

The Gospel of John XIII The Light of the World

(John 8)

Fred R. Coulter

We want to continue this right in the timeframe of the Feast of Tabernacles, because this is when these events occurred, and there are some very important events for us to understand.

John 8:1: “But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.” There was a place where He stayed, kind of camped out overnight at the Mount of Olives. You will find that during the ten days before Jesus’ crucifixion you will find that every night He went out to the Mount of Olives and then came back to the temple.

What was out there—if He stayed in someone’s house, or if there was a little camping area that He stayed in, whatever it may be—I don’t know, but at least Jesus had that pattern of going out there. Remember, on the last occasion when He went out that way He stopped by the Garden of Gethsemane, and that’s where He had His final prayer for three hours.

There’s also in the area of the Garden of Gethsemane an olive tree that is purported to be 2,000-years-old. That means that it was there at the time that Jesus prayed. That’s really something if you think about it for a minute. What does an olive tree and olive oil symbolize? *The oil: the Holy Spirit of God, and that was to burn in the temple!* Then you go to Zech. 4 and it talks about the two witnesses who are the two olive trees that stand before the Lord of the Earth.

So, God just takes one simple little thing, and why have that same olive tree still alive 2,000 years later? That’s kind of a witness from God. I’ve never heard of tree any older than 2,000 years. There may be some; I don’t know about some of these Sequoia trees. Anyway, it was right in the garden where Jesus prayed.

In the morning, after Jesus would be out there at the Mount of Olives, v 2: “And at dawn He came again into the temple...” They had a different sleep schedule than we do. All you ‘night owls’ would not exist at that time, because you wouldn’t have electric lights to keep you bright and awake; and music and noise and different things to go on.

When I worked the graveyard shift as a cook, that really got me down after about six months. Working from 1am to 9am is the worst graveyard shift. You can kind of tolerate it from 11-

7 because you can get home and get to sleep. But from 1-9 absolutely kills you. You couldn’t have that during Jesus’ day. They didn’t walk over and flip on a switch and have electric lights. You had, at best, candles, and you had mostly these little dish lamps and they were just open little dishes with the wick stuck in the end and the wick would come out one end and they would fill it with olive oil and they would light the end of the wick and that was their lamp.

Sidebar: The Jews had, on the Sabbath, if you were reading the Scriptures alone and the light was going dim because the olive oil in the lamp was running low, you could not tilt it to make the flame come higher to read. But if there were two of you, one could read and one could tilt, that would be okay. Talk about ‘straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel’!

Verse 2: “And at dawn He came again into the temple and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.” Here comes a terrific confrontation; this would be a real classic movie scene! If you can kind of keep this in mind and just remember the temple area, the whole area where people would congregate:

- the court of the Gentiles
 - the court of the Israelites
- then you would go inside and there was:*
- the court of the burnt offerings
 - then the Holy of Holies

All around there were different areas where people would gather. There was the custom where different rabbis would get up and speak. Different groups would go over in a corner and listen to this one, and over in another corner and listen to another one. So, they all came to hear Jesus.

Verse 3: “Then the scribes and the Pharisees... [because they wanted to catch Jesus really had to figure out something to really do Him in] ...brought to Him a woman who had been taken in adultery... [you have the evidence right in hand] ...and after setting her in *the center*.” That means Jesus was teaching and all around Him were a lot of people. The scribes and Pharisees came through all of the people and went up into the center area where Jesus was and stood her right in the middle in front of Jesus.

Verse 4: “They said to Him, ‘Teacher, this

woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. And in the Law, Moses commanded us that those who commit such a *sin* should be stoned. Therefore, what do You say?" (vs 4-5). They couldn't really get Jesus on sinning or by preaching on His own authority. Remember, they came and said, 'We're going to find out where this authority is.' So, Jesus said, 'Okay, I will tell you where I got My authority if you answer Me one question: The baptism of John, was it of men or was it of God?'

So, the scribes and Pharisees thought and thought and said, 'If we say of God or from heaven, then He will say, *Why don't you obey him?* But if we say of men all the people will be against us, because the people believe that the message was from heaven.' In other words, his authority came from heaven and not from man. So, they answered Jesus and said, 'We don't know.'

Here they have to get Him. What would be the thing where they could really get Jesus? *If He went against the Law of Moses!* In order to catch a woman in adultery, you have to do some advance planning and scheming. It doesn't say if a priest enticed her, or they paid someone else to entice her, but you notice only half of the case is here. They only brought the woman!

Verse 6: "Now, they said this to tempt Him, so that they might have *cause* to accuse Him...." Wouldn't they really stood up and shouted it and say, 'This Man preaches against Moses.'

