

Did Paul Bring a Better Gospel Than Jesus? IV

Fred R. Coulter

Last time we finished in John 3; let's review there just a bit. What we have done is, we have covered many of the places in the Bible where the *if* word is used. We saw that in the Bible *if* is used 1,332 times, and in 1-Kings 8 Solomon prayed: *if, then:*

- *if* your people repent, *then* hear from heaven
- *if* they pray to You, *then* hear from heaven
- *if* a man sins against someone and repents, *then* hear from heaven

What we are looking at are the conditional things that we find in the Bible in relationship to God. Also, this is important because the so called 'superior gospel'...

There was a man named Marcion who had almost an identical gospel to the 'superior gospel' that is preached today from Paul. He took the Epistles of Paul and, as it were and took a razor knife and composed his own New Testament which consisted of the Gospel of Luke_[transcriber's correction], minus all the commandment-keeping stuff and the Epistles of Paul, minus all the things related to commandment-keeping, so that he would have pure grace to present. These modern day false prophets are going back and they are doing the same thing that Marcion did.

I think it's interesting, because when we get to the various Scriptures, what we have is how these teachers come along and people listen to them and they think that it's marvelous. They don't do what the Bible says: 'Prove all things.' If you go through the Bible, how many times has it warned you to 'beware lest someone deceive you'?

Here is what Paul is talking about concerning some of the false apostles. I think it is well put this way:

2-Corinthians 11:1: "I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me.... [Isn't it true that that kind of doctrine is nonsense?] ...For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness... [subtleness] ...so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ" (vs 1-3).

When you get to false doctrines, when they read these verses, they always come in with their own interpretation of the simplicity of Christ. The simplicity of Christ is what you find in the Bible, not

the simplicity of Christ where you eliminate everything that you don't like.

Verse 4: "Or indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus..."—which is what they do *if you reject all the Gospels*, because that was for the Jews and not for everybody else, when Jesus said, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation, *then you have another Jesus*.

"...whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit..." (v 4). That is very interesting because false spirits come along with false prophets. 1-John 4 says, 'Beloved try the spirits for many false prophets have gone out into the world.' What is the spiritual power and inspiration behind those false prophets but demonic spirits?

"...which you did not receive, or a different Gospel... [sliced and diced] ...which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something good*" (v 4). 'This is interesting. This is nice. Your opinion is good. Oh, your opinion is good.' The truth is, we need to take all of our opinions and let them be judged by the Word of God, not take our opinions and judge the Word of God. That's the wrong way to do it. So, they put up with it as something good.

One of the things we've covered was in John 3: What does it mean to be *born again?* and how that it is a conditional statement. Today we're going to continue looking at some of the conditional statements. Then we're going to look at a verse in John 3 that will really, when you understand it, knock the foundation off some of the things that the Protestants have.

John 3:3—speaking to Nicodemus: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly I say to you... [He's telling the truth] ...*unless*... [Greek, 'ean mee,' which means that if someone *is not* 'born again']: ...he cannot see the Kingdom of God.'"

We covered how that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' This is conditional. You're not going to see the Kingdom of God unless you are *born again*. We went through the Scriptures to show that you have your first birth by water, which is your physical birth, and 'born of water' has nothing to do with baptism. The second birth comes at the resurrection. We have the Scriptures that say that Jesus, when He was born, was Mary's firstborn, and that when He was raised from the dead, He was the 'Firstborn from the dead.' This is what Jesus is talking about here.

Verse 4: "Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man who is old be born? Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?'... [it was

completely mystifying to him] ...Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless anyone has been born of water... [the first birth of the flesh] ...and of Spirit...' (vs 4-5)—from the dead, and Christ is the only One Who has been 'born again' from the dead.

"...he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That which has been born of the flesh is flesh..." (vs 5-6). The natural body, or the fleshly body, comes first. Then the spiritual body at the resurrection (1-Cor. 15).

