

Politicians, Preachers Christ & Our Calling I

The answer to the condition of our world is Truth Repentance Obedience and Love
Fred R. Coulter—July 30, 2016

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. I don't know if you've been watching the conventions or not, but we've had two weeks non-stop convention, first the Republican and then the Democrat. I guess it's the old, old story. The more that things change the more they stay the same. We don't know what's going to happen with it.

I'm going to cover a couple of verses here, because everyone is going to try and solve the problems. 'The Donald' says, 'I'm taking the gloves off.' I don't know what that means. I don't know if he gets to be President is he going to give a million dollar reward for those 30,000 missing e-mails? We'll have to see what happens. You couldn't have anything as contrasting as this. This is what 'the Donald' may have to do. I don't know if he'll be able to do it.

Psalms 39:1: "I said, 'I will take heed to my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked are before me.' I became dumb, keeping silent; I said nothing good, and yet, my sorrow grew worse. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue... [I'm going after Hillary] ... 'O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am. Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth, and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah'" (vs 1-5).

- What can man do that is of lasting good without God? *Nothing!*
- What can we do without God's Spirit? *Nothing!*

Verse 6: "Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain... [Hillary better listen to this] ...He heaps up riches and does not know who shall gather them."

This, I believe, has got to be the most difficult and the most corrupt of elections that we are facing. Dolores and I were talking about that this morning.

How did we end up this way, when we started out so good? *I guess that's the story of all human life!* It just builds and builds and builds.

What I want you to do is to read Ezekiel 20-21, and then 22. I couldn't help but thinking of this

while watching the convention and everything going on, and how that men cut off from God can only see so far, and can only do so much. They always miss the point. We were talking, and it reminded me here of Ezek. 33. Who is at fault? *Everyone has their part in it, that's for sure!* Where did it start? How did it happen?

Ezekiel 22:17: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me....'" (vs 17-18). All the good is gone. Here there were two policemen shot yesterday. How many today? It's amazing how people get wrapped up and believe lies, whatever the slogan.

"...All of them *are* bronze, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the middle of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver" (v 18). God is looking at it, 'What good is there?' What is fire to do? Fire is to purge and to cleanse these things, but if you melt them all together, what do you have? You've something that is good for nothing. So, this is the whole lesson here.

Verse 20: "*As they* gather silver, and bronze, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the middle of the furnace, to blow the fire on it to melt *it*, so I will gather *you* in My anger and in My fury, and I will cast *you in* and melt you."

What did we cover here a couple of weeks ago? *We're facing the worst conditions since the creation of the world.* It's going to build and build, which then tells us maybe we have a considerable more time than we have thought.

Remember what it says about the 'stranger within your midst.' They will 'come up very high above you and you will be brought down very low.'

- How far yet do we have to go?
- How far yet do the strangers have to go?

If you look at it from this point of view: 'I'm going to run out and vote for Trump because he's going to make America great again.' All right, if he's elected and you have eight years where things are a little improved, what's coming after that?

If he's elected, if you think there's vengeance against Hillary today, think of what it's going to be against 'the Donald' in four or eight years. Think what is going to happen. The reason that they can't solve these problems is *because they don't know the origin of them!* Can you ever have

enough police or soldiers or eavesdroppers to stop all terrorist attacks? Does know there are terrorist attacks? *Yes!*

Sidebar: I have to tell you something on Pasadena. Harry Curley and I drove around the campus area. As I mentioned last week, I've got a nice picture of the campus, the trees, the mountains in the background. When things were going good there at Ambassador College in Pasadena, everyone said, 'This is just like the Millennium, a little piece of the Kingdom of God on earth.'

It was beautiful, well taken care of, lovely. But what happened? That's a long history we won't get into. What did Jesus say to the disciples and apostles when they said, 'Lord, look at these beautiful buildings of the temple here.' Jesus said, 'You see this? There will not be one stone left upon another stone.' I think they probably sat there and said, 'How is that going to be?'

This is how I felt driving around the campus. In one spot they've got all these condominiums that they put there the last few years. Drive around a little further and you've got some new ones that are coming up where the student center was. The only two buildings that are going to be left are what we called Ambassador Hall and Mayfair. Those two buildings are still there. Otherwise, three-story expensive condominiums in what are called Ambassador Gardens.

Then we drove down from there and came to where the Hall of Administration was. Last time I was there they were getting ready to tear it down. This time there was not one stone left upon another stone. They dug it up and removed all of the foundation and building, expanded it out, and they are putting in a new building there.

