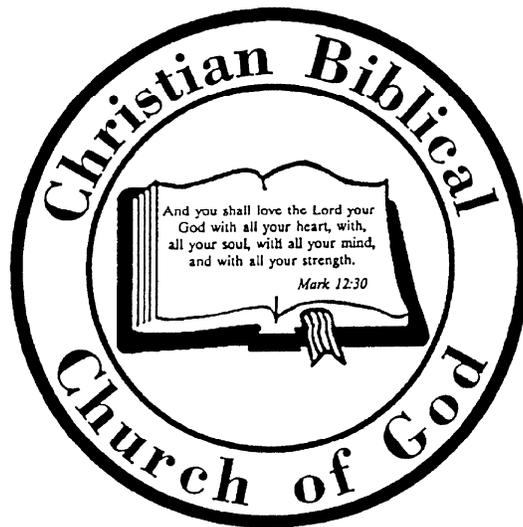


Study Package Five

Faith, Grace, and Salvation



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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Fred R. Coulter
Christian Biblical Church of God
P. O. Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442

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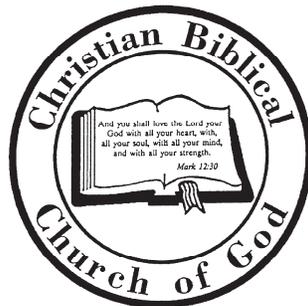
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Study Package Five

Series of 28 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



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Study Package Five

Faith, Grace and Salvation

Foreword

This transcript book, *Study Package Five—Faith, Grace and Salvation* which is an extensive study contains the transcripts of twenty-eight messages delivered by Fred R. Coulter. Mr. Coulter has had nearly 60 years of being a minister of Jesus Christ and has seen faith and grace at work in the lives of Christians. This knowledge is presented here, for you the reader, to be encouraged in your daily walk with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

What the reader will find is briefly covers as follows:

First, in the *Grace of God I*, will be found that God had offered grace to His people under the Old Covenant with Israel.

Then in the *Grace of God II*, it is found that God's grace continues on from the Old Testament to the New Testament, but the grace is magnified through Jesus Christ.

In the transcript *Grace of God III* the subject of grace before salvation is covered. Also noted is that those who are living under God's grace do not have the liberty to live in sin.

The message, *Grace of God IV* elaborates on the truth that grace is a gift from God—no human being can earn it. Additionally spoken of is that God, in the Old Covenant, did not deal with the Gentile nations as he dealt with Israel.

In the *Grace of God V* message it is shown that those in covenant with Jesus Christ are before God the Father free from the 'law of sin and death. They are to let the Holy Spirit rule in their lives.

In *Grace of God VI* it is shown that God chooses those whom He wishes to have a covenant with. People cannot run around seeing if they can find God, and seeing if they can choose God. When called by God, and if that calling is accepted, that person is required to do works acceptable to God.

In the series on *Justification by Faith*, the first message covers what the faith is that God requires. The true faith of God shows its presence through the keeping of God's commandments. You will find here how to become and how to remain in right standing before God.

The message *Justification by Faith II* teaches that no one can make God do something for one. The attitude of you being 'the chosen' or that you can do a work that will make God have to do your will is simply wrong. This aspect of being at one with God is extensively covered

In the transcript *Justified by Faith III*, thoroughly explained is the difference between justification through Jesus Christ by faith and works of law. In the Old Covenant there was justification by law keeping to the temple whereas the New Covenant has justification through Jesus Christ to God the Father in heaven above.

The transcript *Justification by Faith IV* goes through the book of Galatians—explaining it in detail. The heart and core of salvation is that salvation comes only by Jesus Christ.

In the message *Faith for Salvation* the faith that is acceptable to God the Father is explained. In short, either God the Father is your master or you have the world and Satan as your master.

Human Nature I is a transcript that elaborates upon how the human mind is able to deceive itself in sin and is able to justify itself in what it does! The *Human Nature II* message is a continuation of the subject, but it focuses on overcoming sin in the mind.

The transcript for the message on *Human Nature III* addresses how sin is right there among mankind, from Adam and Eve to the billions on earth today. Sin blinds the human mind so that it cannot differentiate between real good and that which appears good.

The transcript on *Forgiveness* explains the problem of difficulties within a group—even if that group is composed of individuals called by God. How hard it is to deal with people who have had that trust destroyed more than once. How to grow in forgiveness of others is explained.

The transcript for the message titled *Sin* covers what sin is, the cause of sin, and how to remove sin from one's life with the help of God's Spirit. The meaning of the New Testament Greek words for sin are explained.

In the transcript *The Holy Spirit*, Fred Coulter explains what the Holy Spirit of God is and how it works with those who are called by God.

The transcript *The Grace of God* explains how very important the grace of God is. There is no amount of good works to neighbors that one can do that will obtain the grace of God for one. It is the greatest expression of God the Father's love and all-encompassing mercy.

The transcript *Repentance* is a thorough discourse upon what repentance before God is. It gives more understanding regarding how the death of Christ can justify you upon one's repentance.

Water Baptism is a transcript that gives in detail the reasons: why baptism, why complete immersion in water, and who should be baptized. Explained is how one's standing before God the Father is before and after true baptism. Spoken of is how the false grace of Protestantism really is an erroneous teaching.

In the transcript *Justification to God*, discussed is how religious circles in the world want to be justified before God for their past sins so that they can continue in their sins. Also explained is how Israel under the Old Covenant, though following the law of righteousness did not attain to a law of righteousness.

In reading the transcript *Righteousness of Faith* one again, as previously noted in the transcript series, cannot earn the righteousness of faith. It is the gift of God. This gift gives a human being the power to bring forth the fruits of God's Spirit unto eternal life.

The Sanctification transcript explains how God, in accepting a person to Him through baptism, sets that person apart for a holy purpose and use. All who have God's Holy Spirit are sanctified and is a saint.

The transcript *Baptism for the Spirit* thoroughly discredits the idea of the baptism of the Spirit as a "Pentecostal experience." It shows the error of regarding any Pentecostal church or movement or speaking in tongues as the baptism of the Spirit. Rather the truth is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the act of receiving the Holy Spirit as the begetting from God the Father.

Faith is the transcript that exhaustively shows what the Faith of God actually is. People are deceived by a faith based strictly on feelings. Faith is based only upon the Word of God and any faith that one thing that one has that does not totally agree with the Word of God is a false faith. True faith is created by ingesting the Word of God, by God sending His Spirit to be with one and by believing God.

The transcript *Salvation* addresses what salvation is, how one receives salvation from God, and what the fruits of salvation are. It specifically explains that salvation is the gift of God the Father by His grace and is granted to the believer through faith in Jesus Christ—not earned by any works of law.

The final transcript in this book is the *Laying on of Hands*. It shows that the laying on of hands is a special act by ordained elders that are part of the body of Christ. The laying on of hands is asking God the Father to confer a spiritual gift or blessing upon someone.

Special thanks goes to Bonnie Orswell, Nancy Spaller, and Laila Patterson for transcribing the sermons.

Grace of God I

(Grace of God in the Old Testament)

Fred R. Coulter

There are too many people who have the idea that God was only gracious in the New Testament; that God only gave His grace in the New Testament, and that His grace was not revealed at all until Jesus Christ. Well, that is not a wholly accurate statement, even though John said that ‘the Law came through Moses and grace and Truth through Jesus Christ.’ That is not saying that God was ungracious in the Old Testament. God *was* gracious in the Old Testament and in dealing with the people that He dealt with.

Heb. 13 gives us a very important Scripture that we need to really rely on and understand and realize in approaching this. We’re going to see other aspects of the grace and mercy of God in the Old Testament, which also are precursors or forerunners of those in the New Testament. After all, let’s not forget that all of those who prophesied also spoke of the grace that was coming. Those who wrote the words of God also were prophesying and writing down what Jesus Christ was going to do.

Hebrews 13:8: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” I would have to take it that this statement means:

- Jesus Christ *yesterday*—as the Lord God of the Old Testament
- Jesus Christ *today*—as He is the Mediator of the New Covenant
- Jesus Christ *forever*—on into eternity

There’s one thing that we need to grow in and that is *grace* and *knowledge*. Let’s see how we are to be growing in grace and knowledge. Here’s a statement that is made, and as we get into this we will see how we are to grow in grace and knowledge.

2-Peter 3:18: “Rather, **be growing in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...**” As a result of studying through this again, this time I know that I understand it more, and I think we’ll all understand our calling better.

How many of you have asked yourself: Why did God call me? Almost everyone does. That’s one of the hardest to answer, but we’ll answer that. I’ll give you a partial answer right now: If we look at the things that we have done and what we are, then we have to ask: Why did God call me? That’s an introspective way to look at it. The grace of God gives us the answers as to why God has called us. We’re going to see that it’s not because of some great thing we have done, **but it’s the great thing that God has done!**

We’re also going to see in the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, how God dealt with the ones He worked with directly in a *very gracious way*—with the exception of when they sinned and God had to really lower the boom on them.

We also need to balance out the equation. If we sin in the New Testament, under the New Covenant, does not God lower the boom on us? What is the ultimate? What is the ultimate punishment of sin? *The Lake of Fire!* It sure is, and that is the opposite of God’s grace. God’s grace is all encompassing in God’s goodness and the Lake of Fire is all encompassing and all consuming in doing away with people who do not follow God’s way. We have these two very broad extremes.

Let’s look at things from just a little bit different perspective than we have before. In Genesis 1:31 we find something of God’s goodness or graciousness: “And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, **it was exceedingly good...**”—‘tov me od’—*beautiful or bountiful, cheerful, fine, glad, good* and also a word for *gracious*. So, even the creation of God was an *act of grace*. Why can we say the creation of God was an act of grace? *Because when you define the word ‘grace’ it means an act of God, unearned* on the part of the recipient, *unmerited in why the person is getting it.* Grace actually means, in the Old Testament:

- favor
- kindness
- gracious
- pleasant
- precious
- well-favored
- to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior in position or level

Or, in this case, we are inferior to God even though we’re made in His image. So, God’s stooping and bending to us is an act that He does to be here:

- to find or show favor
- to be, to give or grant graciousness
- to show mercy and have pity upon

If God is gracious—which He is—then what He does reflects His grace or graciousness or goodness. We know that God is love, so then *grace is a quality* of that love. That love is shown in the things that God does. Go through the first chapter of

Genesis and everything there is totally positive. God made the earth, all the animals and all the plants. He created human beings. He blessed all the animals and said to be 'fruitful and multiply.' He blessed Adam and Eve and said 'to be fruitful and multiply.' And when He finished everything He said, 'Behold, it is very good.'

The next thing He did, Gen. 2, was a very gracious thing. A day—which we can now say is a *day of grace*, because it's the day *God chose*. This gives us a little insight into Sabbath-keeping vs Sunday-keeping. If you do what God says by His dictate, by His command, then you're acting in response to what God has done. So therefore, that is a gracious act from God to even give us these things. Creating the Sabbath, blessing it, sanctifying it, establishing it as a day of contact between His creation and Himself is, in fact, a very *gracious* thing.

Adam and Eve didn't earn it. They were created, came to consciousness and God said, 'I'm God, you're Adam and you're Eve—*Ish and Isha*. Here God gave the Sabbath as a very *gracious* thing to do. The Sabbath was given to man, Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, and it's given for our benefit. I tell you, we sure need it. Doing what I'm doing now, I know the value of the Sabbath much more than when I was just full-time in the ministry. There's sort of a little trap in that; not to put it down or say that things are the way they are now are worse than they were then. There's no judgment, it's just that it's a comparison of the difference in perspective.

When I would go around and visit all church people, I hardly had contact with anybody that we would say were 'in the world.' Sabbath was a totally different thing from what it is now. People would come to Church and say, 'I'm so glad it's the Sabbath' and I would say, 'Yeah, I am, too' from all these things I had to do; I had to go here and there. I enjoyed doing it, but now when the Sabbath comes and now when we get together with God's people—because I'm not out there with God's people day in and day out, I'm out there in the world with swearing, cursing, smoking, tobacco-chewing, foot-stomping *world*—it sure means a whole lot.

I can see that the giving of the Sabbath was a tremendous, *gracious act of God* so that we could have a day of contact with Him, a day of fellowship together with Him, a day that *He* has blessed! Have you ever noticed when you're talking to someone and you have a good conversation and at the end you say, 'God bless you.' You feel just real good when someone says 'God bless you.' You go away feeling real happy. Just think: God has blessed the Sabbath. That's a fantastic thing! God has blessed this very day! That's really a gracious act.

He didn't bless the other days. He said, 'Go work!' This day He blessed. Then He showed them the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He gave them a warning, which was gracious. Isn't that gracious to give a warning, that 'in the day thereof you shall surely die.' We look at it as a very negative thing and say, 'Oh, terrible!' But that was gracious. He warned them before He did it. How would it be if He said nothing to them and said, 'Go ahead and eat of all the trees in the garden.' So, they go eat of all the trees of the garden and then they eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and, lo and behold, all these things come crashing in on them. What would be the first reaction? *God, why didn't you tell us?* God didn't do it that way! He told them first.

Then the creation of Eve for Adam was a very gracious act by God. Now then, we find that man—as they always do—turned the grace of God into something it shouldn't be. Isn't that right? Doesn't that go right back to the book of Jude where it says that 'they turned the grace of our God into licentiousness.' That's exactly what happened here in Gen. 3 if you look at it properly. Didn't they take the graciousness of God and turn it into license to do what they want? *Sure! Yes!*

Let's see that after man *fell*, which he did—Satan fell and man fell, both of them—***they fell from God's grace!*** So then, there had to be the penalty of sin that came. God had to set in motion, which was already to go, all the laws controlling goodness, righteousness, sin and all of that sort of thing, to where there had to be a control on evil. There's an automatic control on all evil whether people believe it or not.

Good example: Look at all of these so-called great rock stars. They run their lives in a very evil way. They take the drugs, they debilitate themselves; they bring others into the evil that they are doing—what happens? *They all die at a young age!* That's almost like an automatic law that sets in. The more evil that you are the shorter you're going to live. Whenever there is a sin, there's always a consequence, because there's an automatic law.

God set all of those things in motion, as well as we inherited the *law of sin and death* passed on to us by inheritance. How does God deal with us? We're dealing with a situation whereby in certain things—in almost everything—***the law of sin and death keeps us from meeting the requirements of God's perfection***, the only way God can deal with us in a gracious way, or through His grace.

The curse came on the world; we know the story of Cain and Abel. Gen. 5 gives the genealogy down to Noah. 'Noah' actually has the meaning of *God's favor*. Not grace, but *God's favor*, because

God did something with the birth of Noah that perhaps maybe we've overlooked before and haven't quite understood in this light.

Genesis 5:28 "And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years and begat a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.'" (vs 29-29). God lifted the curse at this time that was on the land because of the curse of Adam and Eve.

Verse 30: "And after he begat Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years. And he begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years. And he died. And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth" (vs 30-32). What happens here in God's intervention concerning the Flood.

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was only evil continually.*" That's a result of the *law of sin and death.*

Are there good acts and things people can do? *Sure there are!* But there are things that are good that are not motivated from goodness. They can be good on the surface. When you get right down to the final analysis, Jesus said, 'Don't call Me good, there is none good but God.' So, even though a person can do good things, do right things, do responsible things, that doesn't make them good as God is good. They are good by human standards.

Here God looks down on the earth and the thought of everyone was "...only evil continually. And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth... [In other words, let's just end all this nonsense!] ...both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.' But Noah **found grace** in the eyes of the LORD" (vs 5-8).

Why did Noah find grace? *Partly because of the things that he was doing,* but partly because of the *choosing of God!* That's how we find grace, **by God's choosing!** That's the whole point to remember concerning God's grace.

We will see that this all the way through the Old Testament. It is by *God's choosing!* Case in point: Remember when Hezekiah was told to set his house in order, he was going to die. He wept and he cried and asked God to please remember 'the things that I have done.' Whatever his full repentance was, God chose to be gracious to him—didn't He? God

sent Isaiah back and told Hezekiah, '15 more years.' That is an act of *pure grace!*

- Did Hezekiah deserve it? *No!*
- Did he earn it? *No!*
- Did he beg that his life be spared? *Yes!*
- Was he repentant? *Yes!*

But his begging and his repentance didn't earn it. God *chose* to do it! Just like what it's going to be at the Lake of Fire. There is going to be 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Weeping and gnashing of teeth *is not going to earn the grace of God,* because they've already *rejected* the graciousness that God was going to give them. ***Grace is something that God gives to us!*** Noah found grace, and you know the whole story of the Flood.

Now we're going to see something very interesting, quite a parallel here, Genesis 12:1: "And the LORD said to Abram, 'Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house into a land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing.... [This is a pure act of grace. That is why Abraham is called 'the father of the faithful.' God *chose* him—which is an *act of grace*—and God's calling for us is an *act of grace.*] ...And I will bless those that bless you..." (vs 1-3).

Let's see the attitude they had at the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11:4: "And they said, 'Come, let us build us a city and a tower, *with* its top reaching into the heavens. And let us establish a name for ourselves..." They wanted to make a name *for themselves,* strictly out of:

- *their* own doings
- *their* works
- *their* own rebellion
- the things they were doing *themselves*
 - What happened? *They didn't make a name for themselves!*
 - What did God do? *He chose Abraham!*

Abraham was probably a reject in his society. If you read *Josephus* you will find that he was a reject in his society because he wouldn't bow-down to idols! He was a reject! So, God calls a *reject!* He says, 'All right, now that you're rejected, get up and completely get out.'

I think there are some parallels for us. One of the reasons God called us: I don't think we were necessarily 'in like Flynn' in the world, I don't believe. I don't recall in my circumstances that I ever was. I wasn't a rebel, but surely anything but righteous. However, you want to measure by the world's standards, I think we can all say that about ourselves.

Here God says that He's going to make a name for Abraham. What is the thing that still motivates so many people in the world today? *To make a great name!* That's the whole thing behind the great sports things— isn't it? *It sure is! Make a name for themselves!* They love to be called 'bad'; same way with politicians.

Let's see what God told Abraham He would do, Genesis 12:3: "And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you.... [That's still true today! The world can't figure it out. All they do is curse and end up with drought and famine. Those who bless us and do go to us, they get blessings, too.] ...And in you shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Part of our faith in God, part of our acceptance of God, is because we do have to accept God. He has to accept us, but we're accepted in Christ. We have to accept God; we have to answer the calling. God takes us as we are and forgives our sin, but there is sure one thing that is true: ***we are not going to change God!*** So, that means we have to accept Him for what He is and what He has done. We can't tell God, 'Oh yes, we love You, because You gave Your grace to us and You have called us, but I don't like the way You're doing to the rest of the world. I don't like it that You blast the descendants of Abraham.' Well, would you want God to lie to Abraham? *Of course not!* There are some people who believe that way today. That's a very reason for a lot of the race problems in the world.