Verse 7: "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'It is **necessary** for you to be born again.'" It is absolutely incumbent; you cannot enter in the Kingdom of God any other way than being *born again*, which is born from the dead.

Here's the test for all of those who claim that they have been *born again*. Let me just rehearse a little bit how they come to the thing of *born again*.

1. they believe that when you die your soul goes to heaven
So, they eliminate the resurrection!
2. some believe in baptism, that it's when you're baptized
3. others who don't believe in baptism say that it's when you believe in Jesus and accept Him into your heart
 - Do you believe Jesus is Savior? *Yes*
 - Do you believe that He died for your sins? *Yes*
 - Do you accept Him as your personal Savior? *Yes*
 - Do you open your heart to Him? *Yes*
 - you have been *born again*

It eliminates baptism and real repentance. That's the kind of *worldly* repentance because everyone wants to escape the penalty of sin. That's not true repentance unto a covenant death of baptism so that you can enter into a covenant with Christ. It is absolutely necessary for you to be born again.'

If someone says, 'I'm *born again*. Oh, that's wonderful! So, you've been *born again*?' *Oh yes. I've been born again.*

You read them John 3:7: "...'**It is necessary for you to be born again.**' The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; so *also* is everyone who has been born of the Spirit" (vs 7-8).

- Can you disappear in front of me?
- Can you walk through walls?
- Can you walk through doors?
- Can you ascend?
- *No!*

Then you're not *born again*. Very simple!

Verse 9: "Nicodemus answered and said to Him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? Truly, truly I say to you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. **If** I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?'" (vs 9-12).

Here's a parenthetical statement (v 13) inserted by John in 95_{A.D.}, because they were already having the doctrine of people when they die going to heaven. Jesus did not say this. This was written in by John.

Verse 13: "And no one has ascended into heaven, **except** He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, **Who is in heaven.**"

Jesus wouldn't be standing there talking to Nicodemus and say that 'no one has ascended into heaven, only He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.' When John inserted this parenthetical statement, where was Jesus? *In heaven!* You can't be on earth and in heaven at the same time.

Let's read vs 14-16 because this becomes very critical. First of all I'll read it in the *King James*:

Verse 14: (*KJV*) "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so **must** the Son of Man be lifted up.... [the force of *obligatory*] ...That whosoever believeth in Him **should not perish** but have eternal life" (vs 14-15). That is an incorrect translation. This gives you a dogmatic statement that you won't perish.

Verse 16: (*KJV*) "For God so loved the world... [God has done His part] ...that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him **should not perish** but have everlasting life."

- v 15: "...should not perish, but have eternal life"
- v 16: "...should not perish, but have everlasting life"

Recently, a friend of mine—Gary Stazak who contributed to some of the commentaries in *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*—took a New Testament Greek course. After going through everything we did, he wanted to take the Greek. He was amazed that his Greek teacher actually understood the proper translation, like we have in the *Faithful Version*.

Verse 14 (*FV*): "And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in the same way it is **ordained**... [as close to obligatory as you can get]

...that the Son of man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him **may not perish...**" (vs 14-15).

- "...may not perish..." is in the subjunctive tense
- "...should not perish..." is in the indicative tense.

There's a vast difference!

Subjunctive means that there are conditions to be met: "...may not perish..." It doesn't say *shall not perish*, or *should not perish*. That's why we have the account in Heb. 6 and 10 concerning the unpardonable sin. That's why we have the incorrigible wicked who are going to be thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20).

Let's understand something about **belief**. It is *a belief* and a continuing, growing belief that you are to have in God the Father and Jesus Christ.

James 2:19: "Do you believe that God is one? You do well *to believe this*. **Even the demons believe**—and tremble *in fear*." To say that you believe in Jesus, but not believe the way that the Bible means *in belief*, which is that ***you believe with your whole heart and with your whole mind!*** It is an on-going, continuous belief.