"...But Jesus stooped down *and* wrote on the ground with *His* finger" (v 6). I've heard a lot of people say different things about what He wrote on the ground. I don't know what He wrote on the ground. I know one message He could have written:

- Where is the man?
- the Law of Moses says that they shall *both* be tried

or He could have written

- the sins of each one of the instigators who were bringing this woman

All of those are possible. I don't know what He wrote on the ground, but it must have been pretty convincing.

Verse 7: "And as they continued to ask Him, He lifted Himself up *and* said to them, 'Let the sinless one among you cast the first stone at her.'" Notice that He was very clever in putting it right back on them. 'If you're anxious to carry out the Law of Moses, you do it.'

Verse 8: "And again He stooped down *and* wrote on the ground.... [again, I don't know what He wrote] ...But after hearing *this*, they were

convicted *each* by *his own* conscience, and went out one by one, beginning with the older ones until the last...." (vs 8-9).

This is very interesting because you had all the people around there. I don't know how many of the people knew the different Pharisees and so forth, but they probably knew some of the sins that the Pharisees had done. If there would have been a Pharisee who would have picked up the first stone, then, I'm sure, the multitude would have been against the Pharisees as well as proving Jesus' point.

"...And Jesus was left alone, with the woman standing in *the center*" (v 9). All the people were still standing round about. When it says that Jesus was left alone, apparently they brought in the woman and they got all of the crowded center area where Jesus was; it's just Jesus and the woman, and He's still down there writing on the ground.

I'm going to do that sometime. I'm going to really try to pick up some of the wisdom that Jesus used when He was trapped. I do need that, because when I get trapped I tend to respond in a different way. I get out the Smith and Wesson, the six-hooter, and POW! POW!

Verse 10: "And when Jesus lifted Himself up and saw no one but the woman..." I imagine that she was scared to death! Just imagine how she felt. Her heart pounding and she was wondering and worrying.. Here's this Man, 'is He going to condemn me? Those rats caught me.' Talk about government entrapment, you sure have it here!

"...He said to her, 'Woman, where are your accusers? Did anyone condemn you?' And she said, 'No one, Lord.'..." (vs 10-11). I'll bet she was very happy to say that and rather breathless in doing it.

"...And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you. **Go, and sin no more**'" (v 11). He knew it was a sin.

Here's another thing that is very true: When we have our sins forgiven, when we're not judged for sins that we have committed, and we know that we are forgiven, then we're to "...**Go, and sin no more.**"

John 5:14—this after Jesus healed the man that was sick: "After these things, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have been made whole. **Sin no more**, so that something worse does not happen to you.'"

It's very interesting that during the Millennium all Israel is going to be saved. Israel is depicted in the Old Testament as a unfaithful wife, an adulteress. Here in type you have how God is

going to forgive Israel, all those who come into the second resurrection, because this is going to have to be at the time during the second resurrection. He's going to forgive their sins, but He's going to tell them "...**sin no more**..."

John 8:12: "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.'" That's quite a profound statement! "...**the Light of Life**" *if* you follow Christ!

Verse 13: "Therefore, the Pharisees said to Him, 'You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, because I know where I have come from and where I am going. But **you** do not know where I come from and where I go'" (vs 13-14). They could have by *believing Him!*

Verse 15: "You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one." Isn't that true? Every time you get in a sticky argument of some kind, you always start out with part of a premise that is true, but it's really, in fact, false because it's not the whole story.

Isn't this thing that arguments with kids are made of? There was a comedian that was telling about his family at home, and one of the brothers would come down in the morning and sit at the breakfast table and make an ugly face and then one of the other little kids would look at him and say, 'He looked at me!' Both are a false premise. One made a face and the other one is trying to get the other one in trouble. It's a false premise, but it's still true! That's how you get involved in a lot of these carnal arguments.

Many times a judge will tell you, 'I can't do this, or that, because the law doesn't say so one way or the other.' That's why we have the legislature of the temple of Satan's system to try and produce all the laws. They're generating laws all the time; if there isn't a law they can't make a judgment.

Well, that's exactly what the scribes and Pharisees were doing. They came back judging after the flesh and caught the woman entrapped in adultery to try and bring physical circumstances on her for her part in breaking the law. Yet, that's not the whole story.

Verse 15: "You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. Yet, if I do judge, My judgment is true, for I am not alone; but I and the Father Who sent Me. And it is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I AM *One* Who bears witness of Myself, and the Father, Who sent Me

bears witness of Me.'" (vs 15-18). Then they get into the whole argument concerning the Father.