Genesis 18:1—here we will see God's grace involved in it. Here's where we find that Abraham found favor: "And the LORD appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he sat at the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. And he said, 'My LORD, if now I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass away, I pray, from Your servant. Let a little water, I pray, be brought, and wash Your feet, and rest under the tree'" (vs 1-4).

Then he prepared this meal for the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament and, apparently, two angels with Him. Abraham did find *grace* in God's eyes—didn't He? Notice what position this put him in, that all the way through this incident where God told Abraham what He was going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah, *Abraham reasoned with God!* Notice how he reasoned with God. If we are within God's grace and within God's mercy, and are in a repentant attitude—which we can see that Abraham was—then this puts us in a totally different relationship with God.

Isaiah 1:16: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil... [there's

something we can do: quit doing evil] ...learn to do good... [we can do that] seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD...." (vs 16-18). Within this relationship with God there is repentance and the acceptance of God's grace, we can reason with God to a certain degree. Not to go against His will, not to change His plan, but we can ***reason on the basis of mercy.***

Just remember when James and John came to Jesus—when then didn't receive Him in the village—and they said, 'Let's call fire down from heaven.' Jesus said, 'You don't know what manner of spirit you are in.' *You can always reason with God concerning mercy!* Therefore, you know one thing: if you have an enemy, don't go pray that God will destroy them, because God won't do that. You pray for that enemy, that God maybe could be merciful to him. Isn't that the hardest thing in the world to do? *That is the hardest thing in the world!* But if you found yourself in dire circumstances, wouldn't you want God to be merciful to you? Here's how we can reason with God:

Verse 18: "Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. **If you are willing and obedient,** you shall eat the good of the land... [what a tremendous and gracious thing that God does for us] ...But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with* the sword;' for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*" (vs 18-20).

Let's see how this actually was the way that Abraham reasoned and dealt with God, and God was gracious. He would be gracious to all the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah ***IF*** there were 50 righteous.

Genesis 18:23: "And Abraham drew near and said, 'Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?... [he was reasoning with God face-to-face] ...Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city....'" (vs 23-24). What is this also telling you about Abraham? *That Abraham was a merciful man! He was concerned with the shedding of innocent blood, as well as for Lot and his family!* He knew that Lot was there.

"...Will You also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from You to act in this manner, to kill the righteous with the wicked.... [he's talking very bluntly directly to God] ...And far be it from You, that the righteous should be as the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?'" (vs 24-25).

If Abraham were speaking wrongly, God would have told him, 'You're out of order!' He just did to Sarah—didn't He? He said, 'Sarah, you're

going to bear this time next year.' She laughed and snickered and said that she didn't laugh. God said, 'Yes, you did laugh.' If Abraham were wrong when he made the statement, 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' God would have said, 'Abraham, what are you saying this for?'

Verse 26: "And the LORD said, 'If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.' And Abraham answered and said, 'Behold now, I have taken upon myself to speak to the LORD—I who am but dust and ashes'" (vs 26-27). Notice his attitude; he realized he is just dust and ashes because in the snap of a finger that is exactly what he could become.

Verse 28: "Perhaps there will be five lacking from the fifty righteous. Will You destroy all the city for lack of five?" And He said, 'If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*.' And he spoke to Him yet again, and said, 'Perhaps there shall be forty found there.' And He said, 'I will not do *it* for forty's sake.' And he said, 'Oh let not the LORD be angry...' (vs 28-30). Notice the attitude that he had toward God. This is a perfect example of *reasoning* with God for mercy!

"...and I will speak. Perhaps there shall be thirty found there.' And He said, 'I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.' And he said, 'Lo now, I have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord. Perhaps there shall be twenty found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.' And he said, 'Oh do not let the LORD be angry, and I will speak **only once more**. Perhaps *only* ten shall be found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.'" (vs 30-32). Of course, you know they didn't find ten.

- What happened? *God saved Lot and his family!*
- What else happened? *Lot's wife did not believe the goodness and mercy of God and she looked back and turned to a pillar of salt!*

Notice that when they were leaving, Genesis 19:17: "And it came to pass, when they... [the two angels] ...brought him outside, *they* said, 'Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountain lest you be consumed.' And Lot said to them, 'Oh no, my LORD, behold now, your servant has **found grace** in your sight...' (vs 17-19).

He knew that this was a gracious act of God. Did Lot do anything to earn it? *No!* He actually got out because of the pleading of Abraham.

"...and you have magnified your mercy, which you have shown to me in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil overtake me and I die" (v 19).

So, God allows even our own peculiar little difficulties and problems that we. Here Lot was right in the middle of being saved. He knew that he had found grace, and he knew that he was getting out of it. He had the peculiarity that he was probably afraid of wild animals up in the mountains and said that he didn't want to go up there.

Verse 20: "Behold now, this city *is* near to flee to, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my soul shall live.' And *the angel* said to him, 'See, **I have accepted you concerning this thing also...**' (vs 20-21).

There's a little more reasoning and latitude with God, but what does it all depend upon? *It depends upon our acceptance of God's grace* and our recognition of our own human weaknesses and frailties!

That is why when we come to the prayer in Luke 18—when the Pharisee came and said, 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other men.' See the difference in the attitude? And the sinner said, 'God, be mercy on me, a sinner.'

Gen. 32—here again we see the grace and favor of God. This has to do when Esau was coming back and he was going to meet Jacob and Jacob was coming with his two wives and two concubines and all of his sons, all of his sheep and all of his cattle. He thought Esau would take them. Jacob sent a present out to Esau and said:

Genesis 32:5 "And *I have* oxen and donkeys, flocks, and menservants, and maidservants. And I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in your sight."

Jacob also knew the value of how he should treat his own brother. Remember, even though he did get the birthright the way he did from Esau, he still didn't despise his brother. He came and treated him very kindly. Jacob said, 'If I've found grace in your sight...' Esau at that time, was probably more powerful militarily and could really have done Jacob in. Jacob thought that if this guy still hates me for stealing the birthright, I'd better be very careful.

Gen. 33 goes through the whole episode of Jacob's and Esau's meeting, Genesis 33:10: "And Jacob said, 'No, please, if now I have found grace in your sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore have I seen your face, as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me. Please take my blessing that is brought to you because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.' And he urged him, and he accepted" (vs 10-11).

Here's another thing that's very important and is also very true, and this ties in with the parable

in the New Testament: *If you have received a gracious treatment and mercy*, how are we to treat others? *The same way!* Remember the parable of the lord whose servant demanded that he pay 10,000 talents. He said, ‘Lord, I don’t have it to pay’—when the lord commanded that he be sold, his family and everything. So, he forgave him. Then the one who was forgiven went out and choked his servant who owed him 100 pence. You know what happened when God found out about that.

Here’s a very good example in the Old Testament. As we go through we’re going to see a unity and a consistency in the whole Bible, rather than just divide Old Testament and New Testament in the traditional way that it is normally done by most people. Yet, there is that division: the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. But the basic principle of grace is true in the Old Testament *and* in the New Testament; only the graciousness of God to us has the ramification of eternal life, which is absolutely fantastic! Here’s another kind of grace and favor that God can give, and it has to do in relationship with others. It also is a reward of God—not strictly speaking—an extension of His grace. I would hate to put it in the form of a ‘reward,’ because *you cannot earn grace*. I would have to say that is semantically not correct, though apparently on the surface it is.

It is an extension of God’s grace because of your relationship with Him, that He will extend His grace into the relationship that you have with others. Here’s a case of Joseph. He was brought into Egypt, sold, and especially after the way his brothers treated him, you talk about a family argument. I just imagine we would be shocked if we had the recording of all the arguments that the 12 brothers had between each other, and the arguments they had concerning Joseph: ‘This upstart with that coat and that smart aleck telling of the dream. We’ll fix his hide. We’ll take him out here and we’ll do him in.’ They were going to kill him. Then Ruben said to spare his life. ‘Okay, we’ll sell him to the Arabs.’

Then they went through the whole charade of killing a goat, putting the blood on it and taking the jacket back to Jacob saying, ‘Joseph is gone!’ They had to live with that lie for how long? Did Joseph *have cause* that he could be bitter? *Yes, sure he did!* He was brought into Egypt, sold, and:

Genesis 39:2: “And the LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the **LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hands**” (vs 2-3). The master could see that there was something special about Joseph. It was an extension of God’s grace.

Verse 4: “And Joseph found grace in his sight... [tremendous favor, tremendous blessing] ...and he served him. And he made him overseer over his house, and he put him in charge of all he had.” You know the rest of the story. It’s the one of the few cases that’s recorded in the Bible where a man turned down an illicit affair.

Nevertheless, then he went through all of the things of being in the dungeon. He found grace and favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, because Joseph told what Pharaoh’s dream was. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of all Egypt. Joseph then returned that grace and favor when his brothers came down to Egypt to find grain because of the famine. He had a little trickery in it, too, but that made it kind of intriguing when you go through and read the whole story.

Can you imagine how they all felt when they were all together; when Jacob was there and Benjamin and all the sons were there in Egypt when everything was discovered of who they were and what was going on. Joseph said that it was ‘by the hand of God that He sent me here.’ He didn’t even say, ‘Hey, brothers, I want you down here to apologize to me for what you did to me.’

- didn’t say that
- didn’t do it
- didn’t seek any vengeance

He said, ‘I’m here because of the hand of God. He’s blessed me, so let’s receive the blessings of God.’

Then we go through the rest of the story and come to the time when the children of Israel were the captives or slaves in Egypt. They suffered quite a few things, and we would have to say that the calling of the children of Israel out of Egypt was *a gracious act*. Remember, the whole beginning of the Passover, as it relates to Christ; it’s through Christ that we have grace.

Exo. 32 is the sin where they made the golden calf. Exo. 33 is really a fantastic chapter when you realize it. Exodus 33:7: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go! Get you down, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*.’” After Moses stood between God and the people and said, ‘God, don’t kill them.’

Then God said, ‘I’ll take you to that land, only these are a stiff-necked people. Then we have the occasion where Moses asked to see God in His glory, and God told him, ‘Yes, you can see My glory, but stand here at the rock and I will show you My back part,’ because no one can look on the face of God and live.’

Exo. 34—What it is that God delights in, and what God emphasizes more than anything else.

(go to the next track)

Exodus 34:5 “And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.” What are some of the names of the Lord? *Almighty! All powerful!* Is that what He emphasized? *No He didn't!*

Verse 6: “And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, **merciful and gracious...** [He spared all the Israelites] **...longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and Truth.**” Because God is love, this is what He delights in more than anything else.

This is why if a person approaches God from the opposite point of view, as we find in the parable of the three servants who were each given a pound (Matt. 25). One gained ten, one gained five and one hid it in the earth. Remember what he said when God came to account? *Here's the pound You gave me, I wrapped it and hid it in the earth! I knew You were an austere man! I knew that You gathered where You didn't sow! You harvested where You didn't straw! Therefore, I was afraid and I hid it in the earth!* What was God's response to him? *The same that he had to God!*

If our response, our attitude toward God, regardless of your circumstances is that *God is gracious and merciful and kind!* *If*, in our prayers and relationship with God you really feel down and out and sort of on the odd side of God—and I'm sure you've all felt on the odd side of God because of sin and some of the circumstances you've gone through—*remind Him of His goodness and His mercy.* Think of the attitude Abraham had; think of the attitude that Joseph had. Use those attitudes toward God coupled with repentance. Then you won't be like the third servant who took the pound and hid it.

“...the LORD God, **merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,** keeping mercy to the thousandth generation... [He would have spared all those in Sodom and Gomorrah] **...forgiving** iniquity and transgression and sin...” (vs 6-7). That's what God delights in; that's why Christ came: to save the world, not condemn it. It's own sins condemn it enough! That's why the only sin that won't be forgiven is the *blaspheme* against the Holy Spirit, which comes from God the Father.

“...but Who will by no means clear *the guilty...* [God is not going to forgive unless there is repentance!] (If there isn't repentance, then): ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation.” (v 7).

As it is in Exo. 20—‘for those who love Him and keep His commandments unto a thousand

generations.’ A thousand generations is a long, long time. I can't tell you exactly how long a generation is. I know that it came up one time where Jesus said that ‘this generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled’ (Matt. 24) We all try to figure out how long a generation is. I thought I'd be real clever and took the three sections of the 14 generations of Matt. 1—from Abraham to Moses to whatever—and went through the genealogy tables and added up all the years of those that were listed and divided it and got an average. I found out that there's no way you can set a definite number of years on a generation, because one average was 32 years, one was 60 years, and one was 42 years. How long is a generation? *However God figures it!*

How long is a thousand generations? A thousand times 62 is almost the whole history of the earth. A thousand times 42 is almost all the time from Abraham down to our day—right? You want to take the narrowest amount—32 years—that's 3200 years, goes back at least to David. That's a long time! I just imagine that if we really knew, we are here as a result of God's mercy, regardless of how we got here or our forefathers got here. We're here because of God's mercy. I know I would not want to live in Eskimo land. Nor would I want to be down in the jungles of the Amazon. When I see people in circumstances like that, I've had two responses:

1. Those dirty people deserve it—*that's the wrong response!*
2. It's God's blessing that we're here—and *may God be merciful to them!*

Maybe if God would call them, remember what God said of Israel in Jer. 2—‘If I would have gone to the heathen, they would have kept My laws and statutes to this day.’ We don't need to get all uppity-uppity and brag about this, that or the other thing. We just need to be thankful for God's mercy, that He has done it, that He has allowed it.

Let's see some more of God's graciousness and mercy and goodness. There are many places we can go in the Old Testament. Some I have covered in the past: sections in Deuteronomy where God said that ‘I love the fathers, therefore I have chosen you. You're not the biggest, the greatest and the best, you're the least, smallest and so forth.

1-Sam. 1—let's see how God works through circumstances in people's lives. Samuel and his calling, and the whole situation concerning Samuel was because of mercy and grace. It was because of the attitude of Samuel's mother; strictly because of her attitude. Look at how all of Israel was blessed because of Samuel. Just to summarize:

They came year to year and Elkanah^[transcriber's correction] her husband said, ‘Why are you weeping.’ That's because she didn't have any children (1-Sam.

1:7-8).

1-Samuel 1:9: “And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk. And Eli the priest sat upon the seat by the side post of the temple of the LORD.”

We can also understand something here that’s important: What happens when you come into contact with someone who is supposed to be God’s representative, but is corrupt? Was Eli corrupt? *Yes, he was!* Were his sons corrupt? *Yes, they were!* God executed all three on the same day. **Hannah trusted in God**, not the man Eli the high priest.

Verse 10: “And she *was* in bitterness of soul, prayed to the LORD, and wept sorely.” Not angry. Bitterness means *over much sorrow* in this particular case; much grief because of the trying circumstances of not having any children.

Verse 11: “And she vowed a vow... [this is reasoning with God in the realm of His grace] ...and said, ‘O, LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid and remember me, and not forget Your handmaid, but will give to Your handmaid a man-child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.’” You can imagine the older that Samuel got... It doesn’t say *no scissors*, but no razor. It’s not saying that his hair was always long, but that he would not be *shaved*.

Verse 12: “And it came to pass as she continued praying before the LORD, Eli noticed her mouth.... [here’s Eli, an evil man, but still a priest] ...Now, Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard....” (vs 12-13). You can imagine that she was there like you see at the Wailing Wall, the Jews rocking back and forth, you see their lips moving. She was crying and tears were streaming down and rocking back and forth.

Verse 14: “...And Eli thought she had become drunk And Eli said to her, ‘How long will you be drunken? Put away your wine from you!’ And Hannah answered, ‘No, my lord, I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have neither drunk wine nor strong drink, but have **poured out my soul before the LORD**.... [notice the whole attitude]Do not count your handmaid for a daughter of wickedness... [Eli’s sons were called sons of Belial (1-Sam 2:12)] ...for out of the abundance of my anxiety and grief I have spoken until now.’ And Eli answered and said, ‘Go in peace...’” (vs 14-17).

Did God honor Eli’s command? *Yes, He did!* Not because Eli was good. Partly because she was pleading with God, but I imagine there were others who pleaded with God and wept and went through all these things and God never granted them children. But because God chose to do so and Eli

affirmed it.

Verse 17: And Eli answered and said, ‘Go in peace and the God of Israel grant *to you* your petition that you have asked of Him.’ And she said, ‘Let your handmaid find grace in your sight.’ So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*” (vs 17-18).

She became pregnant. Her first child was Samuel and he became one who kept the Word of God going, and was a great prophet of God, and hence a tremendous amount of grace came to Israel because of that one thing. There’s an excellent example of it.

Let’s and see how God deals with those who are sinners. How He dealt with Israel. I think this helps give us an insight into the tremendous wickedness of human beings. I think if we understand that, and if we all understand that the wickedness in the human being differs not one wit from human being to human being, with the exception of those who are demon or Satan-possessed, that will obviously be multiplied in wickedness.

Here is the whole account of God calling Israel, how they went through the Sinai, how they sinned and their lust and everything just coming all the way through.

Psalms 78:32: “For all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works.” They had the fire by night, the pillar by day; they had the manna, all the things that God had done: the killing of the wicked, the fighting of the enemy, etc.

Verse 33: “Therefore, He ended their days in vanity and their years in terror. When He slew them, then they sought Him; and they turned back and sought after God earnestly” (vs 33-34). Isn’t that true with all human beings. When the going gets rough there is not an atheist anywhere; not one.

You know how you know and atheist is really not an atheist? *By the very fact that he swears and takes God’s name in vain!* If he didn’t believe in God why would he have to use curse words all the time? Because when you use curse words all the time you’re trying to prove, trying to reinforce, that God doesn’t exist. **You’re tempting and challenging God!** So, if there were really an atheist, and one of these days I hope I meet an atheist, and if I hear him swear and curse I’m going to ask him this question: ‘Why do you use God’s name if you don’t believe in Him? You believe in all the other words you speak—don’t you? If you use His name you must believe in Him.’ That will sort of twist them up in a knot. This is true. They’ve even portrayed this in movies, and it is true, when the going gets tough they cry out to God.

Verse 35: “And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues, for their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them...” (vs 35-38).

That’s going right back to the time that we just covered there in Exo. 32 & 33. That’s quite a thing, that God is that merciful and gracious and here this is talking about just in the Old Testament. We haven’t come to the New Testament.