I thought to myself: ***you never want to go against God!*** In the long run His correction is going to come. Now you know why it's important to understand the model prayer: Forgive us our sins as we forgive others. Yes, indeed! Look what happened. It was classic. Remember this: ***All nations fall when they reach the highest point and become corrupt!*** That's exactly what happened to the Church. Those who came in an infiltrated and took over were probably sent by God as correction to find out:

- Do you love Me?
- Do you value the Word of God?
- Do you want to keep the Word of God?
- What is it that you want?

Could God have stopped this at any time, if it would have been handled correctly? *Yes!* As we're looking at them, where they're putting in the new foundation. There was a place where trucks drive up,

so we were able to drive up there and look in it. It was just unbelievable. I think both Harry and I really had some sad feelings because of what's going on. But what a thing!

Just like it is here, v 21: "And I will gather you and blow on you... [v 22]: As silver is melted in the furnace, so you shall be melted in the midst of it; and you shall know that I the LORD have poured out My fury upon you" (vs 21-22).

Sad thing that has happened; let's look at what's happening to Protestantism. Did you know that at the opening of their convention with the Presbyterian church in the United States, they had an imam open with prayer? What has happened? Have we reached out height as a nation? As a people? *Yes, indeed,* and we're coming down, *down, down.* What was the first one to go? We'll see here in a minute.

Verse 23: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, say to her, "You are a land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation"' (vs 23-24).

What have we been having? *Wind, drought, flood, fire!* Right now, while we're speaking, there's a fire just south and west of us in Monterey County and there's one in Southern California. When that's over, there will be another one someplace else. Why do all these things happen over and over again? Does it drive people to God? It should! 'O Lord, help us.' For us, it teaches us a lesson: ***Don't ever leave God!*** Think about that.

Here's why it's happened, v 25: "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst... " Today if you believe in a conspiracy you are a nut. There are many conspiracies.

What does it say of Satan the devil? *He has deceived the whole world!* If you really want to make some people mad, really mad, you tell them that because of our sins we're having all of these terrorist attacks. They'll get angry, 'How can a God of love do that?' That's not the question. The question is that **if you believe He's a God of love, why don't you love Him?**

I've got a book here we'll cover in the second half. It's called *The Naked Gospel!* By time he's done with it, it is really naked.

"...like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst. Her priests have done violence to My Law and have profaned My Holy things.... [keep in mind the Law, that's important] ...They have put no difference between the Holy and the profane, and have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have hidden their eyes from

My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them” (vs 25-26).

If they are not called, how is it going to drive them to God? ***It's not to drive them to God for spiritual salvation necessarily!*** That is a calling! But God judges all nations according to the letter of the Law (Jer. 18). Even nations that were never given the Law, if they do the things that are in the Law of God, God recognizes that.

Analyze the question: How many of the laws of God, as a whole, does this nation keep? First four? That's what Dolores and I were talking about. You look at the first four, none of them. How do they treat the Sabbath and the Holy Days? *'You don't need to keep those!'* The best they say is that they are ceremonial.

We'll find out, the *lawlessness of the priests, pastors, and ministers are responsible as the first layer of responsibility in causing the problems!* Because they don't read the Old Testament, they do not understand how God really, really works. When He says He's going to raise up a nation that's going to come and tear Israel apart—which happened with the Ten Tribes and they went into captivity. It happened with Judah twice. Did they learn the lesson? *No!* Not even to do things in the letter of the Law. First thing they can do:

1. stop lying
2. believe the Word of God
3. keep the Ten Commandments in the letter of the Law

If they did that, wouldn't this nation be a different place, entertainment-wise, activity-wise, if in the letter of the Law the whole land kept the Sabbath. Look at how much sin goes on Friday night to Saturday night. Think of that.

It should drive them to God, to stop doing the things that are wrong in their lives, if they will listen. To be called to salvation is an entirely different situation. For them to say that 'in the Old Testament they received salvation by keeping the Law.' If it was good enough to keep the Law in the Old Testament, and you received salvation, why then did Christ need to come and die?

Another thing, the Old Testament talks about all the nations of the world. New Testament is the preparation of the coming kings and priests of God to rule with Christ when He returns. It's entirely different and the standard is higher than the Old Testament.

As I've said, how many times, just analyze the news and analyze television with the Ten Commandments, and you'll get a good picture as to why all of these things are coming. Look at all of

those. Look at all of those who are trying to do right, but they haven't come to the first point of coming to the true God in the letter of the Law, getting rid of all of their idols, quit their false preaching and keep the Sabbath.

