Pentecost

Return of Jesus Christ and the First Resurrection

Fred R. Coulter — May 3, 2008

It has to do with many questions concerning Pentecost and so I need to give a little background concerning Pentecost and its history within Radio Church of God and then, subsequently, Worldwide Church of God, so that we can understand what the problems are and where we’re coming from and what we need to do. And this will be in response to the ministerial challenge given to people who receive our CDs who attend United and believe in the Biblical truths concerning Pentecost picturing the first resurrection, the harvest of the firstfruits and so forth. And they steadfastly hold to Trumpets being the day of resurrection. And so, I encourage them to check out the Truth, check out the Bible and get all the information. The only way you can understand anything is to get all the information concerning it. And I realize that there are some things they may not understand because in some of the Pentecost sermons that I have done, because those in the Christian Biblical Church of God have heard it for what?—all the time that they’ve been affiliated with us—which is probably more like 20-plus years (’83, so it’s been 25 years).

And of course, we’ve grown in knowledge and understanding concerning it—every Pentecost that comes along and getting into the Bible to understand it and to know it. So, I can understand their difficulties in not understanding it. And I can also understand their corporate mentality in not wanting to understand it, because then it would mean that someone not with their group may have some understanding of the Bible that they don’t have. Now there may be, if you look at it from God’s point of view, how many people is God dealing with in the world and many of them having nothing to do with us, in various countries around the world. So we don’t know how much knowledge they have, or don’t have, or whatever it may be.

So, what we need to do is—I’m going to go through and examine everything step-by-step. I’m going to read some of the things that they have here concerning their opinion of what I’m doing and so forth. And then I will give some answers to it. And I hope that they take the posture that they’re searching for Truth. I’m not searching for my own understanding or my own interpretation. And as all of you know, that when I speculate on something that is really speculation I ring my cowbell so that everyone knows that I’m speculating. And I’m not trying to usurp anything from anyone, but trying to understand the Bible and the Word of God, to preach it in the way that it should be, because we are to preach the Truth.

Now, when Herbert Armstrong and his wife, Loma, first came to understand about the Holy Days—and they understood them through various branches of the Church of God Seventh Day, namely G.G. Ruppert and some other Churches of God Seventh Day that kept the Holy Days. And just a little historical background that I came across when I was assisting Dale Hampton up in the Eugene area, and visiting with him, and that was right after we got married in January, 1965. But anyway, when I would go out and visit — maybe this was before we got married in January ’65, because I went up there in June ’64. Anyway, Otis Cole—who’s the father of Raymond, Wayne and Leroy Cole—told me about Herbert Armstrong and the Church of God Seventh Day; and that, yes, he got a lot of his things from Church of God Seventh Day, contrary to what he said in later years that God revealed it to him as it was revealed to the Apostle Paul—which is not true.

He also told me a very interesting thing: His father—that is Otis Cole’s father—was an elder in the Church of God Seventh Day. And in 1917 his father went to the elders, Dugger and Dodd. Now those are the same ones that Herbert Armstrong came across later, if you read his autobiography. And his father presented to them the truth of Israel in prophecy, as we understand it today; and about the Holy Days, as well. So the Church of God Seventh Day, down through its history, has had a lot of exposure to the Holy Days, and as a matter of fact, even today many of them keep the Holy Days. I know some of those Church of God Seventh Day ministers who keep the Holy Days. So when he started keeping the Holy Days, it wasn’t a result of all of a sudden they discovered them in the Bible, alone, separate from other teachings that had come down from the Church of God Seventh Day.

And when it came to Pentecost, and counting Pentecost, that’s where Herbert Armstrong had the trouble in doing so. Let’s go to Leviticus 23 (KJV) and let’s see the beginning problem of this, which began way before the founding of Ambassador College in 1947. This was like in 1934, if I recall correctly. Now Leviticus 23:10: “Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, ‘When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall
bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath…” (vs 10-11).

Then we come down here to v 15: “And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering…” Now, he took the word ‘from’ to mean excluding the day that you are on and beginning the count on Monday. So this is how he came up with a Monday Pentecost. Although, those in the Church of God Seventh Day who kept Pentecost, kept it on a Sunday. How much knowledge of that did he have, I do not know. And so, that’s how the Church came to have a Monday Pentecost, because ‘from’ meant away from the day after the Sabbath. So if it’s waved on Sunday, then from the day after the Sabbath, that’s Monday. So you start your count there.

Later in 1953 the problem arose in Eugene—this was...the college was founded in ’47, so we’re looking at six years after the founding of the college—the problem of Pentecost came up again and they had a small congregation up there of about 12 people; and they insisted that Pentecost would have to be on a Sunday if it were counted correctly. So two things happened at that point—and Herbert Armstrong rehearsed this at the conference in 1974. And I also had it verified through other ministers who were involved in it. Raymond Cole was sent up to Eugene to straighten out the congregation and make sure that they kept a Monday Pentecost. Herman Hoeh was designated the task of researching it and finding out whether it was on Sunday or Monday, because at that point Herbert Armstrong was very willing to change—as exhibited 20 years later when he changed.

So, Herman Hoeh confessed in 1974, at the ministerial conference that we had to resolve the question on how to count Pentecost, he said that the way that he did it was this: He said: *Herbert Armstrong was God’s apostle, therefore God’s apostle cannot be wrong. Therefore, I will find a way to show that Herbert Armstrong is right and Monday Pentecost is right.* Now, he (HWA) was willing to change but then he also made the error when it was really proven that counting Pentecost begins on a Sunday and ends on a Sunday. He said: *God bound that Monday Pentecost for 40 years.* Well, that cannot be true! Because then God would have to bind Sunday-keeping by people who sincerely believe that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to Sunday.