This will help you understand why God called Paul who was Saul, who was a destroyer of the Church. That’s why Paul said that he was called to show a pattern. He considered himself to be *the* sinner. Every time I think of that I cannot help but think how relatives of the deceased—that Paul when he was Saul caused to be killed—felt when they were in the Church and then here comes Paul who was known; he’s the one who persecuted the Church. You wouldn’t feel like running up and putting your arms around him, hug him and say, ‘Oh, Paul, I’m so glad to see you. By the way you killed my son.’ *or* ‘You killed my daughter.’ It’s an incongruity in human standards, but that shows you how fantastic the *grace of God* is.

Look at it here; it says they flattered Him with their tongues: “...and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues” (vs 35-36). They didn’t mean it; they lied to Him: ‘Oh, God, we will never do this again.’ Their heart was not right with Him because they had their heart set on what they wanted to do.

Verse 37: “For their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them...” (vs 37-38). Now you can see why it is so ludicrous for us to say that as Americans we are great Americans, because of the great American spirit and the great American ingenuity. We’re only here because of God’s mercy to us, that’s all! I mean, even as a nation and as a country we’re here *by God’s grace*.

“...yea, many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath” (vs. 38). Sometimes I do this quite a bit in my own mind’s eye. What would it be like just to be stationary and let the earth turn and what would happen every time I came to San Francisco? You can just feel the anger well up in you, you see all these fruitcakes going around up there and all the things taking place. How would you feel everyday? Well, God remembers that they’re but flesh. He knows that their day of

salvation is going to come. He’s already set the laws in motion that will take care of their activities and so let it be, and be merciful to the rest.

Verse 39: “For He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away and does not come again. How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert? And still again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel” (vs 39-41).

It goes through showing here how God just keeps taking it and taking it and then it reaches a certain point. I don’t know what God’s level is of how He judges all these things and where it comes to. But I’m just thankful that He’s merciful and we ought to look to His mercy and His graciousness and not look to His wrath and His power and His destructive ability, but look to God’s creative ability and His goodness and that will help us in our relationship with Him.

Psalm 84:8: “O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed, for a day in Your courts is better than a thousand *elsewhere*.... [a thousand days in the court of the wicked] ...I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness” (vs 8-10).

I have seen this Scripture perverted, to use it as leverage in humility to force people into a fearful, humble stance to where ‘he wasn’t seeking in anything better than to just be a doorkeeper—so who are you?’ *You know!* ‘Oh that’s right.’ To use it as leverage in fear against people.

“...I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness, for the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory... [God is the One Who gives grace and glory] ...no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (vs 10-11). That’s something to keep in mind. That’s why Paul rejoiced in his afflictions. That’s why he rejoiced when God told him, ‘My grace is sufficient for you.’ Because He’s withholding no good thing from us and He will give it to us, especially in due time at the resurrection.

“O LORD of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusts in You” (v 12). The next time you sin and you think: How can I go repent of this? *Especially if it’s one of your lifelong problems!* There are certain things that God has allowed everyone to have as a lifelong problem. He did Paul—didn’t He? He didn’t heal him. Every one of us has some kind of lifelong problem or thing that is always a stumbling block for us, and every time we lose our temper, or whatever it is, we think: Oh, terrible! How can I repent again?

Remember this, this will help you: Psalm 86:1: “Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy.” When you sin you sure are needy. Even when you don’t sin you are needy. I mean, even when you’re the very best you can be you’re still needy. That is true!

Verse 2: “Preserve my soul, for I am Holy...”—we are! We’re called the Holy people of God. Aren’t we sanctified with God’s Truth? *That’s true!*

Verse 3: “O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good and **ready** to forgive...” (vs 3-5). That’s all part of God’s grace! He is ready to forgive!

What if we thought we don’t have to go back to 1-John 1 because we’ve been there several times where that He *will forgive* all of our sins, all of our unrighteousness? He *is faithful* to forgive them. Here it is that He is also *ready* to forgive.

“...and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You” (v 5). Don’t hesitate to repent of any sins that you find yourself doing. I mean even if it’s one of those things that dog you all your life, cause you do need it forgiven. ***He’s ready to forgive for those who call upon Him!*** Sure enough if you don’t call upon God He won’t forgive them. If you think that it’s too much that God can’t forgive remember He’s going to forgive the sins of the whole world. Are your sins greater than the sins of the whole world? *No!* That’s all a part of God’s graciousness.

Remember, it says that they ‘limited the Holy One of Israel.’ We limit God when we do not trust in His mercy. How is it that we don’t trust in His mercy? ***When we do not acknowledge***

- His goodness
- His mercifulness
- His graciousness
- When we are *afraid* to go to God and tell Him that we really need Him

We really, *really* need Him! So, that’s all a part of the *relationship of the graciousness of God.*

Verse 6: “Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications. **In the day of my trouble I will call upon You...** [don’t wait until the week after, you may not get out of your trouble] ...for You will answer me. Among the gods there is none like You, O LORD; neither are there any works like Your works. All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O LORD, and shall glorify Your name, for You are great and do wonderful things; You alone are God.

Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your Truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I will praise You, O LORD my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore, for great is Your mercy toward me; and You have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave” (vs. 6-13). Tremendous! This is why we are to grow in *the* grace and in *the* knowledge of Jesus Christ.

- Why can’t we have the joy of God’s salvation?

Yes, we can have the joy of God’s salvation when we understand about God’s grace! Too many people who should have the joy of the Lord are in the misery of church, and that should not be.

- Why can’t we feel good?

Not because we look upon ourselves as good and do as the world: psyche yourself up—self-hypnotize—how good you are, how wonderful you are, how much you can do. *No!*

- Why can’t we feel good because we understand God’s goodness?
- Why can’t we feel happy because of what God has done for us?
- In spite of all of our circumstances?

Paul said in Rom. 8, it doesn’t matter what comes against us: life or death, height, or anything. **‘Nothing** can separate us from the love of God.’ I really think we’re really on the verge of beginning to understand that. Let’s hope that going through this part of the *grace of God* we can understand more how we can have the joy of God and His salvation, and His goodness, and His mercy.

There is nothing wrong with that. Is it a sin for Christians to be happy because of God? *Of course not!* That’s an incongruous question. Why should we as Christians have to go around and carry God as a burden? That’s a silly statement! How many times did we make it so? Why did we make it so? *Because we didn’t understand about God’s graciousness and God’s mercy!*

Here’s another Psalm having to do with God’s mercy, Psalm 103:8: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him” (vs 8-11).

Verse 17: “But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting...”

Psalm 111:1: “Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart in the council of the upright and in the congregation. The

works of the LORD are great, sought out by all those who have pleasure in them. His work is glory and majesty; and His righteousness endures forever. He has made a memorial for His wonderful works; **the LORD is gracious and full of compassion**" (vs 1-4).

I defy anyone to hold the doctrine that the God of the Old Testament was a God of wrath and a God of anger. God is a God of love, mercy and compassion for those who

- call upon Him
- seek Him
- repent
- draw close to God

God is a God of wrath, a God of anger and a God of power ***against sinners and the rebellious and the devil worshipers*** in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. There's no difference because God, as we saw in the beginning, is 'the same yesterday, today, and forever.'

Psalms 112:4: "To the upright there arises light in the darkness... [that ties right back in with our sermon series in John] ...he is gracious and full of compassion and righteousness." That's what God is! The book of John is that which exemplifies, is that which brings the understanding of God's grace and love like no other book. I think it is absolutely true that we cannot understand the Gospel of the New Testament, the Gospel of Christ ***unless*** we fully understand the book of John; that it's spiritually understood.

Psalms 116:1 gives the full situation here: "I love the LORD because He hears my voice and my prayers." Have you ever had a prayer answered that you just muttered kind of as a thought one time? Who knows how long before it was fulfilled. I've experienced that. I know that in the moment that I understood that, that prayer was answered there was a special thrill and exhilaration that even that little thought, *God heard*.

Verse 2: "Because He has bowed down His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death hemmed me in, and the pains of the grave took hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow" (vs 2-3). Lest any of us think that that is true, I know sometimes with the pains and difficulties of our own physical existence and the circumstances we are in, sometimes we feel that way.

Verse 4: "Then I called upon the name of the LORD: 'O LORD, I beseech You, deliver my soul.' Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with

you" (vs 4-7). I've often wondered what is going to be like at the resurrection when all these things really come together. Whatever that song of Moses is going to be when we're on the Sea of Glass, that is going to be absolutely stunning!

Psalms 145:1—here again you have to follow through the thought: "I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You; and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.... [we can sure say that about God's love] ...One generation shall praise Your works to another and shall declare Your mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious splendor of Your majesty and of Your wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Your awesome works; and I will declare Your greatness. They shall pour forth the memory of Your great goodness and shall sing of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (vs 1-8).

This could almost be the theme song of the second resurrection. You just think on it for a minute! Can you imagine what those people are going to think when they come to the conscious realization that they have been resurrected. When they come to the conscious realization that God is going to give them salvation. They're going to say that God is *gracious and full of compassion*. Slow to anger, and of great mercy.

Verse 9: "The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." That's a tremendous Psalm!

Let's see a couple things concerning our part in using God's grace in relationship to God's laws. Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge..." That's basically true. If it comes down to where you don't sin because of the fear of sin, that's better than not sinning. I've found that when you come to that point and you resist that temptation, what does God always do? *He always provides a way out! It's the beginning of knowledge!*

"...*but* fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of your father and forsake not the law of your mother, for they *shall be* an ornament of grace to your head... [in other words of grace and favor just in life and living like it was with Joseph] ...And chains around your neck" (vs 7-9)—chains of decoration and beauty.

Proverbs 3:21: "My son, do not let them depart from your eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they shall be life to your soul and grace to your neck" (vs 21-22). Apparently that had to do with some of the symbolism having to do with

the priest's ornamentation. I know across the forehead of the priest they had 'Holiness unto the Lord,' and then the two shoulder things. I forget right now exactly what they were.

Proverbs 4:9 talks about wisdom and what it will do: "She shall place upon your head a garland of grace; she shall bestow upon you a crown of glory." We can spiritualize this and project it into what it's going to be at the resurrection. That will be because of God's grace, and then we will have a crown of glory, which won't fade away, etc.

Isaiah 30:18: "And therefore, will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you..." This is talking about how God is going to bring back all the Israelites; bring them out of captivity and restore them.

"...And therefore, He will be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you, for the LORD *is* a God of justice; blessed *are* all those who wait for Him" (v 18).

Let me add to your reading list these things that you need to go back and read in the book of Deuteronomy:

- chpt. 4:6-8, 37
- chpt. 6:16-18, 24-25
- chpt. 7:6-9, 12-15
- chpt. 10:12-22.

Let's go to that one section and we'll pretty well end the grace of God in the Old Testament. This is showing our part.

Deuteronomy 10:12: "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, to keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *belong* to the LORD your God, the earth also, with all that is in it. Only the LORD had a delight in your fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, you above all people, as *it is* today" (vs 12-15).

Verse 19: "Therefore, love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." And it talks about fearing God, serving God.

Verse 21: "He *is* your praise, and He *is* your God, Who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons. And now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of the heavens for multitude" (vs 21-22). Then you can add to that Deut. 11 about loving God and so forth.

Isaiah 53 is showing part of the grace of God. Remember, it says in Heb. 2:9 that by the grace of God 'Jesus tasted death for every man.' Well, here is a prophecy of it. This doesn't talk about the grace of God in Isa. 53, but it *shows* the grace of God.

Isaiah 53:2 is a prophecy of Christ: "For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him. *He is* despised and rejected of men..." (vs 2-3). Imagine that He came to His own creation. He came to His own people.

Verse 3: "*He is* despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (vs 3-4).

That's virtually what they said, 'If you be the Christ come down off the cross.' That's tantamount to saying 'You are there because You are not of God.' And if You're not of God 'You're there because God is striking You down.'

Verse 5: "But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed." We always used to say that's just *physical* healing. But I tell you, there's a whole lot more to *spiritual healing* than there is to physical healing. A whole lot more!

Verse 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken?"(vs 6-8). It shows God's graciousness and mercy even in the death of Christ.

We're going to see even more profoundly, as we get down to the Passover time, and I'm still brooding on this and thinking about the tremendous sacrifice of Christ, in particularly in relationship to the fact of the power of Satan the devil's hand in His crucifixion. I hope we can get that in a real bright light this time, because it manifests ***the humility and the love and the mercy and the graciousness of God like nothing else ever does!***

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

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5/20/12
Corrected: 2/2016

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Hebrews 13:8
- 2) 2 Peter 3:18
- 3) Genesis 1:31
- 4) Genesis 5:28-32
- 5) Genesis 6:5-8
- 6) Genesis 12:1-3
- 7) Genesis 11:4
- 8) Genesis 12:3
- 9) Genesis 18:1-4
- 10) Isaiah 1:16-20
- 11) Genesis 18:23-32
- 12) Genesis 19:17-21
- 13) Genesis 32:5
- 14) Genesis 33:10-11
- 15) Genesis 39:2-4
- 16) Exodus 33:7
- 17) Exodus 34:5-7
- 18) 1 Samuel 1:9-18
- 19) Psalm 78:32-41
- 20) Psalm 84:8-12
- 21) Psalm 86:1-13
- 22) Psalm 103:8-11, 17
- 23) Psalm 111:1-4
- 24) Psalm 112:4
- 25) Psalm 116:1-7
- 26) Psalm 145:1-9
- 27) Proverbs 1:7-9
- 28) Proverbs 3:21-22
- 29) Proverbs 4:9
- 30) Isaiah 30:18
- 31) Deuteronomy 10:12-15, 19, 21-22
- 32) Isaiah 53:2-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 2; 3
- Luke 18
- Exodus 32
- Matthew 25
- Exodus 20
- Matthew 24; 1
- Jeremiah 2
- 1 Samuel 1:7-8; 2:12
- 1 John 1
- Romans 8
- Deuteronomy 4:6-8; 6:16-18, 24-25;
7:6-9, 12-15; 10:22; 11
- Hebrews 2:9

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Gospel of John*
- Books: *Josephus*

Grace of God II

(The Grace of God in the New Testament)
Fred R. Coulter—February 2, 1985

How many have our booklet, *Grace of God of the Bible*? This is one that I wrote when we first began Biblical [Church of God]. I would have to say that at this point now we've grown a lot in understanding concerning grace, but I think you're going to be very surprised as to why, when we were in Worldwide Church of God, we did not learn about the grace of God, and I think you're going to be absolutely floored!

Let's just review concerning *The Grace of God in the Old Testament* (#1 this series). In studying through concerning the Grace of God in the Bible, it dawned on me that this is an example of kind of a personal experience in how you feel when you grow in knowledge. Remember, the Bible says that you learn 'here a little and there a little; precept upon precept.'

This is exactly what it is, and if you want to know how much this part of the Bible has been used by me all you have to do is look at the pages and you can almost see by the color, and that's from the hand, just over the years, my dirty fingers have left these little marks and the little bit of sweat in the palm of my hands. I've got it marked. I probably have a half a dozen different pens and different times I've made major insertions in it.

How many times have I preached sermons on the Sabbath? How many times have we gone over the story of Adam and Eve? I know that in the Worldwide Church of God there's only one version you ever heard and that's the only sermon you ever hear from one person, so you don't want to go back to Gen. 1, 2, and 3, but it dawned on me that in Gen. 2 when God made the Sabbath, let's see what He did to it.

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day..." (vs 1-3).

Most people think it's a curse, but it's a blessing. He blessed the day. Why aren't people anxious to keep the day that God blessed? That's strange. Sometimes things become so crystal clear that when you see it in it's proper light it's just amazing! You would think since people would want a blessing from God that they would want to keep the day He blessed. So, He blessed it.

Verse 3: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

When you go through and read the rest of the account, the Sabbath Day was given while Adam and Eve were in a state of grace, because they were given permission to eat of all of the trees of the garden *including the Tree of Life*. You cannot eat of the Tree of Life unless you have a state of grace.

The Sabbath was given not only as a law—Exo. 20 and Deut. 5—but it was given to mankind as an act of grace. {note booklet: *Which Day is the True Christian Sabbath?*} Sabbath-keeping: Is it salvation *by works*? **or** Is it an *act of grace*? I think that when people read that they're going to be absolutely surprised that keeping the Sabbath is an *act of grace*. We will see that God has given us good works that He ordained that we should walk in and the Sabbath is one of those *good works*. You can go back and go over the Scriptures where it says in Isa. 58, 'If you will turn your foot from the Sabbath and call it a delight,' etc.

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them." Wasn't the Sabbath one of those things ordained that we should walk in? *Certainly!* Wherever you find Sabbath-breaking, just go back and re-read Ezek. 20. When they broke the Sabbath He said, 'How long refuse you to walk in My commandments?'

Go to Exo. 16:27-28_[transcriber's correction], where the fellow went out on the Sabbath to look for manna, and God said, 'How long refuse you to keep My commandments?' It's one of those good works, and it's a blessing. I can tell you that I know that from experience, that it is a blessing to keep the Sabbath and to assemble as God has said. There's just no two ways about it.

Let's see a reference to the Old Testament in 1-Peter 1; it's talking about the salvation and the grace that is given to us, and that even though the prophets of old were under the grace of God by their calling, their message, and their promise to be in the Kingdom of God, they didn't understand some of the things that we understand.

1-Peter 1:10: "Concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the *grace that would come* to you... [toward you; they didn't understand it, but it was one of those things that God gave and they preached it] ...have diligently searched out and intently inquired, searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, testifying beforehand of the

sufferings of Christ, and these glories that would follow; to whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the Gospel... [glad tidings, (KJV)] ...to you by *the Holy Spirit...*" (vs 10-12).

We are going to see why it is called *the glad tidings*. We are going to see why we have been missing the joy of God's salvation. *Partly because of our own sins, partly because of our own weakness and infirmity!* When you're in pain and misery you can't be jumping up and down for joy, that is true. I'm talking about the overall, why can't you feel good about being a Christian kind of thing? Why do you have to go around with a guilty conscience all the time? The Catholics are the ones who make you have a guilty conscience, because the Catholics have turned the grace of God into justification by Catholic works, and they turned it into lasciviousness.

Zech. 3 talks about the time of the coming of Christ. This is one of the many parts. Isaiah is full of the prophecies of the grace of Christ, the crucifixion of Christ, and all the things having to do with what God was going to do with the grace of God that was to be given to us.

Zechariah 3:8: "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you; for they *are* men wondered at, for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the Branch!" That's referring directly to Jesus Christ.

