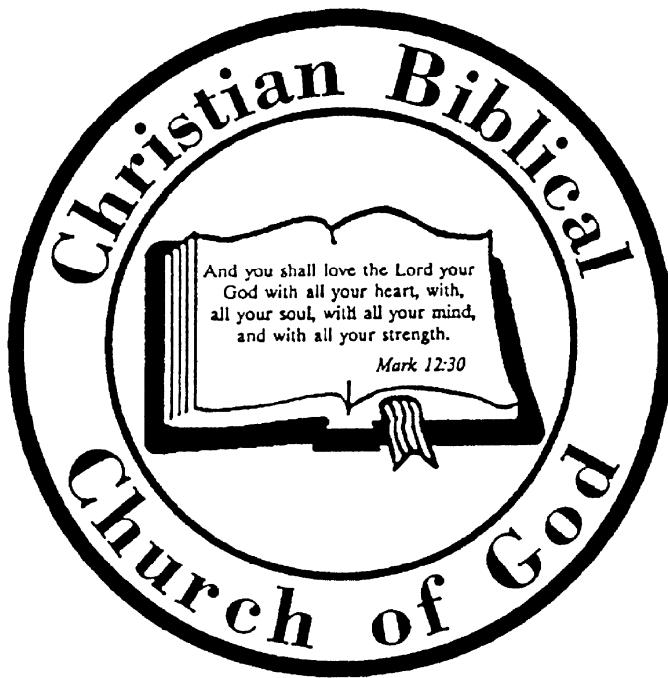


Pentecost and 144,000



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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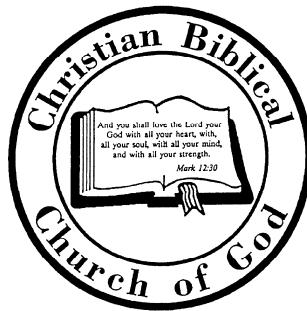
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Pentecost and 144,000

Series of 3 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

Date

- Pentecost and 144,000 I
- Pentecost and 144,000 II
- More on the 144,000

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Contents

Study Package 10

Pentecost and 144,000

Transcript Book

	PAGE
Pentecost and the 144,000 I -----	1 – 9
Pentecost and the 144,000 II -----	10 – 17
More on the 144,000 -----	18 – 28

Compact Disc

[When included]

Tracks 1 & 2 Pentecost and the 144,000 I

Tracks 3 & 4 Pentecost and the 144,000 II

Tracks 5 & 6 More on the 144,000

Pentecost and 144,000

Foreword

This book consists of three sermon transcripts from sermons given by Fred R. Coulter, a minister of Jesus Christ. These three sermons teach about the annual Holy Day of Pentecost.

In the first sermon transcript, “Pentecost and the 144,000 I”, you find that God claims the firstfruits as His. Explained in detail is that Jesus Christ is the first of the spiritual firstfruits to God. Christ was sacrificed for the forgiveness of our sins and through His resurrection the on-going justification of mankind to God the Father continues. The Feast of Pentecost pictures this resurrection of Jesus Christ and also the yet to occur resurrection of the Saints of God when Christ returns to the earth. Other important points that are covered are:

- When should Pentecost be kept?
- The resurrection of the Saints will be as powerful spirit beings, not as flesh.
- How the seven churches of Revelation fit into what the Day of Pentecost represents.
- What and why the place of safety that is mentioned in Revelation.
- What is going to happen to believers just prior to the return of Jesus Christ that are not in the place of safety.
- The special harvest by God of people that were not in the Seven Church Harvest.

The second sermon transcript, “Pentecost and the 144,000 II”, the special harvest of God is taught as it is revealed in the Bible. Covered in depth is the sealing of the 144,000 of Revelation by God. Other important things that are covered are:

- The seven trumpet plagues of Revelation.
- The two witnesses of Revelation.
- More details regarding the 144,000 that are not part of the seven church harvest.
- More details about each of the Seven Churches of Revelation.

The last sermon transcript in the book, “More on the 144,000”, covers the 144,000 of Revelation in greater depth than the previous two sermon transcripts.

Special thanks goes to Bonnie Orswell, Laila Patterson and Nancy Spaller for producing the transcripts.

Pentecost and the 144,000 I

Fred R. Coulter

There's a tremendous meaning for the Feast of Pentecost, and there are a lot of things that God wants us to know and to understand as we go forward and in keeping the Holy Days. All of the Holy Days really show us and teach us the ways of God. It's very interesting that in the Septuagint version of the Bible, when you go through Exo. 31, all the way through there, with the exception of the seventh-day Sabbath, it says, 'My Sabbaths'—plural. You can't have one without the other. If you have the seventh-day Sabbath, which you keep, then you must also keep the annual Sabbaths.

Now, this day of the Feast of Pentecost pictures the finality of the harvest of the firstfruits. And it all begins with Christ on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day. As we have seen, Christ is the first of the firstfruits. For ancient Israel, God wanted the children of Israel to always remember that the first of the firstfruits belonged to God.

Exodus 34:26: "The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring unto the house of the LORD your God...." Christ was the First of the firstfruits (John 20). He ascended to the Father on *the morrow after the Sabbath*. He was the Premier Sheaf that was elevated by the priest to be accepted on our behalf. In other words as the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins plus the resurrected Christ for the justification to put us in right standing with God, and for Christ to be at the right hand of God the Father, to carry out His plan and carry it forward.

Now let's see some very important things concerning the resurrection, and, of course, everything starts with the resurrection of Christ. The firstfruits is a firstfruit harvest. It is a harvest Holy Day to celebrate the completing, the accomplishing of the firstfruits of the grain. That's not all the firstfruits, which follow after that. There are the firstfruits of the fruit of the tree, there are firstfruits of other products, other vegetables, other things that come along. Those all belong to God. But this is a special one. The harvest that God has with the Feast of Pentecost relates to and begins with Christ Who is *the first of the firstfruits*.

Let's understand something very important concerning the resurrection of Christ, and especially in this day. I'm going to emphasize, again, that ***you must have the right Bible***. And the right Bible is the one that is based upon the right Greek text and Hebrew text. *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version with Commentary* has been based upon the proper texts. I use the same Greek text that was used that the translators of the *King James Version* used, which is the Byzantine text, also

known as the authorized text, or the received text, or the text of 1550 by Stephens. That's the one that I have used.

1-Corinthians 15:12: "But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the dead*, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the dead*?" So, immediately Satan is there. As soon as the seeds have been sown Satan is there bringing his tares and infiltrating into the Church, bringing false doctrine and saying 'there's no resurrection.' We're all going to heaven.' *No!*

Notice Paul's argument, v13: "For if there is no resurrection from *the dead*, neither has Christ been raised." I want you to notice the strength of his argument, and I want you to know how dogmatically he brings it because this is important.

Verse 14: "And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain." In other words they're preaching a myth. You're preaching something that is empty, that is hollow, that has no meaning. "...and ***your faith is also in vain***."

Verse 15: "And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God..." This is an important statement. Anytime someone makes a statement that is not in conformity with the Word of God is a false witness for God. Meaning that he is testifying of something that is not true, and claiming that God has sanctioned it, which then is false witnessing for God. Taking the name of God in vain, using the name of God in futility and vanity.

"...because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the dead* are not raised. For if *the dead* are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins" (vs 15-17).

In other words there is no forgiveness of sin unless Christ, Who is the First of the firstfruits, ascended unto the Father to be accepted on the morrow after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which then is the first day beginning the 50-day count. ***Unless that occurred there is no forgiveness of sin!*** And you can also trust and be reassured that any other scheme of the forgiveness of sin will not bring the forgiveness of sin, because Christ ***is the Way and the Truth and the Life.*** There is no other way that it can be done than through Jesus Christ.

Verse 18: "And those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished.... [there's no hope] ...If in this life only we have hope in Christ...

[without a resurrection] ...we are of all people most miserable" (vs 18-19). Why? *Because you're believing in something that is false*, if the dead are not raised.

Notice how Paul concludes his argument, v 20: "But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die..." (vs 20-22).

We all have inherited the 'law of sin and death' within us, so as in Adam we die. Just like God told Adam, 'Dust you are and unto dust you shall return; even so in Christ shall all be made alive'—that is all the resurrections, the three resurrections in the Bible:

1. the first resurrection
2. the second resurrection of those who have not committed the unpardonable sin
3. the other part of the second resurrection, which is the resurrection of those who have committed the unpardonable sin

All will be made alive in Christ, whether for eternal life, or whether for eternal death.

Verse 23: "But each in his own order: Christ *the* Firstfruit..." We are the Church of the Firstborn. We are the firstfruits of the harvest, but Christ is the *First* of the firstfruits.

"...then, those who are Christ's at His coming" (v 23). That's when the first resurrection is going to be: *at His coming!*

Now we're going to see then how 'at His coming,' pictures the Day of Pentecost as *the day of the resurrection*. Let's understand that that is the only day that it can signify. Someone will surely say, 'Well then, you're saying you know when the return of Christ is.' *No!* We're saying we know when the resurrection will be. The reason is we can go back; let's look at it from what we already know.

- Is Christ our Passover, Who was crucified for us? *Yes!*
- When was He crucified? *On the Passover Day!*
- Did God do it on the time and in the day that He prophesied, and in the way and the manner that He said that He would do it? *Yes!*

It's exactly the same thing concerning the resurrection of Christ.

- When was He raised? *Right at the end of the Sabbath after being in the grave three days and three nights!*
- When did He ascend to the Father? *On the Wave Sheaf Offering Day!*

Then we saw how there are seven churches, and those seven churches represent *the harvest of the church age*. The *harvest of the church age* is part of the main harvest of God. That's from the time that Christ ascended to heaven until the time of the first resurrection. Then 'every man in his own order.' We know that at the end of the thousand years there will be the second resurrection of those who have not committed the unpardonable sin. Then the other half of the second resurrection for those who committed the unpardonable sin, that all the wicked may be thrown in the Lake of Fire at once. So, the Holy Days picture God's plan; these things happen on the Holy Days. Let's keep that in mind, and let's understand that of the day of Christ's coming no one really knows; I'll show you why a little bit later.

Let's pick up the story now in Acts 1 and let's see what Luke wrote concerning the things, the events that took place after Christ was raised from the dead.

Act 1:3, concerning Christ: "by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days..."

Isn't it interesting that Christ was seen of the apostles from the time of His ascension until the time of His second ascension into heaven—His first one *to be accepted*, and then His second one to *remain* in heaven. He was seen of the apostles 40 days. But also isn't it interesting that after Pentecost, and the covenant that was made with Israel and the wedding supper of Israel with the 70 elders, that Moses was on the mount with God 40 days. In either case we have 40 days. In Christ's case it's 40 days before Pentecost. In Moses case it's 40 days from the day after Pentecost. So, it's 40 days.

"...and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God. And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.'.... [which was just 10 days away] ... So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?' And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know *the times or the seasons*, which the Father has placed in His own authority'" (vs 3-7).