Now what happens when you don’t keep the proper day? Just to say, subsequently, they changed it. They changed it in ’74 and went back to the proper counting. And, as you will see in the new Bible that is coming—and we’ve been a little delayed in getting it because of some binding issues (we’ve got those resolved)—but let’s go to Leviticus 23 and just review that again, because there is no way that there can be any misunderstanding of it when it is properly interpreted and translated.

Leviticus 23:9 (FV): “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, “When you have come into the land which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest of it, then you shall bring the premier sheaf of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it”’” (vs 9-11).

Now, v 15 is the correct translation of the Hebrew ‘me mochorath’ which means beginning with. Not after. “And you shall count to you beginning with the next day after the Sabbath… [not ‘from’ but] …beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete.” Then you tie that together with Deuteronomy 16, let’s go there.

Deuteronomy 16:9—and we find that these weeks are to be complete weeks. “You shall count seven weeks to yourselves. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time you first began to put the sickle to the grain.” Now this means seven complete weeks. Can you have a week of six days? No. Can you have a week of eight days? No. Has to be seven days—that’s what God set up and it means complete weeks. Also it says in Leviticus 23—you know where it is—that “on the next day after the seventh Sabbath.”

Now Herman Hoeh admitted that he changed that to mean ‘weeks’—so that it would justify Herbert Armstrong’s belief of a Monday Pentecost. Now that’s the basic sum of the problem where it started. Just like people who do not keep the Sabbath do not understand certain parts of the Bible, likewise, when you don’t keep the Holy Days on the right day you don’t have a complete understanding of it. So when it was changed—I remember that we had Pentecost services down in Los Angeles and Gerald Waterhouse was the one to come down and preach the sermon. And someone else came down from Headquarters there to bring the sermonette and he brought the sermon and I led the music and gave the announcements. And I remember clearly saying, “Brethren, here we are all keeping Pentecost on the right day for the first time in the history of the Church.” And I said, “Who knows, maybe we’ll find out that Pentecost pictures the first resurrection.” Well, that was my first thought ever of it. And we’re going to examine all the facts and see, that yes, that turned out to be correct. So we will go through all of these things and see. But first of all let me read you
Wrong! About 25!

But he wrote him back and said concerning me:

point about Pentecost picturing the first resurrection.

So I don’t want to get into an attitude of mud-
slinging or whatever, but here was a letter that was
sent to a man who attends United and wanted to
bring it up to him, and I’m sure…that I have heard
sent to a man who attends United and wanted to
bring it up to him, and I’m sure…that I have heard

Now, wherever I’m wrong—and I’m sure
there are a couple things; I’ve seen a couple things
that I can adjust a little bit and make it more clear.
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...I agree that there are some things that
we cannot know for sure in regard to
every aspect surrounding the return of
Christ, but we must be careful not to
teach them as new doctrine or new
understanding as Mr. Coulter is.

Well, if that’s what the Bible teaches then that’s
what it is.

He has developed this new information
based upon his own speculation and
interpretation presenting no Biblical
proof for his conclusions.

Which is totally contrary—that’s not true! I go
through and show the Biblical proof.

Again, that’s one of the strengths of
United. No minister can come to the
conclusion that he has found new truth
and then teach it as doctrine. Any
member of the Church may present an
idea or viewpoint to his or her local
pastor where it can be reviewed initially,
and as I mentioned earlier, it will then
go through the extensive review process
over time and eventually would have to
be accepted by three-fourths of the
entire ministry.

Well, why don’t they ask me for the book and the
tapes to help them with their research, so they can
determine. Now if they can prove me wrong, I’ll be
willing to change. But if they don’t accept what’s in
the Bible and the truth of it—because we’re going to
see a little later—there is not one shred of evidence
that the Feast of Trumpets is a harvest feast. But
there are all kinds of Scriptures relating to Pentecost
being a harvest feast. And we’ll get into Matthew
13, where it talks about the Parable of the Sower.
We’ll get into the ones where the “harvest is white,”
as Jesus said. We will get into the parables of Mark,
the fourth chapter, etc. So Pentecost can be pictured
as a harvest feast.

This is one of the reasons I chose not to
study doctrinal issues or teachings of
independent leaders and one-man rule
organizations.

Are you afraid to study things and prove right from
wrong?

I believe their leaders may feel in order
to be good leaders and God’s
anointed…

I never said that at any time.

...that they have to be teaching new
things and new understandings that have
to be revealed to them.

Well, some have done that, but I haven’t!

It tends to validate their leadership and
authority as one being used of God.
However, their teachings have not been thoroughly researched and examined by their peers and subjected to the review and expertise of the entire ministry.

Well, we also have a problem with the entire ministry, in some cases. How did so many infiltrate Worldwide, to take it down with false doctrines? And if you would present them the truth of the Bible, which would show things, they may not understand it and they may not want to accept it. And since they are in authority they would reject it. So you have that problem, too.

Therefore, it can be quite easy for doctrinal purity and integrity to be maintained.

If it’s done by committee—that’s what he’s saying. Well, one thing about a committee is very important to understand, which is this: If they’re all honest and if they all search for the truth, everything will be fine—because in a ‘multitude of counselors there is safety.’ However, look at the counsel that Rehoboam got form the old men, didn’t listen to them; from the young men; then he took their counsel. It was wrong! So committees do not guarantee anything any greater than what is the truth. And if they don’t accept the truth, then committee membership and committee review does not necessarily mean that you’re going to get the pure truth. Only the Bible has the pure truth and we must put it together in the right way that it must be.