Zechariah 4:6: "Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, 'This *is* the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts.'" How many times have we heard that preached, and yet, physical means were sought to bring about salvation. *No!* It's by God's Spirit.

Verse 7: "Who *are* you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the Headstone [Christ] with shoutings, 'Grace! Grace unto it!'" This was a direct reference of the tremendous *act of Grace of God* in sending Jesus Christ.

Even though God is a God of grace in the Old Testament and the New Testament, He reveals that grace to us as individuals in the New Testament in a very profound way. Read:

- Isa. 55:6-7
- Isa. 61:1-3 (quoted in Luke 4 where it says 'Come unto Me that are heavy laden and you can buy without money, and you can have bread without price').
- Isa. 66:1-2

Those are prophecies of the grace that God would give to individuals.

Now let's get into *The Grace of God in the New Testament*. Remember that I showed you the number of Scriptures that were included in the literature in the Worldwide Church of God, and how that on one page they had one column and two thirds of another column type written page. I've gone back and analyzed every one of those and in the entire literature of the Worldwide Church of God they only use *ten* Scriptures referring to the *grace of God*. **Ten!** Now, is it any wonder that people in the Worldwide Church of God do not understand the grace of God?

There's one thing that the grace of God does: ***it sets you free!*** Not free *to* sin, but it sets you free *from* sin, and it sets you free to where you have that direct contact with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Who is the only Mediator? *Jesus Christ!* It's sets you free from control and manipulation by men. So therefore, whichever church wants to control people cannot preach the true Grace of God. *They cannot do it!*

Let me count the Scriptures: 39 in the booklet that was supposed to teach about grace had to do with either commandment-keeping only, or the fear of going into the Lake of Fire. That is really something! And yet, the most important thing that we need to do, and, though I heard it preached from the pulpit from time to time, 2-Peter 3 was not in any of the literature. It's not here on the literature list. I was absolutely dumbfounded! I knew it was not too good, but I didn't realize how bad. I don't want anyone to take this as an attack on the Worldwide Church of God, but it shows an error in *their* teaching.

- Do we point out the errors of Protestants? *Sure we do!*
- Do we point out the errors of other doctrines? *Yes!*
- How do we point them out?
- Just by making fun of them? *No!*

We point them out by the Scriptures and whatever the Scriptures say that's what we go by. Not just one or two but we take the whole thing. We're going to go very thoroughly through the grace of God in the Bible.

2-Peter 3:17: "Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, **be growing in the grace and the knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...." (vs 17-18).

In studying for this, there's part of it I'm going to have to omit concerning Jesus Christ until we get down toward the time of the Passover, but we can answer the question for sure:

- Why are we to remember the death of Jesus Christ?
- Why is it that the Passover pictures His death and we are to, as it says in 1-Cor. 11, have a memorial of His death till He should come?

The Protestants would say, 'We celebrate His resurrection' with *their* so-called Easter. Why does God say we are to commemorate His death? We'll answer that, and I think you're going to be absolutely amazed—I know I was in studying it—what God has done for us, and why we should remember His death even though we are saved by His life. We are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of God, and we should be doing that constantly. That's something we need to always continually look forward to.

I think as far as the group, *physically* we are perhaps one of the weakest groups you could ever find on the face of the earth. But *spiritually* let's hope that we can do as the Apostle Paul said, that God did many things with him as a *pattern for those who would believe afterwards*. We would have to say that with the sickness and the illness that the Apostle Paul had. I mean, there's just no two ways around it, God called him to preach the grace of God. Yet, he himself was afflicted with a terrible eye disease, so bad that he even apologized that he may have appeared repulsive to the Galatians. Now, that's pretty bad!

Let me just give you an example. Have you ever seen someone who was disfigured so much you didn't want to, but the only thing you could do was stare at them? You felt real bad about staring at them, but it was so grotesque that was all you could do, just kind of out of shock and disbelief. Well, the Apostle Paul was much that way. What did they say to Jesus? *'If you be the Son of God get off this cross, then we'll believe you!'* I imagine there were a lot of people telling the Apostle Paul, 'When I see you healed then I will believe what you are saying.' Did God heal him? *No!* It's not based upon the physical condition alone. Here's one of the things that the Apostle Paul was an example for all of us in.

Let's get the full story flow, 2-Corinthians 12:1: "Indeed, it is not expedient for me to boast. But I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." It seems to me that we heard people boast about how much of this and that that they have done and published and printed and preached to, and countries they went to, etc. The Apostle Paul didn't. He did it only out of foolishness.

Verse 2: "I know a man in Christ *who*, fourteen years ago, was caught up to *the* third heaven. (Whether *this man was* in *the* body, I do not know; or out of the body, I do not know—God knows)." This is when he was being taught directly by Jesus Christ and he was in such a condition that he didn't know whether he was in the body, whether he was out of the body, or what.

Verse 3: "Now, I know such a man (whether *taken up* in *the* body, or out of the body, I do not know—**God knows**), *and* that he was caught up to Paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, which a man is not permitted to speak" (vs 3-4).

I'm sure a lot of those things he didn't understand. What language do they use at the throne of God? If anyone wants to speak in tongues let them try that on for size. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. In other words the Holy Spirit translates it into whatever language God receives it in. Though God can understand all languages because God confounded the languages, so He invented it.

Verse 5: "I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the Truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me. But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted" (vs 5-7).

There are certain things that God does just to humble him. The messenger of Satan, some people say, was a demon. I don't think that it was a demon, I think it was just an affliction that Satan was allowed to put upon him like Satan did upon Job. But just as Job was afflicted he was not Satan possessed, nor was he bothered with a demon. I would have to conclude it would be exactly the same.

"...to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted.... [God allowed him to have that, actually caused it] ...I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me; but He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you...' (vs 7-9). I think the longer we live the more we're going to see about the *grace of God*, that that is the most sufficient thing we could have.

Why is that the most sufficient thing that we could have? *Because it doesn't matter what we are in the flesh! It doesn't matter who we are or what we are in the flesh if we have the grace of God!* Is there anything greater than the grace of God? Can there possible be anything greater? *No, there cannot be!*

That's why the Bible says when you compare physical things among physical things you're unwise, or compare yourself with others. You're unwise because you're not looking to the Spirit of God or the grace of God, which is all encompassing. That's what I can certainly say with us, the grace of God is going to have to be sufficient for us. God will take care of us physically in His own way and His own time as God sees that it's going to be. Sometimes God uses that as a tremendous example and witness to other people, because they will say, 'How can you believe in God when you suffer like that?' And you give the simple answer: *Well, the grace of God is sufficient for me!*

We're all not going to live forever in the flesh, and yet, somehow there's a strange quirk of human nature that we want to perpetuate the flesh forever and ever. It just doesn't work that way. It isn't going to.

Time marches on and we either weigh more or less, have more gray hair, or less hair. Our children get older. Jonathan and David are young men; they are not little babies any more. I mean, we can remember when they were born.

I remember when all of our children were born because I was there when they were born. I remember especially when David was born. Brought him out, put him on the table to clean him up, and there's Grandpa Henshaw and he said, 'Whoa! Look at that back! Look at that back!' David to this day has got a good strong back and a good stand. He enjoys track and so forth. Now he's a man and he's making his own way, he's going to be earning his own money.

At that point we can say, 'Thank God!' After all the cost and everything that goes into it. That's just part of life. We need to understand about the grace of God and let it be a sufficiency for us.

I have several definitions of grace and what it means and so forth. 'Charisma' means *the gift of God!*

- the *physical gifts* that God can give
- the *spiritual gifts* of God
 - ✓ *chrisma*
 - ✓ *charismatos*

Let's look at some Scriptures concerning that:

2-Corinthians 1:11: "While you also are laboring together for us by supplication to God, that the **gift** to us from many persons might be *the* cause of thanksgiving by many for us." The word *gift* you can see is 'charisma'—this is just the *physical gift of goods*. It's just a blessing, a gift. Refers to the *spiritual gifts*...

1-Peter 4:10: "Let each one, according as he has received a gift *from God*..." There are gifts of the Holy Spirit. There's another Greek word for gifts: 'dorea'—*gift of God*. When it talks about the *spiritual gifts* in 1-Cor. 12 it is 'dorea.' Here we are talking about a gift in the way of 'charisma.'

"...*be using* it to serve the others as good stewards of *the* Grace of God *which* manifests *itself* in various ways" (v 10). We're going to see quite a few instances where we have the grace of God, which here is 'cheritos' and 'charisma'—both of those.

Verse 11: "If anyone speaks, *let it be* as the words of God; if anyone serves, *let it be* as from *the* strength which God supplies; so that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to Whom is the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen."

Romans 1:11: "For I am longing to see you, so that I may impart to you some **spiritual gift**... ['charisma.' What is one of the most important spiritual gifts that can be imparted to someone? *The understanding of God's grace! The understanding of God's Word!*] ...in order that you may be established."

2-Timothy 1:6, where the Apostle Paul says: "For this reason, I admonish you to stir up **the gift** of God... ['tau charisma'] ...that is in you by the laying on of my hands... [This obviously was with the ordination for the ministry. There are certain gifts that are imparted at that time.] ...For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness" (vs 6-7).

Romans 5:15: "But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*?..." The receiving of the gift of grace comes from the same word 'charisma.' We receive the Grace of God 'charis' or 'charite' or 'charitos'—either one, but we get the free gift.

Verse 7: "...For if by the transgression of the one man many died, how much more did the Grace of God, and the gift of grace... ['dorea'—the other word for gift.] ...which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?"

Let's look at the word 'charis' or 'charitos'—which we have the English word *charity*. Here are the meanings of the definition of the word 'charis' or 'charitos':

1. graciousness, attractiveness, pleasantness
2. thanks or gratitude
3. favor, grace, gracious care, or help of goodwill

A broad definition means *the gracious intention of God*. What God is doing for us is really a fantastic thing.

4. on the part of God and Christ to us the possession of Divine grace as a source of blessings for the believer

We're going to go through this very thoroughly, and since so few people have really had the grace of God expounded we're going to go through every Scripture. I know it's going to take a little while to do it. There are certain needs that we have and especially with the Passover we are going to really be benefited when we understand this very thoroughly.

It really helps you in your relationship with God. I guarantee one thing, that if every day you put your life under the grace of God and thank God for His goodness and His grace, you're going to have a much better day; you're not going to have to be overcoming and working on yourself. I've heard many ministers get up there and say, that you have to just beat the flesh and work on yourself—pray an hour and study an hour—in the most hateful way. So you do it.

At Ambassador College the students—when I was there—would be hours in the prayer booth. Every little thing was regimented because we were doing it rather than letting God do it for us. I mean we accomplished certain things you can do certain things that way. But you end up with a *salvation by works* because it's what *you* do rather than what *Christ in you* does. When you put yourself under the grace of God what *Christ in you* does then is accomplished without having to just beat the flesh. You try it. What's that old saying? *'Try it you'll like it!'*

5. a store of grace that is dispensed

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE!..." (vs 1-2). That shows that you can draw on that store of grace when you sin. But you don't go out and sin so that more grace can come.

6. a state of grace *or* standing in God's grace
7. a deed of grace

For example: God the Father sending Jesus Christ with His death and resurrection and so forth.

8. a work of grace

We're going to see that there are works of grace. That's almost contradictory—isn't it? God's work *in us* is a work of grace.

- if we're called by grace
- if we are saved by grace
- if we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus

then it is *God's work* in us which is a *work of grace*.

9. a work of grace that grows from more to more

That's an interesting definition: it grows from more to more. God is called *the God of all grace*. Let's talk a little bit about humility, because there's a false humility, too. I heard someone give a sermon recently on humility. Again, we must all make ourselves humble.

- What is the most humble act you can do?
- Is it that you make yourself humble and weak?
- Is it that you take a very contrite position?

I was watching this TV report on AIDS, there wasn't one man there that had a man's voice, even including the straight guys who were there just interviewing. And the society has been so feminized that a man can't speak as a man anymore, because everybody's offended.

- Should we all speak humbly and softly?
- Does that make us humble?
- What makes a person humble?
- What is the most humiliating act you can do?
- *Repentance and standing in God's grace!*

That is true humility; not something you put on; not something that you do or work up. I mean, a person can work up *superficial* humility out of vanity. I think maybe in the case of the poverty vow, that's a *superficial* case of humility out of vanity. 'Oh, we have given up everything.' But we lust after it all.

1-Peter 5:5: "In the same manner, *you* younger men..." That is not necessarily referring to younger elders *vs* elders; that means younger people in age.

"...be subject to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility..." (v 5). How do you do that? How do you bind on, or put on humility?

"...because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God..." (vs 5-6).

You submit yourself completely to God. That is the most humbling thing you can do. That doesn't necessarily make you humble before people, because you are humble to God. Look at the example of Moses. He was called the meekest man on the face of the earth, but how did he treat those who rebelled against him? *He prayed to God and then he stood up and told them what they were: a pack of sinners.*

What did he do when he first saw all the Israelites sinning when he came down off the

mount? *In anger he threw down the Ten Commandments that God wrote with His own hand!* Then he had the humility to ask God to spare them. He had the humility when God said, 'Hey, I'll fulfill My promise through you. You're of Abraham's seed, I'll destroy them and I'll fulfill it through them.' Moses said, 'No, God, please. If You're going to do that, blot my name out of the book of Life.' God said, 'Okay, I won't do that but I will do with whom I have to do with whom.' He spared them because Moses was humble. But he sure didn't appear humble before the people. They came up and said, 'Who are you to take all this to yourself?' So, *the most humbling thing you can do is submit yourself to God!*

Verse 6: "Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; casting all your cares upon Him... [that's how you put yourself under the grace of God] ...because He cares for you. Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world. Now, may **the God of all grace...**" (vs 6-10). That's why we need to come to God.

I think we can safely say that the difference between a religion of men and the Truth of God is when the people are pointed:

- to the grace of God
- to trust in God
- to have that relationship with God

vs

- trust in a man
- trust in an organization
- trust in numbers
- trust in past works
- trust in whatever

"Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle *you*. To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen. By Silvanus, a faithful brother to you, as I reckon, I have written *to you* briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is *the* true Grace of God in which you stand" (vs 10-12).

(go to the next track)

I want to ask you: What is the Gospel? *Everyone would unanimously answer, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God!* Well, we're going to see that there are two parts to that:

- 1) the Gospel of the Kingdom of God

- 2) the Gospel of the Grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ

Which one is more important? *Since they're stated together they are **both** important!* You're going to be amazed; we're going to learn some new things. Acts 20 is where Paul came to Miletus and he called for the elders at Ephesus and had them come down and Paul was preaching to them. After Paul got the elders of the Church of Ephesus down there:

Acts 20:18: "And when they had come to him, he said to them, 'You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, *and* all the time I was with you, I served the Lord with all humility and *with* many tears and temptations, which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; *and* how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, *but* preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house-to-house" (vs 18-20).

This is not going from house-to-house banging on the doors like the Jehovah Witnesses do. They always descend on our place on the Sabbath. There was a whole gang of about 20 out there on the street corner and I said, 'Please don't go to this house over here' because they come around and bang on the door every Sabbath. It doesn't mean that. He taught them publicly, he taught them in the Church, and in different houses, from house-to-house wherever the people were.

Verse 21: "Earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I myself do not take any *of these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel [glad tidings] of the Grace of God" (vs 21-24). The glad tidings!

Why is it called the 'glad tidings' of the grace of God, or the Gospel of the Grace of God? *Because one of the most profound things that can happen to an individual in the grace of God is to not have sin imputed to him!* Even though 'the law of sin and death' is still in us, God does not look to that *law of sin and death* that causes us, when we sin, to serve the flesh. That's fantastic when we really understand that.

In other words, if we sin a sin that is a sin not unto death, as John said: God is going to forgive that (1-John 5:16^[transcriber's correction]) A sin unto death is the *unpardonable sin*. We can have the confidence in coming to God and claiming that grace because *we*

stand in that grace. That's why there needs to be the joy of the salvation of God, and the happiness and the faith in the assurance that that is so. If God, Who put 'the law of sin and death' in us, condemns us because it is there, then we have no hope. Every time we do some little thing that we don't want to do, or maybe even some major thing that we don't really want to do, or we're sorry we've done it, if God condemns us for that and beats us over the head all the time there's no hope for anybody. There is no hope of salvation for anyone. That's why we need the grace of God.

That's why he said, v 24: "...and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify **the Gospel of the Grace of God**.... [that's really tremendous] ...And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more" (vs 24-25). There it is together.

He preached the Kingdom of God, but the Kingdom of God must preach the grace of God. How we missed that for years is amazing. I mean, we're going to see so many things that have been missed for so long it's going to be incredible. That's why there are so many misunderstandings that come along.

I will tell you another thing: *That's why people*—when things don't go right—*become so disillusioned*, because they blame themselves for everything that happens. When you blame yourself for something that happens and you don't think that God is going to help you out, and you carry that guilt around with you, it's a terrible burden to carry. There have been too many people put into that position. I have been there; you have been there; others are there. We need to understand about the grace of God and what He's doing more than anything else.

10. Jesus Christ is the only means by which the grace of God is mediated to men

Can you think of a Scripture that says that? *Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.'* He is the **only means**, and it's through His birth, death and resurrection. What God has done and still does for man in Jesus Christ His Son is God's outstanding act of grace.

This sermon is based upon John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." And how that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; of course, that's in God's time.

11. God the Father is the Source from which grace comes to man

What's a Scripture that verifies that? *'None can come to the Me. Christ said of Himself, except the Father draw him.'* That's the first act of grace. Do you believe that God has called you? If you *believe* and *know* that God has called you then be confident and happy in that grace that God has given, that God the Father the Supreme Being of the whole universe reached down and called you. He didn't call you because you were righteous. He didn't call anybody because they were righteous, because the Bible says, **'There is none righteous, there is none that does good, no not one.'** God calls us because He calls us, and we virtually have no say-so about it.

Look at Paul. He was trooping off on the horses or donkeys, whatever they were on, going over to Damascus and he was trudging along and probably figuring what he was going to do to string up those Christians and BAM! he got knocked off the horse. Did Paul have anything to say about his calling? *Not a thing!* It doesn't happen that dramatically to everybody, believe me, but it happens to us nevertheless. That is tremendous! God is the Source from which grace comes to mankind.

12. Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which the grace most effectively reaches man in his need

We are going to see that we have need. Grace is quite the reverse of a reward for good conduct. Bill Cosby did the Noah one. I forget the whole sequence, but I remember this where Bill Cosby says, 'I've been good! I've been good!' And that's the way most people view things. You do something 'good' and God is supposed to recognize the good that you do. Salvation by works is *doing good things to make God recognize what you've done* that is good. But that's impossible because in *the law of sin and death* you cannot truly, aside from God, do a Godly act.