Here and there, there's a Sunday-keeping church that does that. But just think about it. If you have a '100,000' channels on your television set, look at EWT, that's the Catholic channel. Watch them. Go through the whole ceremony of the Mass with in mind what God requires. The only thing I can figure is that ***this has got to be a worship of Satan!*** They have idols everywhere. They have the chants. They have all the physical things that they do. God doesn't want any of that. What does God want? What is it that God wants?

Here's what God wants, Isa. 66; this answers the question: What can I do for God? That's the wrong question. The questions should be: What can God do for me? *and then* What does God want me to do? This will tie in with part of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool... [that's pretty terrific, we can't even get off the ground] ...Where then *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest?'"

Supposedly the greatest thing that was done in the Old Testament by man was the temple that Solomon built. Here's God's answer:

Verse 2: "'For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.'"

In other words, wanting to love God, wanting to obey God; that's the important thing. What did God even tell Israel? Here's what God told them to do, after He told them that they really didn't have the Spirit of God to do it, but nevertheless, in the letter. Here's what God would want:

Deuteronomy 6:1: "Now, these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God commanded to teach you so that you might do *them* in the land where you go to possess it."—that you live.

Here's what you hear on television today: 'The Muslims kill homosexuals and adulterers, and all of this sort of thing.' You read it in the Bible that God said that would be the ultimate judgment for them. Since God is a God of mercy, love and forgiveness, do you suppose that in many cases of these things people were given a chance to change and repent? *Of course!*

You just don't take everyone and kill them. You find out if they've done this, is it true. Now, 'Do you want to change your life and do you want to repent or do you want to rehabilitate?' That's what they call today. How many people today have been on drugs, and different things, and they've been rehabilitated and are now good citizens? That's what God would want. Actually, 'penitentiary' comes from 'penance,' which means it's a take-off of repentance. Maybe in incarceration you'll repent. You'll say, 'What am I doing here?'

Sidebar: The other night I was watching I Almost Got Away with It and Forensic Files and you think what people can do to find criminals. Think what God does Who knows the mind and heart. That's what God wants: change. Even if you obey in the letter of the Law and love God by keeping His commandments, and love your neighbor as yourself, just think how nice that would be. Look at all the locks, bars and things we have to have today.

You get these women advertising for the National Rifle Association today, telling how good it is. 'I've got my gun and no one is going to come and take it.' Isn't that a sad commentary that society is so bad that you have to have guns to protect yourself. Will all those guns protect you in the long run if God says, 'Unless you repent...'? **NO!**

Here's what God wanted in the letter, v 2: "That you might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life, and so that your days may be prolonged."

How many cut their lives off short because they sin? *Many!* You go back and you read Exo. 21-23; all those are the statutes and ordinances of God. God says how to handle theft. *You repay!* What does that do? *That stops a lot of theft!*

If you steal cattle, you give them four for the one. If you steal sheep, you give them five. How about if we applied that to cars? If you're caught stealing cars, you're going to buy them a brand-new one. 'I can't afford that.' We have a system of work programs and you can work and you can buy his car for him because you stole it. Would that not cut down a lot on thievery?

God said this. If you see even your enemy that his donkey, horse or cow has fallen on him, or his wagon has turned over, you go help him. Is that not loving your enemy as yourself? *Yes!* Is that not what God said and Christ said? *Yes!*

To run the average society in the letter of the Law, you have to keep the commandments of God.

Even in the family. What if you have a nice family, but there's one that goes out and he causes a lot of problems and sins, drugs, and all this sort of thing. What happens? Mom and Dad are all upset. The whole family is upset. Everybody is affected.

What happens when he changes and repents, stops—or she stops? There are more consequences with young women; that's why God lays so much stress sexually on women, because so much happens. Children come! What is the thing that both parties say they are going to do? *Help single mothers!* I've said how many times, tell them to find a husband, take care of them.

Here's what God says, v 3: "Hear therefore, O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you..." Everyone wants it to be well with you.

Sidebar to finish the story from the program I Almost Got Away with It: Here was this young man. He decided he'd rob banks. So, he robbed a bank and got away with it. Then he would tell his wife that he's out working and doing things, but he's out really scouting out banks. He got away with robbing five banks over a period of time. Finally he was caught. His wife didn't know a thing. Police came and searched the house and got in all the nooks and crannies of the house, came out with bags of money.

'Did you know this?' *Never saw it before!* Only thing in his favor was that he never caused any violence. He did confess his sin when he was caught, because they caught him. They gave him five years. He had a lot of time to think about it. It showed how he was really sorry for what he did. He's not being called to salvation or anything like that, but he reformed and he changed. He has a truck-driving job and he's doing well. He said, 'What I did was really stupid, greedy and wrong.' *All in the letter of the Law!* If that would happen with this nation, just think what would happen. That would be something, wouldn't it? *Yes!*

"...and that you may greatly multiply, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey" (v 3). That's us today; a land full of milk and honey. Only problem is we've got a mountain of debt and that's like a guillotine hanging over this whole nation.