Many things will turn right back to John 3:18-20, that if you hate the Light you won't come to it because your deeds are evil and you don't want your deeds exposed. If you come to the Light and walk in the Light and in the Truth, Jesus said that **He was the Light!**

I want you to pay special attention in John 1 to the connection between the Word—where it says that Jesus was the Word—and the words 'created everything that there was.' Let's see about the Light of the world.

John 1:4: "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. There was a man sent by God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might testify concerning **the Light**... [Jesus said, 'I am the Light of the world'] ...so that through him all might believe. He [John] was not the Light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the Light. The True Light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him" (vs 4-11).

Stop and think about it for a minute; remember, the Word created everything that there was and nothing came into existence except that the Word had created it. What was the first thing that was created? Jesus said that **He** is the Light of the world. We know that after Satan's rebellion:

Genesis 1:2: "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light.' And there was light. And God saw the light that *it was* good; and God divided between the light and the darkness" (vs 2-4). There are many, many things you can draw in analogy concerning this:

- God created light
- the Light is Truth
- Jesus is the Light of the world

Differentiate that from darkness. Who is the author of darkness? *Satan the devil!* If you walk in darkness, you're walking in sin. All of those things you can just amplify and think about just out of this one verse.

Let's see another analogy: *When God is with you there is Light!* When God was starting to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt and He separated the children of Israel from the Egyptians:

Exodus 10:21: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward the heavens, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, so that one may even feel the darkness.’” You talk about something that creeps and crawls on your flesh! Have you ever been in a cave? You go down and they tell you about how many millions of years it took to make these various formations.

I never believed any of those things, that it took that long, so I said, ‘What if the temperature of the water was changed? What if it was very hot water at the time when these were made? Would it not be made a lot quicker? You see the geysers and hot springs and they build up real quickly. We hold onto the rail going down and they turn off the lights. Almost every cave trip you take they turn off the lights. What they want you to do is see if you can see your hand. Bringing it right up to your nose you can’t see it. Nothing! Black!

Just think of that kind of darkness, the kind that crawls all over you that can be felt, and you can’t get away from it. I don’t think it is sticky or gooey, but it sure makes your skin crawl! **“...so that one may even feel the darkness.”**

Verse 22: “And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven. And there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.” I don’t know about you, but if you have stay in bed for three days and you’re not sick, about the end of the first day and night you’re ‘fit to be tied.’ Can you imagine how restless and scared they were getting on into the third day?

Notice that God was with the Israelites, v 23: “They did not see one another, nor did any rise from his place, *for* three days....” Not like today with your Black and Decker flashlight. I imagine it was so thick and heavy that even when they would light their little candles that all it would do is light about two inches around and they couldn’t see anything. It was a *thick* darkness. I don’t know if it put out the candles or what.

“...But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.” (v 23). In a sense, in analogy, the same thing is in our lives. We live in a world that is full of *spiritual darkness*. The world is going about not knowing where it is, but there is Light in our lives. All during the 40 years that the Israelites were wandering in the desert they had this:

Exodus 13:20 “And they moved from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them in the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, to

go by day and night” (vs 20-21). All during the 40 years that was there; the Light of God was there, symbolic of Christ! Quite an interesting parallel in all these things when you really think about it.

Psalms 27:1: **“The LORD is my light** and my salvation...” God is going to lead the way; Christ is the Light! He said, ‘I am the Light of the world!’ In other words, if there’s any Truth, any goodness, any thing in this world, it’s going to have to be traced back to Christ! Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, ‘The light in you is darkness’ and He warned us that the light in us better not be darkness.

“...whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (v 1). Then David goes all the way through here showing how that God:

- protects him
- watches over him
- delivers him out of the hand of the enemy

The conclusion is, v 14: “Wait for the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall make your heart strong; yea, wait, I say, *wait* on the LORD.”

This is the fantastic and marvelous thing about the Bible: The Bible is a continuously self-improving book. There’s no other book like it on earth.

Psalms 119:105: “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

- What was inside the temple to burn perpetually? *The lamp of God!*
- Who is the Word of God? *Christ is the Word of God! He is the Light of God!*

And Christ—Who is the Word—gives light, which is also contained in God’s Word!

- Who inspired the Word of God? *Jesus Christ did!*

See how all of these just come right back and tie together; it’s really fantastic! “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Verse 130: “The entrance of Your words... [into the mind] ...gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”

How is Jesus Christ going to return? All of these tie together. I thought that was rather fascinating in preparing for this sermon how all of these things just fit together so tremendously.