We can do good things in the community. We can be upstanding in the community. That's in the community level; that's on an individual level. But as far as God is concerned it's the same difference as between not stealing to pick up the goods, and lusting.

There are a lot of people who have never stolen. But I'm sure would love to have had the opportunity, and to have gotten away with it, because it's there; the lust is there! *or* It could be of adultery, or it could be of other things.

13. grace is quite the reverse of a reward for good conduct

Rather it is a means of rescuing man from his own deep failure. That's why we need the grace of God. We can be successful in the world—can't we? Even Jesus said a man can gain the whole world, but what

is the profit if he loses his soul. We're talking about *spiritual failure* that human beings cannot measure up to the righteousness of God on their own.

14. rescuing him from his own deep failure and harm and helplessness to overcome it alone

I tell you try to overcome something alone and by your own works, it is futile. How many have ever done that? I've heard it preached, too: 'You work on that sin and you overcome that sin.' That's the wrong advice. You go pray for God's grace and mercy and pray for God's gift with Christ in you that you can overcome. It's a totally different situation because you beat the flesh to overcome if you do it yourself, and you get absolutely frustrated.

A good example of that is that you can do it to a certain extent, for example someone who's an absolute confirmed alcoholic cannot stop and cannot help themselves, and though they resolve—they hate it, they detest it—they are completely helpless. It's the same way spiritually. We cannot save ourselves. If we can save ourselves by our good works we wouldn't need Jesus Christ. That's why Gal. 3 says, 'If there were a law that would give life then truly salvation would come through a law.' ***But it has to come from God through His grace!***

15. obedience to the law to gain acceptance with God equals under law for justification

One's acceptance with God is not something we can achieve by his own merits or works, but is chosen and called and made accepted, forgiven, blessed with the Holy Spirit of God, made heir of eternal life, made sons of God as a gracious undeserved gift from God the Father through Jesus Christ. That's what the grace of God has in the way of meaning.

Now I'm going to read to you the first part of the book, *The Grace of God In The New Testament* that I wrote many years ago:

To understand the *Grace of God* as revealed in the New Testament is to comprehend one of the most wonderful attributes of God; and is the *key* to a deep, personal relationship between God the Father and every Christian, through Jesus Christ.

The Grace of God expresses the *greatness of his love* and the *richness* of His mercy! To live within and under the Grace of God is to experience and appreciate the *fantastic* love of God and His merciful kindness.

Contrary to religious speculations, grace is not just a theological tenant or topic of argument; drawing denominational battle

lines; in fact, the Grace of God means ***life itself!*** Without grace there would be *no salvation, no Christianity! No eternal life!*

Indeed, *grace is the foundation* of true *Christianity*. The New Testament reveals that God the Father's *grace* is an *all encompassing* quality.

The Grace of God has tremendous meaning to those who really understand it. Through, Jesus Christ, God's gift of *grace* is granted so we may spiritually *grow up unto Him*, Jesus Christ—the Son of God—Who is the Head of God's Church, in all things.

The *Scriptural Truth* is that God the Father, through His GRACE and salvation, will share His eternal life, existence and glory with all human beings who *truly* love Him with *all* their hearts, and minds and beings.

The potential of our destiny to become the literal sons of God through the Grace of God is the *most incredible* and least understood Truths of the Bible. The Apostle John wrote, "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (1-John 3:1-2).

This is why Peter was inspired to admonish us to *grow in the grace* and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Rather, be growing in *the grace* and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen." (2-Peter 3:18). ***Grace is based on love***

Love is the basis for the relationship and fellowship between God the Father, Jesus Christ and the person who has been called to salvation. ***God is Love!*** "The one who does not love does not know God because God is love. In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so

loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us.” (1-John 4:8-12).

Our relationship with God *must* be based on love! “And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This *is the* first commandment” (Mark 12:30). Love is the *foundation* of grace and *without* this foundation there is *nothing!*

As such then, *grace* is the primary quality or attribute; the first extension or expression of *God’s love*. Therefore, *grace* is the primary quality and function of the spiritual relationship and the fellowship between God the Father and the person He calls through Jesus Christ.

Now let’s see a couple examples of God’s grace in intervening in our lives. The salvation that was given needs to be stated this way:

- the first one to receive the grace of God in the events leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ was Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth with the birth of John the Baptist
- the very next one to receive direct grace and favor was Mary

Luke 1:28: “And after coming to her, the angel said, ‘Hail, you who are highly favored!...’” If you look at that long Greek word ‘favored one’ you will see ‘charitee’. It is ‘kacharitee o mene.’ Do you see ‘charitee’ right in there?

“...The Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women.’ But when she saw *him*, she was *greatly* perplexed at his message, and was considering what kind of salutation this might be. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, because **you have found grace with God**” (vs 28-30). It’s the exact same thing. Noah found *grace*. Exact same thing. Mary *found grace* with God.

Verse 31: ““And behold, you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus.””

Direct message from God. Mary found grace. Why did she need to find grace? Contrary to the Catholic doctrine of the ‘immaculate conception,’ there had to be two immaculate conceptions for the Catholic doctrine.

- 1) for Mary, as the Catholics believe so she would not receive the stain of Adams sin on her soul

2) the immaculate conception of Jesus Christ

Well, the fact is Jesus did have *the law of sin and death* in Him. He did receive that from His mother Mary, as part of His physical inheritance, otherwise He could not have died. And one other thing as to why the death of Jesus was so profound was because He didn’t have the law of sin and death in Him, just as a person, *He bore in His body our sins!* So, I’ve given you a couple things to think about to understand more about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Here is a tremendous verse that ought to just really bring you a lot of peace of mind, happiness and joy. That’s aside from the daily frustrations we have to go through in this life.

Ephesians 1:5: “Having predestinated us for sonship... [‘huiiothesian’—which means *sonship*] ...to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of **His grace**... [‘cheritous’—God’s grace] ...wherein He made us objects [recipients] of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*” (vs 5-6). You think about that!

We have been made the *objects* of God’s grace. Once we are called through God’s grace we are the *objects* of God’s grace. We have a little thing in language called the ‘object of the preposition’ That is the one that receives the action. We are receiving the action of God’s grace. We are the objects of that grace in Jesus Christ. That is mind-boggling when you really think of it and really put that together! We are recipients. We are made “...objects [recipients] of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*.”

Verse 7: “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” You just think upon that for a minute! How rich is God’s grace? Why did the Apostle Paul say, ‘What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!’ God’s grace abounds more than we have ever comprehended or understood, and

- we *stand* in that grace
- we are *recipients* of that grace
- we are *objects* of that grace

That is a tremendous thing. You talk about mentally and spiritually helping you approach God, that should help an awful lot.

It will help us in our relationship with each other. It will help us overcome the greatest sins that Christians do unto another: judging one another and judging one another’s hearts. That’s why Jesus said, ‘Judge not lest you be judged’ when you judge to condemnation. Isn’t that what has happened to

everyone of us? We've been judged to condemnation by others in the name of Christ when we ought to have it understood ***we are the recipients of the grace of God***, so therefore, who are we to judge the servant of God? If you are all under God's grace and His servants then to judge you to condemnation is to judge a servant of God. I'm not referring to just ministers. Do you serve God? *If you serve God you are a servant of God!* You may not be a minister, but ***you are a servant of God!***

You see how that just clears the air? It just clears the air. Therefore, we don't have to snoop in people's lives. When you understand that, isn't it ridiculous how many grilling sessions that people had to go through, ministers coming over to their house and wanting to know what was going on? 'What were you doing? I heard this.' Then we'd get tongues plowing into everybody's lives. Can you see what happens when a whole church bases their doctrine of salvation on ten Scriptures, when there are literally 151 to tell us about the grace of God. That the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Gospel of Grace which Paul put ahead of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Let's keep all of these things in perspective.

Ephesians 2:4: "But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For you have been saved by grace.*)" (vs 4-5). This Greek word here is 'sodezo menoi'—which means *having been saved*.

Right now we are in a state of *having been saved* from the 'prince of the power of the air,' and saved from the penalty of death from our sins. So, in that sense we *have been saved*, but we are in the *process of being saved*, if we stand in the grace, and we *shall be saved* at the resurrection. 'By grace you have been saved' (1-Cor. 15).

Verse 6: "And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming..." (vs 6-7). That's when we are going to sit down on those thrones: 'And I saw thrones and they that sat on them...' (Rev. 20:4). That's when we will be there in the heavenlies.

"...He might show the exceeding riches of His grace..." (v 7). That's a phrase I really want to understand. I can tell you this right now, I have a sense and a feeling for it, but I don't fully comprehend the "...riches of His grace..."

- How rich is God?
- How great is His grace?
- How fantastic is His mercy?

We can only understand that as we grow in grace and knowledge. I think we understand it to a certain degree but that's what I want to work on and understand more.

"...in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God... [the saving, the faith and the calling; every bit of it's from God] ...not of works, so that no one may boast" (vs 7-9).

If there were a law that we could keep perfectly, which would be the key that would compel God to give us His grace, just think of the boasting that there would be when a person finally did it. God doesn't want anyone boasting.

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

This is such a fundamental thing that I think is going to help us all grow closer to God and each other and have more love for God and each other when we understand how God has treated us. He hasn't dealt with us after our sin. You know that 'the wages of sin is death.' ***He hasn't dealt with us after our sins and we can be thankful for that!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 2:1-3
- 2) Ephesians 2:10
- 3) 1 Peter 1:10-12
- 4) Zechariah 3:8
- 5) Zechariah 4:6
- 6) 1 Peter 3:17-18
- 7) 2 Corinthians 12:1-9
- 8) 2 Corinthians 1:11
- 9) 1 Peter 4:10-11
- 10) Romans 1:11
- 11) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 12) Romans 5:15
- 13) Romans 6:1-2
- 14) 1 Peter 5:5-12
- 15) Acts 20:18-25
- 16) John 3:16
- 17) 1 John 3:1-2
- 18) 2 Peter 3:18
- 19) 1 John 4:8-12
- 20) Mark 12:30
- 21) Luke 1:28-31
- 22) Ephesians 1:5-7
- 23) Ephesians 2:4-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1; 3
- Exodus 20
- Deuteronomy 5
- Ezekiel 20
- Exodus 16:27-28
- Isaiah 55:6-7; 61:1-3
- Luke 4
- Isaiah 66:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 11
- 1 John 5:16
- Galatians 3
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Revelation 20:4

Also referenced:

Booklets:

- *Grace of God in the New Testament* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Which Day is the True Christian Sabbath?* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *The Holy Sabbath*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5-25-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Grace of God III

(What Does the Grace of God Do For Us?)
Fred R. Coulter

I would like to review just a little bit and to go over the meanings of grace again. The Greek word for *grace* is ‘charis,’ ‘charitos’ or ‘charite’—and it has the following meanings:

1. graciousness, attractiveness
2. thanks or gratitude
3. favor, grace, gracious care, or help or good will, the gracious intention of God
4. on the part of God the Father and Jesus Christ toward us or to us, the possession of Divine grace as a source of blessings for the believer
5. a store of grace that is to be dispensed, a state of grace, or that is standing in God’s grace, a deed of grace worked by God in Christ; a work of grace that grows more to more

In discussing this the last time, it was also brought up that *grace is the forgiveness of sin*. That is not quite a correct definition of grace. Your sins are forgiven *because of* God’s grace. The *act of forgiveness* is the *result* of grace. Grace itself does not mean just the forgiveness of sin.

Otherwise, when you get to the openings of Paul where he said, ‘Grace be to you,’ is he saying ‘Your sins be forgiven to you’? *or* Is he talking about something of a broader meaning and a broader sense? *We’ll see that it’s a broader meaning and broader sense!*

1-Peter 5:10 shows that God is the *God of all grace*. Jesus Christ is the only means by which the grace of God is mediated to men, through His birth, death, and resurrection and function as our High Priest in heaven. What God has done, and is still doing, for man in Jesus Christ His Son is God’s outstanding *act of grace*.

This ties in with the Scripture in John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am **the** Way, and **the** Truth, and **the** Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’” That narrows it down very, very specifically. Why is that so? The reason that is so, and the reason that God has it narrowed down into the being of Jesus Christ is *because no other being in all of the universe could qualify for that intermediary and for that sin sacrifice!* Only Jesus Christ! That’s why it is not going to be through Mohammed, Buddha or Confucius. It’s not going to be through any man or any movement. *It’s going to be through Jesus Christ and no other way!* God is determined that that is the only way that it’s going to be.

6. God the Father is the Source from which grace comes to man. Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which the grace most effectively reaches man in his need

We’re talking about *grace before salvation*. Could God be merciful to someone who is not called for salvation? *Sure He could!* Could God answer prayers of people who prayed in sincerity to God? *Yes, He will!* Especially if they believe that there would be an answer.

- What would be one of the most important things that a person could do in time of crisis if they have neglected God?

or

- If they have not really firmly believed in God but they somehow find themselves in a terrible straight and trouble?
- What would be the most pleasing thing they could do?
- Would it not be to call out to God? *Sure it would!*
- Do we not know of many cases of people who’ve been in circumstances like that?

They’re not praying for salvation or eternal life! They were just trying to live a little longer. Maybe they’re just trying to prevent some catastrophe from coming on them, and they pray to God in belief and ask God to help them in those circumstances.

God’s graciousness and mercy is so great that even though He is not calling them for salvation He’ll hear their prayer. When people get like that what is one of the first things they admit? *‘Oh, I’ve been a miserable person!’* Is that not a type of repentance? *Sure it is!*

It is not a call to salvation necessarily, but that’s why that God—being no respecter of persons—will help people like that. What they do from then on becomes another situation. Obviously, there comes a time that if—after God has helped them and rescued them and has done certain things for them—they turn their backs on God and just walk out and slam the door and do whatever they want. Maybe the next time they get in those circumstances they’re not going to get the help.

7. grace is quite the reverse of a reward for good conduct

This is why it talks about in Galatians that until Christ came we were kept under law. The Law was a schoolmaster or tutor to lead us to Christ. It’s the

same thing with our children. They need the kind of discipline that is by law. You do this and you'll get a reward. You do the other and you'll get a punishment. This brings them to a maturity of mind if it's consistent through their lifetime. When they get old enough they will be able to make the proper choices.

But without the rudimentary black and white righteousness and sin, good and evil to really formulate what they need, when they get older they will have no discernment between right and wrong if you don't. Little children cannot be treated as adults. You cannot sit down and reason with children as you do with adults. Their minds have not developed enough. We've seen some of the results with our own children. There are times when the best thing to say to children is *NO!* flat out, *Don't! Stop!* That is necessary. You wouldn't talk to an adult like that. You would say, 'Would you please...' Why? *Because they are old enough, they have comprehension enough!* The whole relationship is different.

So it is before God calls us—and in the process of calling us, too—that we get this concerning the Law and the commandments, and those are absolutely necessary, but the whole process is to put them in our mind, in our heart and in our inward parts so that we, as led by the Holy Spirit, can live the right way of life. Exact same parallel with children.

The reason that we teach children that way when they are small, is so that when they grow up and they leave home they're going to have some kind of responsibility about themselves knowing what is right and what is wrong.

It's to lead us to Christ. That's why when we are led to Christ and we come under God's grace, *we do not have the liberty to go and live in sin.* Being under God's grace and blessing and mercy we have the liberty to have annulled 'the law of sin and death' within us in our standing before God. As long as we're in the flesh 'the law of sin and death' is going to be there. The true day of redemption, if we understand it correctly, when you have repented and been baptized you *have been saved* from your past sins. While you're going God's way you *are being saved*. When Christ returns you *shall be saved* from flesh because you'll be changed to spirit.

The same way concerning the day of redemption. When you have repented and are baptized you have been redeemed. While you are following Christ and walking in *His* way you are continually in a state of *being redeemed*. The New Testament refers to *the day of redemption*, which has to do with the resurrection. Redemption is not just a one-time act when you are baptized and repented of your sins. It is the same as salvation; it is

ongoing. Does not the sacrifice of Christ through the grace of God have to redeem us or buy us back when we sin? *Yes!* So, it's an ongoing efficacious thing that God is doing.

8. one's acceptance with God is not something he can achieve by his own merit [by works], but is chosen, called, and made accepted, forgiven and blessed with the Holy Spirit of God, made an error of eternal life, made the son of God as a gracious undeserved gift from God the Father through Jesus Christ

That really has a lot of meaning and I want to emphasize that again so that we can really bear down on that and it helps an awful lot.

I don't know how you have been since we have started through this series on *grace*, but I know that the more I study on it the more it helps me. It helps me an awful lot because then I look to God to give me the strength to overcome. I'm going to do the best I can, but I don't have to go around and just literally beat my head against a stonewall and to do it by *my* works.

It must be the working of Christ within me to overcome it. When we lay it at that doorstep, and when we bring it to Christ, and when we ask God's grace to be with us, to be upon us, it is something that happens in that state of grace that we are standing in, and it comes *to* us. That's why when we get into the blessings that are given, Paul opens the epistles and he said, 'Blessings from God the Father and grace and peace from our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.'

When you ask for a blessing do you not expect a blessing? *Sure you do!* When you ask for grace, should we not also expect grace? *Yes!* Should we not have that help, which is a gift, it's an undeserved thing? We can't find it within us. I think this has been the whole problem in overcoming. We've been looking to resources *within us* for our own discipline that we work it up:

- we overcome a problem
- we go to God and say, 'God, I've overcome this problem'

—*it's the other way around!* We go to God and say, God:

- grant me Your grace
- grant me Your help
- grant me the strength
- lead me out of this overcoming

How do you overcome? *Overcoming is not a work that is human originated!* That's why in overcoming sin we can have God lift from us, and why should we carry it around, we can have God lift from us that

frustration, burden and vexation, which you've all experienced in trying to overcome something *by yourself*. There have been lusts and temptations that you've had to fight, and you've fought them and you've gritted your teeth and you've asked God, 'Why does this continue?' *Very simple, you haven't put it under the grace of God and asked for God's grace through faith to lead you out of it.*

I hope that we understand that because I know for myself, I understand it more, I can be more relaxed, and I can be more relaxed around people. Why? *Because when you have God's grace and you know that God is going to do it then you don't have to be looking at other people with a view of judging them for something that they are doing—which you may or may not like, or what you may or may not agree with, or what you may or may not think is sin. Just lifts that whole burden from you.*

This is the atmosphere that has been lived under too long in the Churches of God, that you go into a congregation and once you come past the niceties and the introductions and the friendships and you start getting down into the human nature element of it, what do you find? *You find pickiness, the looking, the judging, the criticizing!* Why does that exist? *Because people are not pointed to the grace of God through faith and they too much want to overcome themselves without God!* When you strive to overcome so much on your own, what do you do? *You transfer that to other people in a sense that you're going to be critical of them for two reasons:*

- 1) because you're looking for faults
- 2) so you will feel better and can live with your own problem

Whereas, we need to just wipe the slate of all that and overcome with God's Spirit through grace.