James goes on to make a very clear example, v 20: "But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that **faith...**" In the Greek:

- *believe* is the verb—'pistos'
- *faith* is the noun—'pistis'

So, when you believe, you are 'faithizing' *to God, in God or into God*.

"...that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar? Do you not see that faith was working together **with** his works, and **by** works *his* faith was perfected?" (vs 20-22). This tells us a few things:

- **if** you say you believe
- **if** you say that you have faith in this new 'super gospel' that Paul supposedly brought
- **if** you say that there are no commandments to keep
- **if** you say that every day is Holy

What are you saying? *That you really don't believe God!* You believe *your version* of what you force upon the Scriptures! You say you don't need to keep the commandments and there are no works that are unnecessary. What you really have is:

1. a very shallow faith
2. a faith that cannot be perfected *because you really don't believe*
✓ you don't believe in Christ

- ✓ you believe in another Jesus
- ✓ you have another gospel
- ✓ you don't understand the Truth

His faith was perfected! How many people have faith that they are not perfecting because they're not loving God and obeying? *Lots of people!*

Verse 23: "And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Now, Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness'; and he was called a friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (vs 23-24). ***You perfect your faith by what you do in carrying out your belief!***

We're going to see some other Scriptures that show some of the conditions to receive salvation.

Let's read John 3:16 properly: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes **in** Him..."—Greek is 'eis.' It can actually have the force of *into*. In other words, *your belief goes between you and Christ*. Paul wrote that the 'just shall live by faith': ***from faith to faith, your faith to God, God's faith back to you***, and it's a continuing belief in God and God giving you faith from Him and His Spirit to believe even more and stronger. This is the kind of belief that we have.

"...**may** not perish, but **may** have everlasting life" (v 16)—subjunctive—meaning that there are conditions, and **if** the conditions are not met you will perish and you will not have everlasting life. That's why we have the parables of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents: one was given five, one was given two, one was given one. You can go all the way through the Scriptures and see many conditions.

Verse 17: "For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." This does not mean that Jesus is not going to judge. Jesus said to the Pharisees and scribes, 'I have many things to judge of you.' This means that He didn't come at that time to judge the world, but He came to bring salvation.

Verse 18: "The one who believes in Him is not judged..."—unto condemnation. Do you really believe? Belief means that *you have faith to obey*. Note Heb. 11:

- by faith Abraham
- by faith Noah
- by faith Enoch
- by faith Abel
- by faith Isaac
- by faith Jacob

They did, and every place in Heb. 11 where it says, ‘by faith,’ they acted upon that faith and did what they should do. This is what Christ is talking about.

“...but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (v 18). If you don’t believe, what happens?

Verse 19: “And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light... [they don’t like to be told by God and His Word what to do] ...and does not come to the Light...” (vs 19-20). Just like the children of Israel when they heard the voice of God, ‘Oh, get away from us; we can’t stand it.’

“...so that his works may not be exposed; but the one who **practices the Truth...**” (v 20-21) Here’s part of the conditional clause—‘may receive eternal life or everlasting life.’ How?

Verse 21: “But the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light...” You’re always going to God. You’re always coming to the Light to have your life *cleansed, healed and strengthened* day-by-day.

“...so that his works may be manifested... [after he believed] ...that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (v 21). That tells us an awful lot here.

We’re going to see some other **if** clauses as we go along. Then we will ask: ‘How secure is salvation once you believe?’

Revelation 22:14: “Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to *eat of* the Tree of Life...”—conditional. Take the opposite: **If** you don’t keep His commandments, you’re not going to have the right to the Tree of Life. All of these things show conditions. **If** you have faith, you will have works.

For example: If someone says, ‘Come and work for me and I’ll pay you \$20.00 an hour. You believe that he’s going to pay you \$20.00 an hour. You have faith that he’s going to pay you \$20.00 an hour, so you work, and he pays you \$20.00 an hour. If he says, ‘Come and work for me and I’ll pay you \$20.00 an hour, and you don’t show up, you don’t work, but on payday you go say, ‘Pay me.’ He’ll tell you, ‘You didn’t even show up! I’m not going to pay you anything!’ That’s another way of looking at it here. **If** you work all week, you will be paid. **If** you take the negative of that, and you do not work all week, you will not be paid.

