

To Understand God: *Obey My Voice!*

Fred R. Coulter—March 12, 2016

We are going to be facing an awful lot of challenges to the Truth in the coming few years, more than we've had in the past. That's why it's important for us to really understand that even though there are many, many things within the plan of God, our relationship with Him is simple. It's the simplicity in Christ.

The way that God expressed it to the children of Israel was He said that here was the proposition: ***'If you will obey My voice...'*** This is very basic, but the basics are simple, and this is on which the foundation of everything is built ***'If you will obey My voice...'***

For us, it's exactly the same thing. All the details come later. The details are different from the world's view of things. The world is wrapped up in a system that is based on another simple proverb: *'There is a way that seems right to a man, but the ends thereof are the way of death'* and *'Every way of a man, or woman, is right in his own eyes.'*

God gives us the next simple thing for us to do. Let's see what that is. This is really very powerful. This is also taken from what we call the Old Testament. Stop and think about this for a minute: When the apostles began preaching and teaching, and they were to go into all the world and preach remission of sins and the Gospel of eternal life. That's what they were to do. Guess what? *They did not have the New Testament; Not one word of it had been written!*

How did they preach the New Covenant? *They preached it from the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms.* In the last chapter of Luke there was a special thing that Jesus did for the apostles.

Look at it the way the apostles were looking at it, because they thought He was the Messiah, *and He was!* They figured He was going to set up the Kingdom of God, because that's what He taught, *which He's going to!* But He was crucified and died and buried. You talk about an utter collapse of inspiration for the apostles, though He told them He's going to be raised after being in the tomb for three days and three nights. *No one has ever been raised from the dead to eternal life, except Christ!*

So, when He opened their minds to the prophecies concerning Him in the Law and in the Prophets and in the Psalms, they could preach the Gospel. Think about that for a minute, because this becomes very important.

Christ wasn't done with the Word of God. Remember what He said: *'I did not come to abolish*

the Law or the Prophets. I came to fulfill,' which means *to complete.* So He was completing the Word of God so that we would have it all written down *so we could obey His voice.*

Sidebar: Another thing that's important: #4. We will see that as you study the Word of God, it grows and grows, it expands and expands in understanding and meaning. That's why you don't learn it all at once. You start at the beginning and then it keeps going and going from there.

We're being prepared for eternal life. God starts just like He did with Abraham, {note Sermonette: *Spiritual Spring Cleaning* by Guilebaldo Elizondo}. He says, *'Repent, believe the Gospel, and follow Me.'* That's pretty simple. That's another way of saying: ***obey My voice!*** It's recorded here.

Let's see another thing that is simple but becomes very deep; the basic fundamental thing for everything. Remember: just like there are false teachings in the Christianity of this world, there is a *false love* in the Christianity of this world. Just like there's a false grace in the Christianity of this world, ***there's a true grace that's in the Bible!***

Sidebar: The next time you meet a Christian of the world, and they talk about the grace of God, ask them one simple question: **What does it mean grace upon grace?** I'll finish that for you: ***Everyone that has the Spirit of God has a direct connection, and access to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and are the future spiritual sons and daughters of God!*** Think on that for a minute.

By the way, as Gil mentioned, the works of law are the *traditions*. Protestants have them; Jews have them; Catholics have them. Buddhists have them; Hindus have them. But *we have the Word of God!* Everything in the Word of God is based on what we're going to read here.

Matthew 22:35: "And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, 'Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?' And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God **with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind**'" (vs 35-37). That is ultimate goal of conversion, right there. Simply said!

"...with all your heart..."—there's emotion involved. But it's not just merely based upon emotion.

"...with all your soul..."—your physical body. So then you take care of your body so you can

glorify God in your body by following the things that God wants you to do to take care of your body.

“...And with all your mind”—sounds really simple, and it is.

Verse 38: “This is *the* first and greatest commandment.”

- What happens when we do this?
- What is the next step from this?
- Is there a definition that tells us?
- What do we do so that it’s more than just a feeling in the heart?

—which we need to have when we first come to the consciousness of sin. God is the One Who brings us to that point, because we don’t know what sin is.

The way that the Bible works: ‘a little here, a little there, line here, a line there, precept here, a precept there.’ It’s just like putting together a puzzle or a house or making something.

There’s this commercial where it shows this transmission in mid air, and then all of a sudden it all comes apart. There are all these parts and all these details in there. I’m sure you’ve seen that commercial if you watch television. If you haven’t, you haven’t missed anything. Here is the transmission, but look at all the parts. It doesn’t work without all the parts. Have you ever had transmission problems? How’s your car run? *Not very good!*

So likewise, here’s what Jesus has told us to help define: How do we love God? We started with ‘Obey My voice. Love Me with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength.’ Now that expands it out considerably more.

