing I know is that if you ask you will receive. I'm asking. I don't know what to do and don't know where to go.

I had my little ole Nash Rambler, and in my apartment I had no television or radio. So, when going to college I could study Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Went to school Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I'm never out of my apartment at nine o'clock at night. Here I am in my Nash Rambler and I like classical music so I had it on that station. They started playing the dirge of Bach! That's some of the most awful classical music that there is. I can't stand it!

So, I turned it to another station and heard the first World Tomorrow program. As soon as I heard that I said, 'That' it!' Then things went from

there and I ended up at Ambassador College.

But we start from nothing to become perfected! That's the whole purpose of why we exist!

Matt. 6:33: tells us what we are to do after we've been repentant, baptized and received the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for* you, **seek first...**"—'protos' *primary*, the first and most important thing in our lives is **God the Father, Jesus Christ, and**: ...**the Kingdom of God**... [in that order] ...and... [How is our behavior to be?] ...**His righteousness**..." *This tells exactly what our purpose is and what we are to be doing!*

"...and all these things shall be added to you" (v 33)—*all the physical things that you need!* But look at what God is going to add beyond that.

How is this accomplished? First of all, God calls us and we answer the call. But God's call is His love toward us. When we're called, then how do we respond to God?

Everything that we do hinges on being perfected, seeking the Kingdom of God first, and then here is the first action that we do. It's action, thought and emotion altogether. It's our whole life.

Mark 12:28: "And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him*, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, 'Which is *the* first commandment of all?'" *The Jews always do that!* What's the most important commandment? *So, He told them!*

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

Look at how all encompassing that is! It involves thought, emotion, work and doing what God wants. This also gives us a good thought concerning conversion. This command makes mandatory all the rest of the commandments, if this is the first one! Like we've said concerning the Ten Commandments.

I just did this on Church at Home recently: *Go to the Ten Commandments and tell me what's wrong with them! Show me one thing that is wrong!* ***You can't!*** Why? Because God is love and all of His commandments are based on love.

The difficulties that we have is that we live in an evil world, because of Satan the devil. We've got these things interfering constantly, and that's

why we need the Sabbath every week. Just like the world has their thing every year, God has His thing every week and every year. Why? *We learn, we grow, we add to that knowledge, and we come to understand!* As we go along we also begin to understand how wicked and evil that human nature really is and how much we need God.

Verse 31: "And *the second is* like this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Let's see how we put this in action. We still have human nature and God does not remove it from us, because it's a process of overcoming. That's why we all die, that ends that!

We have a lot of senior citizens in the Church. That's just the nature of it as it is right now. I was talking to Harry Curley just before he died and he said, 'You know, Fred, when I first came into the Church, I was always going to weddings. Now I'm always going to funerals. I said to him, 'You know why? ***Because God is harvesting!***' So, don't look at it as some great overwhelming tragedy that you can't overcome, because no one yet has overcome death except Christ.

We're all going to die one day. But isn't it something, as we're young and strong and all of this sort of thing, we never think of that. I mean, when you were 25, did you think about the day that you were going to die? At 30? *No!* at 40 you're still going pretty good. At 50 you're still going good. At 60, well, maybe a thought or two. At 70 a whole lot of thoughts. At 80 a lot of thoughts! And legal things written down such as wills, and if you have any possessions, who is going to get it?

Remember what Solomon wrote: **What if a man lives a thousand years twice-fold and he leaves everything behind? *He's taking nothing!*** Look at those stupid Egyptians! Great pyramids, great tombs and 'we're going to all take it with us.' *They all died!* A monument to Satan the devil and men's stupidity ***because they reject God!***

Because we have to overcome human nature, God has given one thing in His great love through Christ. He is the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Remember what Paul wrote, 'Not of works...'