John 6:47: “Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life. I AM the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but

they died. This is the Bread, which comes down from heaven so that anyone **may eat** of it and not die” (vs 47-50)—there are conditions for eating it: that’s called the Passover, on the Passover Day at the set time.

Verse 51: “I AM the living Bread, which came down from heaven; **if** anyone eats of this Bread, he shall live forever... [there are conditions] ...and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” Of course, we find that in the Passover ceremony where Jesus took the bread and broke it and He gave it to them and He said, ‘This is My body, which is broken for you.’

Verse 52: “Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, ‘How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?’” I imagine they were arguing back and forth:

We know we’re not to eat unclean meat and we know that human flesh is unclean. We’re told we’re not to drink any blood, but He says, ‘Drink My blood.’ How is He going to do that? What is He talking about?’ You can imagine the argument.

Verse 53: “Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, **unless...**’—‘ean mee’—*except or unless*. Or you can put it this way: **if** you **do not** eat the flesh of the Son of man and **if** you **do not** drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. Here are the conditions. There are no conditions on God because God has fulfilled what He has said. God has promised and He cannot lie. The conditions are on us because we have to make the choices continually. That’s why it’s so true that everyday you have to make the choices:

- everything that you do is a decision
- everything that you think of is a choice
- everything that you allow into your mind is a choice

Let’s just put a little adjunct on here: God wants you to govern yourself with His laws and commandments and His Spirit in your mind *so that you develop the righteousness and character of God motivated by His Word and by His Spirit*. That’s how you are to control your life.

This is talking about the covenant, v 54: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day... [I imagine they were really bewildered at this point] ...for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him” (vs 54-56). Because you are in a covenant relationship with God you receive the Spirit of God, so Christ is dwelling in you (Rom. 8).

Here's the answer to the question: What does He mean? Verse 57: "As the living Father has sent Me..." That means everything:

- He came not to do His own will
- He came not to speak His own words
- He came not to bring His own ideas, but whatever the Father commanded Him

"...and I live by the Father..." (v 57). How did He live by the Father? *With the power of:*

- God's Spirit
- God's Word
- God's commandments
- God's love
- God's faith

"...so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me" (v 57). Which goes right back to what Jesus said in:

Matthew 4:4: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Jesus was God in the flesh and every word that He said we are to live by. Just like Paul said as we read in #2 in this series, that if you don't adhere to the sound Words of Jesus Christ you don't understand a thing.

John 7:17: "**If** anyone desires to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is from God, or *whether* I speak from My own self."

Because in v 16: "Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me.'"

How do you understand the Bible? *By doing the will of God!* Everybody starts out with the simple things. If there's one thing that's simple, that's the Ten Commandments. There is nothing complicated about the Ten Commandments. Even those who don't believe in God understand that certain things need to be done. If you want to know the doctrine of God, whether it's true or not, you do the will of the Father. That's how you do it.

Verse 18: "The one who speaks of himself is seeking his own glory; but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

John 8:30: "As He spoke these things, many believed in Him." A lot of people believe, *but not to the point of obeying*. They're the ones who believe, who don't work, but come to payday and they ask to be paid. *Jesus says, 'I never knew you!'* Here's what Jesus did.

Verse 31: "Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, '**If**... [conditional] ...you continue in My Word... [His entire message.] ...you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the

Truth, and the Truth shall set you free" (vs 31-32). Let's look at it this way. Wherever there's a condition, there is a positive outcome, which we just read, *if!*

Let's look at it this way. Let's read it with the word 'not' in it: 'If you do **not** continue in My Word, you truly are **not** My disciples.' How can you have a gospel that rejects the four Gospels of Jesus Christ and His Words and think that you're obeying God? *It couldn't happen!* "...and you shall **not** know the Truth and the Truth shall **not** set you free.'