- How is that expressed?
- Can you live just any old way you want to?
- Can you think any old way you want to think?

In the world, the most sacred thing is your opinion, right or wrong,

Here’s what Jesus said, John 14:15: “If you love Me... [you’ll hear me say this over and over again, because this is basic] ...keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” That’s the way it is in the Greek.

When you understand that before He came in the flesh He was the Lord God of the Old Testament, that includes an awful lot in the Old Testament, too. We all know the Ten Commandments. That’s another step:

- obey My voice
- love Me
- keep My commandments

Let’s see how God reacts to us and with us once we repent and receive the Holy Spirit of God. This is the vast difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

Here is how we overcome the carnal mind. Everybody knows what the carnal mind is. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.’

Notice how God is going to solve this problem. How are you going to obey His voice, love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being, and keep His commandments? *With the Holy Spirit of God uniting with your spirit of man* and that is the beginning of conversion!

Then here is what He does, Hebrews 10:14: “For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection... [but perfection is a process] ...for those who are sanctified.... [means you have the Spirit of God] ...And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ““This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,” says *the Lord*’...” (vs 14-16). After what days? *The days of Christ’s ministry!*

Here is the covenant that we enter into: “...I will give My laws into their hearts...” (v 16). Because if you love God and keep His commandments, He will write them in your heart and in your mind. Isn’t that something?

There’s this commercial, they’ve got it everywhere: ‘Here we’re going to improve your mind—Prevagen—Scientists have discovered from jellyfish a protein to improve your mind.’ Then it shows in simulation how the mind works and so forth.

God has a better idea! He has His Holy Spirit, which He gives to each one of us directly. That is called the begettal. Just like I point out in the book, *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?*, when a new life is begotten, it’s not ready to be born, yet. It has to be perfected through the process of growth. Then at the right time it’s born. Everything for the physical life starts there, *but everything for the physical life is also preparation for the spiritual life*, because of what God is going to do with His Spirit. This is really a great, marvelous and loving thing that God does.

God Himself loves *you*—Himself. In creating the heavens and the earth God is so great that He can love each one of us individually with the same measure of love that He gives to all that have His Spirit.

It’s not like the Catholic Church where they have a hierarchy, and some Churches of God have a hierarchy.

- the equal—that's all you people out here
- the more equal—that's all of us privileged people

We can live in sin and do what we want to and take your money and you have to come and crawl before us and take a little wafer in order for you to be part of what they're doing. *How horrible of a counterfeit that is!*

God wants it between you and Him, with His Spirit, directly. Now to make it easy to obey His voice, He puts His laws and commandments within your mind:

- as you study
you have your part
- as you grow
- as you overcome

When God first begins dealing with us, and it will happen after that too, many times, which is that God will work in our lives, because of troubles and difficulties. That's how God deals with every one of us. If we're rich and prosperous and have need of nothing, you won't care anything about God. So, we cry out to God and He hears and He answers. Then, if we start reading the Bible, it's almost like a switch was turned. In some cases it's like BING! like a little spark of electricity. What is that? *That's God opening your mind to understand!*

That's the beginning. He's saying, *'I have so much more to give you because I love you. I have so much more for you.'* This is why we need everything that God has.

- You can't develop the mind of Christ without the Spirit of God
- You can't develop the mind of Christ without having the laws and commandments written in your heart and inscribed in your mind

"...I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds" (v 16)—so that you can think as God wants you to think.

The more you study the Word of God, the more that you understand and the more that you will love God. It's a continuous growing thing.

Whether in trials or difficulties, which we'll have, we've all had them. I've had them; you've had them. We all have them. What for? *So we can have this happen to us!* Isn't that a tremendous solution?

One of the very first things you're going to hear from those who have the false Christianity of this world... {also note Psa. 119} Why? When you read and study that, you will see how fantastic and wonderful that the laws and commandments of God really, really are.

Here's a little ammunition to answer those who think they're Christians. You ask them, 'You keep Sunday?' *Oh, yeah, I go to church every Sunday.* That's the wrong day, folks, but they are convinced that's the right day. 'Well, the law is done away,' first thing they'll say. 'Jesus did away with it.' *He said He didn't do away with it.* 'Paul did away with it.' *Paul didn't do away with it.*

Remember this, God is the Lawgiver, this is what's important; Psalm 19:7 "The Law of the LORD is **perfect**..." Go back to where we just read (Heb. 10:4). *We are sanctified unto perfection.* You can't be sanctified unto perfection if you are not using those things that are perfect.