Verse 4: "Hear, O Israel. 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 might. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart. And you shall diligently teach them to your children..." (vs 4-7).

We did that as a nation. That's how we had the educational system. When it says, 'this is the one I'll look to' (Isa. 66). Let's see all the 'religious' efforts of people when they don't obey. If you go to the Vatican on a pilgrimage at certain times, you get indulgences. Indulgences are a written certificate of forgiveness of sin by whomever. They can't do that. But people go, and then they go out and do what they want to. It's like the Mafia: they lie, cheat, steal, kill, swindle, and then the Catholic Church buries them. Just like this:

Isaiah 66:3: "He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man..." Come to the temple and your heart isn't right, even in the letter of the Law, that's what it's like.

"...he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog's neck; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations" (v 3). This is why we are where we are today.

Look at how many abominations that we have as a nation. Look at the government, thinking nothing, not one word in the Democrat convention about a \$21-trillion debt. *Not a word!*

What's going to happen? Every once in awhile you see these advertisements, 'You better get a little gold; you better get a little silver, because the economy is going to collapse. When it collapses, it's going to be the greatest collapse in the history of the world,' which is true. There are a lot of people who know.

But here's what happens if people don't, in the letter of the Law, as a nation turn to God, v 4: "I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered..." There have been enough people out there telling in various ways, 'Don't do this; don't do that; don't do the other thing.'

"...when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight" (v 4). We can apply that to the nation. Look at your nightly news and take a look at it.

Ezekiel 22:26: "...they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them."

What happens when you turn away from the Word of God? *You become more and more secular.* Isn't that correct? *Yes, indeed!*

Why did God give His Sabbaths? He gave the weekly Sabbath, because He made us in such a way that we need to be educated with the Word of God, even in the letter of the Law, so that we have a guidance in what to do with our lives just living in the world.

Wouldn't it be nice if everything was done in truth, and you could have a handshake and that was it? And you knew that the other person would keep his or her word and you would keep your word? Try this—I've mentioned this before; this is one of the goals that I have—you have your internal mind and your internal language going. You are thinking and you're talking to yourself and you're answering to yourself. You're trying to make a decision. Then you think of something, and then you say, 'I've got to do this, but....' You never do it.

What did Jesus say? 'Let your 'yes' be *yes* and your 'no' be *no*.' (Matt. 5). Try that with your internal reasonings. Let your 'yes' really be *yes* and your 'no' really be *no*. I think you're going to find that's a tough one, because your mind is there still working away. So, this is why we need the Word of God.

Verse 27: "Her rulers in her midst *are* like wolves tearing the prey, to shed blood and to destroy souls, to get unjust gain.... [Remind you of a foundation, or two? or three? or four?] ...And her prophets have covered themselves *with* whitewash, seeing false visions and divining lies unto them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD has not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression and committed robbery, and they have troubled the poor and needy. Yea, *they* have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them who should build up a wall for the land, and stand in the breach before Me, so that I should not destroy it. But I did not find one" (vs 27-30).

Jer. 5:1 says God told Jeremiah to find one man. 'We'll do justice and we'll do good and I'll forgive this whole thing against Jerusalem.' Think of it. Therefore, couldn't find one, let's hopefully that with the Churches of God there is more than one. But *even the Churches of God suffer from allowing false teachings to come in!* You can read Rev. 2 and 3. That's why we need these things.

When I saw the whole Hall of Administration—Dolores and I have been there. I've been up in Herbert Armstrong's office, up in the upper left hand fourth floor, the biggest office, and so forth. Talked to him personally on many occasions. We were at the other end of the hall where another evangelist was and when we got there to see him it was such an emotional time and

difficult time in the Church. We were talking about some things and he kept pointing to the ceiling. We found out later that it was because it was ‘bugged’ — in the Church of God. *Imagine that!*

I looked at that and thought, just like Jesus said. *‘Not one stone left upon another.’*

(go to the next track)

Christ and Our Calling—Part One

Let’s examine the main cause as to how of all these things take place, based upon Ezek. 22—the prophets, the priests, and the civil leaders. Then the people follow along. That’s what happens.

I’ve got this book *The Naked Gospel* by Andrew Farley. Jesus plus nothing, no additives. I’ll read from this in a little bit, but let’s come here to 1-John and let’s understand something. If you have Jesus only, do you have it all? Isn’t that what they say? ‘If you have Jesus, you have it all.’ It comes out this way.