Wherever there is the conditional *if*... Remember, there are 1,332 in the Bible, besides subjunctive verbs, which also give conditions.

Verse 36: "Therefore, **if** the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free.... [Free from what? *Free from sin!*] ...I know that you are Abraham's seed..." (vs 36-37).

This one really upset the Jews, v 51: "Truly, truly I say to you..." You could also paraphrase it this way: 'In Truth, I tell you the Truth.'

"...**if** anyone keeps My words, he shall not see death forever" (v 51).

Verse 51: (KJV): "Verily, verily, I say to you, if a man keep My sayings, he shall never see death"—and we go to heaven. **NO!**

The Greek is: *shall not taste death forever*, which means you die in the faith, but you won't remain dead forever. *Entirely different!* When you really start going through the *King James* and looking at it, in many, many key places they just do not translate it correctly. You can assume out of it doctrines that are not there.

Verse 52: "Then the Jews said to Him, 'Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; yet, You say, "If anyone keeps My words, he shall not taste of death forever." Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, *who* died? Who do You make Yourself *to be*?' Jesus answered, 'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, *of* Whom you say that He is your God. Yet, you have not known Him..." (vs 52-55).

- Were these not scribes and Pharisees and disciples wanting to follow Jesus?
- Where was He teaching? *At the temple, and He tells them that they did not know God!*

If someone would walk into a Protestant or Catholic Church and say, 'You do not know God' right in their church. There would be a riot. There would be a stampede. If you ever say that, get close to a door so you can run fast. Don't attempt to do it up on center stage because they'll 'cart you off.'

“...but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar. like you... [He just explained to them that Satan was the father of lies] ...But I know Him. and keep His Word” (v 55).

- Did Jesus obey God? *Yes!*
- If we’re to walk in His footsteps, what are we to do? *Obey God!*

There you go!

(go to the next track)

Since we’re here in John 8, we overlooked one *if* clause.

John 8:36: “Therefore, **if** the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free”—because He said that the one who is a servant of sin is in bondage.

Verse 37: “I know that you are Abraham’s seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.’ They answered and said to Him, ‘Our father is Abraham.’ Jesus said to them, ‘**If** you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” (vs 37-39).

If you believe God, What are you going to do? What does it say in Genesis 26:5? “Because Abraham **obeyed** My voice and **kept** My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” *Those are the works of Abraham!*

I know that some who may be argumentative might say, ‘Which laws, statutes, commandments and judgments were those?’ My answer is, ‘The same ones that He gave to Israel, because Christ is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever.’ Would He give one set of laws to Abraham and another set of laws to Israel? *Of course not!*

John 12:26: “**If** anyone will serve Me, let him follow Me...” That means do exactly as He did.

- Did Jesus keep the Sabbath? *Yes!*
- What day should we keep? *The same day!*
- Did Jesus keep the Passover, Unleavened Bread and the other Holy Days of God? *Yes!*
- What should we do? *The same thing, follow God!*

“...and where I am, there shall My servant be also. And if anyone serves Me, him shall the Father honor” (v 26). That’s something!

Verse 25: “The one who loves his life... [here’s a comparison; this is a contrast that is conditional] ...shall lose it...” Or you could put it this way in an *if* clause: **if** you love your life, you’re going to lose it.

“...and the one who hates his life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life” (v 25). How many things in the Bible relating to salvation and being a Christian are really conditional? *Quite a few!*

John 13—there are quite a few *if* clauses here so let’s go through some of them. This is the account of foot-washing. I am sure that there a few Sunday-keeping churches that do foot-washing, but they never ask: On what day did Jesus do the foot-washing? *If you’re to follow Him, you’re to do it on the same day that He did! It was the Passover Day!*

It think it’s very interesting as I was going through reading a little bit in the book of Mark, Jesus told Peter, when Peter said, ‘I’ll never deny you. If I have to go to the death with You. I’ll go to the death. I’ll go to prison.’ Jesus said, ‘I tell you that *today*—remember it was in the night when He was talking to Peter, probably about what we would say 9:30 or 10:00 o’clock—in this very night...’