Just to give you an example with your car. You need the right kind of oil in the engine. What if you took all of that out and took out all the good oil, and you put in a massive amount of WD-40. How long do you think it would take to burn out your car? Wrong oil!

God has made us to receive His Spirit, to receive His Law, so that we can:

- obey His voice
- love Him
- keep His commandments
- have them written in our heart and in our mind

so that we can be perfected spiritually with His Spirit—all added together.

Verse 7: "The Law of the LORD is perfect, **restoring the soul**..." Restoring your whole being. When you were sinning against God did you have a lot of sickness, a lot of disease, a lot of problems? Did you have mental turmoil? *Yes, indeed!* Restoring the soul; the end result of that is the resurrection.

When you talk to your children, what is one of the favorite conversations? *When I grow up...* It's the same way with us and God the Father. In order for us to enter into the Kingdom of God, we have to grow in grace and knowledge. At the resurrection we'll be born again: transformed, spirit beings. Think of that!

We'll have some interesting conversations with some of those who came before us. An interesting one would be:

- Noah, what was it like when you were building the Ark and everyone was against you?
- What was it like when you entered into the Ark and you were in there seven days before it started to rain?
- How hard did they bang on the side of the Ark?

'You're crazy! You're a fool!.' Then, oh-oh! Clouds, thunder, lightning, broke up the fountains of the deep. 'Noah, let me in.' *Sorry!*

Don't worry about those people before the Flood. In God's plan, He's going to take care of them. But that's part of the more deep things of God. But we have to start with these things and build from there.

Notice what it does: "...the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (v 7). That's us! Before God called us, we were all simple-minded. Doesn't matter what our intelligence is. Don't you think some of these great scientists say, 'Oh, there's no God; the Bible's a myth, everything's a lie.' They're blinded, but in God's eyes, with all this knowledge, they're simple. God can change that. All they have to do is repent and come to God.

Verse 8: "The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart... [every way and everything about God is good and right] ...the commandments... [zero in on this, the commandments plural] ...of the LORD are pure... [not a thing wrong with them] ...enlightening the eyes." Again, giving you great and spiritual understanding.

Where are we reading right now? *In the Old Testament!* How many have said the Old Testament is the 'old law,' or 'it's been done away'? *Look what they're missing! Look at all the instruction here they're missing!*

Verse 9: "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever..." In the New Testament it talks about fear, especially in relationship to sexual immorality. It says 'flee sexual immorality.' Why does it say that? *Because the only way to avoid it is to get away from it!* You will reach a certain point that you won't be able to stop. So, God says to *flee*. That's New Testament.

"...the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether... [all of this combined] ...more to be desired than gold, yea, much fine gold..." Why? *Only God can give eternal life!* All the gold, all the riches in the world cannot do that.

Like at the funeral service. A very rich man died and someone asked: How much did he leave? The answer is: *All of it!*

Notice what else it does, in our mind—and I know you do this and I do this, because every human being does this—you talk to yourself all the time. That's the working of your mind. There's nothing wrong with answering yourself if you give a right answer. Everything you do is a choice or a decision:

- What should I do?

- Where should I go?
- What should I wear?
- What should I eat?

"...sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (v 10). Coupled with the Spirit of God, which we are to be led by the Spirit of God.

Verse 11: "Moreover by them... [all what we just read here, the commandments, the statutes, the precepts, etc.] ...Your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward."

What kind of reward? Look at the difference. It talks about all the gold in the verse above, but here it talks about great reward. You can't put any value on eternal life.

Here's another thing it does, v 12: "Who can understand his errors?... [nobody can because you think you're right] ...Oh, cleanse me from *my* secret faults." It helps get right down to what Gil was talking about, *being cleansed within*.

We will see how all of this applies. What I did, since Psa. 119 puts it all in a personal, first person, and one of the things we are to overcome is self and vanity, but in Psa. 119 it talks about **I** 135 times. That's not vanity, because it's relating to the Word of God. It's broken down into 22 sections, according to the Hebrew alphabet. In Hebrew, every one of these verses start with that letter of the alphabet. This was to be memorized by all the Levites at the temple. Think about that! That stretches my brain!

Again, concerning the Law of God, Psalm 119:1: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD." New Testament it is called 'the way of the Lord.'