Remember, this was before any of the New Testament was written. And this was written before the book of Revelation was written by John, and the book of Revelation is *to reveal*. All of the New Testament is *to reveal the will of God and His Word and His Truth!*

Verse 8: “‘But you yourselves shall receive power... [‘dunamis’] ...when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth.’” That’s a continuous thing that is going on today, and God has made it known, and God has sent it out.

There are Bibles in over 250 languages; the New Testament in over 1,200 languages; the book of Mark in over 2,000 languages; all of that is preaching the Gospel and it is going out. We all have our part to do our preaching. We all have our part to do our witnessing. And brethren, pray that God will open whatever doors are necessary for us to reach out and to reach new people. With our website we’re able to reach out into all the world, 24-hours a day, seven days a week to anyone who has a computer they can get on there and find out information concerning many things—www.cbcg.org—we have a lot of information and literature on there.

Verse 9: “And after saying these things, as they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” Just disappeared to go sit at the right hand of God the Father.

Verse 10: “Now, while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them.” That’s two angels; angels look like men.

Verse 11: “Who also said, ‘You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.’”

Let’s see how tremendous and momentous this event was, and how important it is to understand the real meaning of Acts 2:1. We have the booklet, *The True Meaning of Acts 2:1*, because everyone has misconstrued this, twisted the Scriptures to their own destruction to make it say something that it really doesn’t say.

Acts 2:1: “And when the day of *Pentecost*, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled...” And some people say, ‘See, the 50th day was over. They were all assembled with one accord in one place. That means they were there on the 51st day.’ That doesn’t relate to what the Greek really means. The Greek here has a special articular infinitive, the present tense. This should be translated: and during the fulfilling, or the accomplishing of the 50th day, not the 51st. If it were the 51st day then it would clearly say the 50th and first day. But it doesn’t say that in the Greek.

And during the fulfilling of the 50th day “...they were all with one accord in the same place” (v 1). Why? *They were assembled for the Holy Day*,

which is a Holy convocation. That’s why they were there.

Verse 2: “And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound ...” (vs 1-2). Here is the re-enactment of what we saw at Mt. Sinai. Only instead of at Mt. Sinai it’s at the temple of God, because that’s where God placed His name. So, anything that God was going to do, any authorization and change in the way that things were done would come from God. In this case by the power of His Holy Spirit, and right at the temple so that it would be fully established that this was by the authority and the power of God, undeniable.

“...like the rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire...” (vs 2-3). Remember the fire on top of Mt. Sinai? This is showing the same fulfillment now, *only spiritually*, of the Day of Pentecost as when the Law was given on the Day of Pentecost.

“...and sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them the words to proclaim” (vs 3-4). Let’s understand something very important here. God is not the author of confusion, so whatever the Holy Spirit did was something that was sound, it was intelligible, it was understandable, and it was for a specific purpose. That’s what happened on this Day of Pentecost, and here’s the reason:

Verse 5: “Now, *there* were many Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when word of this went out, the multitude came together and were confounded, because each one heard them speaking in his own language” (vs. 5-6).

So, there was a double miracle. There was a miracle in the preaching, because in the minds of the apostles they were thinking and speaking with their own language, but in everyone who was *listening* it came to them in their own language. This is a profound thing to understand. Not only just for Jews, because remember, the New Testament says ‘to the Jew first and then to the Greek.’ So, we have here ‘to the Jew first,’ but also to those who were assembled there in Jerusalem who came from every nation on earth.

Please understand that the stories that went back from those who were up at Jerusalem during the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and all the events that took place that we have already covered: How that Christ was crucified and raised from the dead, and all the stories that were told by the scribes and Pharisees to tell the lies that the disciples stole the body away. They knew that something big was going to happen on Pentecost,

because it was a Holy Day of God. This was big! This was great! This was fulfilling the prophecy of God giving His Spirit to men; and He began with the apostles.

Verse 7: "And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying to one another, 'Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how... [since the implication is they are uneducated] ...is it *that* we hear each one in our own language in which we were born?'" (vs 7-8). They were hearing, they were understanding, and then it lists all of the nations that they were from.

The last part of v 10 says "...Jews and proselytes." Proselytes were circumcised Gentiles who would embrace the religion of Judaism.

Verse 11: "...we hear them speaking in our own languages the great things of God.'.... [this day was tremendous] ...And they were all amazed and greatly perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others were mocking *and* saying, 'They are full of new wine.' Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them: 'Men, Jews, and all those of you who inhabit Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. for these are not drunken as you suppose, for it is **only the third hour** of the day'" (vs 11-15). That is in the morning.

- When did God appear on Mt. Sinai? *In the morning!*
- When did He give the law? *On the day of Pentecost!*
- When did He give the Holy Spirit?

In other words to give them the heart to keep God's laws? Remember, when He gave the Ten Commandments He said:

Deuteronomy 5:29: "Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always...." God is supernaturally giving the heart, by the circumcision of the heart through the power of the Holy Spirit so that they would have the ability now to keep the laws of God greater than that. God's Spirit and power would write them in their hearts and in their minds so they could keep them with a willing heart, with a willing attitude, and in service to God. But first there has to be repentance!

Then Peter went on and gave this tremendous and powerful sermon, Acts 2:16: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel... [we'll see how this ties in with Rev. 7]'And it shall come to pass in the last days,' says God, '*that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and even upon My servants and upon My handmaids will I pour out My Spirit in those days,*

and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapors of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord'" (vs 16-20).

He gave this prophecy. It's recorded here in Acts 2, but this has not yet occurred. The only thing that has occurred of this is that the Holy Spirit was given. The rest of it has not occurred. That is for a future day of Pentecost. We need to keep that in mind. We'll see that when we get to the book of Revelation.

Verse 21: "'And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Men, Israelites, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarean, a Man sent forth to you by God, as demonstrated by works of power and wonders and signs, which God performed by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know; Him, having been delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you have seized by lawless hands *and* have crucified and killed. *But* God has raised Him up, having loosed the throes of death, because it was not possible *for* Him to be held by it" (vs 21-24). Then he finished giving the sermon saying that David was not resurrected from the grave but it was Jesus, even though He gave the promise to David.

Verse 34: "For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he himself said, 'The Lord said to my Lord'..." They understood those Psalms. Remember the very first time that they saw Jesus in the evening on the day that He ascended to the Father (Luke 24). what did He do? *He opened their understanding concerning Him and the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms!*

Here Peter is quoting Psa. 110; v 34: "...'Sit at My right hand until I have made Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.' Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (vs 34-36). That was a powerful sermon, and notice what happened:

Verse 37: "Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart..." This is what has to happen to every one of us. This is what has to happen to everyone whom God calls. They are pricked in their heart so they will understand what Christ went through to die for their sins and become the sacrifice for all of mankind. And God leads you to repentance to understand that.

Let's understand something very important: *Repentance is a continuous, ongoing thing in our lives by the operation of the grace of God*, and He is the One Who leads us to it. Just like the parable of

the prodigal son, remember what happened to him? He got his inheritance and went out and spent it, squandered it in a strange land and was out feeding the hogs good food. He couldn't even eat it. And it says there, '*...and when he came to himself...*' Now, this is what you need to do concerning repentance. You need to *come to yourself*; that is *understand where you are*.

- understand your nature
- understand your sins
- repent to God

That's what they did here: "...they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?'.... [there are things that God wants us to do] ...Then Peter said to them, 'Repent...' (vs 37-38).

Repentance means *to turn from your sin, turn from the way you're going, turn back and come to God!* Just like God said through Ezekiel, 'Turn you, turn you, for why will you die O house of Israel.' It's the same way with us. And I hope there are brethren out there who are turning back to God. Why will you die O Church of God, you that have gone astray? *Turn you, turn you, come back to God! Let your hearts be pricked!*

(go to the next track)

"...‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call.’ And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day” (vs 38-41). Which day? *During the fulfilling of the 50th day!*

That is a tremendous thing that happened. Imagine the account that everyone went back and told the story of being there at the temple, and this tremendous event took place. The One that was called Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and how the power of the Holy Spirit came on them. This was a tremendous event! We'll project forward to the last Pentecost here in just a minute.

I want to go back and pick up something that's very important concerning the two loaves that were baked with leaven (Lev. 23). Let's ask ourselves a couple of questions concerning this and let's see if we can determine the true Scriptural use of leaven here in Lev. 23, and what that pictures in its fulfillment. Now remember, all during the Feast of Unleavened Bread leaven represents sin. Outside the Feast of Unleavened Bread leaven does not

represent sin. What we are looking at here is a good use of leaven.

Leviticus 23:17, and this is to be done on the 50th day: "You shall bring out of your homes..." This is all who assembled up at the temple area, that they were to bring out of their habitations.

"...two wave loaves of two tenth parts. They shall be of fine flour. They shall be baked with leaven..." (v 17). Why would God have them put leaven in these? This has to be a good use of leaven because it's waved before God. I think we were right in our past understanding that one loaf equals those who were qualified for the first resurrection under the Old Covenant, and the other loaf represents those who qualify for the resurrection under the New Covenant.

- Why leaven?
- What does it say these are?

"...they are the firstfruits unto the LORD" (v 17). *Baked!*

Now let's see something important here, where there is defining the Kingdom of God with the parable of the leaven, which is a good use of the leaven.

Matthew 13:33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven...' You can't say that this is a bad use of leaven. You cannot say that leaven here is picturing sin because then you would have to say that the Kingdom of God is likened unto sin. And the Kingdom of God is likened unto righteousness, *not sin!* So, it's likened unto leaven.

"...which a woman took... [the Church] ...and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened" (v 33).

What happens to bread? *All dough when you first make it is unleavened.* When it's baked unleavened then it's permanently in that form until it's eaten. Now, when you put the leaven in it rises. It completely changes the form of the bread. When you bake it, it is permanently in that changed form. It can't be beaten back as though to make it flat again like you do when it rises and then you beat it back, let it rise a couple more times so that you really get everything leavened. Here is a good use of leaven.

What does this picture? This pictures *the new spirit body*, which we will receive. All of those from the Old Covenant that qualified—going all the way back to Abel and those who, under the New Covenant, beginning with the Day of Pentecost as we saw who received the Holy Spirit at the resurrection—*will be changed*.

Let's see that in 1-Cor. 15; this becomes very important, very profound! You are not going to be raised with the same body that you have in the

flesh today. Let's notice how the Apostle Paul describes this. Remember, he also condemned them already as we saw earlier, that there were some who did not believe in the resurrection.

1-Corinthians 15:34: "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God. I say *this* to your shame." Can you imagine that? Sitting in the Church of God not having the knowledge of God? We see the same thing being repeated today. How can people sit there in the Church of God and not have the knowledge of God?

1. they have not been taught
2. some of them may be tares
3. some of them may be Laodiceans or whatever attitude of the seven churches that be there

"Nevertheless, someone will say, 'How are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?' Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies" (vs 35-36).