Understand that before there were human beings, probably before there were any angels, *before the ages of time*, God had this plan! Now, way, way, ***way*** down in time, all of those of us are part of His plan and have been with all of those recorded in the Bible, plus a lot of those in the New Testament Church who were never recorded in the Bible. There are people that we have never heard of, never seen whom God is working with, ***because God's plan is greater than we think!***

- Can God control the whole universe? *Yes!*
- Can He control one cell? *Yes!*

As a matter of fact, it's made in a miniature design of the universe. Guess what, our bodies have trillions of cells. Isn't that amazing? Right while we're sitting here, our stomachs and intestines are digesting breakfast, making room for our lunch that we'll take in a little bit. Our bodies are adjusting to the heat and we're going to need something to drink. You need water, air, food and all of those consist of cells. *That's amazing!*

Just think about how much God loves you just in the physical creation. He didn't put our ears in the back of our head. He didn't put getting rid of the waste under our chin. He made us as human beings in ***His image!*** Now, he wants to make us in ***His likeness!*** How do we keep the first commandment going, *loving God*, and what does this produce?

1 John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for **the fellowship**—... [that's what it is in the Greek; not **a** fellowship] ...indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ."

That's why we have prayer every day; little short ones all during the day. That's how God leads you and guides you and gives you understanding. That's also called, with God's Spirit and God's Word combined, *the washing of the Word by the Spirit!* We will see what that does in just a minute.

Verse 6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness... [the way of the world] ...we are lying to ourselves, **and we are not practicing the Truth.**" *A perfect description of Protestants and Catholics!*

They keep Sunday. There are some Protestants that do preach a good deal of the Bible. But if you ask them:

- What is God's plan? *We go to heaven!*
- Why do you keep Christmas? *That's when Jesus was born!*
- Why do you keep Easter? *That's when Jesus was resurrected!*

You're walking in darkness and you are not practicing the Truth! The Truth is the Sabbath and Holy Days, and none of that other nonsense!

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the Light..." We are, because:

- the Word of God is Light
- His Spirit is Light
- His Truth is Light

"...as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship

with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin" (v 7).

That's the process of overcoming! Being cleansed of all sins!

Living in this age, we have more things smashed up against our brains and in our ears and eyes than any other generation has ever had, for good or for evil!

Jonathan just told me that they updated the Bible app, so if you if you have that you have to go and update it. They haven't yet got it updated for apple, but it will be there. So, you have the Bible on a pad.

- What do you do with it?
- Do you use it?
- Do you read it?

If you have it on your phone and you never use it, how much different is that if you have a Bible at home and it's on the shelf. *No difference!*

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. : If we confess our own sins..." (vs 8-9).

What does the daily prayer say? *First thing, honor and hallow God!* The next thing is *'your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!* Who is that referring to? *To each one of you as you're praying to God for His will in your life!* Did Jesus have to do that on the night that He was arrested to be crucified? *He had to agonize, because it was really a terrible thing that He went through!*

Next time you have a little pity-party about how bad it is for you, go read what Jesus went through. Read Psa. 22. Then ask yourself: 'What are my troubles?' they're nothing but God will help you with them!

"...He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v 9). *Seeking the Kingdom of God first, through the fellowship with God, and all of these things will be added to you, and become perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect!* See how that fits together? That's what we are to do daily.

I have to admit that this last week with all of this nonsense going on with this absolute satanic, insane impeachment going on, I was a little depressed. I was going around having my own little pity-party.

So, what I did, I told myself I had to stop that because there's nothing you can do about it. What can you do about it? If you worry about it, what are you going to do? *Nothing!* So, concentrate on what God wants you to do.

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not

sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." Who is the one who says that God is a liar? *Satan the devil!*

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin..."—*because you have the pull of human nature, lust the eyes, lust of the mind, and you have television, cell phones, billboard signs and everything like that!*

"...we have an Advocate... [advocating, interceding] ...with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world" (vs 1-2). *And we know that is in God's time and plan!*

Here's how we know that we are doing what God wants there's a lot of people who say that they love God, 'I go to church every Sunday. We have a marvelous Christmas at home.' Or a Catholic would say, 'I go to Mass every day.' What did God say? *Once year!* 'Every day! You must be so righteous, it's incredible!' *No! You're deceived!* I had one man say, 'I don't agree with you with IFMA—Independent free moral agency.'