What did Jesus give as a qualifier for that? *'If you love Me, keep My commandments!'* You see how everything is all put together, and just comes together as a complete package?

Verse 2: "Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who seek Him with the whole heart."

That ties right in with what we read about loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being. See how the Bible puts it together in such a way that we learn from it? This gives us the strength of God's Spirit. This gives us the joy of knowing the Truth.

Verse 3: "They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes!.... [admitting he's got human nature] ...Then I shall not be ashamed

when I have respect unto all Your commandments” (vs 3-6).

This goes on and on and on through Psa. 119; it is an amazing Psalm! This is what happens: When we are in the world, we’re blinded. How are we blinded? *We don’t think we’re blinded!* We can see quite well.

We are blinded *spiritually*, because when we do not keep the commandments of God, it’s just like putting a shutter over the eyes. When we repent and are baptized, as we’re repenting leading up to baptism, God lifts that blindness, *and you see*.

The Word of God is so absolutely great that it is a lifetime of study and a lifetime of learning, and you learn more and more and more. That’s what God wants, and especially for us today that we have all the Word of God and all the things we have for it.

But notice this, v 18: “Open my eyes so that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law.” That is amazing!

You know, brethren, in all the years that I’ve been in the Church, and this Passover coming up will be my 56th, I’m still learning, because there is so much here.

Think of it this way: ***God is so great that He created the heavens and the earth and all of us!*** More importantly, think on this: ***He loves every individual so much***, and in His plan He’s going to give them all an opportunity for salvation. In His plan right now, we’re given an opportunity. But God is so great that He has numbered us through the genes and chromosomes that *we are distinct and unique and different from any other human being*.

Expand that out further: *Everything that God has created*, though there are similarities in it, like the whole human family—all human beings together—*yet, we are individual and distinct and separate, yet we constitute part of humanity!*

It’s the same way with every leaf on a tree, with every snowflake that falls, with every animal that is brought into this world. Unique!

That’s how they catch criminals. You ever watch *Forensic Files*? Watch a couple of those. One man was about ready to get away with murder, but he left a thumbprint right on the plate of the light switch. That was a witness against him. Got caught!

Let’s see what God wants us to do. This becomes really very important here. As I mentioned earlier, there are going to be a lot of people coming saying, and even want to come in and change the beliefs of the Churches of God. That’s happened before in the past. That’s warned of in the book of Revelation. But let’s understand that here is how we

can differentiate right from wrong, good from evil, spiritual from carnal, by even those who profess Jesus. But in the world, you have two classes of Christians: one are those who are *for* Jesus but are not a part of the Church of God because they don’t keep the commandments and they don’t keep the Passover and Holy Days of God. They don’t keep the Sabbath, but they are *for* Jesus. They’ll tell you a lot about Jesus, and so forth. That’s a very close counterfeit! That’s why we need to have the Word of God and studied and know it.

Jesus gives this warning. Matthew 7:21: “Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven.”

Let’s see what Jesus said of Himself after He was cornered by the religious authorities for healing a man on the Sabbath:

John 5:19: “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder’” (vs 19-20).

Jesus didn’t do His own will. When it says ‘*of Myself I can do nothing*’—the Greek there is ‘ek.’ It means that *He did nothing of His own thoughts, separate from God’s*, and that would amount to nothing if He did it; likewise with us. He repeated:

Verse 30: “I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father Who sent Me.” That’s what we need to do always in our lives; the same thing. The Spirit of God will lead us to do that.

Now when we’re confronted with something that is different, come back to Matthew 7:21: “...but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven.” That’s why we have the whole Bible. It starts out simple and then God reveals other things to us as we go along.

Verse 22: “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’”

But that was only because of the name of Jesus; that wasn’t because of them. That’s more than likely, because the people that they were preaching to didn’t know that they were false, and so God

answered the prayer of those individuals, not because of them.

Verse 23: “And then I will confess to them...”

‘Oh, you were wonderful. Yes, you were great, marvelous. You did absolute wonderful things. Hallelujah!’ *NO!*

“...‘I never knew you...’” (v 23). Why? *Because God only gives His Spirit to those who obey Him!* And they didn’t have the Spirit of God.

We’re going to see, as Jesus said in the end-times there are going to be false prophets, there are going to be false Christs. I’m telling you that we don’t understand the work that the Catholic Church is doing to bring all religions together. I’m going to give some sermons on that in the future. But they are working through many, many different organizations called NGOs (non-government organizations). They’re bringing people on common ground.

They even had a big ceremony over in Seoul where they had the alliance of world churches from 120 churches sign a unity pledge. It’s through these kinds of organizations. We will see that come.