Let's see how Jesus explained it concerning Himself, likening it also unto grain. Remember that Jesus was the *first of the firstfruits!* *He was the Premiere Sheaf of the harvest of the grain!*

John 12:24: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone ... [this is a sowing (Matt. 13)] ...but if it dies, it bears much fruit. The one who loves his life shall lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life" (vs 24-25). Christ is likening even His own death as a grain being planted that dies.

It's the same thing here, 1-Corinthians 15:36: "Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow *is* not the body that shall be; rather, *it is* bare grain—it may be of wheat, or one of the other grains; and God gives it a body according to His will, and to each of the seeds its own body. Likewise, not all flesh *is* the same flesh...." (vs 36-39).

He goes on to explain it in quite detail]: "...Rather, *there is* one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds. And *there are* heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly *is* different, and the *glory* of the earthly *is* different. *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory. So also **is the resurrection of the dead**. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body"

(vs 36-44).

Notice how it's talking about the harvest continually—it is sown. That's why the Day of Pentecost pictures the resurrection because that's a finality of the firstfruits harvest for the grain.

Verse 45: "Accordingly, it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.'.... [Christ through the power of the resurrection] ..However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural—then the spiritual. The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *one*, so also *are all* those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *One*" (vs 45-49).

When we bear the image of the heavenly we will be changed, just like a lump of dough is changed when leaven is put in it, and then when it's baked in its final form, it is permanently in a changed form. That's exactly what it will be with us for the resurrection.

Verse 50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.... [it must come from God as a gift] ...Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vs 50-52). We will see in a little bit that in Rev. 11 the last trump is defined as the seventh trump, and that is the resurrection.

Verse 53: "For this corruptible must put on... [from God] ...incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (vs 53-54)—**by the very power of the resurrection.**

We will be changed, *permanent change*. That is what the leaven of the two loaves picture on the Day of Pentecost. Of course, when all the thousands of them came there were thousands and thousands of those loaves. They waved them before the Lord and then that became part of their keeping of the Feast of Pentecost.

Brethren, this really gets exciting. Now let's review Rev. 6 and 2 & 3—the seven churches:

- that pictures the seven churches that were *then*
- that pictures the seven churches *down through history*

- that pictures perhaps even the seven churches *at the end-time*.

If we have seven from which comes seven, out of which comes seven, which is the pattern of the book of Revelation then we probably have seven churches in the end-time which will match up to the seven churches (Rev. 2 & 3). These seven churches represent the seven weeks harvest. Let's see when the seven week harvest comes to an end and then we are left once again with the 50th day harvest, which will be God's harvest.

We have in Rev. 4 & 5 showing the events that are going on there, and how that Christ is the only One to open the seals (Rev. 4 & 5). Then He was given power to open the seals, and that is after the time that God the Father gave Christ the authority to do so. We will see where we have the end of the Church Age.

Revelation 6:1: "And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, *there was* a white horse; and the one who was sitting on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer" (vs 1-2). This is a picture of the false religion going out in 'conquering and to conquer.' We see that happening right now bringing all coalesced into the coming one world government.

Verse 3: "And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, 'Come and see.' And another horse went out *that was* red; and power was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth..." (vs 3-4). This is the time of Rev. 13 after *the beast* receives the deadly wound and that is healed and he comes back, and authority is given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations, and it was given him authority to make war against the saints.

Verse 5: "And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, *there was* a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand. And I heard a voice in *the* midst of the four living creatures say, 'A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin; and see that you do not damage the oil and the wine.' And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it was Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one* fourth of the earth, to kill with *the* sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth (vs 5-8).

Now then, here's what we have when the

Church Age ends, v 9: "And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held." This was in vision. This is not saying that they're immortal souls. But this is a way of God conveying to John, and to us, the events that are going to take place.

Verse 10: "And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time, yet, until *it* be fulfilled that both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been" (vs 9-11). So, we have two categories of Christians at this particular point:

1. we have those who have gone to a place of safety (Rev. 12)

We also find that Satan goes after to make war with the remnant of her seed, who have the testimony of Jesus Christ and keep the commandments of God. This is the war pictured right here by the 5th seal.

2. there will come a time when all of those who are not in a place of safety will be martyred
 - that will end the Church harvest
 - that will finish the harvest of the seven churches
 - that will finish the seven-week harvest

But there is still one more day of the harvest, which God Himself is going to do, in a way different than dealing with us.

Let's see how that begins, v 12[transcriber's correction]: "And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the hair of* sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place" (vs 12-14).

This is a tremendous event! This is the event, which is spoken of there in Hag. 2 where the Lord says, 'And yet one more time I will shake the earth and the heavens and the dry land, and the sea.' And then Christ will appear. This is it, right here. Notice what happens.

Verse 15: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free man hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us, and hide us

from *the* face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the great day of His wrath has come, and who has the power to stand?" (vs 15-17).

Now let's see where this occurs. Jesus talked about the Tribulation because the Tribulation begins with the second seal. Then we have the third seal, the fourth seal, and then the fifth seal is the martyrdom of the saints. They are blamed by *the beast* as causing all of these problems on the earth. 'And as soon as we get rid of them then we're going to solve all the problems on the earth and:

- we'll have one government
- we'll have one religion
- we'll have one mind

and all of these nasty Christians will be exterminated.' When they come to the point of killing every Christian they can find, because they'll be able to find them. Even without the *mark of the beast*, which none of the true Christians will have, they have the global positioning system, and they can track down any human being on earth within 100 square feet. So there is:

- no mountain you can go to
- no cave you can go to
- no cellar that you can go to

because when God has determined it is His will that those who are to be martyred *will be martyred*. At that time God will give great strength to be able to give a witness, and to prophesy against the evil powers of Satan and the world.

Matthew 24:21: "For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the beginning of the world* until this time, nor ever shall be *again*. And if those days were not limited, **there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be limited**" (vs 21-22).

The Greek here doesn't mean, 'cut short' (KJV) shortening up less than 3½ years. It means, *limited*; those days are limited. God has in advance set a limit of the days of the Tribulation.

Verse 23: "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here *is* the Christ,' or, '*He is* there,' do not believe *it*. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, '*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness'; do not go forth. '*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers'; do not believe *it*'" (vs 23-26).

This ties in with the beginning of the sixth seal with the rolling back of the heavens as a scroll rolled up together.

Verse 27: "For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the east* and shines as far as *the west...*" This is not talking about a bolt of lightning, because lightning does not just proceed from the east. It proceeds from the east, from the west, from the north, from the south; from the clouds down to the ground; from the ground back up to the clouds; it goes sideways, it goes at every angle. So, this cannot be talking about lightning as a bolt of lightning, but the light of day, which comes out of the east because that's where the sun rises, and shines even unto the west because that's where the sun sets.

"...so also shall the coming of the Son of man be" (v 27). This is called *the sign of the Son of man*. What is going to happen? *When the heavens roll back as a scroll there is going to appear this brightness as if it's another sun, and of that day and of that hour knows no man!*

Verse 29: "But immediately after the tribulation of those days..." We saw the Tribulation come up to a certain point. And when we come to the book of Revelation we are going to see that it shifts from the tribulation of man against man to the more dastardly part of it—of demons and men against the angels of God--ith the seven trumpet plagues. This becomes important to understand.

Verse 30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven... [as a sun just being exposed; never there before] ...and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Because of the time that is left, the sign of the Son of man must be like a sun coming closer and closer and closer to the earth. Then when it comes time for the resurrection it will, I believe, lock into orbit right over Jerusalem. That's where the Sea of Glass will be. How high it will be, I don't know. It says it's going to be in the clouds. How high are the clouds? Clouds can be as high as 50,000 feet. They can be as low as 2,000 or 3,000 feet. So, we don't know, but we are going to meet Christ in the air in the clouds. Christ is coming with the clouds.

Notice when the resurrection occurs this is what is going to happen, v 31: "And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to *the other*."

We got ahead of the story a little bit, because we need to look at the 50th day harvest of God. And this is a *special harvest* of God. Remember how we ended; they saw the sign of the Son of man in heaven.

Revelation 6:17 "Because the great day of His wrath has come, and who has the power to stand?"

Now then, God does something very important. He intervenes to fulfill a prophecy. He intervenes to show His mercy. He intervenes because He does not want, with the end of the Church Age, that there lack human beings who are converted and qualify for the Kingdom of God.

Revelation 7:1: "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from *the rising of the sun*, having *the seal of the living God*; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads'" (vs 1-3).

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 34:26
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:12-23
- 3) Acts 1:3-11
- 4) Acts 2:1-8, 10-15
- 5) Deuteronomy 5:29
- 6) Acts 2:16-24, 34-41
- 7) Leviticus 23:17
- 8) Mathew 13:33
- 9) 1 Corinthians 15:34-36
- 10) John 12:24-25
- 11) 1 Corinthians 15:36-54
- 12) Revelation 6:1-17
- 13) Matthew 24:21-31
- 14) Revelation 6:17
- 15) Revelation 7:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 31
- John 20
- Luke 24
- Psalm 110
- Revelation 11; 2-5; 13; 12
- Haggai 2

Also referenced: Booklet:

The True Meaning of Acts 2:1

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Pentecost and the 144,000 II

Fred R. Coulter

Let's understand something very important and very profound of the 144,000 (Rev. 7), that cannot be anyone who is in the Church today. That's why the Jehovah Witnesses are completely wrong on *their* interpretation and understanding of the 144,000. Why is it that I say that the 144,000 of Rev. 7 cannot be any of us? Let's answer the question by Scripture.

Let's see that *we are now sealed* with the Holy Spirit of God. *Whenever you receive the Holy Spirit you have been sealed!* Let's see that and let's understand that the 144,000 were not sealed with the Holy Spirit until this particular time down into the Tribulation. We'll see that very clearly.

2-Corinthians 1:20: "For whatever promises of God *there are*, in Him *is* the yes, and in Him the Amen, with glory to God by us." That's one thing we can do, brethren, *we can claim the promises of God!* Not because we're anything. Not because we're something that we have done of ourselves and we now deserve it. *No!* We claim the promises of God:

- for the sake of Christ
- for the sake of His Word
- for the sake of His Truth
- for His righteousness

It's always *yes*, because He won't deny the promise; He will fulfill it!

Verse 21: "But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us... [with His Holy Spirit] ...*is* God, Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (vs 21-22). The earnest of the Spirit is the down payment; we are just like the unleavened bread now. When we are leavened in our *spiritual* form then we will have the fullness of the Spirit, and that's why leaven is pictured in good cause at that particular time. We only have the earnest of it now.

Let's see how he explained, to those at Ephesus, concerning the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 1:12: "That we might be... [those who are in the first resurrection] ...to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory" (vs 12-14). If you have the Holy Spirit of God now, *you have been sealed!* So, you cannot be any of the 144,000 of Rev. 7.

Let's see who the 144,000 are, and this will show how true God's Word is, Revelation 7:3:

"Saying, 'Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.'" We've already been sealed so these are those who are now called and converted by God's supernatural act.