Verse 3: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if we keep His commandments.**" *That's our reciprocity back to God!*

Verse 4: "The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him."

I tell you what! I was thinking of going to one of these reunions of Ambassador College; they had one in Pasadena this year and I thought that maybe I'll go. Byron Norrod said that he went one time and 'I would say that you wouldn't want to go, because it would really make you disappointed and maybe even mad.' He went and there's everything under the sun, and was shocked to see one of his classmates who was a minister in the Church (WCG) who is now a minister in the Lutheran Church and he had a big gold cross!

This is why we keep His commandments; that's back to God. Look what He's done for us with everything else. Notice what happens here:

Verse 5: "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word..." **What does that mean?** *Everything that He has spoken!*

What did Jesus say? *The first thing out of His mouth with the temptation of Satan the devil, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God!*

"...truly in this one the love of God is **being perfected...**" (v 5). *You cannot be perfected*

without Law-keeping! Why? Law-keeping requires what? *Mind, emotion and action!*

“...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.... [this is becoming perfect, right here]: ...**Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked**” (vs 5-6). *This is becoming perfect!*

Would you say that Christ is perfect? *Yes, indeed!* Perfected through the flesh and through the resurrection!

Verse 6 is a good one for Protestants and Catholics. And Sunday, you know that's the thing. Where does it say at any time Jesus saying that 'you have heard it said of old time that God is Lord of the Sabbath, but I tell you I'm Lord of Sunday.' Do you find it in the Bible? *No way!* Who is the lord of Sunday? ***There is one who is the lord of Sunday, who claims to be God, and that's Satan the devil!*** Maybe you never thought of it that way.

- Can Satan be sweet? *Yes!*
- Can Satan be gentle? *Yes!*
- Can he say he'll give you a benefit? *Yes!*
I'll give you many benefits! Yes, he can!

That's what the obligation for us!

(go to the next track)

Now we will focus on perfection, and how does God do that? *In order to do it, you have to start out first with creation and the creation of man!* But you can't have the creation of man unless you have everything on the earth provided for him before he begins. ***So, God did that.***

Then you have to have reproduction. Nearly everything that God has made—plants, animals, fish, human beings, etc.—all reproduce. The reproduction is still a mystery to human beings.

I know that when I squeeze my lemon juice in the morning there are lemon seeds from the tree that's inside the fruit and it's right in the middle of it. So, I could take that and plant it in the ground and it would grow, and it will produce lemons after it grew to a certain height. It would continue as long as you watered it, fertilize it and take care of it, trim it and get rid of the weeds, etc.

Then with human beings, how are you going to make them so they're not robots? Look at what people are trying to do today. They are trying to make robots, and they have this artificial intelligence. They're warning that artificial intelligence is going to take over and destroy the world.

I don't know if that's true or not. The way I look at the book of Revelation, I see a lot of other things than artificial intelligence. You have to have a

body, mind, heart and the spirit of man. You have to have free moral agency, and then you have to have God's Laws, God's Spirit all based on the love of God.

Then you have to have the superior sacrifice. That superior sacrifice is Christ—Who came in the flesh—God manifested in the flesh! Let's see something about Jesus Christ and what He went through. As the Creator of mankind, He had to go through everything and suffer for mankind. That's why He became human.

Hebrews 5:7: Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death...”

Most people don't think about that. They think that Jesus came and it was so easy for Him, because He was God in the flesh. ***NO!*** He had human nature just we have. He had God's Spirit more abundant than we, but He also was always in direct confrontation with Satan the devil.

“...and was heard because *He feared God*” (v 7). *In other words, there was that chance that He couldn't make it!*

Verse 8: “Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered.”