Luke 17:22: “Then He said to the disciples, ‘The days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it.’” I think about that a lot and I think about during the time of the apostles—you can read this in Paul’s

writings—they pretty well thought that Jesus was going to return during their day. All of these other people who were the ones being:

- against Christianity
- changing Christianity
- bringing in false Christianity
 - ✓ the Lord is in your heart
 - ✓ we will prove all these apostles were false
 - ✓ we're really the true apostles, the false ones saying their true and the true ones saying they're false

One of the things that they taught was that Christ is going to return 'in our lifetime.' Even the last part of the book of John, and remember it went around as a rumor among all the brethren, which then was obviously perpetuated in all the Churches. What did Jesus tell John?

Jesus told Peter, '*Feed My sheep,*' and 'you're going to die by crucifixion' in so many words. And Peter said, 'If that's going to happen to me, what's going to happen to him?' pointing to John. Jesus said to Peter, '*What is it to you if he lives until I return? You feed the sheep.* You do what you're supposed to do.' And from that day on it went out that Christ would return in the lifetime of the Apostle John. This gave everybody a lot of hope, because who was the last remaining apostle? *The Apostle John!*

When John was given the vision of Revelation he did see in vision and lived to see the return of Christ. But when John died, can you imagine how many of those *false Christians* would say, 'See, we were right! John is dead! And Jesus didn't return! Now, we have the true doctrine! This doctrine over here is too Jewish; you don't have to keep the Holy Days and the Sabbath and all of that. We have the true doctrine.'

When Christ returns it's going to come a little differently, but I imagine that there were many days during that time, all those years up until the death of John, that the apostles were desiring one of the days of Jesus Christ. I wonder how many sermons that were given years later where the apostles would say, 'I just wish that you had been there when thus and such took place. I just wish you had been there when Jesus taught us these things. Maybe you would believe even more.'

That's why Jesus said that there was a 'blessing for those who believe on Him and have not seen Him.' They were desiring "...to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it."

Verse 23: "And they shall say to you, 'Look

here,' or, 'Look there.' Do not go, neither follow *them*. For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven... [the sun] ...so also shall the Son of man be in His day."

So, when Christ reveals Himself, it's going to be **light!** Tremendous! Let's compare light and righteousness, because if you have the Light of Life, you have the righteousness of Christ.

Psalm 37:1: "Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart" (vs 1-4). Who is the Bread of Life? *Christ is the Bread of Life!*

Psalm 34:8: "O **taste and see that the LORD is good...**" How? *Through His Word!* This gives understanding. "...blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him."

Psalm 37:5: "Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way unto the LORD..." (vs 5-6). I'll guarantee you one thing, no one is ever going to understand a thing about God if they hate God. God just won't do it.

But how much more can you understand about God if you delight in God, and delight in His way? What does it say about the Sabbath Day? {note Isa. 58—if you will call the Sabbath the delight of the Lord, you will be blessed.} When you see some of those Scriptures you wonder why on earth there's such a big argument over whether to keep the Sabbath or not. It would seem very simple:

- if you delight yourself in the Sabbath
- if you do the things that delight God
- if you delight in the Lord

Verse 4: "Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart." Where as compared to the wicked who lust after it and take it, who steal and rob.

Someone was telling me about an ad; you write in to get this special implement that you can hang your clothes anywhere, in any room, in any climate—any garment—it will fit and all you have to do is send \$15.95. You send \$15.95 and you get back a nice bright galvanized 16-penny nail!

That's how the *workers of iniquity* do things! Technically, it's true. You can take this nail

and put it up anyplace and you can hang things on it. But for \$15.95 you get a quarter of a cent nail.

If we delight in God and if we trust in Him, "...He shall give you the desires of your heart" provided they're not based on lust, that they're based on the things that are right.

Verse 5: "Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness **like the light**, and your judgment like the noonday" (vs 5-6). That's why it say we don't wait for the praise of men; let the praise be that which only comes from God, from God's Spirit, from His glory. "...your righteousness **like the light**, and your judgment like the noonday."

Verse 7: "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of him who carries out wicked schemes."

Let's take this *righteousness and light*; Christ is the Light of the world. Let's see the righteousness we need to have, and that comes by *faith!* I hope we are growing more and more in faith as we go along, and stronger and stronger in the spiritual conviction of God's way.

The Apostle Paul was writing about the kind of righteousness that he wanted. Let's just get the comparison:

Philippians 3:3: **"For we are the circumcision, who serve God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in the flesh."** To have no confidence in the flesh, but to have confidence in Christ.