Let's review the things in Rev. 6; how that all of those things that the prophet Joel said concerning the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the earthquake, and the pouring out of the Spirit of God; how even Peter prophesied that that would be before the great and notable Day of the Lord. This is showing it right here. That's what happened. Here is the fulfillment of the Pentecost harvest or the 50th-day harvest by God. This is a separate harvest; separate from the Church. This is God's Divine intervention to fulfill and complete His Word and call those especially whom He is determined to call.

Now let's see who the 144,000 are, Revelation 7:4: "And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of *the* children of Israel. From *the* tribe of Judah..." (vs 4-5). Isn't it interesting that in the book of Zechariah, God says that 'the tents of Judah will be saved first'? So, here is Judah *first*.

"...twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand *were* sealed..." (v 5)—Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph and Benjamin.

Dan is left out; the reason Dan is left out is because the book of Genesis says of the prophecy of Dan that he 'would wait for his salvation.' Of course, Dan is the tribe of Israel that is so involved in idol worship and Catholicism. So, God is going to save them later; they're not included in this 144,000. *This is a special category that God has saved for Himself!*

Now let's understand when in the timeframe does this take place in the Tribulation. We know that the overall Tribulation is 3-1/2 years. So, this is an event which takes place before the 3-1/2 years has expired. Let's see that this gives us a prophetic timeframe as to when this took place. God says concerning Israel:

Hosea 5:15: "I will go; I will return to My place until they confess their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will seek Me earnestly."

The prophecies are true; Israel is going into captivity. There are some people out there who say that 'Israel is not going into captivity today.' That is a lie and that is a false prophet. He is teaching things that are not according to the Scriptures. Oh, that it

would be that Israel could be in such a condition before God that they wouldn't have to go into tribulation. But you read all of the prophecies concerning where Israel is when Christ returns and all of them show that they are in captivity. Here are the children of Israel in captivity and—out of those who are in captivity—144,000 are brought to repentance and are sealed. When during the tribulation_[transcriber's correction] does this take place?

Here it is speaking of Israel during this time of repentance, Hosea 6:1: "Come and let us return to the LORD, for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; in the third day He will raise us up..." (vs 1-2). In prophecy, how long is a day? *In prophecy a day is a year!* So, this is after two full years. That's when the sign of the Son of man is going to appear in heaven and God will then begin to raise them up.

"...He will raise us up..." (v 2)—beginning in the third year of the Tribulation, which means there's a whole year—the third year—left, and there is another six months making a total of a year and a half. The whole Tribulation is 3-1/2 years altogether, broken down into the first two years, coming down through the opening of the seals until the sign of the Son of man appears in heaven. Then we come down to the time now of Rev. 7 where we have *the 144,000 of Israel sealed* just like it says right here in Hos. 6.

"...in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.... [notice the prophecy]: ...Then we shall understand, if we follow on to know the LORD. His going out is prepared as the morning; and He shall come to us as the rain, as the latter *and* former rain to the earth" (vs 2-3). This is what we have in Rev. 7—God intervening to save them.

Now then, what does it say concerning the preaching of the Gospel? '*To the Jews first,*' which includes *all* Israel. Then whom does it go to after that? *To the Greek or the Gentile!* God is going to reach down and *supernaturally seal*, by the power of God's Holy Spirit, through this angel who is commissioned to do so.

Let's understand something: *All of these will receive the Holy Spirit first*, then they will be baptized just like it was with Cornelius' household; they received the Holy Spirit first, then they were baptized. Can God do that? *Yes, He can!* God chooses to do that whenever it is His choice to do, like He did with Cornelius. But do they still have to be baptized? *Yes, they do!* What will happen then? There will be great baptismal ceremonies taking place with the 144,000. Now then, since it goes to the Gentile also, the same thing is going to occur.

Revelation 7:9: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one was able to number..." This shows, contrary to the preaching of some, that God is not just restricting those that He is calling from the time of Christ until His return to 144,000. Such a thing could never be, because if even on the very first day, as we saw with Pentecost, 3,000 were converted and thousands were added. Another place it says 5,000 souls were added. Great multitudes in Jerusalem believed. We saw where James told Paul, when Paul came up to visit James (Acts 22), '*behold the thousands that believe in Christ and are zealous for the law!*' So, anybody who says that God is only calling 144,000 in this age just doesn't know what he's talking about and he's twisting and turning the Scriptures to his own destruction.

"...a great multitude, which no one was able to number... [Where did they come from?] ...out of every nation and tribe and people and language, was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and *holding palms in their hands*" (v 9).

Just like we saw 'white robes'; they're called to the wedding. These are some of the guests who are called at the very last minute out of the highways and out of the byways, and out of the places that God is doing it at the last minute. Since this is prophesied in Acts 2 to happen with all the signs preceding it, and it happened on the Day of Pentecost there, this has to happen on the next to the last Pentecost before Christ puts His feet on the earth, or the Pentecost before the resurrection.

So, we have these people who, in these circumstances, will be converted for one year. These people—the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude—then are reckoned as the laborers who are put into work and hire at the eleventh hour. There's only one hour left, and in this case that pictures *one year left*. Is God able to do that? *Yes, He is, no doubt about it!* So, they're going to receive salvation.

Verse 10: "And they were calling out with a loud voice to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, saying, 'The salvation of our God has come.'... [because that's what they're going to receive] ...Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and strength *be* to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen.' And one of the elders answered *and* said to me, 'These who are clothed with white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?' Then I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'They are the ones who have come out of the great

tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and the One Who sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall not hunger any more, nor shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun nor the heat fall upon them, because the Lamb Who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them, and will lead them to fountains of living waters; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (vs. 10-17).

This projects forward to the time that we know in Rev. 21 shows the finality of God’s plan. What this is doing is showing what God is going to do with the 144,000 and great innumerable multitude? First of all, He’s showing that they’re going to be resurrected. Of course, they’re not going to be resurrected until the first resurrection takes place, but it also shows that they are not going to enter into the Millennium as physical human beings. They’re going to be spirit beings. Now we have a good setting to go on and understand what we’re talking about with some of the other Scriptures concerning the Day of Pentecost and the resurrection.

I’m just going to summarize Rev. 8 & 9, but each of them are the *seven trumpet plagues*. The seventh seal is opened and then the first angel goes out. Isn’t it interesting that it talks about the first angel going out and blows his trumpet. Then the second angel, third angel, fourth angel, fifth angel and the sixth angel.

Now let’s see when the seventh angel sounds, and the seventh angel is the last trump; that’s what we need to understand. The saints are resurrected at the last trump, *not trumpets*. The Feast of Trumpets is a day of war, a memorial of blowing of trumpets; so, here we have a sequence of seven trumpets. {see *Outline of Revelation I & II*, and the chart that goes with it} It shows that the first trumpet is blown shortly after the Pentecost where the 144,000 are sealed and the great innumerable multitude. That comes down through the time sequence to when we come to the seventh trump, which then has to be on the Day of Pentecost, or about right there.

Concerning the two witnesses, because this leads up until the resurrection. God allowed the two witnesses to be killed, Revelation 11:8: “And their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”

- Sodom tells us the *morals* of the peoples
- Egypt tells us the *religion* of the people

The coming one world religion is going back to the whole thing of Egyptian religious worship. That’s

why it’s defined here. “...where also our Lord was crucified.” That is typified by Jerusalem because Jerusalem—even though it was city that God chose to place His name there when the temple was built—it has never been faithful, with the exception of a few of the kings, as we find recorded in a history recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles.

When the two witnesses die, v 9: “Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth” (vs 9-10). The last two enemies now to be killed, so the world thinks.

Verse 11: “Then after the three and a half days, the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet... [Can you imagine how everyone is going to view that and take that?] ...and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.”

Then here is an example, a perfect example in the Scripture concerning ‘the first shall be last and the last shall be first.’ The two witnesses were the very last two who were martyred for Christ’s sake. They are the very first two who are resurrected.

After they stood on their feet, v 12: “And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, ‘Come up here!’ And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them rise. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past....” (vs 12-14). The second woe was introduced with the sixth trumpet.

“...Behold, the third woe is coming immediately. Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come; for You have taken to Yourself Your great power, and have reigned. For the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to all those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth’” (vs 15-18). That is the resurrection—is it not? The resurrection occurs at the seventh trump, the last trump, just as Paul said.

Let's see where, as we saw in Matt. 24, the angels will pick us up as we are resurrected and will bring us up to the Sea of Glass, because there is going to be the meeting with the saints. And then we will see what has to happen here.

1-Thessalonians 4:14: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep, because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive..." (vs 14-17). Who are those who are alive?

1. those who are of the Church in the place of safety
2. the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude (Rev. 7)

After all the dead in Christ have been raised, v 17: "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds for the meeting with the Lord in the air; and so shall we always be with the Lord."

Let's see when that will take place. I want you to understand that there are a lot of things that have to take place after the resurrection before we come back to the earth. It is true that the Feast of Trumpets pictures the day when Christ and the saints put their feet on the earth on the Mount of Olives. But the coming of Christ began with the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and He kept coming closer and closer to the earth. Let's see the harvest of the firstfruits. Then we'll go back and we'll examine the 144,000 again of Rev. 7 and the 144,000 of Rev. 14. But first let's get us all resurrected first; let's have that all taken care of.

Revelation 14:12: "Here is the patience of the saints; here are the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." That means having Jesus' very own faith.

Verse 13: "And I heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from this time forward. Yes, says the Spirit, so that they may rest from their labors; and their works follow them.' And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and one like the Son of man sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand was a sharp sickle" (vs 13-14). What do you cut grain with? A sickle!

Verse 15: "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, 'Thrust in your sickle and

reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.'" Jesus said the harvest is the *end of the age*. The age ended with the seventh trump. This then is the resurrection of the seventh trump. So, as the age is ending the sickle is put to the grain and all are resurrected.

Verse 16: "And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped." There is the first resurrection; that occurs on Pentecost. Then it jumps forward to another harvest. And this is the harvest of the destruction of the wicked through the seven last plagues.

Verse 17: "Then another angel, who also had a sharp sickle, came out of the temple that is in heaven. And out from the altar came another angel, who had authority over fire; and he called with a loud cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Thrust in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe'" (vs 17-18). These are the true grapes of wrath.

Now notice, the One Who did the first harvesting was like unto the Son of man, that's Christ. Now we have an angel with a sickle.

Verse 19: "And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast its fruit into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood spewed out from the winepress as high as the horses' bridles, to the distance of a thousand six hundred furlongs" (vs 19-20). This is the judgment in the Valley of Judgment.

(go to the next track)

Revelation 15:1: "Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire" (vs 1-2).

Remember how we saw that the Sea of Glass was there when Christ came down on the mountain. He had Moses and the 70 elders and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu came up. They all saw Him because it was pavement under His feet. If we're going to meet Christ in the air, what are we going to do? How are we going to be suspended? Well, there is a sea of glass, which we can walk on; that's where the angels take us.