Therefore, I feel I cannot trust the writings and teachings of other organizations when the review process has not been followed.

Well, take mine and submit it.

Mr. Coulter’s writings and teachings is a good example. When his teachings about the resurrection taking place on Pentecost and the saints going to heaven or the Sea of Glass for extensive training sessions before taking rule over the earth is examined by leading ministers or doctrinal issues in United, then obvious inconsistencies and error is found. His conclusions are based on conjecture, speculation and a misunderstanding of certain passages.

United Church of God will only teach as we have been taught the doctrines that have been long established in the Church, beginning with Mr. Armstrong. Our church policy again states that it will only change doctrine that has been proven by an overwhelming preponderance of evidence and supported by three-fourths of the ministry. I personally find comfort and stability in that protection of our doctrines.

Very interesting! What if you stood before the Sanhedrin, like Stephen? Was that a committee? Yes, indeed! The ruling governing body! And he told them the truth and what did they do? They took him out and had him stoned because they couldn’t stand it. Now would you say that that committee agreement was seeking truth—or seeking a political/religious position. Now, continuing:

In an effort to assist you…[this is the one he’s writing to] …in your understanding of Fred Coulter’s teachings, I have obtained edited copies of the transcript of two sermons he gave on this subject.

Well, in order to get the basic understanding, you need about seven. They can get transcripts online. But I do know there are ministers in United who believe in a Pentecost resurrection, but they won’t bring it up because they might lose their paycheck! So, are we dealing with truth-seekers, or are we dealing with hirelings? Are we putting Herbert Armstrong above the Bible and Jesus Christ? I can guarantee you if you do that you’ll never grow in grace and knowledge. It doesn’t matter if you have ten thousand on your committee. Never forget that, by committee in Worldwide, they changed over to Sunday and Christmas and Easter and New Years and all that sort of thing. So truth is paramount. The Word of God is what we need to follow. Now I’m not teaching my personal opinions. And you can listen…we have what, nearly 2,000 sermons you can follow.

The transcript was edited and commented on by two members of United Church of God: Leon Walker, Chairman of Doctrinal Review Committee and Kevin Epps. I hope a review of Mr. Coulter’s sermon, along with a running commentary by our ministers, will help you to see where speculation and opinion are used to support new doctrinal beliefs. Further, you will note that once a speculation as fact, then other Scriptures can be used to force them to fit in with the new understanding. One tries to make Scripture say something it does not actually say.

I have a couple of the edited copies of what they did and they took certain areas spliced out of the transcript and then gave their comment. See, this is why you have to have all the facts. And today we are in a whole attitude in the world and in the Church and things that it has to agree with what we have always understood—or you have to agree with the powers that are in charge. And just in the judiciary
system, how many people have been convicted because of lying by prosecutors, and judges not getting all the facts or excluding the facts—you know, you have to have all the facts. So if you take some of the facts and bear down on them to make a point, then you can twist and turn it. If you take other things and assume from that, and then draw a conclusion, how are you going to come up with the truth?

Back to the two transcripts of sermons. They’re not two transcripts; they are parts of two transcripts of two sermons that I gave. And in the book God’s Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days you’ll have at least eight transcripts, plus you can hear what I say with the CDs. So, if you want to be fair about it, fine! If you want to come and fight me, well then you do the fighting and I’ll use the Word of God—which is the sword of the Lord—and we’ll see what the truth is. And we’ll go through and we’ll stack it all up and see what is right. But, hey, I hope that you all repent and come to the knowledge of it. That’s all I’m seeking. I’m just seeking the Truth of God and what is right. I haven’t been out here presumptuously doing things for my own way. Besides, I have a wife who will never let me do that.

Now, Jim Franks writes this—he’s Director of Ministerial Services, United Church of God. He commented on this teaching by Mr. Coulter: “This issue came up a couple of years ago and I believe it is from… [though he took out my name] …the essential argument is that since Pentecost is a harvest of firstfruits, it must picture the resurrection. This teaching has Christ returning twice: Once to collect the saints, Pentecost; and again, to be seen by the whole world, Trumpets.

Well, you have it wrong. That’s why you need all the facts.

There are several serious flaws in this reading. It essentially teaches a secret rapture.

Has anyone ever heard me say we’re going to be raptured away, brethren? Not true!

I hope that others could see through this error. Pentecost pictures the harvest of firstfruits.

He admits it! It’s right in front of him!

But it does not require that the resurrection occur at such a time. We are told that those who are alive will not precede those who are asleep. Unless one is willing to accept a secret rapture,

the two second comings of Christ—this new truth—makes no sense at all.

Well, I’m sure he hasn’t read a thing. He’s just going on what someone told him. So Mr. Jim Franks, let’s hope that you would be honest. Let’s hope that you would order one of these books. And for you, since you don’t want to handle the truth, I’ll be happy to give it to you free—though I might be inclined to make you pay for it, so that you will understand that, while we give this out free to everybody, maybe you ought to pay for it so you would value it.

In addition to the subject of the resurrection, reference has also been made to the timing and location of the marriage supper. You may recall that I actually speculated on when and where this might occur in my Trumpet’s sermon. In retrospect, I probably should not have even hinted at this idea. I was speculating that it might occur in heaven on the resurrection day—which I’m still assuming it is Trumpets.