Verse 4: "Though I might also have *reason* to trust in *the flesh*. If any other thinks he has *cause* to trust in *the flesh*, I *have* much more." There apparently were Jews going around saying, 'I'm of this tribe and I've done this' and so forth.

Verse 5: "Circumcised on *the eighth day*; of *the race of Israel*..." Later in John 8 we will see what the Pharisees did. They emphasized *who* they were, rather than *what* they were. Before God who you are makes no difference. It is *what* you are. You may be, as Paul was, all of these things in the flesh, but unless you belong to Christ—and that is *what you are*—it doesn't matter *who* you are.

"...from *the tribe of Benjamin*, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee... [that means he was blameless] ...with respect to zeal, persecuting the Church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless. Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have

counted *as loss* for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law..." (vs 5-9).

And that's what it was; you do this, that and the other thing. All the things that God says to do we should do, that's fine, but that doesn't make us anything great. It has to be Christ.

"...but that *righteousness*, which *is* by *the faith* of Christ, the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith" (v 9). If our righteousness is going to shine as the Light—and Christ is that Light—Whose righteousness do we need? *We need the righteousness of Jesus Christ!* I hope we can understand this more and more as we're going along.

1-Corinthians 1:30: "But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God, even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.... [Christ has made all these things for us] ...So that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*'" (vs 30-31). That's a tremendous thing, that we can have the righteousness of Christ, Who is the Light, and our righteousness will shine as the Light. ***When we come before God we are viewed as God views Christ!***

I know that is a very hard concept to get. I know that a lot of people—and that's what the Apostle Paul was accused of—say, 'Let us sin that grace may abound.' ***NO!*** He said, 'God forbid!' But we have the righteousness of Christ given to us. It is imputed!

(go to the next track)

Righteousness is given to us ***provided that we believe!*** When you go to God when you have sinned you confess your sins to God and you *believe* that they are forgiven (John 1). You *believe* that they are covered with the blood of Christ.

If they are, Whose righteousness is standing in your place? ***The righteousness of Christ!*** Really think on that for a minute. That should help us really have more of the joy of God, because Christ took the burden of sin. We don't have to carry the burden of sin. How many times have we gone around, 'Oh, woe is me'? ***We carry the burden of sin!*** We don't have to carry that; Christ carried that. That's a tremendous thing.

Not that we should go out and say, 'Christ has done it, therefore, I don't have to do anything.' ***NO!***

- we have to *seek God*
- we have to *walk in the Light*
- we have to do the things that *please Him*
- we have to delight in *the Lord*
- we have to delight in *His way*

All of those things are *coming to the Light!*

- Christ is the Light
- Christ is our righteousness

1-John 2:8 shows what kind of response should be for us as brethren: “Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light [Christ] is already shining.” That is the true way of Christianity. The darkness is Satan’s way.

It’s amazing how all of these things just continually tie together.

Colossians 1:12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light... [Christ is the Light of the world] ...**Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness...**” (vs 12-13). When you think of that, or read that, just think of that thick darkness of Egypt. Egypt is personified as sin! The Pharaoh with his serpent is personified as Satan!

“...and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins” (vs 13-14).

1-John 2:8: “...because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining. Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now” (vs 8-9). It gets right down to our own mental attitudes all the way around.

Verse 10: “The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (vs 10-11). The darkness can come upon those people who then, instead of following Christ and living the way that they ought to, can turn from Light.

It’s just like we’ve talked about many times, you can be in the light, but you can be walking the other way and the light can be on your back, not in your eyes. Pretty soon you can walk away from the light and clear into utter darkness. That’s what happens when you have hatred take hold of your life like that.

Now we’re going to start getting into this verbal battle between Christ and the Pharisees. After Jesus said:

John 8:18: “...and the Father, Who sent Me bears witness of Me.’ Then they said to Him, ‘Where is Your Father?’ Jesus answered, ‘You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would also have known My Father.’ Jesus spoke these words in the treasury *while* teaching in the temple; but no one arrested Him because His time had not yet come” (vs 18-20). So, all during the Feast of Tabernacles they were seeking to arrest Him.

Verse 21: “Then Jesus said to them again, ‘I am going away; and you shall seek Me, but **you shall die in your sin...**’” That could be literally forever, if you die in your sins, it is over with.

“...Where I am going, you are not able to come.’ Therefore, the Jews... [the scribes and Pharisees; the leaders] ...said, ‘Will He kill Himself? *Is* that *why* He says, “Where I am going, you are not able to come?”’” (vs 21-22). Just arguing; carnal-minded.