In serious discussion with someone coming out of Protestantism, we had a Bible study at his house and he had quite a few people there. I started going through certain places in the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John is one of the most important of the four Gospels.

- What does the Gospel of John reveal, more than anything else? *The Father!*
- What did Jesus say how we are to pray?
- Lord Jesus?

That would not be wrong, but if you leave out the Father, then you are not correct. You only have half of it.

- What is it? *Our Father!*
- How do you end it? *In Jesus’ name!*

1-John 2:21: “I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth...” Even though we know the Truth, we have to have things written to us, to confirm, support and defend it.

“...but because you know it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth” (v 21).

What was the first thing that Jesus said when He was tempted by Satan the devil? He was talking to Himself, as a man. Since He’s the Creator of mankind, that applies to all men and women. ***He said, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God!’***

No “...lie comes from the Truth.” However, if you only bring part of the Truth, or some of the Truth, or half of the Truth, you’re incomplete and in effect you create a lie by misusing the Truth. Isn’t

that an amazing thing? Politicians do this all the time; they are absolutely the best. But they have to take second place to preachers.

Verse 22: “Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?...” That applies to the Jews. ‘He’s not the Messiah.’ What happened to them because they rejected Him? Where is their temple? Where is Jerusalem? Where are the Jews? *Scattered exactly as God said!* Can you fight against the Word of God? *No, you can’t go against it!* You can’t throw away some of it.

Someone is going to say, ‘The Old Testament, how can you live by every Word of God? You’ve got to kill all homosexuals.’ Please understand this; this is very important: After the Flood God gave to Noah the instructions that if a man kills a man, he shall be killed by man. What was that? That was *the administration of death* given to all nations. They had to administer and run their own nations.

God was no longer going to have part in the administration of death. I’ve given a sermon on this, why you cannot have Sharia Law within other geographical areas. God designed it so there is only one sovereign within a geographical area. That sovereign is responsible for the laws and for administering up to the death penalty for crimes.

Paul shows that for the Church those were set aside (2-Cor. 3). The answer is only God can modify His Law. Man cannot modify God’s Law, but God can modify His Law for man. Because the Church was to go into all the world, what did Jesus tell the disciples and apostles? ‘Go into all the world to all nations, preach the Gospel.’ But He did not give them the administration of death. The Gospel is called the administration of life.

We do not come into any nation, as a church, and carry out our own civil laws. When God was dealing as Israel as a nation, they had civil laws, civil judges, priests, and the high priest, who was the ultimate or the supreme court of the land at that time.

Today that is all gone. Today what is the greatest penalty that the Church can administer to anyone who sins within the group? *Disfellowship! Separation!*

When Jesus said, ‘Man is to live by every Word of God,’ He means all of those things that had to do with our conduct, our living, and our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which was given through the Gospels and the apostles. That’s what we are to live by.

We keep the Ten Commandments, because we’re to live by every Word of God. We also love

God and love our neighbors, love each other as Christ has loved us. This is the important thing that we are to do. When someone comes along and says, 'You're just like the Muslims.' *No, we're not!* I bring this out because this is important to understand here.

Verse 22: "Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son. Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either. Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father" (v 24).

- If you deny the Son, *you deny the Father*
- If you deny the Father, *you deny the Son*

That's what's important here. We need to understand that as we're going along. Live by every Word of God.

Today it never, never ends. There are people today who have been in the Church of God for a long time who are saying that Jesus was not God before He became human. And that the Holy Spirit is the Father of Jesus. In the Church of God today! I just got that a couple of weeks ago. That's why important you have to hold onto the words of God.

I want you to write down four letters: **TROL**. This is what we need in our relationship with God and what people need coming out of the world: **Truth Repentance Obedience Love**. There's another four-letter thing that we have, an acronym: **IFMA**. That doesn't mean If-ma. That is: **Independent Free Moral Agency**. That's why people get off the beam. They use their free moral agency to choose their own way, rather than continuously choose God. So we'll look at these two: **TROL** and **IFMA**.

We're going to do a short series in John 1 and in the Epistle of 1-John and see that these four things are there all the way through: **Truth, Repentance, Obedience and Love**.

1-John 1:1: "That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes..." John is affirming as a witness he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. He was with Christ from the beginning. He was with Him in everything that you find in the Gospels.

"...that which we **observed** for ourselves..." (v 1). When Jesus was doing different things, they were watching Him. Observed here is *an intense way of looking*, almost to the point of *gawking*. They were observing everything Jesus did, hearing everything that He said. Walking with Him,

talking with Him, sailing in the boats with Him and so forth.