What Jesus did was to confirm that the day begins at sunset and the night is the first part of the whole cycle of the day. *‘Today, in this very night, you’re going to deny Me three times.’* Jesus came and He was ready to wash their feet.

John 13:6: “Then He came to Simon Peter; and he [Peter] said to Him, ‘Lord, are You going to wash my feet?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall know after these things” (vs 6-7). That is after He got done washing the feet.

Verse 8: “Peter said to Him, ‘You shall not wash my feet, not ever.’ Jesus answered him, ‘**If** I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” He understood the condition that this was a conditional statement.

Verse 9: “Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.’.... [he understood] ...Jesus said to him, ‘The one who has been **washed**...’” (vs 9-10). That has to do with baptism in this particular case. You have to read *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* and *The Christian Passover*, we cover that in both of those.

“...does not need to wash *anything other* than the feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all.’ For He knew the one who was betraying Him; this was the reason He said, ‘Not all of you are clean.’ Therefore, when He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, *and* had sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak rightly, because I am. Therefore, **if** I...” (vs 10-14). If you acknowledge Christ as:

- your Lord
- your Teacher

- your Master
- your High Priest in heaven above

Read this statement if you *do not* think that foot-washing is required.

Verse 14: “**Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also are duty-bound to wash one another’s feet.**” There’s a great lesson in it. We’ll cover this again when we come down toward the Passover time.

Verse 15: “**For I have given you an example, to show that you also should do exactly as I have done to you.**” Remember, Jesus said, ‘**If** I don’t wash you, you do not have part with Me.’ So, how can anyone say that he or she is a true Christian if they belong to a church that:

- does not keep the commandments of God
- does not keep the Sabbath of God
- does not keep the Passover of God at the right time and in the right way
- does not wash one another’s feet

They are not of God regardless of how religious you may think. The pope washes feet, but does it ceremonially with twelve seminary students and he doesn’t even kneel down. He has them elevated on chairs and he’s got a golden vessel, it almost looks like a teapot, where he pours the water over their feet, and so forth. That is a perversion of what Jesus said. We’ll find out the whole lesson of foot-washing:

Verse 16: “Truly, truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord... [the apostles were the servants of Christ] ...nor a messenger greater than he who sent him. **If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them**” (vs 16-17).

It’s a matter of not only knowing, you will always understand—if you are a minister, elder or a teacher—that you never, never tell God what to do. You don’t go through and create a nice, fuzzy, warm *gospel of grace* that everyone can agree to, because ‘we’re all good people.’ You will do exactly as Jesus said. When you go through the Gospels and read everything that Jesus taught, you really begin to understand how absolutely absurd it is to say that it was for the Jews only and not for everyone.

John 14:14: “**If** you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.” We find in other places that it has to be *according to His will*. We find in other places it has to be *in faith*. So, that modifies this.

Verse 15: “**If** you love Me...” [‘Oh, I love the Lord, but every day is Holy’] ...keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” It is emphatic. When you understand that Jesus was the Lord God of the Old Testament, that carries a whole lot more weight. This adds to what Jesus said where

He said, ‘Do not think that I’ve come to abolish the Law or the Prophets.’ *If you do, then Jesus is going to respond:*

Verse 16: “And... [because you love Me] ...I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *Even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 16-17)—the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**If anyone** loves Me, he will keep My Word...” It does not read, ‘If a Jew loves Me,’ because they claim that the Gospels were for the Jews only. It says, “If **anyone** loves Me...”

“...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me” (vs 23-24).

What happens when you reject the words of Christ for the words of Paul that you like? **You don’t love Jesus!** It’s that simple. Too many people don’t think of it that way.

Since Jesus said that if you are Christ’s, no one can take you out of His hand, we will see that means no other man can, but who can?