Well, you’re allowed to assume! You’re allowed to speculate! But Fred Coulter better never, never, never do that, because he’s a “bad boy.”

However, I think I made it clear that it was only a part of my dream of “what if.” The Bible does not say. I had no idea at the time I said those things that any other groups or individuals were teaching this as doctrine. Again, to help clarify the subject for you as well, I’ve also attached a copy of notes from Mr. Paul Suckling that he used to present a sermon on the subject of the marriage supper. I believe that you will find this very helpful and shows clearly where we have the facts and where we have speculation.

Then also they don’t like it that I have taught that Ezekiel 40 to the end of Ezekiel and the temple is the second temple—not the Millennial temple. And so, what I’m going to do—so that if anyone wants to pass on anything to anyone—I’m going to have a couple of sermons added to this next CD, which will cover some of these things. And also, they take umbrage concerning the difference between the 144,000 in Rev. 7 & Rev. 14. So we’ll cover all of those. It’s going to take quite a few sermons to go through this. And so, I hope that if any of you are in United, that if you want an extra CD of these sermons as we go along, to give to your local minister, that would be fine. And if anyone finds something that I’m teaching wrong, please let me know. I don’t want to teach anything wrong. And I will make it clear when I speculate.
Comment was made: What we’re seeing here is the classic case that destroyed Worldwide Church of God. You fear authority rather than fearing God! And that no one can dare have a thought other than what they’re told to think! All thoughts have to be proven by the Scripture, whether true or not.

Let’s first of all before we tackle this and any other thing concerning Pentecost and so forth, let’s go through and see how we are to approach any subject. Nowhere in the New Testament does it say: all new doctrine must be cleared by the corporate committee. Please understand that. The Bible teaches us how we need to do it. Now, let me just cover a couple of things here in Proverbs. I won’t go to the Proverb which says: “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.” And “Don’t answer a fool according to his folly, lest you become like him.”

Proverbs 18:13 “He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.” So if you want to answer anything, get all the facts first.

Proverbs 15:28: “The heart of the righteous studies to answer…” Now, that’s what we need to do. And that’s what I’ve done in all of these things. I haven’t gone off half-cocked, I don’t give my own ideas, because we’re told in 1-Tim 4 “preach the Word.” The Word is the Truth of God, so preach the Word.

All right then, we come to Proverbs 25:2: “The glory of God is to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings is to search out a matter…. [Now we find this also confirmed by Paul who said, ‘We see through a glass darkly.’ In other words, we don’t understand all things. And I don’t present myself as understanding all things. I am learning; I hope everybody else is learning. And I am sure that there are a great many more things for us to learn.] …The heavens for height, and the earth for depth, but the heart of kings is without searching” (vs 2-3). And of course, the greatest King is Jesus Christ.

Now, let’s see in the New Testament what we are to do. No, let’s go to Isaiah 28, first. This is why it’s necessary to get all the Scriptures, all the facts—not go through parts of two transcripts and then render your opinion. I’ll cover some of those a little later. We find this in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. Isaiah 28:9: “Whom shall He teach knowledge?…. [Because it’s from the Word of God that we learn. And if we learn it from the Word of God, God is the one Who’s doing the teaching with His Spirit.] …And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Those who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts…. [In other words, those who are beyond the basics.] …For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little” (vs 9-10). So we get some from verses from the Old Testament, some from the New Testament, and we put them all together in a right way.

Now, let’s come to the New Testament and let’s see how the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy to do that. Let’s come to 2-Timothy, the second chapter. And this is what we have to do regardless of how long we have been in the Church, regardless of how long one may have been a minister. We have to do it constantly. We cannot change the rules. Here are the rules that God has given:

2-Timothy 2:15: “Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God… [And that is what I’ve always striven to do. It doesn’t say: diligently study to show yourself approved to the doctrinal committee. Because if the doctrinal committee is political, they can reject anything and accept anything.] …study to show yourself approved unto God a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the truth.” Now, if you wrongly divide the Word of Truth you can come up with error because you’re taking parts of it. And that’s Satan’s favorite thing. Quote a lot of Scripture, but don’t quote the ones that are important; and make it sound like it’s Biblical, but it’s error.

Now, let’s come over here to chapter three—and if you would avail yourself of any sermons we have online, you’ll see this is what I’ve always preached. I’m not out here as some loose cannon, blowing things off in the wind as if I’m some renegade. Now some people may view me that way because I will not submit to a corporate hierarchy that imposes its will over the people and brethren that is not the will of God. So from that point of view I will be very independent and very staunch concerning that. But that doesn’t mean that I am some “independent, one man rule” out here, that will listen to nobody or nothing. That’s not correct. So, if you can show me where I’m wrong, let me know—I’ll be glad to change. And those who have attended with us for a long time know that’s true. That if I’m wrong, I’ll change. Sometimes it’s hard to admit that you’re wrong, but nevertheless, before God, you’re obligated to do that—every one of us!

2-Timothy 3:16: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17).

Now, let’s see what else we are to do. Let’s see how else we are to handle these things. Let’s come to the book of Acts 17:11—here’s what we
need to do with all things. And I would hope that
those on the doctrinal committee in United would
not be political and would not kill the messenger
with the Truth, but rather would do as Acts 17:11
says: “Now these... [that is in Berea] ...were more
noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received
the Word with all readiness of mind and examined
the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”
So that’s what we need to do. And we will do that.
We’ll look at every aspect of it.