How about when they fed the 4,000 and the 5,000? *That was quite a thing!* Think of what they went through when they said, 'We've got five fish and a couple loaves of bread.' Jesus said, 'Tell them all to sit down.' So, they sat down, 5,000 of them.

Jesus looked up into heaven and blessed the food. He told the disciples, 'Take this and go out and feed them.' Every time they broke a piece of bread off, there was more, broke some bread off, there was some more. Give them a fish and here was another one. Can you imagine what was going through their minds? 'We saw this; we experienced this.' So, John is affirming that what they saw, what they did, what they experienced, everything that they heard, is why they were preaching and teaching what they were. ***It is from God and you better pay attention to it!***

"...we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled..." (v 1). Remember what Jesus said, after He was resurrected? He appeared to them right in the middle of the room. He said, 'Come here, feel Me. Put your finger in the hole in My hand.' Remember Thomas wasn't there. Christ came back eight days later, Thomas was there, and Jesus said, 'Thomas, come here.' He backed down at that point.

"...concerning the Word of Life" (v 1). This is quite a thing. What was it that came to Ezekiel? *The Word of the Lord!* Let's stop here and go back to the Gospel of John at the beginning. The reason that this was written was to show us who Jesus really, really was and is. Think of this. In the world, people go to religions so they can be better people. That's a good cause. You find that people who have some religious convictions generally have better behavior, except the ministers who steal all the money.

A calling of God to eternal life is not just to make you a better person in society. You should be. It is to prepare you for eternal life and transform your mind so that you can be trained to enter into the Kingdom of God as a son or daughter of God and rule the world with Christ. That's a whole totally different thing. John is writing this so we know who we're dealing with and who is dealing with us.

- there are false christs
- there are false saviors
- there are false teachings

We have the Word of Truth as never before, yet, people are deceived as never before. It is an unreal thing that goes on.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word... [the Word of Life] ...and **the Word**... [the Word is 'ho logos'] ...was with God, and the Word was

God.” I won’t get into the technicalities of it, but the second one here ‘God,’ does not have a definite article.

The Jehovah Witnesses say He was a god (little g). Not so! This means, in the Greek, He had exactly the same attributes as God. He was with God. With is from the Greek ‘pros,’ which means *toward God, facing Him*. In Greek face-to-face is this: ‘pros pros opon.’ This is the meaning.

Verse 2: “He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him” (vs 2-3).

How could He create Himself, if He was not God first? If Jesus, as they say, and some of them do, He was just a created human being. Didn’t exist until the conception in the womb of the virgin Mary. Then how could all things have been created by Him, if He didn’t exist until that minute? *Could not have been!*

Verse 4: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it” (vs 4-5). That was Christ’s coming; the world in darkness. Who is the author of darkness? *Satan the devil!*

Back here in Isaiah are the words used in the *Messiah!* There’s one part that starts out, ‘Darkness has covered the earth,’ *gross darkness*. This is what it is. The people living in darkness, unwilling to turn to the light, cannot comprehend it. They didn’t comprehend Jesus. Today they want to deny Him.

Verse 5: “And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it.” Then it talks about John. Then it talks about Christ coming to His own.

Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh...”

What does it say in v 1: “...the Word was God.” *God became flesh!* Paul says ‘God manifested in the flesh.’

People read that and say, ‘That was written by a man.’ This is always good when you run into an atheist. ‘You believe in evolution?’ *Yeah!* ‘Where did you get that?’ *I read this book!* ‘You don’t want to read the Bible because men wrote, why do you believe what they wrote?’ When it says that these men were moved by God to write what He wants them to write. If God can’t move people to write what He wants to write, He is indeed most helpless.

Remember the story of Baalim, the false prophet. He was hired to come and curse, dedicated to come to curse, paid to curse! He got up there and *God made him bless*, seven times.

The whole Bible was written by forty men. That’s it! Why don’t you do this, if you don’t believe that, find one law that Moses said, ‘I give you this law myself. Comes from me.’ *Can’t find it!* Same with the prophets. Find one prophet who preached something that didn’t come from God. Can’t find it in all the Word of God. Some people say, ‘I’ll believe it if Jesus would come down and tell me.’ Do you really want that? If He came down to tell you and you didn’t fall down and repent...

Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us... [that means temporarily dwelt among us] ...(and we ourselves... [goes right back to what he was writing in 1-John 1] ...beheld His glory...” Didn’t Peter, James and John go on the Mount of Transfiguration and see the vision of transfiguration. After that, do you think that you would tell one syllable of anything that wasn’t true? or Write anything that wasn’t true? *No!*

“(...beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth” (v 14). Then he talks a little bit more about John.