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit...” (vs 1-2). Who takes it away? *God does!* Once we’re called and receive the Holy Spirit, we’re to bear fruit. If you don’t bear fruit, He takes it away.

“...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit” (v 2). That’s why we have trials and difficulties so we grow in character.

Verse 3: “You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you. Dwell in Me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you bear fruit unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing. **If** anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned. **If** you dwell in Me, **and My words dwell in you**...” (vs 3-7).

Isn’t that something? Jesus said, ‘The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.’ That’s why they have to be dwelling in us. How can you do away with Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and say that Paul brought a superior gospel? *Not possible!*

“...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you. In this is My Father

glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; **live in My love**” (vs 7-9). How do you *live in His love* since He’s in heaven and you’re on earth?

Verse 10: “**If** you keep My commandments, **you shall live in My love**; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.” Those are conditional things. We have choices to choose to do these things. Then beyond that we have the choices to choose to them in what manner:

- with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- a lackadaisical manner
- a put it off and do it later kind of attitude

We have choices with those conditional clauses, all the way through.

With all of these conditions, how sure is salvation? *It can be guaranteed, day-by-day!* Remember, if you sin and repent there’s the story of the prodigal son; the son who asked to go to work in the field and said he wouldn’t, but he repented and went. *There is always repentance!*

2-Timothy 2:11: “This is a faithful saying: **If** we have died together with *Him*, we shall also live together with *Him*.” How did you “...die together...” with Christ? *Through baptism!* We are baptized into His death. We “...died together with *Him*, we shall also live together with *Him*.”

Verse 12: “**If** we endure... [Which shows there are going to be difficulties, troubles and things, but we have to endure.] ...we shall also reign together with *Him*; **if** we deny *Him*, He will also deny us; **if** we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself” (vs 12-13). Those are all some of the **if** clauses that we need to look at.

How sure is salvation? Let’s see what Paul said; 2-Timothy 4:6: “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day—and not to me only, but also to all who love His appearing” (vs 6-8).

Paul knew late in his life that he endured and that he accomplished. In the middle of his ministry, let’s see what he says, which shows what we need to do. How do you secure salvation? *Day-by-day! Every day!*

1-Corinthians 9:23: “Now, I do this for the sake of the Gospel, that I might be a fellow partaker with you. Don’t you know that those who run a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? That is the

way you *are to* run... [your spiritual life] ...in order that you may obtain *the prize*. For everyone who is striving *for mastery*... [in athletics] ...controls himself in all things. Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we *are striving for* an incorruptible *crown*. I therefore, so run...” (vs 23-26). He didn’t say walk. He didn’t say crawl. He said run! That shows a certain amount of zeal.

“...not as one who is uncertain; so *also* I fight, not as beating *the air*. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected” (vs 26-27).

So that those who believe in Christ **may** receive everlasting life, not **shall**. Judgment begins at the house of God and **if** the righteous are saved with great difficulty, what will the end be for the sinners?

Salvation is secure everyday as you keep your relationship with God, as you love God, obey Him and keep His commandments. Paul said that he himself would be rejected if he didn’t do that. How much assurance do we have that we’re going to make it? *If you’re:*

- yielding to God
- overcoming every day
- repenting of your sins as they come along, because we all sin

—as we saw, Solomon said that there’s not a man who doesn’t sin.

Philippians 1:1: “Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with *the* overseers and deacons: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 1-2).

Whenever he opens his epistles, he has a salutation—opening or greeting—very similar to this. This is also imparting a blessing to us: “Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ” So, every day when we go to God, we ask Him for:

- His grace
- His mercy
- His love
- His kindness
- His forgiveness

That doesn’t mean that we become weak sycophants. Actually, it makes us strong.