"...A sea of glass mingled with fire... [because of its brilliance] ...and those who had gotten the victory over the beast..." (v 2). When did the beast first appear? In the person of Satan the devil in the Garden of Eden! Have all of those who enter into the first resurrection, have they had to get victory over the beast? Yes!

"...and over his image..." (v 2). Has there

not been a female goddess-worship in the image to *the beast* going clear back when? *Yes!* At least we know that it came after the Flood. We know that they just reconstructed what they had after the Flood from what they did before the Flood. There's the image of *the beast*.

"...and over his mark..." (v 2). At the end-time we're going to have the *mark of the beast*. It's called the Digital Angel, which is inserted in the forehead or in the forehead either one.

"...and over the number of his name, standing on the Sea of Glass, having the lyres of God" (v 2)

Notice that this includes the Old Testament, those who have been resurrected and qualified from the time of Abel on down to the time of Christ.

Notice what they do, v 3: "And they were singing the song of Moses, *the servant of God...*" These are those of the Old Testament, the loaf of the Old Testament.

"...and the song of the Lamb... [New Testament] ...saying, 'Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* Holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed' (vs 3-4). There's a prophecy of what's going to happen on down into the Millennium.

144,000 of Revelation 7

Verse 4: "And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of *the children of Israel*." These are from the children of Israel only, 12,000 from each tribe. Why are they sealed at this particular time? *They are in captivity because they were unfaithful to God even in the letter of the law!* We'll see that's very important.

We also find the great innumerable multitude. There are no other distinguishing characteristics of these other than the fact that they are sealed at the beginning of the third year during the Tribulation of 3-1/2 years. They then qualify for the first resurrection. These are the laborers of the 11th hour (Luke 11).

144,000 of Revelation 14

We are going to see that these 144,000 are a different group—the distinguishing and qualifying things

Verse 1: "And I looked, and I beheld *the Lamb* standing on Mount Sion..." We have come unto Mt. Sion, the Church of the Firstborn (Heb. 12)

"...and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on

their foreheads. Then I heard a voice from heaven, like *the* sound of many waters, and like *the* sound of great thunder; and I heard *the* sound of lyre players playing their lyres. And they were singing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one was able to learn the song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand, who were redeemed from the earth" (vs 1-3).

This is a separate song from the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. This is a third song that only this 144,000 could sing. No one else could sing it. All the rest were able to sing, the one concerning Moses for the Old Covenant, the one concerning the Lamb for the New Covenant, and now we have a third category here of the 144,000 with their song.

Verse 4: "These are the ones who were not defiled with women..." (v 4). What does it mean to be defiled with women? *You go right back to Rev. 17*, that we have 'Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,' and she is called the 'great whore.'

This means that once they were converted they did not defile themselves with any of the 'religions' or the *religious practices* of this world. We're going to see that's very important when we go back and look at the seven churches (Rev. 2 & 3).

"...for they are virgins... [Christ would only marry a virgin] ...they are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men *as* first fruits to God and to the Lamb" (v 4). We have Christ Who was the First of the firstfruits, and then we have these who are apparently the first group of the firstfruits. All the rest being the firstfruits in general.

Verse 5: "And no guile was found in their mouths; for they are blameless before the throne of God."

Analysis of Rev. 14 and what separates these even further from the 144,000 in Rev. 7:

1. They have the name of the Father written in their foreheads

It doesn't say that about the 144,000 in Rev. 7. All of these are distinguished from the 144,000 in Rev. 7. The first thing that we need to understand is, as we go along here, because it says that they were not of the children of Israel, but they were redeemed from the earth.

2. No one was able to learn the song except the 144,000

3. They were redeemed from the earth

Showing that these 144,000 were redeemed from the earth probably over a period of time.

4. These are they who are not defiled with women

They remained virgins; they remained totally faithful to God in everything that they did in their conversion and were never defiled by women.

5. They are virgins

Remember the warning that the Apostle Paul gave to the Corinthians in 2-Corinthians 11:2: "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 they became non-virgins because they committed *spiritual* fornication. Maybe they were able to repent of it, just like any woman who loses her virginity through sin, she can repent of it but she's no longer a virgin. So likewise, if it is those who have received the Holy Spirit, if they give up their virginity by being enticed by Satan the devil and getting involved in other religious practices, or other religious doctrines within the Church then they lose their virginity.

6. These follow the Lamb wherever He goes

Meaning that they're always following Him regardless of where their spiritual life takes them.

7. These were redeemed from among men

Redeemed from the earth, redeemed from among men.

8. Firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb

9. In their mouth was no guile

10. For they are without fault before the throne of God

Review of the Seven Churches of Revelation 2 & 3:

We will see that out of the seven churches only two of the seven remained virgins:

Ephesus:

They lost their first love and Christ told them, 'Except you repent, I'm going to remove your candlestick.' Loosing your first love, that is loosing your virginity.

Pergamos:

They ate things sacrificed to idols, committed fornication, had the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing God says He hates. He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth. Those at Pergamos, even though they repented because they were told to repent, *they lost their virginity!* They can be put

back in right standing with God, *but once you lose your virginity you have lost it!* That doesn't mean you can't recoup. You can to be in the first resurrection.

But the question is: Will you still be part of the bride of Christ? When describing the 144,000 in Rev. 14 they are the ones who are the bride of Christ *because they remain virgins!*

Thyatira

- they had the woman Jezebel
- they committed fornication
- they ate things sacrificed to idols
- they also had those who knew the deep things of Satan

In other words those who infiltrated into that church were bringing in the doctrines of Satan-worship under the guise that you're worshiping Christ. Obviously, *they lost their virginity.*

Sardis

Sardis was dead! They had a name that they lived but they are dead. With having dead practices they *surely were not virgins* before God. Because they somehow defiled themselves, and remember what Christ said to them. 'Repent!'

Laodicea

The Laodiceans became lukewarm, had need of nothing, and God was spewing them out of His mouth. God told them to repent. So we have Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea. Five of the seven churches were commanded to repent of their sins. So, *they lost their virginity!*

Now the two churches left were:

Smyrna

No command to repent. The Smyrnites were the ones who were martyred, and they were faithful unto death. *They held their virginity unto death!*

Philadelphia

Philadelphia resisted everything concerning the synagogue of Satan, and they patiently kept the Word of God. They were the ones who were faithful, *the most faithful of all.* There is no call to repentance, and to the Church at Philadelphia Christ said, 'To him that overcomes will I write upon him the name of My Father, and the name of the city, New Jerusalem, and I will write upon him My new name.'

To the Philadelphians:

- *if* you have the name of the Father
- *if* you have the name of Jerusalem

- if you have the name of Christ upon you
you belong to part of the bride of Christ!

Not all of those in the first resurrection are going to be part of the bride of Christ. Does this tell us here in Rev. 14—because of all of these conditions—that this 144,000 represents those who have been called down through time—

- who have been faithful unto God
- who were virgins
- never deviated from it

—once they were baptized and received the Holy Spirit they never got involved in any of the religions of this world, or any of the doctrines of this world. I hope you understand why it is so important that we remain faithful.

Now those who have not remained faithful, we pray that they will repent and not lose their reward. This is really important for us to understand. Let's see that they can repent, but they have been building wooden shacks and straw huts and their works are burned up because they were not virgins. The only ones who are virgins in this case are those who build on the virginity, keep it, and build the gold, silver, precious stone, and not the wood, hay, and stubble.

1-Corinthians 3:11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble, the work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of trial will declare it...” (vs 11-13). The day of the resurrection is going to be the final day of declaration.

“...because it shall be revealed by fire... [these are the fiery trials that we go through in our life of overcoming] ...and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is. If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet, as through fire” (vs 13-15).

Is this describing the difference between the 144,000 of Rev. 14 ***who become part of the bride of Christ***, because they remain faithful, as differentiated from those who started out but ended up sinning, ended up repenting and coming back much like the prodigal son, and ***they lost their virginity***? They lost some of the inheritance that they would have had otherwise. So, this is really a tremendous thing for us to understand.

I don't have time to go through the seven last plagues except that the seven last plagues represent the harvest of the wicked, as depicted in the last part of Rev. 14. All of these plagues will be

poured out in the presence of the saints. These are righteous judgments, and these are true judgments. For any who say that the God of the Old Testament was an angry and a harsh God, but the one of the New Testament is loving and kind and sweet, please understand that this is the wrath of the Lamb that is being poured out on all those sinners.

Let's also understand this, too: God knows, for the resurrection—based upon the works and the faithfulness of the individuals—that He is going to select those who will be in the 144,000 of Rev. 14. And if those are the ones who consist of the bride of Christ, ***God the Father is the One Who chooses them!*** We don't have to worry about it. We don't have to look around and accuse people, or suspect them, because it says, ‘*Blessed are those who are called to the wedding supper of the Lamb.*’ Those who are called to the supper will participate in the first resurrection in power, and in glory just like the rest. But only the bride of Christ will be with Christ wherever He is.

Revelation 19:1: “And after these things I heard the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying...”—because that's all of those who were resurrected standing on the Sea of Glass. And it's in the first heaven where the clouds are.

“...‘Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power belong to the Lord our God. For true and righteous are His judgments; for He has judged the great whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.’ And they said a second time, ‘Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity’” (vs 1-3).

Verse 4: “And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’ And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great.’ And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like the sound of many waters, and the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord God Almighty has reigned. Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’

8: And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true words of God’” (vs 4-9).

So we have a tremendous blessing, brethren, if we have been called to be part of the bride of Christ, which I hope whoever you are that that is true. We can't judge for ourselves how it's going to

be. God is going to make that judgment. But also realize this: ***There is a great and a fantastic and eternal blessing to be called to the first resurrection and to be one of the guests at the wedding of the Lamb and His bride.***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Corinthians 1:20-22
- 2) Ephesians 1:12-14
- 3) Revelation 7:3-5
- 4) Hosea 5:15
- 5) Hosea 6:1-3
- 6) Revelation 7:9-17
- 7) Revelation 11:8-18
- 8) 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
- 9) Revelation 14:12-20
- 10) Revelation 15:1-4
- 11) Revelation 7:4
- 12) Revelation 14:1-5
- 13) 2 Corinthians 11:2
- 14) 1 Corinthians 3:11-15
- 15) Revelation 19:1-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 6
- Acts 22: 2
- Revelation 21, 8, 9
- Matthew 24
- Luke 11
- Hebrews 12
- Revelation 17; 2; 3

Also referenced: Sermons:

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More on the 144,000

Fred R. Coulter

I want to answer some questions concerning the bride and the guests and maybe a little bit concerning the 144,000. What I want to do is cover a little part concerning the 50th-day harvest of the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude.

Matthew 20:1: “The Kingdom of Heaven shall be compared to a man, a master of a house, who went out early in *the morning* to hire workmen for his vineyard. And after agreeing with the workmen on a silver coin *for the day’s wage*, he sent them into his vineyard. And when he went out about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, ‘Go also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ And they went....” (vs 1-5).