This is where it starts really getting heated, v 23: “And He said to them, ‘You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; **for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins**’” (vs 23-24). {note the sermon: *I AM That I AM*} That’s a take off of Exo. 3 where He says, ‘I AM that I AM.’ Jesus was telling them Who He was. He told thm Who He was all along.

Verse 25: “Then they said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘The One that I said to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world.’ *But* they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, ‘When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM, and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him’” (vs 25-29).

Tie that in with Psa. 37 about doing the things that delight God. *Jesus always did the things that pleased the Father!* That’s what we need to do, too; always do those things that please Him.

Verse 30: “As He spoke these things, many believed in Him. Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews

who had believed in Him..." (vs 30-31). These were once willing to sit there and glow in Jesus' presence. Then He really put the clamps on a little bit more:

"...‘If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples’" (v 31). Again, His Word: He is the Word and the Word was the Message of God, and the Message was about Jesus Christ **Who is the Word!** *If you believe that Word then ‘you are My disciples, indeed!’*

Verse 32: "And you shall know the Truth..." In other words, He's saying that if you don't do that you won't know the Truth.

"...and the Truth shall set you free" (v 32). Make you free of what? We're a society based upon freedom, but what are we doing? *We're enslaving ourselves with all kinds of chains of bondage!* What does He mean to be made free? *He explains it!*

Verse 33: "They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's seed...'" As I said before, *it doesn't matter who you are!* So what if they're Abraham's seed?

"...and have never been in bondage to anyone..." (v 33). They didn't understand what He was saying. At that time the whole nation of Judea was in bondage to the Romans. They were a conquered nation! They were *enslaved* to the Romans!

"...What do You mean by saying, 'You shall become free'?" Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who **practices** sin is a servant of sin'" (vs 33-34). You live a life of practicing sin. There's a great distinction there between living and practicing sin. How many here are living and practicing sin? How many still sin? *We all sin!* There's a difference.

If you are living in and practicing sin, that's your way of life. But if you're living a life of righteousness:

- led by Jesus Christ
- led by the Light of the world
- led by God's Word
- led by God's Spirit

then you are *not practicing sin!* But if you sin—because you're not perfect; no one is—and *if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins!* There's a vast difference. "...everyone who **practices** sin is a **servant** of sin." The Greek word for *servant* is 'doulos,' which is *slave*. We're not enslaved to sin. We do sin because of human nature, but we're not enslaved to it.

I suppose you could just follow on down to

the degrees of enslavement that would be. You hear stories of these cocaine addicts and they really get down into the depths of being enslaved. Cocaine is their master! They must have it, and they must sin to get it, and they must continue with it.

Then we have stories of how horrible and bad it is, and then we have people advocating legalizing cocaine and marijuana. What on earth kind of society would we have if they legalize it. It would absolutely wipe out the whole society, and the whole society would be a slave to it.

Verse 35: "And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever." Why? *Because the Son owns it!* You can have someone come and work in your house, but they don't live there. They can stay a while but they go home.

How would it be if you have a lot of work to do on the house and don't feel up to it and it's overwhelming. You contract with someone to come in and be your servant. That's what you do, you buy them for their services to come and clean your house. What if they came in bag and baggage and moved in and say, 'I'm going to live here.' There's a vast difference. *Christ owns the house!*

Verse 36: "Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free." Free from what? *Free from the domination of sin!* Let's examine that just a little bit.

I want us to have the whole thought flow, because this is going to have to be taught all during the Millennium. There's still going to be human nature, but Satan won't be there. *Satan will not be there!* It's going to be a whole lot easier to deal with, but there's still going to be free moral agency, and people can still reject God and harden their heart. That will still be possible. So, what I want us to do is understand this full operation.

Romans 6:1: What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** **We who died to sin**, how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order **that the body of sin might be destroyed...**" (vs 1-6).

It's a process; day-by-day the outward man

perishes, but the inward man grows. We destroy sin!

“...so that we might no longer be **enslaved to sin**” (v 6). That ties right in with ‘whosoever is practicing sin is the servant of sin.’ The same word *serve/enslave*. When you are enslaved to sin, you are in bondage. Christ said that if you *believe Him*, if you *follow Him*, **you will be made free for the Truth will make you free!**

Verse 7: “Because the one who has died to *sin* has been justified from sin.” Freed from *servicing* sin. You’re not totally perfect. Before God, because of the righteousness of Christ, He looks at you as completely perfect. But you know, God knows—and He has made it clear in His Word—that we still have sin to overcome, but it doesn’t rule our lives; it doesn’t have dominion over us.

Verse 8: “Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, **you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin...** [that bondage to sin] ...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, **do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof.** Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you...**” (vs 8-14).

That’s how you are free from that bondage. It won’t have rule and dominion over you!