Likewise with us, we learn obedience from the things that we suffer. There are difficulties and problems. *You have:*

- mental suffering
- physical suffering
- suffering by watching other people suffer
- sickness suffering

But notice what all of that did:

Verse 9: “And having been perfected...” *That tells you something!* Remember when the rich man came up to Jesus and said, ‘Good Master...’ (Matt. 19). That young man was kind of like Job. ‘What do I have to do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said, ‘Why call Me good, there's none good by God.’ *There was God manifested in the flesh standing right before the young man*, and He did not consider Himself good, because He had to carry human nature, the law of sin and death in Him in order to condemn sin in the flesh.

Sin is not condemned in our flesh. It's condemned in Christ's flesh, so that through being perfected it will be condemned as we grow and overcome.

“...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him” (v 9).

What did Jesus say? *Why do you call Me*

'Lord, Lord' and do not the things that I tell you?

Here's another reason, Hebrews 2:10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, **to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**" *Think about that!* A lot of people say:

- Why did God do this?
- Why did God do that?
- Why do human beings suffer?

You can see that on one of the Church At Home's, there's an atheist there condemning God because of this, that and the other thing. That's why you have the New Testament. That's why Christ came, because He likewise suffered.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the Church I will sing praise to You.' And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.' Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood... [and human nature, and all of that] ...in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might **annul** him who has the power of death—that is, the devil" (vs 11-14). *Remember 'annul' means to make it as if it never was!*

Verse 15: "And *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham" (vs 15-16). *That's not the physical seed of Abraham; that's the spiritual seed of Abraham!*

That's us! If you are Christ then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise! Let's see what else Jesus said of Himself.

Luke 13:32: "And He said to them, 'Go and say to that fox, "Behold, I cast out demons and complete healings today and tomorrow, and the third day **I shall be perfected**"'"—so He conflated the two together!

1. His work and healings and things like that
2. His resurrection at the end

Let's see how Christ is doing that with us. We know in Psa. 34 it says, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, **but God delivers them out of them all!**'

So, if we look at the difficulties and problems and see what we can learn from them, and stay close to God in prayer, study and understand them, then yes, we will also learn, because that's part of the perfection. Let's see how this develops.

We know that we have body, mind, spirit, heart, etc. We receive the Spirit of God and that unites with the spirit of man that all human beings have. Here's what we are to do:

Romans 12:1: "I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice..."

- What is the sacrifice? *Giving up the things of the world! Giving up the things of self!*

"...Holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service" (v 1).

- What is your spiritual service? *Love toward God, prayer, study, living God's way!*
- What does God do with His Spirit in our mind? *He writes in the commandments and laws of God in our heart and mind!*
 - ✓ that is conversion
 - ✓ that is leading to perfection

The ultimate perfection will come at the resurrection!

Verse 2: "Do not conform yourselves to this world, but **be transformed...**"—Greek: 'metomorphos'—*change*. Just like in your mind a bit at a time.

"...by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well-pleasing and good, and **the perfect will of God**" (v 2)—*leading to perfection!*

That's how God has done it. That's why we're made in His image and likeness. That's why He's given us *free choice!* He doesn't want us to be robots. Could you think about what it would be like to live in eternity with everybody being robots? *That would be incredible!* Let's see how this is done. Be renewed in your mind. How is that being renewed? *Notice the steps involved:*

Philippians 2:1: "Now then, if *there be* any **encouragement in Christ...** " *This is what we're talking about so that you don't get discouraged and despondent because of the difficulties!*

"...if any **comfort of love...**" (v 1)—*God will give you comfort of love! God will answer your prayers when you pray!*

"...if any **fellowship of the Spirit...**" (v 1). *Isn't it something that God gives us of His Spirit so that we can have fellowship with Him and Christ? That's an amazing thing!*

It's not something tangible you can grasp because it's spiritual. Can you grasp the law of gravity? *No!* How does it work? *It keeps you on the earth!* It lets water run down and everything else.

“...if any **deep inner affections and compassions**, fulfill my joy that you be of the same mind... [the mind of Christ] ...having **the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing**” (vs 1-2).