Now then, as we do it, we have to follow
another precept that Paul wrote here—under the
inspiration of God—1-Thessalonians 5:21: “Prove
all things. Hold fast to that which is good.” Now, it
doesn’t say, Prove what you accept. It doesn’t say,
Prove part of the things. It doesn’t say—as Dr. Hoeh
did in his mistake: Make the proof fit what I believe.
And that’s how the Church of God did not properly
understand Pentecost because for 40 years they
didn’t keep it correctly; and if you follow that
mindset, that you only teach what Herbert
Armstrong taught, you are still stuck in the past and
you will never grow in grace and knowledge. And
you will not be inclined to prove all things. I have to
do that. You have to do that. Every Christian has to
do that—otherwise you can believe error.

Now let me read you a Scriptural quote that
Paul Suckling had in his sermon—under the
inspiration of God—Acts 17:11—Make the proof fit
what I believe. —As Dr. Hoeh did in his mistake:
Make the proof fit what I believe.
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And you will not be inclined to prove all things. I have to
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Now we’ll get to the Sea of Glass a little
later, but they’re upset at me for preaching about the
Sea of Glass. And also that the marriage of Lamb to
the Church takes place while the saints are in the air
on the Sea of Glass—then they return to the earth.

Now let me read you a Scriptural quote that
Paul Suckling had in his sermon—and he leaves out
something very important: Revelation 19:6: “And I
heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like
the sound of many waters, and the sound of mighty
thunderings, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord God
Almighty has reigned. Let us be glad and shout with
joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of
the Lamb has come... [past tense; already done.]
...and His wife has made herself ready.’ And it was
granted to her that she should be clothed in fine
linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the
righteousness of the saints” (vs 6-8).

Now, let’s see what he conveniently left out:
Revelation 19:1: “And after these things I heard the
loud voice of a great multitude in heaven... [Now,
if you’re up in the clouds, you’re in heaven—the
first heaven. Like every time I fly, I go to heaven
and return again.] ...saying, ‘Hallelujah! The
salvation and the glory and the honor and the power
belong to the Lord our God. For true and righteous
are His judgments; for He has judged the great
whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication,
and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her
hand.’ And they said a second time, ‘Hallelujah!
And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of
eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four
living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who
sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’ And a
voice came forth from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our
God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both
small and great’” (vs 1-5). Then verse six. So what
happened was “in heaven.”

All right, we’ll get back to that later. Let’s
continue on here proving all things. So you see,
here’s a basic lesson that we just learned: Never read
a Scripture out of context, where the context is
important to understand the Scripture.

Now, let’s continue on. Let’s come to
Daniel 12, and in the new Bible, Daniel appears just
before Ezra. So Nehemiah comes next, then 1 & 2
Chronicles. So, it’s different, but nevertheless, it is
there. Let’s come here to Daniel 12:8: “And I heard,
but I did not understand. Then I said, ‘O my lord,
what shall be the end of these things?’ And he said,
‘Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up
and sealed until the time of the end’” (vs 8-9).

Question: Are we living in the time of the
end? Well, all you have to do is read Matt. 24 and
you know we’re getting closer and closer and closer.
Right? Yes!

Verse 10: “Many shall be purified, and
made white, and refined. But the wicked shall do
wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand... [That’s precisely
what we’re seeing in the world today. But here’s a promise]: ...
but the wise shall understand.” So in the end-times we’re to grow
in the grace and knowledge and understanding.

Now, let’s come to John 16 and let’s see how
that’s going to be accomplished. John 16:7: “But I am
telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go
away because if I do not go away, the Comforter
will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it
to you. And when that one has come, it will convict
the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and
judgment: Concerning sin, because they do not
believe in Me... [Very interesting statement. If you
don’t believe in Christ, you’re sinning. And that is
believe in Christ the way that it should be—the true
Christ.]...Concerning righteousness, because I am
going to the Father and you no longer will see Me;
And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this
world has been judged.... [Not yet removed, but
judged.]...I have yet many things to tell you, but
you are not able to bear them now.... [So here’s
how God communicates it.]...However, when
that one has come, even the Spirit of the truth, it will
lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from
itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And
it shall disclose to you the things to come.... [and
that’s primarily the book of Revelation, because
without the book of Revelation, you cannot understand the prophecies in the Bible. That’s why the book of Revelation is one division of the seven divisions of the Bible—because you need the whole Bible to understand it.] …That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you the things that it receives from Me” (vs 7-14).

Now, just to give you an example of something that has to be disclosed in this age and can only be understood with the technology we have today. Let’s come to Revelation 13—and let’s talk a little bit about the “mark of the Beast.” You can go back and you can read what the Church of God Seventh Day has said, what the Protestants have said—and all of them say that Sunday-keeping is the “mark of the Beast.” And as a matter of fact, that’s what Herbert Armstrong taught, and many of the Churches of God today teach.

Now, let’s read it for what it really says: Revelation 13:16: “And he causes all… [Now, when we understand the book of Revelation properly, we understand it means the whole world in the end-time.] …the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads; So that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” (vs 16-17).

Why could enforced Sunday blue laws and Sunday-keeping not be the ‘mark of the Beast’? Very simple: because if they close down every business in the whole world for 24 hours for Sunday, where no one could buy or sell—on Sunday—you could still buy and sell on Monday, on Tuesday, on Wednesday, on Thursday, on Friday. If you keep the Sabbath, you wouldn’t do it then. If you’re a Muslim, you wouldn’t do it on Friday. It means literally what it says, and there’s now the technology available to do that. And we’re moving closer and closer to the fulfillment of that technology. Right now it’s being delayed a little, because they’re having a hard time getting the right size and the right makeup of the inserted chip in the right hand or in the forehead that will not cause infection and not cause cancer. That’s the only delay. Everything else is leading up to it.