“...because you are not under law, but under grace” (v 14). That’s what God’s grace is all about; *within* God’s grace we are to keep His laws, but all of your law-keeping will never make you perfect, because *only Christ can make you perfect!* ***If you seek to be perfected by law, then you will soon become the slave of sin!***

- Did the Pharisees keep the laws of God?
Yes, plus all of their own!

So much so that they were wrapped up in it and worshipping law instead of God!

- Did they seek, by this law-keeping, to make everything perfect? *Yes!*
- Did it work? *No!*

Christ said that they were the *slaves of sin!*

- Were the scribes and Pharisees sinning?
Yes!

They were planning and plotting and figuring out how they could kill Jesus! If you have murder in your heart you’re a sinner, you’re practicing sin!

John 8:36: “Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free. 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... [now it’s going to start getting kind of nasty] ...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. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this. You are doing the works of **your** father’” (vs 36-41). The carnal mind just comes right back again.

“...Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication....’” (v 41). That tells you they knew an awful lot about Jesus Christ—didn’t they? *They sure did!*

“...We have one Father, *and that is God.*’ Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why don’t you understand My speech? **Because you cannot bear to hear My words**” (vs 41-43). Why?

Verse 44: “**You are of your father the devil...**” That’s awfully strong. There’s no other place in the Bible that says that. Here is where we get to the perfect candidate for Satan’s instrumentalities. They hate Jesus. They have the Law of God. You cannot say that they have some pagan thing. They actively work against Jesus and they actively serve Satan the devil! What kind of combination could you get that would be anymore perfect for serving the devil.

“...and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I speak the Truth, you do not believe Me. Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin? But if I speak the Truth, why don’t you believe Me?” (vs 44-46). Then He labels it right out:

Verse 47: “The one who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason you do not hear, because **you are not of God.**” You talk about ‘cutting to the quick.’ You talk about cutting, just absolutely slaying those Pharisees right on the spot. They said, ‘We’re Abraham’s children.’ Aren’t they

the people of God? *Yes!* He says, ‘You’re not of God; you are of your father the devil!’

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God [Christ]...” Remember in Rev. 1 that it says, ‘Out of His mouth goes a two-edged sword’?

“...*is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword... [we see that happening in John 8] ...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.” That’s how God judges every person. He doesn’t judge on physical circumstances, but the thoughts and intent of the heart. That’s pretty powerful!

That’s what Jesus was doing here. He was telling them exactly who they were, what they were doing, how they were doing it, and their responsibility in it. Let’s see their answer; instead of saying, ‘Let’s repent; oh yes, that’s true’:

John 8:48: “Then the Jews answered and said to Him, ‘Are we not right in saying that You are a Samaritan...’” There’s no lower epitaph that can be given to anyone by a Jew than to call them a Samaritan. That would be like calling a true redneck Southerner a Yankee. There could be nothing more low.

And not only that, “...and have a demon?” (v 48). Same thing! When you can’t resist the Truth, then you accuse of being demon possessed. Let’s see what they did; what was it that they were doing?

They didn’t hear the words of God, because they’re not of God. Why were they not of God? *Because they wouldn’t listen to His words!*

Jeremiah 6:10: ‘To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears *are* not circumcised, and **they cannot hearken....**’ How does that work. Have you ever talked to someone and they just cannot hear what you’re saying? They hear the words, but this blank stare comes over their mind and you just cannot penetrate it. It’s exactly what the Pharisees were doing right there.

“...Behold, the Word of the LORD is to them a reproach...” (v 10). Weren’t they reproaching the Word of God when Christ was speaking? *Yes!*

“...they have no delight in it. Therefore, I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in; pour it out on the children in the street, and on the assembly of young men together. For even the husband with the wife shall be taken *as well as* the aged with fullness of days. And their

houses shall be turned over to others, together *with their* fields and wives; for I will stretch out My hand on the inhabitants of the land,’ says the LORD” (vs 10-12).

That’s what happened to the whole Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem in 69-70_{A.D.} God sent the Romans out and He stamped them into the ground, ground down the temple, chased the whole group of them over to Masada. You know what happened to the tale of Masada. He did exactly that.

Verse 13: “For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain; and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely.”

Verse 17: “Also, I set watchmen over you, *saying*, ‘Hearken to the sound of the ram’s horn.’ But they said, **‘We will not hearken.’** Therefore, hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts **because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it**” (vs 17-19).

That’s exactly what they did with Jesus Christ. It said, ‘Behold the Stone, which the Lord has chosen and the builders have rejected.’ They rejected Christ.