This is interesting—isn’t it? One thing that we have to get rid of is the mentality that it’s all stacked up according to a four-hour sermon. It’s not that way, because God is going to determine who will be where and in what position. That’s all a part of this. The master of the house didn’t tell them very much. He said “...whatever is right, I’ll give you. And they went their way.”

“...Again, after going out about *the sixth hour* and *the ninth hour*, he did likewise” (vs 1-5). He went out there at 6 a.m., 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m.

Verse 6: “And about the eleventh hour... [5 o’clock] ...he went out *and* found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all the day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘Go also into my vineyard, and whatever is right you shall receive.’ And when evening came, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the workmen and pay them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first’” (vs 6-8).

This tells us an awful lot—doesn’t it? As we will see, the whole parable tells us that God does not think like we think, especially if you ever belong to a union. This would be called the greatest ‘scab’ operation that they had ever come across.

Verse 9: “And when those who *were hired* about the eleventh hour came, they each received a silver coin. But when the first ones came, they thought that they would receive more...” (vs 9-10). This is judging by human standards.

“...but each of them also received a silver coin. And after receiving *it*, they complained against the master of the house, saying, ‘These who *came* last have worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have carried the burden and the heat of the day.’ But he answered *and* said to them,

‘Friend, I am not doing you wrong. Did you not agree with me on a silver coin *for the day?*’” (vs 10-13).

This tells us that God is going to do what He is going to do. He is going to reward whom He is going to reward, in the way that He is going to reward them. That all of our complaining or comparing isn’t going to change it.

I know there are going to be some people who say, ‘Who are you to say that we’re not going to be part of the bride?’ The truth is, *Christ is going to determine who it is, and I’m sure God the Father is going to select the bride!*

Just recently I had a wedding, and I love weddings; weddings are my favorite thing! It was really a wonderful outdoor wedding. It was beautiful. Only thing, it was a noon and 95 degrees, so it was a little warm, but just as we started there was a breeze that came up and made it livable. I went through the ceremony and then we went on over where they were going to have the wedding supper. I was sitting there and my wife was sitting there and we were enjoying everything. The bride and groom came in and they took the first dance. I thought, this is just exactly what the Bible is talking about. We’re here and we’re enjoying it. I was happy to have a part in doing the ceremony. But, there’s the husband and there’s the bride and all the rest of us are guests. I thought, that’s just the way it’s going to be in the resurrection. God is the One Who’s going to have to decide.

Verse 14: “Take *what* is yours and go, for I also desire to give to the last *ones* exactly as I gave to you. And is it not lawful for me to do what I will with that which *is* my own? Is your eye evil because I am good?” So, the last shall be first, and the first *shall be* last; for many are called, but few *are* chosen” (vs 14-15). This almost sounds like what we read about in Job: *That you disannul My judgment that you may be righteous.* That’s what they’re trying to do here.

Let’s look at Rev. 7—are these not the 144,000 from Israel? I think that’s very clear that they are different from the 144,000 in Rev. 14. Rev. 7 is approximately at the end of two full years of the 3-1/2 year Tribulation—meaning that there’s 1 year and 6 months left. This, I believe, is the 50th-day harvest that belongs to God. Here it gives no inclination of any reward at all, except that—after you get through the 144,000—then you come down here to the great innumerable multitude, ‘which no man could number’; and then it says:

Revelation 7:14: "Then I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'They are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.'"

So, these here may very well be a good portion of the number of guests, because if they're in white, then those are the wedding garments of the guests. These are part of *the last*, which will probably be some of the first who are resurrected. That doesn't mean that they're going to be necessarily first in reward.

The Two Witnesses

Let's look at the very two *last*, the two witnesses, Revelation 11:3 "And I will give *power* to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and *the two lampstands* that stand before the God of the earth. And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and devour their enemies. For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner" (vs 3-5). This is going to be quite a thing.

I can just see it now: CNN news there: 'Boy, did you see that? Fire came out of their mouth! And look, here are the ashes. What are we going to do to stop them? They're upsetting this thing of one-world government.'

Verse 6: "These have authority to shut heaven so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will. And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss... [Satan and the man that he possesses] ...will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them" (vs 6-7).

This is just like with Christ. Satan thought he had it made when Christ was killed. But Christ was resurrected and totally defeated Satan. So here, *the beast* will think 'we finally have it made, and we'll teach them a lesson.'

Verse 8: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

Of course, the coming one-world religion is going to be nothing more than a re-warmed Egyptian version of the New Age religion. Did you know that Mormonism—when you read this book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*—is nothing more than modern Gnosticism. When you read this it will 'blow you away!' The Gnostics believe that we were spirits up in heaven and that they had to come down and

possess a human body. That's a very basic tenet of Mormonism!

Verse 9: "Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them..." (vs 9-10). When it talks about all the world will see, it means *they will see it!* Today we understand that statement.

"...and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another..." (v 10). I can just hear *the beast*: 'Brethren of the world, they have finally conquered these two men who were disturbing and upsetting our wonderful one-world government. They have caused plagues! Killed people! Drought! Now they are dead! Let us celebrate; I proclaim a feast!' That's what's going to happen.

"...because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth.' Then after the three and a half days, *the spirit of life* from God entered into them and they stood on their feet..." (vs 10-11).

Can you imagine that? Can you imagine the breathlessness of all of the television reporters all breathlessly reporting this, and all the cameras are there and then we have this discussion. They'll have a rabbi and 'what do you think of this?' You can almost see the whole thing going on. And right when they're talking about how good it is that they're dead, all of a sudden—the cameras pointing on their bodies—see them rise up on their feet.

"...they stood on their feet and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, 'Come up here!' And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*" (vs 11-12). These are the last two who are killed, who are the *first resurrected!* Perfect example of the '*the last shall be first*'

Verse 13: "And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming **immediately....** [not just quickly] ...Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.'" (vs 13-15). Here then is the resurrection. But just prior to the resurrection, the two witnesses—the last two—are raised first.

Matthew 20:16: "So the last shall be first, and the first *shall be* last; for many are called, but few *are chosen*." Then we have Jesus was going up and He told them about how He was going to be

betrayed, and so forth.

Verse 20: "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, worshiping Him and asking a certain thing from Him. And He said to her, 'What do you desire?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these my two sons may sit one at Your right hand and one at *Your left hand* in Your kingdom'" (vs 20-21). You talk about a political move to make it good 'for my two boys.' But this has the same thing to do with the first and the last, only from a little different perspective. This time, instead of the first and last being the general laborers that were out in the vineyard, now here we have it with the 12 apostles. Christ gives the lesson here:

Verse 22: "But Jesus answered *and* said, 'You do not know what you are asking....'" The two sons were right there. They wouldn't want to march up and say, 'Lord, give it to us, look how good we are. But, mom, you are so persuasive, why don't you do it for us.'

"...Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?".... [He had just told them He was going to be crucified.] ...They said to Him, 'We are able'" (v 22). Of course, they didn't know what that was. It's kind of like a Marine recruit. 'Are you able to go up and capture that enemy machine-gun nest?' *Yeah, I can!* Don't even know what you're saying; never been under fire.

Verse 23: "And He said to them, 'You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*; but to sit at My right hand and at My left hand is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father.'" So, the Father is in charge of all of this, not just us as human beings, or just Christ alone.

Verse 24: "And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers"—because they got there first. The other ten would have liked to have gotten there first to ask; that's what they were mad at. Just carnal human being wanting to be the best, the greatest and all this sort of thing.

Verse 25: "But Jesus called them to *Him and said...* [He's giving the lesson here]: ...'You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship [dominion] over them, and the great ones exercise authority over them.'" *Dominion* is 'katakurieu'—which is *downward*; and the other one is 'kataexousia'—which is *authority downward*.

Verse 26: "However, it shall not be this way among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant; and whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave; just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to

serve, and to give His life *as a ransom for many*" (vs 26-28). That all ties in with those who are going to be in the resurrection.

Matthew 22:1—let's look at the guests: "And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king [God the Father], who made a wedding feast for his son [Jesus Christ], and sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast; but they refused to come'" (vs 1-3). The 'king'—Who is God the Father—is going to have the marriage and He's going to select the bride.

Verse 4: "Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, 'Say to those who have been invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast.'" But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*" (vs 4-6). Just a summary of the life of the apostles.

Verse 7: "Now, when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.... [Jerusalem 70 A.D.] ...Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast.' And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil..." (vs 7-10).

This is talking about people who are bad people and good people—not in the sense of *spiritually speaking* but just in their lives. Of course, both the bad and the good have to repent. It's harder for the good to repent because they don't see the sins that they have done.

"...and the wedding feast was filled with guests" (v 10).

Here the parable breaks down a little bit. Obviously, this is referring to the first resurrection. But there is not going to be anybody in the first resurrection who is going to be there without the proper wedding garment. In order to show that you have to apply yourself and have to have the proper wedding garment, this is in the parable. When will those who do not prepare to be guests be cast into outer darkness? *That will be the Lake of Fire at the end of the Millennium in the Great White Throne Judgment!* In order for the sake of the parable to show it, it has to be combined here.

Verse 11: "And when the king came in to see the guests..." The 'king' being God the Father helps answer the questions:

- When we are resurrected will we see God the Father?
- Why not?
- Will we be spirit beings? *Yes!*
- Are we not His children? *Yes!*
- Would He not want to see His children just resurrected, born from the dead? *Yes!*
- Would we not want to see Him? *Absolutely!*
- As well as Christ? *No doubt!*

So, this says He came to see them.

“...he noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast; and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?’ But he had no answer. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness.’ There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen” (vs 11-14).

Let's hope we can understand this a little bit more, Matthew 25:1: “Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared *to* ten virgins, who took their lamps *and* went out to meet the bridegroom.” Here we have the virgins and the bridegroom; before we had the guests coming to the wedding. This is obviously a different category of people.

Verse 2: “And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them” (vs 2-3).

You need to understand about the lamps. The lamps that they had were small, handheld and had a little wick that came out of the side. Olive oil was put into the middle of it and the wick would hang over the edge of it and give light. Obviously, if you only have oil in your little lamp you don't have very much. That's why they should have some with them, to carry an extra amount to pour in there when they needed it.

Verse 4: “But the wise took oil in their vessels *along* with their lamps. Now when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept” (vs 4-5). Showing that they had their own individual problems.

Verse 6: “But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry: ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘*No*, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves” (vs 6-9). This is obviously showing that they did not have enough spiritual character in order

to qualify as part of the bride.

Verse 10: “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came... [in a parable it can't fit everything to the exact facts] ...and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut. And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But He answered *and* said, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you’” (vs 10-12).

In this part He doesn't say ‘depart into outer darkness’ and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ***This does not necessarily show a loss of salvation, but this shows a loss of being part of the bride.*** The door to being the bride is shut! It doesn't say they won't be in the Kingdom of God, but it does tell us they won't be part of the bride.