Who would have thought—even a hundred years ago—that you wouldn’t need any currency to buy and sell? You write your own money with a check. Who would have thought that you could have a plastic credit card—that you could go into the store and everything’s paid for and deducted out your account and you go on your way. That could not be understood until the end-time. And that’s why Jesus said the Holy Spirit’s going to lead us into understanding—to understand the things at the end-time. And that’s why Daniel was told that at the end ‘the wise shall understand.’

So here’s another thing we need to realize: We cannot be locked into misunderstood doctrines in the past, given by a certain person, regardless of what kind of esteem you may give to that person, if it does not square with the Scriptures, then it is incorrect.

Now, let’s understand something else: Did the apostles believe that Jesus was going to return in their lifetime? Yes, they did! God did not reveal that to them until about 63 AD—61, 62, 63, right in there. And I have the commentary in the New Testament, which shows the change of the preaching by the apostles. One of the things they couldn’t bear at the time of the last Passover with Jesus was this: That He wasn’t going to return for over 2,000 years. How zealous do you think they would be? What if He said, ‘Well, I’m going, I’ll see you in 2,000 years.’ Well, Lord, I’ll be dead. ‘Don’t worry about it. I’m coming in 2,000 years.’

So that’s why then God had to give special revelation, through the Holy Spirit, directly to John, to write the book of Revelation. And so, everything in the rest of the Bible then must be understood by the things that are in the book of Revelation, when we’re looking at the end-times. So we need to understand that.

All right, next thing we need to understand is this: Because some are upset at some of the things that I have said, they think I’m totally wrong in saying that all the saints will be resurrected and be on the Sea of Glass—we’ll get to that later—and see all the seven last plagues poured out. And they also say that it’s improper to believe that the return of Christ is not going to be just kind of instantaneous because it’s likened unto a thief in the night. Does that refer to His beginning to reveal Himself: comes as a thief in the night? And after all, He’s going to plunder Satan’s household, which is the whole world. That’s going to take a while to do, is it not? Yes, it is.

So let’s see how God works. Let’s come back here to the book of Exodus; and a little later we will see some parallels in how God works that follow through in the book of Revelation. Now, I’ve already given a sermon on all the plagues and everything that you find in chapter six onward—of all the plagues that God brought upon the Egyptians. Now I want to cover one aspect here. Let’s come to Exodus 8:16. What we find through the whole book of Exodus, beginning with the signs, God revealing His power step-by-step-by-step. Then it reaches a certain point of intensity and then God separates the plagues that are coming upon Egypt, so that they do not come upon the children of Israel.
We find that in Exodus 8:16: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Say to Aaron, “Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the land, so that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.’ And they did so, for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod and struck the dust of the earth and it became lice in man and in beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the priests did so with their secret arts to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice upon man and upon beast. And the priests said to Pharaoh, ‘This is the finger of God.’ And Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not hearken to them, as the LORD had said. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh. Lo, he comes forth to the water. And say to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. And if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you, and on your servants, and on your people, and into your house. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground on which they are. And in that day I will cut off the land of Goshen, in which My people live, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, so that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the earth. And I will put a dividing line between My people and your people. This sign shall be tomorrow.’”’’” (vs 16-23).

Now we have a similar operation of this that takes place back in the book of Revelation. And that’s Revelation 6—we have all the six seals—so let’s go back there, Rev. 6 & 7. We won’t go to the two witnesses, but remember, just as though it was Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, warning Pharaoh and their religious leaders, so there are the two witnesses in Jerusalem, warning against the Beast and the False Prophet. And they “call plagues down on the earth as often as they will.” They’ll be the same plagues that we read of here in the book of Exodus.

Now, when the sixth seal is opened—we’ll come back to this a little later, but I just want to stress a point: that God is again going to use the same principle of setting aside those people that are His, so that the plagues do not come upon them. Now we have the first seal, second seal, third seal—we’ll go through all of those—and it’s war, and it’s famine, and it’s starvation and it’s death and slaughter and everything like that; martyrdom of the saints.

Then the sixth seal, Revelation 6:12: “And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as the hair of sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free man hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb…”’” (vs 12-16).

They’re going to know it’s Christ returning, right? Does He come to the earth on that day, that is revealed? No! As we’re going to see, there are a lot of things to happen. However, what does He do?

Revelation 7—he separates His people just like He did those in the land of Goshen. So right after that happens, Revelation 7:1: “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea, Saying, ‘Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads’” (vs 1-3). So here’s a time that God separates out His people and we have what? 144,000, and these are all from the 12 tribes of the children of Israel.

Now, what I’m going to do on this CD, we’re going to put on there the difference between the 144,000 here in Rev. 7 and Rev. 14. We may have some things that we’ll repeat as we go through this, but that’s okay since there’s such a misunderstanding. And besides, it will help us. And it will help me if there’s something that I have done that’s wrong, I’m certainly going to correct it.

But notice: “And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel” (v 4). And it lists them, starting with Judah—to fulfill the prophecy that that God will save the tents of Judah first. Then we have the great innumerable multitude. And the answer as to who these are is that they came out of great tribulation (v 14).