1-John 5:1: "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ... [that's an ongoing sense] ...has been begotten from God... [or out from God the begetting has come] ...and everyone that loves Him [God the Father] Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him."

How do we then maintain the love? I think we've had some experience of that here. *We maintain the love for each other because we are not doing the things that I just mentioned that causes the problems!* We are not trying to live someone else's life. What we're trying to do is love God and live within His grace and love each other. That's the most encouraging thing that we can do. That's why in the time we've been here we haven't had any internal strife. We haven't had any of those problems. If we continue in God's grace and in this kind of thing he's saying we won't have it. Not

because we're better, but because Christ is greater than all.

Verse 2: "By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.... [there is commandment-keeping right in it; has to be] ...For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. Now then, everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world... [How do we overcome the world?] ...and this is the victory that overcomes the world—**our faith**" (vs 2-4).

How are we saved? ***By grace have you been saved through faith!*** That's how you overcome! That's why if you really go to God with this attitude—in sincerity, repentance, love and understanding—God is going to begin to let this grace come to you in a more abundant way and you are going to see a lot of the problems, mental things and temptations begin to fall away. They won't be rooted in there like the core of a carbuncle. If you've ever seen a carbuncle and the core, it's about as long as my little finger and goes deep and it is so sore, and there's nothing you can do.

Same way with human nature. *Human nature cannot overcome human nature!* It has to be God's Spirit, and it has to be *by faith*. Why not just place it before God? Ask for His grace and mercy, and His Spirit to *lead you* in it. Be happy and thankful in the grace of God. I guarantee you that if you have faith and believe in God, then those things will begin to melt away.

Just like a carbuncle, if you lance it and you get out the core there's going to be a little scar there. The problem, temptation or thought pattern may come back from time-to-time—which you can easily identify it and again go to God and ask for repentance and forgiveness—but it's not going to be that just hanging in there in every thought and every moment. It's going to be like taking that core of that carbuncle out. That's how you can overcome with faith. It makes the job a whole lot easier.

For example, if a person has a hard time with swearing and cursing. Or maybe they used to swear and curse a lot before they were converted, and you can't isolate yourself from the world. You cannot go in orbit. So, you go out and work and what happens? *You find yourself around people who swear and curse!* What's the next thing that happens? *Mentally you start doing the same thing!* You don't want to, but you do. If you set about to say, 'I'm not going to do that again,' and you force yourself to not do it, I guarantee you're going to continue doing it. Why? *Because you haven't laid it before God to let Him do it for you!*

If you have not experienced that kind of overcoming *through God's grace* then 'try it, you'll like it.' God will like it. It makes life a whole lot easier, happy and contented because you can give all the credit to God. That's why it says, 'By grace are you are saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast.' That's how we are saved. That's very important for us to understand.

Have you ever wondered what it means to be spiritually minded? *To be spiritually minded is to be life and peace, but to be carnally minded is death!* Can you see the difference in overcoming? ***A carnal mind cannot overcome a carnal mind!*** Therefore, any works that we do as a human being cannot be sufficient.

What is our spiritual battle? *We war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and authorities and wicked spirits in high places!* That's where all the sin comes from. That's why when you're driving down the road and every thing's nice, BAM! you get an evil thought come through your head. Where do you think it comes from? *The prince of the power of the air!* You're not going to overcome that with just your own mental efforts; *you need the power of God.* It's a spiritual battle. So, if we put all these things in that perspective and realize that it is the spiritual power of God, life is going to be a whole lot better. Not that we'll be richer. Not that we'll have better things physically and materially, because that's not what we need. We may want it, but that's not what we need. We need to overcome and be led by God's Spirit.

9. the grace of God is like an all encompassing umbrella, which includes:

- faith
- salvation
- mercy
- redemption
- justification
- repentance
- love
- the laws
- the commandments of god
- forgiveness
- blessings

It's an all-encompassing thing. Let's keep that in mind.

What does the grace of God do for us? I'm going to list nine things that the Grace of God does for us in a fantastic way, and gives us privileges, and blessings. ***Privilege is something that is given; it is a gift!*** You don't earn a privilege; you earn a wage.

Heb. 2—here is the *act of grace* by God. We know and realize that it was God Himself Who came

as a human being for one specific purpose, and it reveals a little bit about the overall plan of God.

Hebrews 2:5: "For *it is* not to *the* angels that He has placed in subjection the world that is to come... [the Kingdom of God as it comes on the earth] ...of which we are speaking. But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, 'What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor..." (vs 5-7).

Is it not an honor and glory to be made in the image of God? *God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, male and female. Let Us make him after Our likeness.'* Then the whole thing of salvation is that we become like God, after the God-kind. God gave us dominion over the earth; dominion over everything that is here. What one thing can we say that man has not been able to have dominion over, except his own sins? Mankind, sooner or later, because of being made in the similitude of God, given a creative mind, is able to do such fantastic things. We have been 'crowned with honor and glory.'

"...and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet." (vs 7-8). That is prophetic as well as a current statement. A lot of things that God says are current and prophetic. It is current because everything that is on the earth is under the hand of man:

- whether for good
- whether for evil
- whether we take care of ourselves
- whether we destroy the environment

It's under our hand. But also the word 'pantos' means *all things including the universe*. Man even in his fleshly form is on the brink of getting into the universe. If he were not limited by flesh, guess what would happen? *Yes, we would conquer other galaxies and go into the universe this very day.* It is prophetic in that that's what it will be.

"...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death...**" (vs 8-9).

If you have your Greek Interlinear you can take a look at that statement and you will notice that *it is not just death*. It is ***the death***. When it talks about death in relationship to a Christian and a relationship to salvation it is talking about ***the death***. What is the ultimate death? *The second death in the Lake of Fire!* From that there is no resurrection.

Since Jesus Christ was God Who took on human form and He was the Son of God, and He's called in some places in the New Testament 'the Son of man' and that actually refers back to Dan. 3 & 7, which is saying God Himself. We find in Titus 2 & 3 that Jesus Christ is called *the great God* and *our Savior Jesus Christ*. When He died that was *the death*. You can't have any greater death than the death of God. That's greater than just a human death because of the significance of Jesus Christ.

"...on account of suffering the death, in order that **by the grace** ['charitee'] **of God** ... [the *act of grace* in having Christ come and live, die and be resurrected] ...He Himself might **taste death for everyone**" (v 9). Notice that the definite article 'the' in the Greek is not there. You go back to the place that we just referred to before: it is called 'tou thanatoo'—which is *the death*. "**...He Himself might taste death for everyone.**" So therefore, as it is applied to each of us; it is applied to our own death. That is a fantastic thing.

Let's go through the book of Romans in a little more detail, and let's see the sequence of things as they come along. As I study—and I try and study New Testament Greek everyday—that's helping me be able to understand more and put it together. In Rom. 5 we see the whole sequence of events and how great that it is. When we come to take the Passover let's hope that we can have a greater insight into the death of Jesus Christ and what He has done.

Romans 5:1. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith **into this grace in which we stand...**" (vs 1-2). We're standing in this grace. It is a condition. It is the very basis of the relationship that we have with God. It is with grace.

It's very interesting that you get into some of these other Scriptures and when it says that we can come before the Father with boldness, that actually means that *we have access into the presence of God the Father*. That can only be done through Christ and through grace because *no man* can come before God and live. But we have—*spiritually*—access to God the Father through this grace in which we are standing.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God.... [not what we can do; not in how great we are, but in the hope of the glory of God] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 2-3).

I've often wondered, and through the years I think I'm beginning to understand a little more now, how you can be happy in a trial. I have yet to meet

someone who's in a terrible trial that is happy, saying, 'Great, I've got another trial. That's marvelous. Hooray! Thank you God.' *No!* We're to pray, 'Deliver us from temptation.' Why can we boast in trials or tribulations? *Because:*

1. God *will deliver* us from them!
2. He *will teach us* something with it of lasting, eternal, spiritual value!

That's why! That's why it says that 'we boast in tribulations.' I think Paul wrote this after he was an apostle for some 20 years so he didn't come by it right away. When he was struck down off the horse on his way to Damascus he wasn't very happy. He was not boasting in that trial.

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance..." (v 3). In other words, that trial coming through its full circuit is working out endurance. The *King James* says 'patience,' but it's *endurance*—patience and endurance are very synonymous.

"...and endurance *brings forth* character..." (v 4). God is testing us with these things. That's why we can boast in a trial. Many times people will think of a trial that will come, 'God, if you send this trial, I am ready.' That's boasting and God isn't going to send that trial; another one is going to come that you don't think of. The major trials that occur other than your knowledge of your own stupidity ahead of time, come as a total surprise. Isn't that true? *Yes!* But we can be thankful for it because God is testing us and proving us.

"...and character *brings forth* hope.... [once we rely on God we can have more hope] ...And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time **Christ died for the ungodly**" (vs 4-6). That's a tremendous thing to do, and I think that we're going to grasp a more full significance of this as we get down toward the Passover time.

Verse 7: "For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Christ also had to do that in faith. Did Christ have faith? *Yes, He had faith!* He had to die in faith knowing, as He told His apostles there on the Passover night, '*Blessed are those who believe on the things that you say about Me.*' And remember that Jesus said, '*I pray for not only these, but those that shall believe on Me through their word.*' Christ had to die in faith knowing that His sacrifice would be in perpetuity for all time, for all ages of all mankind.

The TV series *Shogun* was a pretty bloody movie showing Japan. They were lopping off heads, stabbing and committing suicide, and the only penalty for breaking a law was death or crucifixion. That is the letter of the law! I don't know if that's the impression you got from it, but I sure did. I thought I wouldn't want to live there. You talk about women's liberation, a woman in Japan was nothing; just worth no more than a piece of paper that a man could chattel her with. If he didn't like his wife he had the right to kill her. The sacrifice of Christ is going to have to apply to those lives, too. *Yes, it is! Christ died for the ungodly.* If we were without sin we would not need Christ. That's why it says:

1-John 1:8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us." That's why we need a Savior. That's tremendous what He did.

Romans 2:9 "Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." How is that? *That is by grace!* He gets into all the rest of it. Rom. 6 & 7 he's talking about grace.

What Does the Grace of God Do For Us?

1. Christ died for all by the grace of God!

All—not just some, not just for the Jews—*ALL!* There are some wretched societies that are going to need an awful lot of salvation. They need an awful lot of help.

I don't know if you read in the paper about the native society in New Caledonia? Sometimes it's good to get your paper and read sections E, F & G, just before you get to the classified ads. The *San Jose Mercury* has 'E' section, and they give little reports and some of them are very revealing. They wouldn't dare put it on the front page.

How many saw the movie, *Sky Above and Mud Beneath*? They showed the natives in New Guinea. When I first saw that, it must have been about 1971, and I thought, 'Boy, this is kind of a bad movie, to show all these naked natives going around.' Then it told a little bit about the country they live in. They live in this jungle area. They don't have hardly any flat land. The mountains go straight up. It rains almost 300-inches a year. With that heat and that humidity I know why they go around naked. They couldn't possibly keep a stitch of clothing on because it would just rot. All the do-gooder missionaries came storming down there, 'Let's dress these natives.' Next thing you know the clothes all mildewed right off their back; too much rain.

When I saw that I thought: Why did God put some people in an area like that? There's no clean food, there's no clean fish. If they go in the ocean

there are these sea snakes that will bite you. Their greatest delight for a dinner is a nice fat, big grubby termite about the size of a thermos bottle, which they relish. They can't grow any food because there's no flat land. When I first saw that I thought: God is kind of unfair to these people. Look at us; we're sitting here; we have all of this and we don't have to worry about that. I just sort of lodged that in the back of my mind.

One other thing that they had: The only meat that they could have, they would shoot a monkey or a baboon; or eat a slug, a snail or a lizard. The only domestic animals they had were pigs. The women would suckle the pigs on their own breasts. That was a great possession. That's why they did it. What can you tame in the jungle? So, they tamed pigs, and I thought: how gross! It showed this right on the film. I thought: Sky Above, Mud Beneath, that is true. You have the 'sky above, it's raining, and all you have is mud underneath.

In this article I read about New Guinea and New Caledonia. Do you know what they do to the young boys? At seven years old they separate them from their mothers. They can no longer talk to a woman after that time and they put them through an enforced sodomy regime until 18-years-old! Of all the despicable, horrible things that you can do.

Therefore, I would have to conclude *God is just* in giving them that kind of environment and society to live in. Of course, they used to be cannibals, brain eaters warriors, fighters and things like this; just horrible, wicked, despicable people. Those people are also going to be covered under the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ at the *second resurrection*, because God is not calling, nor can He, them today in that condition. They worship demons. They worship Satan.

(go to the next track)

Perhaps someone would die for a good person, but *Christ died for the ungodly!* That time of the second resurrection is going to be so absolutely fantastic. Can you imagine what a fantastic thing that it's going to be for people who've been in circumstances like that? To be reared in a society like those in New Guinea and New Caledonia? To be reared in a society as was shown on this thing *Shogun*? Can you imagine what it's going to be like? The last thing that you remember before dying was a big sword coming down on the back of your neck. Satan is going to be removed, and I think God is gracious and generous in doing that for them. That is so fantastic it is just marvelous, not only what God is going to do for us.

2. We are put into a special category with Jesus Christ—we are called *friends!*

To be in a special category where you are called *the friend of Jesus Christ*. I'm sure that all of us have acquaintances. I'm sure that all of us have relatives. Are all your relatives your friends? *No!* They may be relatives, but they sure may not be friends. A friend is a special relationship that brings you in closeness. Being *our friend*, Christ has a vested interest in seeing us into the Kingdom of God. That's why the whole psychology of 'beating' people into overcoming, and 'beating' them into the Kingdom of God defeats the whole purpose. *Christ is our friend!* How many times have we viewed Christ as almost our enemy? *That is not right!*

Here's what Jesus says in John 15:12: "This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you." That means that we have to give a whole lot more latitude and leeway—doesn't it? It means that we have to understand and love each other even more because of what Christ has done for us and is doing for them.

You know why there is a lack of love when there should be love? It just occurred to me just now. *They don't understand that Christ is our friend* and it is put in such a way that 'I want to be in the Kingdom of God, but I don't know about you. And since I want to be there I'm going to make sure I get there, and I hope you get there.' It never comes across! It doesn't work!

Whereas, if we consider ourselves with this commandment to love each other as Christ loves us, v 13: "No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends." People may lay their lives down to be burned, 'For if we burn our bodies and don't have love it hasn't profited anything' (Rom. 13). They may do it for the publicity, they may do it for whatever, but they're not doing it for love. But, if you lay your life down for your friend:

- A friend is not going to cheat you—is he?
- A friend is not going to stab you in the back when you're not looking—is he?
- A friend is going to defend you—isn't that right?
- A friend is going to help you.

Jesus said, v 14: "**You are My friends**... [That's quite a statement; but also notice that it's conditional]: ...if you do whatever I command you." Like anything else, a friendship has a close, intimate, understood set of rules. There are rules for conduct that are not close and intimate. One of them is that when you go to the airport you have to go through this machine to see if you have any metal. You must do it, that's it. What are the rules of friendship?

- trust
- loyalty
- love

- protection
- dedication
 - Does Christ love us? *Yes!*
 - Does He protect us? *Yes!*
 - Does He defend us? *Yes!*
 - Does He watch out for us? *Yes!*

We don't want to lower the relationship with Jesus Christ to, on the human plane, become sloppy in the relationship by saying, 'Oh well, Jesus is my friend.' But we need to uphold it in honor and love and esteem. Jesus said, 'If you continue practicing what I command you...'—there are conditions. If you have a friend who deliberately lies to you, what happens? *He is no longer your friend!* If you've ever had that happen you drop that friend! Why? *Because he couldn't be trusted!* Christ won't lie to us, and we are under this grace of God. That's a tremendous thing for Christ to say that ***you are My friends!***

3. Not only are we friends, but we are also relatives—we are brothers!

That's bringing everything real close together. Hebrews 2:10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Although He was perfect, Jesus was *perfected*. Jesus was not offered as a sacrifice when He was twelve. But He was offered as a sacrifice after He finished His ministry and He was some 33-½-years-old. He was *perfected!* And I'm sure God's understanding was perfected in the human experience.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." We are the brothers of Christ. 'Brethren' includes more than just the male gender. That means *those who are of the Family of God*.

Verse 12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to **My brethren**...' That is Jesus will declare the name of God the Father to *My brethren*, those that are in the Church.

"...in the midst of the Church I will sing praise to You" (v 12). Then it goes one step further showing we are also the children:

Verse 13: "And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.'"

4. Children of God!

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Now, you

have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vs 14-15).

That’s all a part of the Family of God, and we’re getting into the thing of the children of God/the sons of God: children of God. We’re right there with it. Sons of God/the children of God where we can call Him “Abba, Father.”

In the societies that we are talking about here, it is completely indiscrete to call someone not of your family by an endearing term like daddy or mommy, and so forth. Even the German language to this day carries that through. When you meet someone on a formal basis, you do not use terms of endearment to them. It is very formal. It is very straightforward. Not only are we the friends of Jesus Christ, not only are we the brothers of Christ, we are also of the Family of God and we can call God our Father in an intimate way, Abba, which means Daddy. and that means that *the formal barriers have been broken down* for the Family of God. We still honor God, love God, respect God, but we can have that close intimate relationship with Him. That’s what the grace of God does for us.

I want you to notice the word for sons of God—‘huio’—which in the singular is ‘huios.’ That ‘ui’ is pronounced *we*. The ‘sons of God’ can refer—‘son’ can refer to the male gender distinctly. It can also refer to male and female.

There are two words for *children* but the main one I want to cover is called ‘tekna’—either gender, male or female—called the children of God.

1-John 3:1: Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the **children** [‘tekna’] of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the **children** of God...” (vs 1-2).