Verse 13: “Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.” Now then, I think that's the best understanding that I've been able to derive from this. In other words, these virgins by the virtue of the fact that *they didn't exercise the spiritual character they should have had*, they, in a sense, disqualified themselves from the marriage. It doesn't necessarily say that they sinned and lost what we would call the *spiritual virginity*, but it does show that they were very negligent.

Let's answer the question concerning the firstfruits, 1-Corinthians 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep.” We know that this is the first of the firstfruits by several things:

1. God says that you are bring the first of the firstfruits unto the Lord (Exo. 34).
2. By the wave sheaf offering that was elevated on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day, that that signified Christ ascending to the Father to be accepted as the firstborn from the dead.
3. Christ is the First of the firstfruits.

Verse 21: “For since by man *came* death, by man also *came* the resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ***But each in his own order...***” (vs 21-23). There is an order to the resurrection. Part of what we have of the order that we saw is the ‘last shall be first and the first shall be last.’

If Adam and repented and made it—is He going to be the last one resurrected? *I don't know!* But the ones who are going to be the very last to be resurrected are those who are alive when Christ returns. 1-Thess. 4 says that ‘they which are dead in Christ ***shall rise first***. Then we, which are alive, will be caught up in the air together with them and meet the Lord in the air.’ Now, *meet the Lord in the air*

can also have the meaning: *for the meeting with the Lord in the air.* So, there's an order.

We are called *firstfruits*. All those in the first resurrection are called *firstfruits*. Christ is called *firstfruits*. Christ is the First of the firstfruits. Now, let's look at the rest:

James 1:18 "According to His [God the Father] own will, He begat us by the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings"—of His creation; meaning those of us who are *created in Christ Jesus!* That's what it's referring to. So, we are called *firstfruits!* Christ is also called *the Firstborn*. Rom. 8:29: 'that He should be called the firstborn among many brethren.' We are also called *the Church of the Firstborn* (Heb. 12).

Let's go back to Rev. 14 and let's see concerning 144,000. The distinction between these and the 144,000 in Rev. 7 becomes very clear when we analyze all the differences. What is said of the 144,000 in Rev. 7 is that they are 12,000 from the 12 tribes of the children of Israel. It lists Joseph and it lists Manasseh and it does not include Dan—that's because of the prophecy that 'Dan will wait for his salvation.'

Revelation 14:1: "And I looked, and I beheld *the Lamb standing on Mount Sion...* [That's what we are to come to—the Church of the Firstborn (Heb. 12)] ...and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand..."

Look at Revelation 7:9 with the innumerable multitude and the 144,000: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribe and people and language, was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and holding palms in their hands."

You have to have the white robes in order to be a guest. This is probably indicating that these were all guests. They stood before the throne; that is out around before the throne.

Verse 10: "And they were calling out with a loud voice to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, saying, 'The salvation of our God *has come.*' Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and strength *be* to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen.' And one of the elders answered *and* said to me, 'These who are clothed with white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?' Then I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' And he said to me, 'They are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes

white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and the One Who sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall not hunger any more, nor shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun nor the heat fall upon them, because the Lamb Who *is* in the midst of the throne will shepherd them, and will lead them to fountains of living waters; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'" (vs 10-17).

Let's come back and compare that with the 144,000 in Revelation 14:1: And I looked, and I beheld *the Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.* Then I heard a voice from heaven, like *the sound of many waters, and like the sound of great thunder;* and I heard *the sound of lyre players playing their lyres.* And they were singing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one was able to learn the song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand, who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins; they are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men *as first fruits to God and to the Lamb*" (vs 1-4). Since we are called *firstfruits* what category are these?

Verse 5: "And no guile was found in their mouths; for they are blameless before the throne of God."

Let's go back and let's analyze this a little bit more.

- **firstfruits**: These were redeemed from among men—not the children of Israel. Can be any race of people or whatever.
- **firstfruits unto God and the Lamb**: Christ is called *firstfruits*, so we know He's the First of the firstfruits. Can we say then that if this 144,000 represents the bride—are these the next category of firstfruits—because it says, 'everyone in his own order.'
- **all of the rest** in the first resurrection will be called *firstfruits*.

So, we have three categories of *firstfruits*:

1. Christ
2. the bride
3. all the rest after that

I think if we put the Scriptures together properly we can see how that will be. Let's look at this a little bit more:

Verse 3: "...who were **redeemed from the earth.**" Again, showing that it's from all nations. This is differentiating it from the children of Israel.

Verse 4: "These are the ones who were **not defiled with women...**" What does it mean to be defiled with women? Who are the women who defile the saints of God? That's another way of asking the question.

Revelation 17:1: "And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, 'Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.' Then he carried me away in *the* spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and *the* filthiness of her fornication; and across her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (vs 1-5). So, it could be 'mother Babylon' or any one of her 'daughters' that can defile the saints.

These 144,000 of Rev. 14 were never defiled by the false doctrines of the churches of this world. These are 'they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes.' It says then, 'Christ and the bride say...'

A summary of what goes on during the Millennium, Revelation 22:17: "And the Spirit [Christ] and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely." This is Christ and the bride. Everything in the Millennium will flow from Christ and the bride. Who will it flow to?

Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection... [that's a blessing upon all] ...over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

We also know from Matt. 25 that there will be those who will be reigning over cities. We know also from Jesus explaining about who's going to sit on the 12 thrones of the children of Israel that it's going to be each one of the apostles. They will be kings. Here we have priests. We will reign as kings and priests with Christ. But the 144,000 are with Christ wherever He goes, whereas those who will be priests will be wherever Christ sends them to be priests. So, it's a little bit of a different situation there.

(go to the next track)

Let me clarify something here, Revelation 14:4: "These are the ones who were not defiled with

women, for they are virgins..." That means from the time of baptism.

2-Corinthians 11:1: "I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me. 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, so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ. For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus..." (vs 1-4).

That's after you've been baptized, then you believe in a different form of Christ, before baptism, you're really not believing in the true Christ. These were the false apostles coming and teaching false doctrines. In believing these false doctrines and following these false doctrines then those who were once virgins lose their virginity—*spiritually*. But they can repent and still be in the Kingdom of God.

Is the 144,000 a literal number? *or* a symbolic number? If you have a symbolic number then what does that mean as a literal number? We have 144,000 literally of the children of Israel—those who are sealed. Then we have the 'great innumerable multitude,' which no one can number. How would you say there could be a symbolic number with the 'great innumerable multitude' because there's no number. I would be more inclined to think that the 144,000 is a perhaps a literal number. How is God going to choose that? Well, He alone knows!

Will there be other virgins that were just slovenly, who are still going to be in the Kingdom of God? *Yes!* *We had the parable of the Ten Virgins.* But the door to the wedding, for them to be part of the bride, was closed. It doesn't say they were excluded from the Kingdom of God. They just couldn't be part of the bride.

Let's clarify something else regarding the classes of the firstfruits:

1. Christ the first of the firstfruits
2. then the seven church harvest—represented by the seven churches (Rev. 2 & 3)—they are firstfruits
3. the 144,000 of Israel
4. the great innumerable multitude
5. the 144,000 of Rev. 14

So you have five categories altogether, and five is the number of grace. There may be something to that, but that helps substantiate what we covered in 1-Cor. 15, that 'Christ the Firstfruit and after that those who are His at His coming, but every man in his own order.' How Christ is going to order that out we don't know. Let's look at Revelation 2 & 3 and

we will see that these seven churches represent:

1. the seven churches that were then
2. the projection of the Church down through history
3. the attitudes of Christians any time during any period

—and some of us can identify with several of the churches with our various attitudes as we have gone through our Christian life. It's awfully hard to say exactly where each person belongs. In that sense, it is good from the point of view that God is the One Who is going to make the decision and *salvation is by faith*.

Salvation is *not knowing which category you are in. Salvation is by faith!* And I think we can trust God to know what He's doing, and we can trust God that *to be in the first resurrection in any category is a blessing!* It says in Rev. 19, 'Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' It's all a blessing! What it does do, it shatters some of our carnal approaches to who we may think we are, lest we pull a Job and *tell God* who we are. **God tells us** we're not who we say we are, but '**you are who I say your are!**' Let's look at the seven churches:

Ephesus:

They're commended for their works, Revelation 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance [patience], and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars." Some people get mad when you do that. We still do that today—don't we? *Yes!*

Someone said, 'Take me off your mailing list because of what you say about Herbert Armstrong, and that if anyone doesn't agree with you well then, you'll have nothing to do with them.' *No!* That's not the case, brethren. I wish there were 10,000 faithful ministers. Just think what could be done. I've tried working with other ministers, only to be beat up, knocked down, mailing list stolen and the whole works. I'd be happy to work with any minister. But I'll tell you one thing I will not do: *I will not compromise or play politics to please anybody.*

If we do not please Christ, then it doesn't matter who else you please—all bets are off! Paul said, 'If I please men I should not yet please God.' And he wouldn't even give one minute to any man to come against what Christ had revealed to him. And he should not! So likewise, I'll just take the same attitude that Paul had. Be glad to work with any man, but:

- don't come and steal from us
- don't come and take brethren

- don't come and have your own personal thing

I don't set myself up as some big thing. I just want to teach the Word of God and serve and love the brethren. I don't want people to look up to me as some big mucky-muck, because I'm not. But in handling the Word of God, I won't continece one minute people twisting and turning the Word of God.

What we're doing here, we're trying to understand some difficult to understand Scriptures—wouldn't you say? Maybe not everything we have here is exactly correct, yet, but what we're doing, we're thinking it through, comparing the Scriptures, looking at the Scriptures to try and have it so we can understand the Word of God even more. There is nothing wrong with that at all. That's something that we should do.

If we find ourselves wrong in anything, we'll change. If someone finds something I'm doing wrong, I shouldn't do, or say something I shouldn't say, let me know and I'll correct it—no problem with that. But I don't want the brethren to be beaten up, and I don't want to be beaten up—I've been beaten up enough. I fought the hierarchy in Worldwide from 1972 on, and it was really a tough situation. I've seen what they did to each other and to the brethren, and that should never be. Yet, we called ourselves 'the church of brotherly love.' Everyone wants to be a Philadelphian. We'll look at that one in just a minute. But it's very obvious that not everyone can be.

Verse 4: "Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love." What is losing your first love? *That's not just being excited at knowing the Truth when you first come to it!* The 'first love' is *loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being!* That's what they lost. How could they lose it? Could it be from negligence? Could it be letting in some idolatry? *I don't know, but they lost it!*

Verse 5: "Therefore, remember from where you have fallen... [He considers this a great sin] ...and repent, and do the first works..."

We can conclude from what we have here that those who did this—and lost their first love—probably have defiled their garments. Probably have lost their *spiritual virginity* from baptism. If they repent and do the first works, they can be restored.

Will they be part of the bride of Christ? *That is God's judgment!* But if we look at it from Rev. 14, we could say that these have defiled themselves with women.

Smyrna:

This one has no correction at all, no calling to repentance, v 9: "I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast *some* of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life" (vs 9-10).