Here’s what happens when you won’t listen. This is exactly what we see happening to the Pharisees:

Proverbs 21:29: “**A wicked man hardens his face...**” He just sets his will that he is not going to give in. You can see this every time you talk to any Jew about Christ, one who is a real ‘dyed-in-wool’ religious Jew, it’s just like taking fingernails on a chalkboard. They just harden themselves.

Proverbs 28:13: “He who covers his sins shall not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes *them* shall have mercy.” Sounds just like New Testament doctrine.

Verse 14: “Blessed *is* the man who fears always... [revere, worship and fear God always] ...but he who hardens his heart shall fall into mischief. *Like* a roaring lion and a ranging bear, *so is* a wicked ruler over the helpless people” (vs 14-15).

That’s exactly what happened when the Jews rejected Christ. Remember, they said that ‘His blood be on our head and on our children’s head.’ Let’s see how they continued exactly in that same way. Their hard-heartedness and their hatred and just collective evil... When I say ‘they’ I’m not saying *all* Jewish people; I’m saying the rulers of the Jews:

scribes, Pharisees, etc.

Here's when Stephen was hauled up before all the council of the 'religious' leaders in Jerusalem. He went through and explained the whole story, you might say the Torah story about God's people; how He began with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then the children of Israel and bringing them out of Egypt, bringing them into the 'promised land.' How they reject God and turned their backs on God time and time again. Then he got done saying all these things and here's what Stephen was inspired to say:

Acts 7:51: "O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears!... [Jer. 10:6, about *uncircumcised* ears; uncircumcised in the heart] ...You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you." This was really getting to them!

Verse 52: "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom **you have become the betrayers and murderers**; who received the law by *the* disposition of angels, but have not kept *it*" (vs 52-53)—and you were the ones who had God's Law!

Verse 54: "And when they heard these things, they were cut to their hearts..." But they didn't repent! They all got up and ran to Stephen:

"...and they gnashed their teeth at him" (v 54). You talk about being 'biting mad!' There have been times when I've been angry and gritted my teeth. But not 'biting mad' where you go out like a mad dog and gnash. They got up and gnashed on him. That means they grabbed him by the arms and legs and bit him like a wild frothing dog!

Verse 55: "But he, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven *and* saw *the* glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right *hand* of God'" (vs 55-56). That made them even more mad! Here they are biting him and God gives Stephen this vision and he says, 'Behold, I see God, and Jesus at the right hand of God!' Then they got madder!

Verse 57: "Then they cried out with a loud voice, *and* stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord, and cast *him* out of the city... [talk about a mob] *...and* stoned *him*..." (vs 57-58). If you're going to stone someone, you're going to hurt them. You're not going to get little pebbles.

"...And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul. And

they stoned Stephen, who called upon *God*, saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And he fell to his knees *and* cried with a loud voice..." (vs 58-60). Notice his attitude; you have to admire this attitude.

If someone came out for me like that I don't know if I could say that I would have this attitude. There would have to be an extra measure of God's Spirit to have this attitude. Here's he's being gnashed upon, stoned and drug out, cast out of the city:

"...and cried with a loud voice '**Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.**' And after he had said this, he died" (v 60). That's quite an attitude; the same attitude of Jesus Christ. When Christ says that we are *free from sin* let's rejoice in Christ. Let's not be in anyway hard-hearted as these scribes and Pharisees were.

Let's continue with the love of God and the enjoyment of each other!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 8:1-11
- 2) John 5:14
- 3) John 8:12-18
- 4) John 1:4-11
- 5) Genesis 1:2-4
- 6) Exodus 10:21-23
- 7) Exodus 13:20-21
- 8) Psalm 27:1, 14
- 9) Psalm 119:105, 130
- 10) Luke 17:22-23
- 11) Psalm 37:1-5
- 12) Psalm 34:8
- 13) Psalm 37:5-6, 4-7
- 14) Philippians 3:3-9
- 15) 1 Corinthians 1:30-31
- 16) 1 John 2:8
- 17) Colossians 1:12-14
- 18) 1 John 2:8-11
- 19) John 8:18-36
- 20) Romans 6:1-14
- 21) John 8:36-47
- 22) Hebrews 4:12
- 23) John 8:48
- 24) Jeremiah 6:10-13, 17-19
- 25) Proverbs 21:29
- 26) Proverbs 28:13-15
- 27) Acts 7:51-60

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Zechariah 4
- John 3:18-20

- Isaiah 58
- Exodus 3
- Revelation 1

Also referenced: Sermon: *I AM That I Am*

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 11-12-14 Corrected: 12-29-14