- What is it that we are to do?
- What is the one thing that we are to constantly seek?

The Kingdom of God and His righteousness! That's the one thing! That's the goal! This is what you do when there are troubles and problems, you have the goal that you are always going to.

Verse 3: “*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself... [Who knows?] ...Let each one look not only after his own things, but let each one also consider the things of others. **Let**...*” (vs 3-5).

It comes from God, but you have to **let!** It's like the door, you must open the door to let someone in. likewise with your mind. You must open your mind to what God wants, and **let** this happened!

Verse 5: “**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself...” (vs 5-7). *Think about this!*

- What have you given up?
- What did Paul say?

We brought nothing into the world, and we're not taking anything out of the world!

- What did you bring into the world?

You mom did all the work!

Verse 7: “But emptied Himself...” *He gave up His Divinity to become pinpoint of life and be impregnated in the womb of the virgin Mary!* She must have been some woman! Think of that!

Women today don't want any children. They found out that women who never marry and don't have children are some of the most unhappy women in the world. Why? *Because you're going against the purpose of God!*

“...and was made in *the* likeness of men...” (v 7). *In the beginning God said, ‘Let us make man in Our image and in Our likeness, male and female.*

“...and took the form of **a servant**” (v 7)—Greek: ‘doulos’—*slave!* So that no one can say that ‘our ancestors were slaves and you got to get reparations for us.’ *Get out and work and quit being stupid!* Every race and people down through the history of mankind have been made slaves! **Get over it!**

Verse 8: “And being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross.”

What did He say of this? ***I have commandment from the Father! I lay down My life and I have a commandment to receive it back! No one takes it from Me; I lay it down!***

Look at what Christ has done and then stop and think: What have I done in my life? God doesn't expect that, because we're not Christ! But there are a lot of things that we can do that God wants us to do for that perfection.

Colossians 1:20: “And having made peace through the blood of His cross...” *That was a tremendous thing that happened!*

Sidebar: What was going on in Jerusalem that last week? I imagine that there were angels everywhere, demons everywhere, and it was being all carried out exactly as God wanted it to be.

Remember what Jesus said when He was beginning His ministry and talking to Nathaniel? What if you see angels ascending and descending from the Son of man? *That's quite a statement!*

Everything was prearranged to fulfill the prophecies. That's why Jesus said, ‘Forgive them, they know not what they do.’ Remember how Jesus gave the instruction to keep the last Passover? *They were coming into Jerusalem and He hadn't told them where they were going to keep the Passover!* He didn't want to tell them because Judas was going to betray Him. He didn't want them to come where they were keeping the Passover, so He said, ‘I tell you what, you go into the city and follow a man who is carrying a pitcher, and whatever house he goes there prepare.’

- How did that work out?
- How did they know which street to walk on?
- How did the man carrying the pitcher happen to come exactly where the disciples could see him and then follow him?

Probably angels had it all arranged! They didn't stop and ask what his name was and where he was going. Jesus just said to follow him. They went and said, ‘The Master says, ‘Where is the room that I may keep the Passover with My disciples?’ *I got it all ready for you!*

How did that happen? *The angels were there making sure that it was done!* I imagine that all of the demons were trying to frustrate everyone of these things along the line.

Verse 21: "For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works... [in your mind motivating your actions] ...but now He has reconciled you **in the body of His flesh through death, to present you Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him**" (vs 21-22) *Absolutely nothing wrong!*

Sidebar: Remember Baalim? He wanted to curse Israel. So, Balak got over there and God let him take the money, but God said, 'You only speak what I want you to speak.' So, they had the sacrifices and Baalim got up there and started blessing Israel saying, 'I see no sin in Israel.'

Think about that for a minute! Maybe those are not the exact words, but how many times did they rebel? How many times did they go against God? Think about when confronted with an enemy who wants to destroy them, God says, 'I don't see anything.'

That's what it is also with the sacrifice of Christ with us. *There is nothing against us!* That's why every day we grow and overcome.