This is an expression of the full Gospel, summarized in this one verse, v 16: “And of His fullness... [everything He came to do, everything He said, everything He taught] ...we have all received... [all the apostles] ...and grace upon grace.” {note sermon series: *Grace Upon Grace*}

What is that? Short summary: ***Having the Spirit of God the Father and Jesus Christ within you and direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ, direct!*** That’s a great grace, is that not? Isn’t that a fantastic favor and blessing that you have been given permission by God, and receive His Holy Spirit, that you can get on your knees and cry out, ‘Father, in heaven above.’ You have direct access to God. That is an amazing thing!

Verse 17: “For the Law was given through Moses, *and* the grace and the Truth came through Jesus Christ.” We already talked about the letter of the Law.

We need to really understand this as much as we can. We have the Word of God, we have the Bible, it’s printed on paper. Reading and understanding brings a spiritual aspect to it and the spiritual meaning behind it.

Just like, as human beings, God has given every one the spirit of man. That’s what makes you different from the animals. There’s a spirit of animals: spirit of cow, spirit of dog, and all of that. They have to have enough spirit to live, but that’s different from us, the spirit of man. ***God wants a***

spiritual relationship with us now through His Holy Spirit!

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives life; **the flesh profits nothing...**” Life only comes from the Spirit. ***The flesh profits nothing!*** Just like we read back there in Isa. 66. If you build God a temple, the greatest temple in the world, what did you build it out of? *From the things that God created!* What honors God more? A repentance heart and attitude in loving God? Isn't that more than a building? *Yes*, because that's a spiritual thing.

“...The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (v 63). That's why when you study the Word of God,

- you're inspired
- you're encouraged
- you're corrected

It is a spiritual thing that takes place. What makes you change your mind? What makes you repent? *The spiritual aspect of the Word of God and God's Spirit!*

Those who are interested in God and want to know about God, and are sincere in studying the Word of God, God will send one of the seven spirits. We've got a sermon series on that: *Spirit of God-Spirit of Man: Seven Spirits of God* These seven spirits keep God informed what's going on, on the earth all the time. God says He even knows when a sparrow falls. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head. He knows all of that.

Think about it! Let me just tell you one thing that I do just about every night. I wake up sometime during the night and I've got a little tray of apples back in the refrigerator. I go get an apple and I go sit down in this chair and I eat the apple. Many times I think about how fantastic that apple is, especially when it's crisp and has that nice snap when you bite it and it's full of juice and it tastes so good. Then I think about how God created everything in the world. I think about the different things He's created. Do I like meat? *Yes!*

Sidebar on eating: I was talking to a Vietnamese the other day. He's a mechanic who works on my car all the time. I had to get the smog done. He said, 'How old are you?' I told him how old I was. He said, 'You know, all of my friends in Vietnam are dying at about 50-55.' I thought to myself, that's sounds a little bit like the Scriptures. 'You want a long life, do what I say.' Isn't that what God says? Honor God (Prov. 3), give you a long life. Then it flashed in my mind about Andrew Zimmer, who eats all these unclean foods. While he was talking to me and telling me that his friends died between 50-55, and he says, 'They drink a lot and

get drunk, smoke. Some of them up to three packs a day.'

I was thinking something else in addition to that. I was thinking of what Andrew Zimmer ate when he went to Vietnam. They brought out live snakes and he selected one. They cut its head off and he took the blood and ate it. I thought, I didn't tell him—I was tempted, but I didn't—I was thinking I should tell him, 'Why don't you write them and tell them to quit eating pigs, snakes, shellfish and things like that, in addition to quit drinking and smoking. Maybe they'll live to be older.'

What is that? What did I just describe? What is the principle behind it? *God is no respecter of persons!* You can go to the Himalayas and you can find these people who live on very sparse diets. One of their favorite things is the inner core of the apricot seed and they live to be 120. God is no respecter of persons. Wherever you are on the earth, you are subject to the laws of God—*period!* Whether you believe it or not! Try having no gravity!

Think about this: All of your bodily functions to get rid of toxins and everything function by gravity. What's the problem when they're in space, when there is no gravity? What they have learned is that men were not made to live in space. They can live there for a while, but you have to bring everything to them. I've seen a special program on the space station toilets. I'll just leave it at that; it's a difficult proposition.

Think about just the ordinary thing of living, walking, breathing, eating, and all of this. God is no respecter of persons. But the calling of God is special; it is spiritual! This is why God wants you to prove the Word of God to be true.