No correction! They didn't submit to any of the false things that came along—

- whether it was persecution by the Jews
- whether it was persecution by the pagans
- whether it was the inquisition by the Roman Catholic Church

—they didn't give in to any of it. So, they kept their *spiritual virginity*.

Pergamos:

They really got themselves in trouble—Pergamos and Thyatira—wow! It's self-explanatory here. They have the doctrine of Balaam. They also have the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. They ate things sacrificed unto idols.

Verse 16: "Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth." Here Christ has to fight against His own church. Pergamos is right where Satan's capital is. When you are so close the things of Satan it is awfully hard to not inculcate some of those practices into your daily way of doing things. That's what happened!

We've had some of that today in this form; not exactly, but some, with the demise of Worldwide Church of God going clear into Sunday-keeping. We've had some of it within the ministry in teaching that they bring out a lot of things of psychology instead of preaching the Word of God. That's getting so close to the world that you look at the things that the world has, which are good, and you bring in that and equate that with righteousness of God. The goodness of this world comes from *the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. It is good. It can do good things, but it doesn't equal the righteousness of Christ. We've seen that!

Thyatira:

Perhaps the best and the worst all combine together here. It says, Verse 19: "I know your works, and love, and service, and faith, and your endurance, and your works; and the last *are* more than the first. But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into

committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols" (vs 19-20).

There it is right there. Most of those from Thyatira, even in repenting, could not be considered virgins after they were baptized. It's talking about their condition after they were in the Church, because the message was to the Church at Thyatira. So, it's not before they were in the Church, but after they were in the Church.

{note sermon series: *The Seven Church Harvest.*}

Sardis:

Revelation 3:1: "And to the angel of the church in Sardis, write: These things says He Who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works, *and* that you have a name as if you are alive, but are dead." This is probably the worst spiritual condition. This is worst than lukewarm! At least lukewarm you're still alive. Here you're a corpse with a pulse.

Verse 2: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die. For I have not found your works complete before God. Therefore, remember what you have received and heard, and hold on to *this*, and repent. Now then, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you shall by no means know what hour I will come upon you. You have a **few** names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy. The one who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels" (vs 2-5).

They just make it by the 'skin of the teeth.' I don't even know if we can say 'skin of the teeth.' But only a 'few' are going to make it. When you go through and you look at these things and you ask: How much does our choice count in all of this? *Everything, as far as our responsibility is concerned!*

Laodiceans:

We beat up Laodiceans long and often, hard and being lukewarm and talking back to God. Verse 17: "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' ... [sounds a little bit like Job. *Talking back to God!*] ...and have need of nothing' ..." It's all taken away; it is all gone!

They are so bad they are 'vomited out of the mouth of Christ. Christ is outside knocking on the door to get in. They can repent! They can receive salvation! They can sit in the throne of judgment as Christ sits on the throne of judgment! *But they have*

to become zealous!

Philadelphia:

Let's compare that to the 144,000 (Rev. 14)—and the Church of Philadelphia comes as close to describing Rev. 14 and the 144,000 with the exception that we have to also do as Christ did in commanding Smyrna; that they had no faults before God.

Verse 7: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One, the One Who *is* true; the One Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens."

We always like to look to the open door, but there's a time when God shuts it. I think we've lived in the time where God has shut the door of radio and television as an effective way of reaching people. He's going to open another door, and when He does we have to be prepared and be ready, whatever it may be. Christ will have to open the door for any one of the seven churches here, but in particular for those who really love God, He's got to open the door. Why?

Verse 8: "I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength... [here is a small church; little strength] ...and have kept My Word..." No other church is commended of really keeping the Word. If you're going to keep the Word, that means you have to:

1. you have to have it
2. you have to know it

How do you keep something that you don't know? You can't!

"...and have not denied My name" (v 8). That's a little different than with:

Pergamos:

Revelation 2:13: "I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is*; but you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."

They only held on as long as they had Antipas as their leader. After that everything went to 'hell in a hand-basket' to Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which this book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* does an excellent job of bringing out what that really means.

Revelation 3:9: "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan..." Who is the synagogue of Satan? *Combines the economics, the religious and the political affairs of this world*, who control the

world. We are living in a time when that synagogue of Satan is coming to the fore again, like it never has.

{Note sermon series: *The Beast that Was and Is Not, and Yet, Is*} I think we will understand it even more clearly when we are living in those times.

We can just say that those of the synagogue of Satan are rewarded by Satan. How does he reward them? What did he promise Christ if He would worship him once? *The whole world!* Those who control the world and the world establishment—in banking, in religion, and in politics—are all a part of the synagogue of Satan with all of their followers and all of their subordinates with them. Those who truly are a part of the synagogue of Satan, worship Satan directly, and get their orders directly from him.

We are in a struggle, brethren. We are in a fight for the Word of God. We are in such a position today that we can no longer say 'look it up in your Bible, read it in your Bible.' Now we've got to tell them, 'before you can even look it up in the Bible, you'd better make sure you have the right Bible. You may not find it in the one that Satan has perverted through Wescott and Hort and through the *New International Version* and through the *New American Standard Bible*, and some of the others. I mean, it's a horrendous thing that they have done to it. That's all part of the synagogue of Satan.

"...who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie—behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you" (v 9). Christ loves His whole church, but there is a special love that God has for the Philadelphians. Why? *Because they love Him!* That's why! And you can't love the brethren truly unless you love God first! You can have a social club. You can get along with each other, you can like each other, you can be desirous to be in each other's company, but to truly love the brethren with the love of God, *that's got to come from God!*

Verse 10: "Because you have kept the word of My patience..." Twice He says, 'you have kept My Word, have not denied My name' (v 8);

- in spite of the synagogue of Satan
- in spite of anybody else around
- in spite of the consequences that come to you
- in spite of what you go through

you stay faithful and keep the Word of God.

"...I also will keep you from the time of temptation which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one

may take away your crown" (vs 10-11). Showing that there is a battle, there is a fight, but you're having to fight against all the odds that are coming. Someone is trying to take your reward, take your crown. Notice how closely this ties in with Rev. 14, more than any other.

Verse 12: "The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more... [follow Christ wherever He goes] ...and I will write upon him the name of My God... [Rev. 14] ...and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name." The bride always takes the name of her husband, which is a new name.

Since there have always been Philadelphians down through time, out of these kinds of Christians are these going to be part of the bride of Christ? Of all that we have examined of the firstfruits: being the seven churches, being the 144,000 of Israel, the great innumerable multitude, and the 144,000 of Rev. 14, this attitude here ties in more closely with Rev. 14. So, if there's anything we can say is, the parallel is very close. But lest we get carried away with categorizing things ourselves and saying 'he is, he isn't; she is, she isn't; we are, they aren't'; we'll just say *it is all in God's hands* and let Him take care of it.

When it comes time for the resurrection, we'll all find out then—won't we? And regardless of what it is, we're all going to be happy about it. The whole goal is to be in the Kingdom of God and receive eternal life.

- God is the One Who's going to give the reward
- God is the One Who's going to pick the bride
- Christ is the One Who's going to marry the bride

And if we can be there as guests, why I'm all for that! It says, 'Blessed and Holy is he that is called to marriage supper of the Lamb.'

So, this will at least give us something to think on; give us something to study more. We don't want to get carried away with anything, and treat what we have had with now we have something new and we can beat everybody over the head with, because that's not correct. Whatever we understand comes from God. When we try and understand these things, and the understanding that comes from God will then lead us to change any of our understanding in the future, then we will by all means change—no question about it! I don't want to be in a category of holding onto any teaching or doctrine, which is incorrect.

But let's understand this: ***The knowledge of this does not change your salvation!*** In other words, it gets right back to the same thing that we covered in Matt. 20 when we started: Christ told the mother of John and James, the sons of Zebedee, 'You don't know what you're asking for and it's not Mine to give, but the Father's.'

So, here the Father has to make the decision. All we can do is look at it and say the most we can come to is that these Scriptures give us a little better understanding and some indications of what God is going to do. That's the most that it can do for us. If we try and make any more out of it, then we'll get carried away with our own self-importance. We don't want to do that at all, and we certainly don't want to pull a Job and walk up and tell God what to do. That didn't work then and it won't work now!

The longer that I have been in the Church the more that I understand that ***there is really literally nothing that we haven't received.*** Everything comes from God! This is the most important thing we need to concentrate on, and this is the greatest tool for overcoming:

2-Corinthians 10:1: "Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. On the one hand, when present with you I am base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you. But I am beseeching you so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are **walking according to the flesh**" (vs 1-2)—*according to human reason, human rational, human ideas and things like this*, or as Paul was fighting: *philosophy* (1-Cor. 1).]

Verse 3: "For although we walk in *the flesh*, we do not war according to *the flesh*." As I mentioned concerning psychology and psychological methods of overcoming: No, you don't do that! Here's the way we overcome:

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds... [this is the battle we have to keep at] ...casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ**" (vs 4-5). That's what we have to work on; that's the most important thing!

Why? Because *in your mind is where sin begins*, and your mind and your thoughts of self and importance and all of the things of the world to puff up the self, then are idols before God. Meaning that ***anything that you think that you understand or know or can do earns you salvation or earns you something or makes you more special than***

someone else becomes and idol.

For us to proclaim that we are Philadelphians and anyone who is not with us is not a Philadelphian—look, we don't know! That would be an imagination, a thought exalting itself against God! When thoughts like that of self-exaltation or thoughts that come along of sin or whatever it may be, you're to grab that thought, bring it into captivity and cast it down and bring your mind into obedience to Christ! This is what we need to do. I don't know about you, but I have a struggle with my own mind! Just like Paul did! That's why it's important that we keep our perspective in this.

Verse 6: "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled." Wow! That's quite a statement—isn't it? How do you fulfill your obedience? *Everything that you do starts in your mind!*

Verse 7: "Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ's, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ's, so also *are* we Christ's." And that's what we really need to keep in mind.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 20:1-15
- 2) Revelation 7:14
- 3) Revelation 11:3-16
- 4) Matthew 20:16, 20-28
- 5) Matthew 22:1-14
- 6) Matthew 25:1-13
- 7) 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
- 8) James 1:18
- 9) Revelation 14:1
- 10) Revelation 7:9-17
- 11) Revelation 14:2-5, 3-4
- 12) Revelation 17:1-5
- 13) Revelation 22:17
- 14) Revelation 20:6
- 15) Revelation 14:4
- 16) 2 Corinthians 11:1-4
- 17) Revelation 2:2, 4-5, 9-10, 16, 19-20
- 18) Revelation 3:1-5, 17, 7-8
- 19) Revelation 2:13
- 20) Revelation 3:9-12
- 21) 2 Corinthians 10:1-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 34
- 1 Thessalonians 4
- Romans 8:29
- Hebrews 12

- Revelation 19
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Also referenced:

Book: *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
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- *Seven Church Harvest*
- *The Beast That Was, Is Not, Yet, Is*

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