Who is going to be the greatest ones doing the greatest miracle for the world, that the world will follow? *That’s the false prophet!* Does miracles, even calling fire down from heaven. *Because they were not doing the will of the Father!* This is pure Satanism as its full and it’s coming full-bore on us.

“...Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness” (v 23). Lawlessness is to be multiplied in the end-times. That’s what we’re seeing everywhere in the world.

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine...”

- **obey My voice**
- **keep My commandments**
- **love Me with all your heart, mind, and strength**

“...and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock” (v 24).

That Rock is Christ! Everything we do is building on the house. God is One Who is building the entire house. Ultimately, what house are we going to live in? *New Jerusalem!* That is going to be awesome indeed.

This is why God has written the Word the way that He has, so we can learn it.

Verse 25: “And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew...” What happens when the rain comes down and the floods come and the wind blows? What are all of those? *Trials,*

difficulties! But God will see us through them all because:

- He loves us
- He’s called us
- He’s given us His Holy Spirit
- He wants us in His kingdom

Just like many of the things that you went through as a child, you can’t remember them anymore. When we’re resurrected and in the Kingdom of God, all of this will be past. Then God is going to use us to save the world and to save all of mankind and do the greatest thing that only God can do: *that starts with the Millennium and the return of Christ!*

That the whole story! Another whole account! That’s why everything that God does has purpose, and as we come along we many not understand it at first, but the knowledge is here so we can understand it.

God is the One Who is building the house! The house is the Church! What did Jesus say to Peter? *I will build My Church!* Ultimately, in every one of us, Christ is the One Who is doing the building, God the Father and Christ is there with us with His Spirit so that we can get through every trial and every difficulty that comes along! Then Jesus shows what happens to the foolish man.

Here is a very simple Scripture that is expanded and understood throughout the rest of the Bible. Here is the goal that God wants for us:

Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect...” Notice how; He doesn’t tell us the way to get there, but He tells us the ultimate goal.

“...even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect” (v 48). That’s what God is doing! That’s why the Church today is not large. God is calling the few; calling those who want to love Him and serve Him.

Brethren, I’m glad to be able to be with you here on the Sabbath and help you understand the Word of God. It’s going to be a really tremendous thing, because after we get this book out—*From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God*—I know that is going to go almost like wildfire!

There will be many new people coming. We are at a point in the Church that there are two things happening.

We are reaching a demographic cliff, which is that many people have been in the Church of God for years and years and they’re getting older and will go to their place of safety in the grave. Since it won’t die out, God is going to call more people and

we have to be ready to help them and serve them so they can grow and overcome.

Furthermore, they will be able to grow at a much faster rate than we have. I remember one of the first things that I got was a magazine, then I had to wait and here came a letter. Then I had to write in and here came a booklet. Later had to write in and here comes another booklet. Then I find out that they have thirty or forty booklets.

Today it's different; we've got it all right here! You want a booklet, go online and just push the button and there it is on your computer. You better have your battery charged up!

Let me tell you something, we have right now 45 in-depth studies with transcript books. We've got a dedicated big fantastic copier. Ken Redmond comes in and he makes the books. We have a spiral binder machine. We've got them on:

- Love of God
- Grace of God
- The Holy Sabbath
- Galatians
- Romans
- Hebrews
- Gospel of John
- Daniel/Revelation (416 pages)

That was never available even when there was a college in Pasadena, CA. We have so much more available and it is all going to be downloadable! Think of that!

Those who work on it and put them together. We just finished the Bible, which was three years in the making. We just finished redoing the website; that was three years in the making. Be sure and ask God to bless those things!

There are other Churches of God. They have some doctrines different from the Bible that they ought to change, but that's up to them to do it. I pray for them! I wish them well! I hope they do good! I hope they preach the Gospel! I hope that as many people who come to them can be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God!

The ultimate goal is in everyone, as many as possible, being in the Kingdom of God and answer the call of God!

We may be one little spot right here, but God is greater because there are many spots everywhere.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 22:35-38
- 2) John 14:15

- 3) Hebrews 10:14-16
- 4) Psalm 19:7-12
- 5) Psalm 119:1-6, 18
- 6) Matthew 7:21
- 7) John 5:19-20, 30
- 8) Matthew 7:21-25
- 9) Matthew 5:48

Also referenced:

- Sermonette: *Spiritual Spring Cleaning* by Guilebaldo Elizondo
- Book: *From a Speck of Dust to a Son of God: Why Were You Born?* (coming soon)

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