I don’t want to get into a lot of theological discussions and things like that. ***We are the children of God!*** When a mother is carrying a child it is called *a child*, yet, it is not yet born. Likewise, we are called the children of God because we have the begetting of God’s Holy Spirit, but we have not yet entered into the Kingdom of God because the resurrection has not taken place. But God calls the things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4), because He told Abraham, ‘Your seed shall be as the stars.’ They weren’t yet, but He said they would be. God calls the things that are not as though they are. That’s why *we are the children of God*, but it will be a concrete fact at the resurrection in a spiritual sense.

Verse 2: “Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we

shall be... [the implication is *as the children of God to the fullest extent*] ...but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.” We are the children of God.

5. Sonship!

We enter into this sonship. It is not an adoption in the sense of the way that people think of adoption. Adoption is taking someone that is not your offspring without your seed. However, until we receive the Spirit of God as the seed of God, we are not truly His children. Once we have received that then we are His children because we have the seed of God in us.

6. Daughters of God!

2-Corinthians 6:16: “And what agreement is *there between* a temple of God and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be **My people**.’” It’s interesting, the way you pronounce that word for *people* is ‘laos.’ We have a word today of a nation that is called Laos. Be interesting to try and trace that derivation back.

Verse 17: “‘Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be **My sons and daughters**,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (vs 17-18). Here the word ‘huio’—in this case plural it is ‘huios’—refers to the male gender exclusively. Then we have the *daughters*—‘thugaters.’ I think where we get the name Agatha, also from the Greek word ‘good.’ It’s not too good of a sounding name in English. You think of someone called Agatha, it’s not the best sounding name, but in the Greek it means *good*. ‘Horaios’ means *beautiful*.

“...you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (v 18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: “Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting Holiness in *the* fear of God.” We went through how to do that. That is through the grace of God.

7. Joint heirs with Christ!

Not only did Christ die for us, not only are we called:

- the *friends* of Jesus Christ
- the *brothers* of Jesus Christ
- the *sons* of God
- the *children* of God
- the *daughters* of God

but we are also:

- **joint heirs!**

When you get into heirs and inheritance it starts getting a little legal sounding—doesn't it? The Bible says there is *one* Lawgiver. Therefore, God is legal; because of law He's got to be legal. Don't think in terms of laws of the land or attorneys, or judges in that sense, because that will cloud your thinking in this particular case. Why don't you study this through because I don't believe that anyone outside of the first resurrection is a joint-heir.

Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God.... [there it is, children—'teknon theos'] ...Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs..."

What is one of the main things that the whole prophecy of Israel hinges on? *Not only just on Christ*, that is one main promise or the promise of grace. *There is the promise of the birthright!* The birthright is by *inheritance*; it is a legal thing.

When someone dies they leave a will and they say, 'I give so and so such and such,' and so forth. Christ died and the *part of the will* was that we become heirs. If you're someone's offspring and they die, you are entitled to part of what they own legally. Because God has brought us into this relationship, God has entitled us, if we continue in the things that He has said, if we continue in the grace of God, we will be heirs.

Verse 17: "Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him."

- What did Jesus Christ inherit? *He inherited the universe!*
- Who owns the universe? *God does!*

Didn't God say:

- the earth is Mine and the fullness thereof
- all gold is Mine, and all silver is Mine
- *Yes, He did!*

He let's us use it, but who owns it? *God does!*

If we are to inherit it, it's not just some will-of-the-wisp thing. *It is an inheritance!* We are going to co-own with Christ everything that He owns. Just let that sink in for just a minute! Think on that!

Let's look at it another way: Why is it—and it's motivated out of greed in many cases—that a woman will want to marry a rich man, or a man will want to marry a rich woman? In the case of tremendous avarice and greed, there's even murder that has been known to take place to *do in* either the husband or the wife *to inherit what they have!* We've almost gone full circle to the first place we

began in Heb. 2 of God has put all things in subjection under Him, and it was Jesus.

Hebrews 1:1 is the lead-in to it: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things..." (vs 1-2). Christ is an heir of all things; it didn't say the heir of air. It's not just something out here in space that is nothing; it is the heir of *all things*.

It really shows the ridiculousness of being materialistic. It shows the ridiculousness of just striving after the fleshly things to have them for the sake of having them because Christians are going to have the best of everything through Christ, appointed heir of all things. That's everything that there is in the universe we will co-own.

But there are going to be rules for using it. The rules are that the Church is to be subject to Christ as the wife is to her husband. That's how we inherit it through that marriage of the Church in Christ; we become joint-heirs. Let that sink in for a minute! How rich are you? Don't try and calculate it in dollars because I don't know what unit of value that God uses for what He's created. But it talks about, in Eph. 3, the riches of the grace and glory of God.

I'll tell you one thing. When we are clothed upon with our spiritual tabernacle, as it says there in 2-Cor. 5, it's not going to be an ill-fitted warehouse suit, I will guarantee that. When God says that we have the right, and it's going to be a property right in New Jerusalem and in the universe, we will own part of that. Not to use as any way we want—not to destroy, not to sin—but to use it for the glory of God and what God has planned. I'll tell you this much, if God has planned what He has for human beings on the earth at this point, we're going to have to have a spiritual mind to comprehend what God's plan is going to be when we are the sons of God. Like Paul said, looking through the glass darkly we can get a glimpse of it, but when the fullness of that comes in that's going to be something.

I've often wondered what kind of vehicle God is going to say, 'This is yours,' and you just take off wherever you want to go. Won't have to be stuck in some car behind the traffic. That's a good time to think what kind of a vehicle is God going to give us in the Kingdom of God. Angels will be our servants. That's going to be absolutely amazing! We're going to have to get use to it.

8. God is our Father!

That's what the grace of God does for us. God is our Father!

9. Christ is going to marry the Church!

I'll just summarize it with this verse, Ephesians 5:32: "This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the Church."

Verse 22: "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is *the* head of the wife, even as Christ *is the* Head of the Church; and He is *the* Savior of the body. For even as the Church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let* wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word; that He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame" (vs 22-27). The only way that can be done is through the grace of God.

Verse 28: "In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself; for no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the Church. For **we are members of His body**—of His flesh and of His bones" (vs 28-30). That is, just like Eve was created out of one of the ribs of Adam, so the Church has been created out of the innermost being of Christ. That's what the analogy is!

Verse 31: "For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." It's going to be that we are joined in one Spirit with the Lord. It's going to be a spiritual and practical relationship for all eternity.

Let's talk about some of the things concerning the grace of God and the riches of His grace, and the tremendous thing that God is doing. I'll just have to admit to you today that Eph. 5:14-21 is my favorite the part in all of the Bible. I perhaps have given more sermons ending up here and coming to this than any other. And yet, through all the times that I have, I never cease to gain more from it, to have more feeling and more understanding of it every time I do.

Ephesians 3:14: "For this cause... [of God's plan] ...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named..." (VS 14-15). the family of angels and the family of men on the earth who are going to be in the Family of God.

Verse 16: "That He may grant you, according to **the riches of His glory**..." That's quite a statement. How much can God give us? *He's already said we're going to inherit the universe with Christ!* That's not just some poetic statement. That

means "...the riches of His glory..."

"...to be strengthened with power... ['dunamis/dunamai'] ...by His Spirit in the inner man..."(v 16)—or person. How can you best be strengthened with the Spirit of God internally? *You can by living in that state of grace*, because God is more *abundantly* willing to give us of His Spirit and to pour out His grace to us.

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts in faith." In other words, that we come so close to God, and the Spirit of God that it's actually like Christ living *in* us, living in our heart. What does it say? *Out of the abundance the heart the mouth speaks!* If Christ is established in our heart and in our very being then it's not going to have to be that we live by the letter of the Law. We live by the grace of God. That's what he's talking about here.

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ..." (vs 17-19).

If we really come to that point through God's grace, to understand how much Christ *loved* us, *does love* us, and *is loving* us, that makes the whole relationship with God a much more tremendous thing. God is more willing and able to give those things to us.

"...being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height..." (v 18).

That's why it says there, and when I first read back in Heb. 6, 'Leaving aside the principles of Christ let's go on to perfection' I thought: What on earth is he talking about? I think I can understand a little more now. We're not putting Christ aside. We're going beyond baptism and laying on of hands, and those rudimentary things that begins us walking on this path of grace so that we can come to this point to comprehend with all the saints what *is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the plan of God*. That's a four dimensional thing. That can only be with the Spirit of God. We can only comprehend it through His grace.

Verse 19: And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." That's quite a statement, to be filled with all the fullness of God. If you will look at the words, it is very redundant the way it is said there, but to "...be filled with all the

fullness of God” has got to refer to the resurrection when this will be accomplished.

Verse 20: “Now to Him Who is able...” Has the power. Christ and God the Father have the power.

“...to do exceeding abundantly above **all that we ask or think**...” That’s really something! The very greatest and magnanimous, wonderful, greatest thought we can possibly comprehend, God is able to do exceedingly above that.

This tells me that to enter into the Kingdom of God as a son of God, to be a Spirit being, is going to be so utterly fantastic that the human mind cannot comprehend it. I think it would be like taking a 100-watt bulb and screwing it into a socket, that when you threw the switch, would have 10-million volts of power. You threw the switch and it would go BLEWIE!—nothing left. I think that’s a good comparison to what our minds are able to comprehend with what God would give us. But we’re to grow in that.

“...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God, now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen” (vs 19-21).

I hope that we can really begin to grasp and comprehend and understand the grace of God to it’s fullest extent. I think we can comprehend more fully what Paul said. ***‘What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!’***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 14:6
- 2) 1 John 5:1-4
- 3) Hebrews 2:5-9
- 4) Romans 5:1-7
- 5) 1 John 1:8
- 6) Romans 5:9
- 7) John 15:12-14
- 8) Hebrews 2:10-13
- 9) Romans 8:14-15
- 10) 1 John 3:1-2
- 11) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
- 12) 2 Corinthians 7:1
- 13) Romans 8:16-17
- 14) Hebrews 1:1-2
- 15) Ephesians 5:32, 22-31
- 16) Ephesians 3:14-19, 18-20, 19-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 5:10
- Daniel 3; 7
- Titus 2; 3
- Romans 6; 7; 13; 4
- 2 Corinthians 5
- Hebrews 6

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5-20-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Grace of God IV (Grace is a Gift) Fred R. Coulter

Here's a little chart that I've put up on the board which will help us understand a little bit more about the New Testament and New Covenant, and the grace that we need. But first of all, let's go to Ephesians 2; this is a key section that will help us to understand about the relationship of ancient Israel to God. That is the key to understanding the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Here is a verse, once again, that you read along, you go over and you just pass right by it and it really tells us what we need to know, but we don't get out of it what we need to know because we're not thinking in the terms that we really ought to.

Ephesians 2:11—Paul gets done showing about grace (vs 4-10) and then he says: “Therefore, remember that you were once Gentiles [nations] in *the flesh*, who are called uncircumcision by those who are called circumcision in *the flesh* made by hands; *and* that you were **without**... [*separate from, apart from*] ...Christ at that time...” (vs 11-12).

It doesn't mean that Christ was not there. Christ was there, but they were not called to Christ. They were not brought to God. They were separate from God because God gave the Gentiles over to their own devices, over to their own gods and everything. Why? *Because God chose only Israel of all the nations!* God only worked through Israel directly. When they would go into captivity then God would work from time-to-time in a secondary manner with the other nations like Babylon and King Nebuchadnezzar; like when He brought the Assyrians to take away the northern 10 tribes, then He worked with them only as much as to fulfill His will, but He never went to another nation directly to deal with them as He did the Israelites.

Why would that be so? The reason it is so is because the Old Covenant was also a marriage covenant. And for God to go to another nation and deal with them as He did with Israel would be on God's part committing spiritual adultery. That is why He gave them a *bill of divorcement* and sent them away into captivity, but He did not marry another, or enter into a covenant relationship with any other nation. That's why it says concerning the marriage covenant, that Christ died, therefore releasing that Old Covenant so that the New Covenant could be established (Rom 7). The Gentiles were *apart* from Christ.

“...alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world...” (v 12). You're either with the true God or you are

without the true God, one or the other. You can't really be half way in between. I mean there are many categories in the world that are somewhat half way in between but you can't be half way in between as far as God's relationship is concerned. Either you are or you aren't.

“...But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once **far off**... [that's a key thing that we want to cover] ...are made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, having annulled... [broken down or torn down] ...in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in *the decrees of men*...” (vs 12-15). These were the 'religious' laws of the Jews on the one hand, and the 'religious' laws of the Gentiles on the other hand. They had 'religion.' They had what they thought was God. But they were alienated from the true God. They were without God in the world.

“...so that in Himself He might create both into one new man, making peace; and *that* He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near” (vs 15-17). Who were the ones who were near? *Israel is the one who was near!* They did not have a relationship with God that we can have under the New Covenant, but they were closer to God. The Gentiles were far off; they were removed.

“...peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father.... [a complete different arrangement] ...So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God” (vs. 17-19).

Let's see from the very words of God how He says that He would be near to them, that He would be their God. Deuteronomy 4:6. “And you shall keep and do *them*... [the commandments, statutes and judgments of God] ...for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations... [that's all the rest of the Gentiles, who were far removed from God] ...which shall hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.' For what nation is so great whose God *is* so near to them.... [The closest one to fulfill that was the Queen of Sheba. She came and saw Solomon, and she said exactly those words.] ...as the LORD our God *is*, whenever we call upon Him?” (vs 6-7).

Tradition has it that she went back to her country and she supposedly built a temple much like the one that Solomon had built. She commanded her people to worship the true God, and I think we have some of the remnants today in the Ethiopians, who are supposed to be Christians and they claim that they are descendants of the Queen of Sheba, especially the house of the Emperor Haile Selassie. He called himself 'the lion of the tribe of Judah.'. Nevertheless, that's what their relationship was. They *were near* to God. We're going to see several things as to why grace is needed in relationship to this.

Verse 7: "For what nation is so great whose God *is* so near to them, as the LORD our God *is*, whenever we call upon Him? And what great nation has statutes and judgments that *are so* righteous as all this law which I set before you today?" (vs 7-8). There was a righteousness of the Law. Where the religionists became all out of place on this was when they created their own traditions and commandments, as the Pharisees did, which they rejected the commandments of God that they could keep their own traditions.

{referring to a chart} Under the Old Covenant in the middle on each side of the Old Covenant/New Covenant, put Abraham's Covenant. This is referred to in Rom. 4 and Gal. 3: that 'if you be Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.' And the Abrahamic Covenant was given when? *Before he was circumcised!* So, there were actually *two covenants* that were given with Abraham:

1. before his circumcision
2. at the time of his circumcision

—coming up and leading to the time when Israel would be called as a nation out of Egypt. Under the Old Covenant with Israel here are the order of events. You have:

- God
- then angels would intercede for Israel with God
- you had the laws and commandments
- you had the temple, the high priest, the sacrifices (no promise of eternal life)

It was justification to the temple, the temple and nation to God. That's why they were *near* to God.

In the New Covenant, we have something better. We don't get near to God. That is why the Old Covenant could not do what the New Covenant was supposed to do. The Old Covenant was not designed to bring eternal life. The Old Covenant was designed to bring them near to God. It says that 'the Law was to lead them to Christ' (Gal. 3). Why? *Because you could see with the Old Covenant that*

there were certain limitations that couldn't be overcome! The main limitation was that it could not open the way to have direct connection with God. They were brought *near* to God, but in the New Covenant, *we have direct connection* with God the Father.

How do we have that direct connection with God the Father in the New Covenant? *With His Holy Spirit!* They were near; the Gentiles were cut off. In other words, it was true, God just cut them off; they had nothing to do with God. The more you study about some of these nations and things, the more you really understand that that was so. They had good and evil mixed in their society, and as Paul said the Gentiles that had not the Law when they do the things contained in the Law 'are a law unto themselves.' They did not have direct access to God.

Now we have direct access to God the Father through Jesus Christ, and He is our sacrifice and our High Priest. He is also the Mediator of the New Covenant. In the Old Covenant the angels were the mediators. God only put His presence in the temple and the Holy of Holies one day a year, on the Day of Atonement. Here we have the presence of God in us every day with His Holy Spirit, quite a different thing.

We have the promise of eternal life and that necessitates grace. The reason you need grace is because the things in the Old Covenant—though they were good, though they were Holy, though they were righteous—could not bring eternal life. It wasn't designed to bring eternal life, because even though they were *near* to God, and they had indirect access to God, *we have direct access* to God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. It takes something more than was with the Old Covenant. That's why we need grace.

As Jesus said, 'Keep My commandments.' In the Old Covenant when they were justified to the temple, and the temple and the nation to God in the New Covenant we're justified before God the Father in heaven, receive the Holy Spirit. Instead of a physical temple we are the *spiritual* temple here on earth because we have God's Spirit in us.

As you will read under the Old Covenant, He built the tabernacle so He could dwell among them (Exo. 25:8). They would have been a whole lot closer to God had they not sinned when He was giving the Ten Commandments. When they sinned God removed Himself yet one step further from them. That's why we have the high priest going in once a year.

Now it is completely different, as far as our relationship to God. In the Old Covenant, even though they could pray, at the time when they were

praying—it's not saying that God would not hear their prayers, or answer their prayers—God was not directly involved in their life creating in them that which is going to be for eternal life. There is another flaw that we will see here in just a minute in the whole relationship of man with God and that's why we need the grace of God to compensate for that.

Let me use another analogy: If you have an imported Japanese or foreign car, it is not designed to do the work of a bulldozer. If you put a blade on the front of that little car to do the work of a bulldozer, what would happen? You'd soon smash it up. It would all wreck up. Nor is the bulldozer designed to go 60-mph or more, down the highway. What would happen to the highway and the bulldozer if someone got that up and going 60-mph down the road? It would just chew it all up. That, in a sense, is a good analogy that the Old Covenant was not designed to give life. If there were a law that could give life, justification would have been by a law. But there is the *grace of God* and the *forgiveness of sin*, which then makes it possible to have that relationship with God. It's not just near to God, it is that *God is in you*, and that's a whole totally different relationship.

Now let's see why we need grace in relationship to eternal life. I will just refer you to the series on the book of Romans. I'm not going to go through in quite as much detail this particular time. You would have to conclude that if you were an Israelite and you were near to God, you would be in a better relationship than the Gentiles who were cut off and far from God, but not according to the New Covenant because the New Covenant requires something else.

Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we [Jews] of ourselves better?... [than the Gentiles] ...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin, exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!'" (vs 9-10).

Under the Old Covenant, what did Paul say his relationship with God was? *Blameless!* He said that the righteousness, which is of the Law, is blameless (Philip. 3). What did it say of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the father and mother of John the Baptist? *They were blameless!* Why? *Because their attitude was right!* They were near to God. They were keeping the commandments that were there. As far as the Old Covenant was concerned they were blameless, but were they without sin? *No! Could not be!* The Old Covenant was not designed to give the Holy Spirit to counterbalance the human nature and the 'law of sin and death.' They're all under sin!