So, there are going to be a lot of people repenting. Does God always honor repentance? Yes! So then after that it shows that they will be resurrected when the resurrection takes place. They’re not immediately going to receive eternal life because we’re not at the point of the time of the resurrection yet. But it shows what’s going to
happen. That They will be there and serve Christ. So we have that parallel.

Now, we also have the parallel in the book of Exodus, but we won’t go back there and go through it, but I’m sure that you can understand the parallel here. All of the plagues became more and more intense, didn’t they? Until finally the death of the firstborn—and Egypt was almost totally destroyed at that point. Then we have the final last act of God upon the Egyptians and Pharaoh at the Red Sea; and we can see a parallel with that in Rev. 19 when God destroys the armies of the Beast and the False Prophet. Not in the Red Sea, but with the sword of His mouth. So I just want you to get a big picture of this; how that God works the same way: Old Testament/New Testament, when He redeemed Israel and when Christ returns at the end of the age.

Now there are some things…let’s cover one other thing that they have great umbrage concerning and that is the Sea of Glass—the unspeakable Sea of Glass. So he quotes Revelation 15—let’s go there, since we’re here in the book of Revelation, then we’ll do a little more study on the Sea of Glass. One man made the comment: ‘Well, why would they need the Sea of Glass to stand on if they’re spirit beings?’ Well, God has the Sea of Glass around His throne, as we’ll see. God had Sea of Glass on Mt. Sinai when he had the elders come up and look through the Sea of Glass where He walked. And what are you going to do with New Jerusalem, which has streets paved with gold, and gates. As spirit beings you don’t need those, huh?

All right, Revelation 15:1: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast… [Now who are those? Christians resurrected?] …and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the lyres of God” (vs 1-2). What does it say? They’re standing on the Sea of Glass. Is the Sea of Glass on the earth? No! It says: “…I saw another sign in heaven…”

Now we’re going to see how Christ comes. He comes in the clouds. And where are the clouds? In the atmosphere, the first heaven around the earth. Right? This does not mean that it’s up in the third heaven. Although there is an indication that the Father will come down from the third heaven when Christ presents all the saints to Him. And we’ll see that a little later.

All right, since they’re the resurrected saints, and the seven last plagues have not been poured out, are they resurrected before the seven last plagues? Have to be! Have to be! So the tactic that is used here—you come over here to Revelation 16:17 and in the middle of the seven last plagues they take an inset verse and say, See! They’re not resurrected yet. Revelation 16:15: “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is the one who is watching and is keeping his garments, so that he may not walk naked and they may not see his shame.” This is an inset verse that is given as a warning to true Christians who are reading it. It has nothing to do whether they’re resurrected or not resurrected at this point. But chapter 15, which comes before chapter 16, tells us that they’re already resurrected. So you cannot use this verse to undo everything that you have in chapter 15. But this is what they try to do.

Continuing now—Revelation 15:3: “And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, ‘Great and awesome are Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You only are holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed’” (vs 3-4). Well, they’re not going to worship until they’re all beat into subjection. “Shall worship”—that is also a prophecy.

Now, comment:

Since the saints are called firstfruits… [he writes here] …since Christ is also the firstfruits (1-Cor. 15:22) He ascended to heaven as the Wave Sheaf… [gives the Scriptures there: Lev. 23, John 20:17, Matt. 18:9] …it is assumed that the saints also must ascend to heaven to be accepted by God.

Now, in reading v 3, am I reading and ‘assumption’? Or does the Bible plainly state it? Revelation 15:3—v 1 says it’s ‘in heaven.’ Verses 2 & 3 say the were ‘standing on the sea of glass…and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.’ So what have I assumed here? Nothing! Then he makes a misquote, he says:

Chapters 16, 17 & 18 according to this explanation are insert chapters and are not part of the chronological sequence. Not so! I never said that chapter 16 was not part of the sequence. Chapters 17 & 18 are not—those are insets, that is true.

Now we come to Revelation 19:7—and it states that: “…the marriage of the Lamb has come…” and then v 11 states that Christ will descend from heaven on “white horse.” Therefore, according to this explanation the marriage supper of the Lamb must take place in heaven. Now you see, they are misconstruing which heaven that the Scriptures are talking about and I am referring to.
We are also told be these who give this explanation that the white horse is not a literal horse but a cherub that has the appearance of the horse.

Never said that at any time!

The method used by those who give this explanation is the proof-text method, that is: first of all a premise is established, then text are found which will support the premise. Of course text, which would contradict the assumed premise, are ignored.

Not so!

Is the proposed chronological sequence above correct? Can it be proved beyond any doubt that the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place in heaven? Or is this explanation merely an opinion? Can the interpretations given be supported? Are there weaknesses in this presentation? It is certainly true that there are inset chapters in the book of Revelation. It is also true that the narrative proceeds to certain points and then returns to another point at another time, especially by means of insert chapters. We also must remember that much of the book of Revelation is written in symbols and there are analogies which cannot be taken literally.

I disagree with that. A lot of it is actual, literal—which, because people cannot understand it, say it is symbolism. Now, there are symbolisms there, but:

- if Christ is coming in the air, is that a symbolism?
- Is there a Sea of Glass? Is that a symbolism?
- Are the saints standing on that? Is that a symbolism?

Careful study is required in order not to make mistakes and arrive at conclusions that cannot be supported.

All right, let’s read “marriage supper of the Lamb.” I already read part of that, didn’t I? I’ll just read Revelation 19:1 again: “And after these things I heard the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power belong to the Lord our God.’” Not on earth.