Verse 23: "**If** indeed you continue in the faith **grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel**, which you have heard, *and* which was proclaimed in all the creation that *is* under heaven; of which I, Paul, became a servant."

That's a statement of what they knew of the creation and the earth, and that's a prophecy of the rest of all time down to the return of Christ.

Verse 24: "Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you..." *Think of that! He's saying that he's rejoicing in prison!* I don't know if he has chains on his wrists and feet, maybe now, who knows/

"...and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ..." (v 24).

- Why? *Because Christ called him and said, 'Paul, you are going to preach the Gospel, and you are going to suffer!'*
- Why was that? *Because he so persecuted the Church!*

But Paul rejoiced in that suffering!

Verse 25: "Of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given to me for you *in order* to complete the Word of God; *even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations..." (vs 25-26). *Think of that!*

It would be really interesting if you had a microphone and you went out and did a survey, even right here in Hollister:

You live right here in this nice little town of Hollister, very nice little town wouldn't you agree? *Yes!* What do you know about God? Why are you here? What is your purpose? *You wouldn't get any answer!*

"...but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom God did will to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory... [What is the end of that?]: ...Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, **so that we may present every man perfect** in Christ Jesus" (vs 26-28).

Be you perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect! Of course, the finality of that is the resurrection!

Verse 29: "For this cause I also labor, striving according to His inner working, which works in me with power."

Don't you think that the apostles are going to be absolutely astonished at the resurrection when they find out how long it really was from the time that they died until the time that Christ returned? What happened to the Church? How many were called? It's going to be astonishing! That's why we're on the Sea of Glass for such a long time. We have a lot to learn and understand.

They'll be astonished concerning the Bible, and how there were so many and how God preserved it. I told you what Daniel Wallace said, 'All the Greek manuscripts, there were over 10,000 known. The difficulties and problems amount to about 1% corruption. Word order makes not difference, word usage and misspellings make no difference. You can always straighten those out.'

No other book in the history of the world is as old and has as many copies available, and is in many concurrent languages as today. That's a testimony to the power of God. He says, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel.' What does God do, He gets it translated and sent out ahead of time.

Eph. 1 & 3 are some of the most inspiring Scriptures in the New Testament. Let me just suggest this to you: Whenever you get in a dump of depression... I had part of that one day this week watching all this nonsense, the lies and things, on the hearings. What I did is what we're doing now. I went to Eph. 1 & 3 to get my mind on where we are going!

What is all of this going on? When you look at from the Word of God, while it might be gigantic out here in the world, it's really pitifully small compared to what God is doing in our lives.

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus

Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus... [that's a prophecy wherever in the world] ...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-2). *This is what God gives to us!*

Now notice what God is doing and what God is preparing at the same time:

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

- receiving the Spirit of God
- understanding the Truth of God

That's the beginning! What is the completion? *The resurrection and all that takes place with that, with Christ!*

Verse 4: "According as He has personally chosen us for Himself..."

Remember that it says in John 6 that '***none can come to Me unless the Father draw him.***' ***So, God the Father is actively working with Christ. And 'none can come to the Father except through Christ!'*** So, They work together!

"...before *the* foundation of *the* world... [that's when they had the plan] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love" (v 4). Where did we start? *Right there!*

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship..." *The King James says 'adoption.'* ***Not so!*** We've been begotten with the Spirit of God to be the sons and daughters of God, so it's called 'sonship.' ***We are His children by begetting and by birth at the resurrection when we're born again!***

"...to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption... [look at this all put together] ...through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence" (vs 5-8). *Not stupidity! No all of this nonsense that you see on TBN today!*

Verse 9: "Having made known to us the mystery of His own will..."

- How precious is that?
- How do we come by that?
 - ✓ by the Spirit of God
 - ✓ by the will of God
 - ✓ by our yielding to God by choosing to:
 - love Him
 - serve Him
 - repent

- continue to humble ourselves before Him in the way that God wants

"...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself... [tie in 2-Tim. 1:9] ...that in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth" (vs 9-10).