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the Way... [there is a way of man that seems right and the end thereof is death, sooner or later] ...and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

Just like we read in 1-John 2, ***you must have the Father, you must have the Son, you must have the Word of God and you must have the Spirit of God!*** That's why there are so few. Not because we're anything great. ***No!*** It's our calling! God does things upside down. Let's see who He is calling to rule the world. It isn't 'the Donald,' and it isn't Hillary. It isn't Prince Charles and it isn't Angela Merkel or Netanyahu.

1-Corinthians 1:25: “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men...” Does God do things to surprise men? ***Yes, indeed!*** But God has no foolishness in Him. I am sure He has a sense of humor.

“...and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (v 25). God doesn’t have any weakness. What Paul is doing is using this to show why it’s so important for us to understand our calling.

Today we understand this even more. Why? *Because we get world news right into our living room!* Just like happened this last week. Catholic priest in France had his head cut off by radical Islamic terrorist. Right away, right on the news. A hundred years ago you wouldn’t know that. Today we’re kind of overburdened with too much. That’s why we need the Sabbath to keep our bearings.

Can any of the leaders of the world figure this out? Can they stop it? *No, they can’t!* But God is training us so that we will be able to rule the world, and they will not be able to do that.

Sidebar: I wonder what it’s going to be like. God’s love is so great that those that He does not call, He’s going to raise to a second physical life for a first opportunity for salvation. What is it going to be like when God raises all the descendants of Esau and Ishmael? Those who have fought against Israel, blood, guts and death for 2,500 years? Their minds are opened! What is that going to be like?

Verse 26: “For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are highborn *among you.*” Yes, what is your genealogy? Today you can send in a sample of blood and find out where you came from. You are a little of this, you’re a little of that, you’re a little of the other.

Verse 27: “Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world... [Why me? *Because we’re the foolish!*] ...so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things.”

Like Hillary used this against Donald, where he said, ‘I alone can do this.’ He might be able to do some things, but he can’t solve the problems. He may bring them down a little if he’s President, but how is he going to solve them? He’s not Christ!

Verse 28: “And the lowborn of the world, and the despised has God chosen... [that’s us] ...*even* the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are; So that no flesh might glory in His presence” (vs 28-29). Can you imagine?

Remember Mohammed Ali. When he was at his strongest and his best, ‘I’m the greatest.’ Everyone told him he’s the greatest! He died an ignominious death, unfortunately with bad Parkinson’s disease, because he got his head beat

around all the time. Just think, if God had called him. ‘God, you had to call me because I’m the greatest,’ or whomever. That’s why God did the things that He did to pharaoh. He was counted the greatest thing on earth.

Sidebar: God said that He’s done all the things there to the Egyptians in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, that His name may be glorified throughout the world. It’s recorded and spoken of to this day. Think of that! Do you find any monuments from Nebuchadnezzar? Might find a little one from Julius Caesar. Look what the great men of the world have done just in our time. Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Tse tung, and others wherever they may be. ***No flesh might glory in His presence!***

Verse 30: “But you are of Him... [the Father] ...in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, ‘The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*’” (vs 30-31). ***Knowing that everything comes from God!***

I’m sitting in the chair eating this apple, say like midnight or one o’clock, something like that. I’m thinking on the creation of God. I’m thinking of the title of the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* Think of all the people in the world that God has created from this little, itty-bitty pinpoint of life. And look at us!

What is it going to be at the resurrection? What is that going to be? ***It’s going to be so fantastic that we hardly have a clue, except we remember we were just a little pinpoint of dust and look at what we are now!*** That’s something.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 39:1-6
- 2) Ezekiel 22:17-18, 20-26
- 3) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 4) Deuteronomy 6:1-7
- 5) Isaiah 66:3-4
- 6) Ezekiel 22:26-29
- 7) 1-John 2:21-24
- 8) 1-John 1:1
- 9) John 1:1-5, 14, 14, 16-17
- 10) John 6:63
- 11) John 14:6
- 12) 1-Corinthians 1:25-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ezekiel 20-21, 33
- Jeremiah 18
- Exodus 21-23

- Matthew 5
- Jeremiah 5:1
- Revelation 2; 3
- 2-Corinthians 3
- Proverbs 3

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Naked Gospel* by Andrew Farley
- *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermons:

- *What is the Administration of Death*
- *God's Law, Civil Law, Sharia Law*
- *More Understanding Grace Upon Grace*

Sermon Series:

- *Grace Upon Grace*
- *Spirit of God-Spirit of Man: Seven Spirits of God*

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