Come down here to v 7: “Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come...” (past tense—where was it talking about? In heaven! Where does Jesus and the saints come from? Heaven—the first heaven! Not the third heaven, the first heaven—in the air, like an airplane]) ...and His wife has made herself ready. And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true words of God.’ Then I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, ‘See that you do not do this! I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’ And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse... [never said it was a cherub] ...and He Who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war,... [that’s Jesus Christ] ...And His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written that no one knows except Him. And He was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God” (vs 7-13). Now, that identifies Him exclusively as Jesus Christ, does it not?

John 1:1: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

“And the armies in heaven...” (Rev. 19:14). Now, who are the armies in heaven? What did Jesus say when they wanted to take out the sword? What did He tell Pilate? He said ‘If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight.’ This is the resurrected saints. Now, if this takes place in heaven, and the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place in heaven, and if the Sea of Glass is in heaven, that is where the clouds are, and we come down from the Sea of Glass to the earth with Christ, then we have to be in heaven during that space of time.

Now, if you who believe in a Trumpets resurrection and return of Christ being one day, I challenge you: fit all of those activities into one day. Because you cannot do it, because Rev. 16 shows that there is a space of time between the plagues and the return of Christ.

“...the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses; and they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure” (v 14) And that has told us what? Verse 8: “...fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” The saints are wearing them, they’re on their horses.

“And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He treads the winepress of the fury and the wrath of the Almighty God. And on His garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun...” and so forth (vs 15-17). Then He comes down and destroys all
the armies of the Beast.

Just one other thing concerning the Sea of Glass. Let’s come to 1-Thessalonians, the fourth chapter. And I want you to answer this question: 1-Thessalonians 4:14: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, **those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him**... [They’re with Christ. Where is Christ? Let’s see in just a minute.] For this we say to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep. Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet... [not plural, singular]...of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds... [Where are the clouds? In the first heaven. When I get on a plane and fly—I’ll mention again—I fly above the clouds while I’m in the plane. And I am in heaven with, probably every day there are hundreds of thousands if not millions of people in heaven flying to and fro to go to different places on the earth.]...caught up together with them in the clouds for the meeting with the Lord in the air... [Now does that not tell us and qualify the first heaven, the atmosphere of the earth? Yes! And what does it say about Jesus Christ? Behold, He comes with the clouds! How did He leave? Ascended into heaven and disappeared in a cloud.]...and so shall we always be with the Lord” (vs 14-17).

Now we know that we’re not going to be up there forever. But nevertheless, how do you get up there when you’re resurrected and the angels take you to meet Christ? How are you going to meet Christ? What are you going to know to do? Remember, all of those resurrected from Abel and Christ? What are you going to know to do? Do you know nothing about.

• **Then what are you going to do?**
• Are you going to be willing to change?
• Or are you going to cling to doctrine because someone 50 years ago taught it and now you corporately follow this one man?
• Are you going to believe it because the Church hierarchy tells you to believe it?
• Or will you believe the Truth of God?
• Or will you reject it, so you as an elder or minister can keep getting your paycheck? Like one man who left Worldwide timed it so he could get his last check in Worldwide and then the very next pay period get his first check in United.

**So what are you going to do?**
• Are you going to believe the Word of God?
• You going to believe the Truth?
• Or are you going to follow the party-line?

These are questions we need to ask. Now, if you follow the party-line and believe just what men tell you rather than read and study the Scriptures for yourself, then you’re going to find yourself in a difficult position that you may be rejecting truth. How long did Worldwide reject truth that Pentecost was on Sunday instead of Monday? And everyone believed it! So we have to ask those questions. If someone wants to stand up and do writing about me and make criticisms against me, fine, have at it. But you better make sure that whatever you say is the truth! And I better make sure that whatever I say is the truth. You better make sure that what you do and preach is found in the Bible, and rightly put together. Whatever I say and do and preach must be found in the Bible, and rightly put together.

So again, I challenge you. Write in for the book: **God’s Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days**. We’ll send you the book. Transcripts of over 30 sermons and there are eight or nine of them in there concerning Pentecost. And we’ll send you the CDs so you can listen at the same time. Now, if you don’t want to read, all you have to do is just get your MP3 CD player and play them while you’re traveling—whatever you want to do. If you can find where I’m wrong, write me and tell me. But at least be up front, and write me! Don’t send it to other people and accuse me of things of which you know nothing about.

So we’ll continue on and we’ll talk about the Sea of Glass a little more next time, and see that that’s exactly what the Bible teaches.

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 6-6-08

Scriptural References:

1) Leviticus 23:9-11, 15 (KJV & FV)
2) Deuteronomy 16:9
3) Proverbs 18:13
4) Proverbs 15:28
5) Proverbs 25:2-3
6) Isaiah 28:9-10
7) 2 Timothy 2:15
8) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
9) Acts 17:11
10) 1 Thessalonians 5:21
11) Revelation 19:6-8, 1-5
12) Daniel 12:8-10
13) John 16:7-14
14) Revelation 13:16-17
15) Exodus 8:16-23
16) Revelation 6:12-16
17) Revelation 7:1-4, 14
18) Revelation 15:1-2
19) Revelation 16:15
20) Revelation 15:3-4
21) Revelation 19:1, 7-13
22) John 1:1
23) Revelation 19:14, 8, 14-17
24) 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ezekiel 40
- 1 Timothy 4
- Matthew 13
- Mark 4
- Matthew 24

Also referenced:

Book/CDS: God Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days, by Fred R. Coulter