And the things in heaven has to be reconciled. Satan has no more coming to the Throne of God.

Verse 11: "Yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose..." *Put all of those things together:*

- the will of God
- the purpose of God
- the love of God
- the calling of God
- the sacrifice of Christ
- giving us fellowship with Him
- His Holy Spirit

All of these things together; why are you depressed? ***There's no need to be depressed!*** *But because we're human beings we need to be encouraged!* Aren't these the words of encouragement that we need in times of depression? *Yes, indeed!*

"...Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will; that we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (vs 11-13).

That's why blaspheme of the Holy Spirit is *unpardonable!* The Holy Spirit comes from God the Father to impregnate your mind and combine it with the spirit of man and the Spirit of Christ altogether ***so that we can develop the mind of Christ and all the things that we're talking about here!*** *That's a fantastic thing, indeed!*

Verse 14: "Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory. For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you..." (vs 14-17).

This is what we need. We're coming into difficult times. We're coming into more challenges against the Truth of God than ever before.

But He "...may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened..." (vs 17-18).

It's one thing to see something, it's another thing to see and understand it mentally and spiritually. This is what Paul is talking about.

"...in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling, and what *are* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (v 18).

Ephesians 2:17: "Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father" (vs 17-18). *When you pray God hears!*

Verse 19: "So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (vs 19-22).

Now let's look at a projection toward the complete fulfillment of God's plan as Paul gave here in Eph. 3. Paul says that this was given to all the apostles and prophets at the same time. This was given so that it would be written down, and God knew that it would be transmitted down through time and history so that it comes down to us today.

Ephesians 3:11: "According to *His* eternal purpose... [right back where we started] ...which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith" (vs 11-12)—***the faith that God gives us!***

Verse 13: "So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working for* your glory." *Look at the positive things when difficulties come, like Paul!*

Verse 14: For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (vs 14-15). *That's going to be a fantastic time, when we see the fullness of this!*

Verse 16: "That He may grant you..." Put your name there. He's saying *you*, not *ye*, which is plural *you*. But *you directly, each one!*

"...according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man" (v 16). *When that happens then you can*

handle the difficulties and problems and see through it all!

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love... [right back where we started] ...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height" (vs 17-18).

That's to understand as completely as we can *now*, but just think about what it's going to be like at the resurrection. The universe is so great that there's no measurement that any man can come to give a reasonable estimate of it.

They have found that when they have these high-powered telescopes out on satellites and they aim at dark spots in the universe that when they get the photos back it's filled with galaxies. ***Absolutely no end to it, and this is what God is calling us to!***

Verse 19: "And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

What is that going to be like? All of our aches and pains that come along, because we're physical, wearing down and coming to an end, will be all gone!

Verse 20: "Now, to Him Who is able **to do exceeding abundantly...**" *To write things that are just unfathomable and then to say that:*

He's going "**...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us...**" [that's an astonishing statement] ...to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 20-21).

That's quite a thing, brethren! When we get down, turn to these two chapters, get on your knees and go to God and pray and read and ***ask God to help you, and He will!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 7:11, 10
- 2) Genesis 8:14
- 3) 2 Timothy 1:7-9
- 4) Matthew 5:48
- 5) Matthew 6:33
- 6) Mark 12:28-31
- 7) 1 John 1:3, 6-10
- 8) 1 John 2:1-6
- 9) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 10) Hebrews 2:10-16
- 11) Luke 13:32
- 12) Romans 12:1-2
- 13) Philippians 2:1-8

- 14) Colossians 1:20-29
- 15) Ephesians 1:1-18
- 16) Ephesians 2:17-22
- 17) Ephesians 3:11-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 22
- Matthew 19
- Psalm 34
- John 6
- 2 Timothy 1:9

Also referenced:

- Booklet: *Which is the True Calendar of God?*
by Carl D. Franklin & Fred R. Coulter
- Church At Home: *Why is Evil Rampant?*
{churchathome.org}

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