Verse 3: “I thank my God on every remembrance of you, always making supplication with joy in my every prayer for you all. For your fellowship in the Gospel from *the* first day until now... [here’s a verse you can claim as a promise]: ...being confident of this very thing, that He Who

began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (vs 3-6). He will complete it! You can be guaranteed that He will! If you’re constantly:

- seeking the will of God
- doing the will of God
- walking in the way of God
- loving God
- believing God
- keeping His commandments

There is no way that you are going to fail, no way that you’re going to fall!

We will see the formula of spiritual growth that will **guarantee that we will make it**. Even though there are all of these conditions that come along, you have:

- the Spirit of God
- the love of God
- the mercy of God
- the forgiveness of God
- the desire of God to complete it in you
- the desire of God because He has called you

He will do it and complete it!

Notice how similar the opening is with Peter’s Epistle.

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (vs 1-2). Here are the promises. ***Always claim the promises of God!***

Verse 3: “According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” (vs 3-4).

The older we get, the more futile we see that human life really is, and the more frail we become, the more we see how frail that human life really is.

When we’re young and strong and in our teens, twenties and thirties, ‘Hey! We can do anything!’ When you start pushing up some gray hair on top of the sod, you begin to understand that that’s not so. That’s why we cling to these promises. We don’t cling bitterly to guns and Bibles and religion. We cling to the promises.

“...that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is in the* world through lust” (v 4).

We’re going to be changed by the power of God at the resurrection when we are *born again*. Then, He gives what we need to do and shows how we need to do it. We’re going to see the guarantee of what God is going to do.

Verse 5: “And for this very reason also, having applied **all diligence...**” If there’s any one thing that you need to have in your brain, it’s diligence, *diligence*, **diligence** and:

- vigilance
- endurance
- love
- faith
- hope
- Truth

“...besides, **add to your faith, virtue...**” (v 5). Here’s a step-by-step program on how to guarantee salvation. We have all of these conditions we have seen: **if** you kind of get in doubt and wonder how. Here’s how:

“...and **to virtue, knowledge...**” (v 5). Virtue is just good living, by God’s commandments Knowledge: Knowledge of Jesus Christ, knowledge of the Word of God.

Verse 6: “And **to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness...** [that your life and your mind become more Godly] ...And **to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love of God**” (vs 6-7).

Verse 8: “For **if these things exist and abound in you...** [part of your heart, your mind, your life and everything that you are] ...they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.... [Peter gives a little warning]: ...But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure**” (vs 8-10)—or guaranteed.

God has given His guarantee of what He is going to do. That’s signed, sealed and delivered in the blood of Jesus Christ and through the forgiveness of our sins. Our part is to reciprocate and be faithful and to ‘make our calling and election sure.’

“...because **if you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time**” (v 10)—**guaranteed!**

- God is there!
- He has given His Spirit!
- He’s given His Word!

We have the whole Word of God that we can study, learn and know.

Verse 11: “For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” ***That’s how you will be guaranteed!***

Salvation is not ‘universal security’ that once you believe, that’s it, you’re saved forever and nothing can change it.

There are many conditions that have to be met, but ***you can meet every single one of them through the power and Spirit of Jesus Christ! Your calling and election will be sure and you will not fail!***

All Scripture from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2-Corinthians 11:1-4
- 2) John 3:3-16
- 3) James 2:19-24
- 4) John 3:16-21
- 5) Revelation 22:14
- 6) John 6:47-57
- 7) Matthew 4:4
- 8) John 7:17, 16, 18
- 9) John 8:30-32, 36-37, 51-55, 36-39
- 10) Genesis 26:5
- 11) John 12:26, 25
- 12) John 13:6-17
- 13) John 14:14-17, 23-24
- 14) John 15:1-10
- 15) 2-Timothy 2:11-13
- 16) 2-Timothy 4:6-8
- 17) 1-Corinthians 9:23-27
- 18) Philippians 1:1-6
- 19) 2: Peter 1:1-11

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- 1-Kings 8
- 1-John 4
- 1-Corinthinas 15
- Hebrews 6; 10
- Revelation 20
- Hebrews 11
- Romans 8

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter
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