Verse 10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one! There is not

one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God... [in the spiritual sense] ...They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness.... [that is a derivative of grace—'charis tau teta,' kind of an awkward pronunciation.] ...No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave..." (vs 10-13). This is exactly what happens.

I was talking with a man who was in charge of something called Help Yourself Real Estate. He just opened an office in Gilroy, and he was telling me that the realtors—once they come in contact with them—sell for a flat fee of \$2450, and they help you sell. In other words if you're going to sell your house they just give you the name and telephone number and you and the people work it out and they come and look at your home and then you pay them only \$2450. Well you know what this does to the realtors. That wipes them out because normally they're used to 6% or 3% and no less than 1-1/2% if they have a three way split. What happens? First of all, the realtors ignore them. Then they start bad-mouthing them, and then they start actively working against them.

Well, he just opened his office in Gilroy. He got new desks, new furniture, a new phone system, and all ready to go and he leased out an office that used to be a jewelry store. He thought everything was going to be fine and safe, but someone threw a Molotov cocktail through the window and burned out the inside of it and ruined all his new furniture, his phone system and everything, and he didn't take out any fire insurance so he is down the tube with it.

These are probably, whoever did it, 'good, upstanding' persons who probably belong to one of the civic clubs, who probably goes to church on Sunday. You can find out how quickly the bitterness and the stinging tongue will come when you bring up about the commandments of God and the Sabbath. They can be so nice and then just turn an evil face to you right away. That's showing exactly how human nature is. That's just the way it is.

"...with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips" (v 13). I can prove that very quickly because if what in these recordings concerning homosexuality were played on one of the stations up there in San Francisco, they would almost have a war going on right during the time the guy was speaking. You know they would. It just shows and reveals human nature. That's the way that human nature is.

Verse 14: "Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways, and *the* way of peace they have not known" (vs 14-17).

They're always seeking peace. They're always talking about peace. They don't know the way.

Verse 18: "There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those..." (vs. 18-19). That's virtually everyone because no one is exempt from the laws of God, although this is directly talking about those who are within the Old Covenant.

"...who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and **all the world** may become guilty before God.... [that's *all* the world, not just Israel] ...Therefore, by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him..." (vs 19-20)—in His presence. They can be justified to the temple, and because of the angels that were at the temple, the temple to God. But by works of law no flesh can be justified in the presence of God. Why? *Because they still have 'the law of sin and death' in them and it takes something more than what we can do!* It takes something only what God can do.

Here's what law does: "...for through *the Law is the knowledge of sin*" (v 20). That is the function of law. Is it still the function of law today to show what sin is? *Yes!* Then what does God determine that the penalty of the Law is? *The wages of sin is death!*

Verse 21: "But now, *the righteousness of God that is separate from law...*" In addition to the Law, is what he's talking about, because in order to receive eternal life you need the righteousness of God. That can only be *given* to you. That can only be *imputed* to you. That can only be given to you in the way of Christ and the grace of God. It can't come any other way. Why can't it come any other way? *Because God determined that's the only way it's going to come!* We have to have the righteousness of God in order to have eternal life.

"...*the righteousness of God that is separate from law...* [notice it is not *the* law. In the Greek there is no definite article; that's important] ...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the righteousness of God that is through the faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference*" (vs 21-22). God is not just working through the nation of Israel alone. This is what has angered the Jews so much.

I've been reading a book *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus* by David Bivin & Roy Blizzard Jr. It is a pretty good book, and the premise of the whole thing is that, Matthew especially, perhaps Mark, maybe perhaps some of the things that Luke had, were originally written in Hebrew but translated to Greek, not Aramaic. The sacred-namers say that it's in Aramaic, but it's not Aramaic. It

helps to understand a few difficult things in Matthew, and so forth, because it helps clarify it.

But the authors have missed the whole point. The people who are doing this are the Foundation for Judeo-Christian Studies. The reason they are missing a very important point is this: There are no extant text of the New Testament in Hebrew anywhere. I mean not even copies. Meaning, we have copies of Greek manuscripts, and in certain cases it's obvious that it was translated from the Hebrew because it's very similar to what the Septuagint was, which was translated from the Hebrew into Greek. But because of the hatred that the Jews had for the Gentiles—*hatred!*—therefore, when God began dealing with the Gentiles, what happened?

Remember when the Apostle Paul came back to Jerusalem and they found out he was there, they went to *kill* him. Then he was arrested. He said to the officer, 'Now, let me talk to the mob out here and see if I can calm them down a little bit.' So, he came out on the balcony and he started talking in Hebrew, and they were all quiet. Remember what happened when he mentioned the name Gentiles? This was before the destruction of Jerusalem. *They went into a wild frenzy!* They were ready to take Paul and dismember him. What happened? *The captain of the guard had to throw him in the clink that night, keep everybody away and then they snuck out at midnight taking Paul down to Caesarea.*

The authors of this book—Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus—are Bivin and Blizzard. Blizzard is quite knowledgeable, but they missed the whole point of how much the Jews had hated Jesus Christ. They say we ought to go through all of the writings of the rabbis and that will help us understand the New Testament. I say, absolutely not! Maybe from a linguistic point of view it could.

But since the Jews hated Jesus so much, guess what they have in their Talmud, in their Mishnas? They have sayings very similar to what Jesus taught about being nice and being good, so you have the counterfeit over here. But God cut off and rejected and sent the Jews away because they did not receive Jesus Christ. Even in the New Testament Church there was a problem between the Jews and the Gentiles, between circumcision and uncircumcision.

So, in going through the book I can see exactly what will happen to that foundation. The Jews are going to get in there and destroy the truth about Jesus Christ because that has been their goal for 1900 years, and until God calls them that is still going to be their goal, anyway they're going to do it. They can do it nicely today. I've heard Jews on talk

shows say, 'Well, Jesus was a good man. Yes, we recognize that He was a prophet like other prophets.'

But that destroys the Divinity of Jesus Christ. And until God opens the minds of the Jews they are still going to be at loggerheads with this: *that God has made no difference between Jew and Gentile in relationship to coming before God in the New Covenant.* That's the whole basis of the problem, and it's over 1900-years-old.

Paul said, v 22: "...for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...[all Jews, all Israelites, all Gentiles] ...*but* are being justified freely **by His grace** ['charite']..." (vs 22-24). It is God's grace and goodness, His love and forbearance that He forgives our sins, which makes us justified to God.]

"...through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood..." (vs 24-25)—the blood of Jesus Christ.

Even though they had sacrifices under the Old Covenant, what does the book of Hebrews tell us? *The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin!*

- Who do you sin against? *You sin against God!*
- What takes away the sin before God? *The blood of Jesus Christ!*
- What took away the sin before the temple? *The blood of animals!*

That's why they were near to God. They could not be brought into the presence of God.

"...faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past" (v 25). As we know there is no such thing as future sin, although sin will occur in the future because it is not yet done.

Do you understand what I mean? It's like this old ad for the Datsun or Nissan GX300. This policeman comes up and here's this thing parked on the road. He looks at, and here it is bright red. They get the lights on it and he looks at it and they play this music, and he looks inside, and walks around it. He pulled up behind in his motorcycle. Then it shows him standing there writing out a ticket. So, the owner comes out and says, 'What are you doing?' He tears the ticket out and gives it to him and says, 'This is for speeding.' It never went anyplace. What would happen when he'd go to court? That would not be a sin because he did not do it. But if he did speed and got caught, he did it. When he got caught it was in the *past tense*.

All sin is in the *past tense*, because it is an

action and a thought that you do now. Who knows what we'll think tomorrow, for good or for bad. I have yard work to do tomorrow; lots of yard work to do. By 2 o'clock in the afternoon when it's hot, I don't really know what my future attitude is going to be. We have more trouble with rotten hoses. You know, you haven't used them all summer. You go out there and hook them up to run water and the end falls off because you buy this \$3.98 hose, 50 feet.

I went out this morning just to turn it on, just to let the water run. You aren't breaking the Sabbath if you water your lawn. I went out there and the hose fell apart on me. I had one of these handy-dandy little quick-fix-its, so I put it on, and I didn't realize it but I made both ends the same. Instead of one being one way and one being the other way. So, I thought, Oh no! Boy, that'll teach me to do that on the Sabbath. I didn't know I was going to do that. I did not know that I was going to get up this morning and run out there and say, 'God, I'm out and I'm going to fix this hose, and we are going to water the lawn.' No, I just said, hey, well it's a little dry, and since Jonathan has to stay home and watch the dog today, I'll let him move the hose around. I went out and turned it on and we ended up with this total disaster over just a dinky rotten hose.

My wife is laughing because she saw it. You know, go out there and screw it in and you're looking, one piece is in one hand, the other piece is in the other hand. She told me to be careful. I didn't know how careful.

It's the same way with our relationship with God. That's why we're told in the prayer that we are to ask for forgiveness of our sins every day because every day there are sins that we will do. Either sins of mental temptation, of or sins of omission, or commission and God is not giving us a blanket thing for the entire future.

It is "...of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus" (vs 25-26).

When we come down to the Passover time, then I'm going to give a sermon showing why the sacrifice of Christ is what we remember and why that is so very important. But if we have the faith that Christ is the only One, where it said, 'I am the Way, I am the Truth, and I am the Life...' Then *if we believe* that God gives us His grace, and He gives us that *gift of grace* which is His righteousness. If God is going to give us eternal life, that is the only righteousness that will qualify for it.

Verse 27: "Therefore, where *is* boasting?..." The Jews can't say, because they've

had a religion now for over 3500 years; ‘we’re near to God.’ The Gentile can say, ‘So be it, but I have God’s Spirit to have direct access to God. And that’s because of God’s calling, not because I’m great or because I’m better than you, but because of what God has done.’

“...It is excluded. Through what law? *The law of works?* By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith” (v 27). Every time I read that it really is kind of mind-boggling because if faith is opposite of law, how can you have a law of faith? Well, the *law of faith* means that there is a certain set way that God has ordained that faith is going to work. It’s based on belief and the attitude. It’s based upon what God has done. Remember, Jesus said that if any come some other way, ‘they are a thief and robber.’ So, it is a *law of faith!*

Verse 28: “Consequently, we reckon... [calculate through this] ...that a man is justified by faith...” Faith in what?

- Faith in Jesus Christ!
- Faith in God the Father!
- Faith in His sacrifice!
- Faith in what He has done!

“...separate... [and apart] ...from works of law. *Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the God of the Gentiles?* *Yes! He is* also God of *the Gentiles*, since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith” (vs. 28-30). That’s just a play on words. Either *by* faith or *through* faith, it means exactly the same thing. That’s why he used two different words.

Verse 31: “Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE!...” The Greek here is ‘me,’ those are the first two letters. Then ‘genoito’ comes from the word concerning begotten, and this is the same word that is used for created.

John 1:3: It says, “All things **came into being** [‘egeneto’] through Him...”—that is the past tense of *coming into being*. When you come back here to ‘me genoito,’ it is the same word and it really means *don’t ever let that thought come into your mind* or *don’t ever let that come into existence*—that kind of thinking; it’s the same root word.

Don’t let it ever come into existence. It says, Romans 3:31: “...MAY IT NEVER BE!... [the *King James* says, ‘God forbid,’ but that’s a complete mistranslation] ...Rather, we are establishing law.”

Why do we establish law? *Through the process of repentance, the receiving of God’s Holy Spirit, coupled with the grace of God and the keeping of the commandments of God, we want to keep the commandments of God!* We establish it

because it becomes a part of us! When it becomes a part of us, that’s the best way to establish law.

Just like with our children. When it becomes a part of them that they automatically do the things that we’ve been trying to teach them all their lives, boy that’s fine. We don’t have to go around and say do this, do that, do the other thing; don’t do this, don’t do that, don’t do the other thing. *It establishes* it, and that’s what we’re trying to do in teaching. We’re trying to establish it in them so they will do it.

Likewise with God! That’s why He says that this is ‘the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah after those days. I will put My laws *into* their minds, and My commandments *into* their hearts.’ As we will see a little later in the Greek, it means *to write them in the tablets of their heart*. The Old Covenant was that He wrote them on tablets of stone. They were always to have the Ten Commandments written and placed at the doorpost when they would come in, so they could see it when they come in and when they go out. The orthodox Jews still do it today.

When I was pastoring down in Torrance and the Santa Monica area reached up into the Hollywood area. When I would go visit in the Jewish areas I could tell who was a Jew and who was a Catholic. Catholics make sure you know they’re Catholic. They put a little cross right up to the left side of their door. The Jews put a little thing with the Ten Commandments written on it and it’s supposed to be the two plates. Even the Jews to this day do that. They put this little thing that is the Torah, and they have the Ten Commandments written on them.

Now we have it where we establish law because it is in our heart, our mind and our inward parts. In other words, we’re not seeking an opportunity to sin, hoping we won’t get caught. That is a work of law. We are seeking an opportunity not to sin. So, if a temptation comes along, rather than saying, ‘Oh well, no one’s around, I’ll do it.’ We avoid it completely. We get away from it completely. Totally different approach: one is carnal; one is spiritual.

Romans 4:15: “For the Law works out wrath...” Why does the Law—because it’s Holy, spiritual, just and good (Rom, 7)—work out wrath? *Because every time you break the Law there is a penalty required!* What is the penalty? *The wages of sin is death!*

Verse 15: “For the law works out wrath; because where no law is, *there is* no transgression.” Why? *Because we saw that the Law gives us the knowledge of sin!*

- by the Law is the knowledge of sin
- *the wages of sin is death*
- the law works out wrath
- *the wages of sin is death*
- where there is no law there is no transgression

This is where you come into a catch-22. The Law tells us what sin is, and we are to *repent* of our sins. If we are to repent of our sins and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we are brought into the relationship of grace with God and we *establish law*.

The Protestants say, ‘We do away with law altogether.’ Then what do you have? If you do away with law altogether—which is ridiculous—it’s like walking in and saying, ‘I cancel the law of gravity.’ But everybody’s still sitting in their chair, they’re not up floating around. You can’t cancel the law of gravity. You can’t cancel the laws of God. What happens when a person makes a proclamation that you have no laws? *Then you have no definition of sin!* Then what happens? *They go back and they establish their own righteousness!* ‘Yeah, murder is sin and we do need to honor mother and father.’

(go to the next track)

At 100-years-old it would be impossible for Abraham of his own to engender children, let alone the difficulty or the deadness of the womb of Sarah. So, he had to say, ‘Yes, Lord, Your Word is true. I believe what you say.’ When God says He forgives your sins, then we believe what He says. He says, ‘I am going to give you eternal life, if you believe in Jesus Christ.’ Jesus said, ‘Keep My commandments.’ *and* ‘This is a gift that I give to you. ***It is a free gift based upon belief!***

- you don’t have to climb Mt. Everest
- you don’t have to do so many ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our fathers’
- you don’t have to build buildings
- you don’t have to make statues or idols
- ***You believe what I said!***

You’re not any more capable of giving yourself eternal life than Abraham was in engendering Isaac. So then, in the same way, if we believe God in what He says, He will fulfill what He says. That’s why grace is so fantastic, because the only way this can come is through grace.

Verse 20: “And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God; for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also **able** to do” (vs 20-21). The word *able* is ‘dunatos’—which is derived from the word ‘dunamis’—which means He has the *power* to do it. God has the power to perform what He has promised.

Verse 22: “As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness.” When you believe God, He then imparts to you His righteousness to overcome and compensate for our own sins and weaknesses. We cannot be spiritually righteous before God on our own.

Verse 23: “But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was* also *written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed... [we’re going to see the depth of why He was delivered for our offences] ...to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead” (vs. 23-24). In other words, He had to be raised to go before God the Father, and to have that sacrifice accepted before there was justification.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand... [we’re getting into that direct access to God the Father] ...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God” (vs 1-2). Rather than how good we are and what righteousness we can do, we boast in God and what He can do.

Verse 3: “And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope. And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man...” (vs 3-7). Even in the flesh you can talk about ‘good’ people as people view people. A good person in the world is still a sinner before God.

“...although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.... [we shall be saved by Him from wrath] ...And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation [atonement (KJV)]” (vs 7-11).

Verse 12 shows us why we need the grace of God, and why only God can give it to us. As we have our little diagram that I drew before, here is God, and here is Israel, and they were close to God. They didn’t have direct access to God. On a personal

basis, even though they were near to God, they were still cut off from God spiritually because they sinned. Here are the Gentiles over here, and these are the two, which are going to be made one in Christ. This is why God has to call us. What cuts us off from God? *Sin does!* But what causes us to sin? *That's the law of sin and death!* So therefore, God is the One Who has to make the initiating action to us:

1. God *calls us*

That's why it says 'No one can come to Me except the Father draw him. (John 6). God has to call us, it can't be done any other way.

2. God has to *grant repentance*

3. God has to *forgive sin*

4. God has to *give His Holy Spirit*

Everything is what God has to do. That's why it's *the grace* of God.

5. God has to *give us His righteousness*

We can't get that kind of righteousness ourselves.

6. God has to *give the justification*

What do we have to do? *We have to believe and also keep the commandments!* Notice all that God has to do. That's why it says in Galatians that if there were a law given that could give life, verily there it would be given through a law. But it's through *the grace of God*.

Now we have direct access to God the Father. That's why Christ came to reveal Him. We'll see the thing that has cut us off from God and *why we need the grace of God!* That's very, very important. Therefore we're not going to take the grace of God lightly! We are not going to even let that thought come into existence that we void the Law of God.

Verse 12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way, death passed into all mankind..." That's where 'the law of sin and death' entered. It's something we all inherit.

When babies are born you see these cute little sweet things. They're nice and cuddly and warm until all the natural bodily processes begin and then those other things need to be taken care of. Same way with our little puppy; it's nice and cuddly and cute and everything like that, but it doesn't know what it should do, and where it should do it, and it's already done it where it shouldn't do it and it's already gotten someone in trouble, and WEEE! the smell is unbelievable, and we just got it yesterday afternoon.

So, it's exactly the same way. These cute little babies, though God calls them innocent, do have in them the 'law of sin and death' from birth. That is what cuts all human beings off from God.

God brought the Israelites close to Him, but He kept all the Gentiles cut off until the time of the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Then God opened it up for all, making no difference.

"...death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that **all have sinned**" (v 12)—they still sin! Like the young man. He came to Christ and asked, 'What good thing should I do to inherit eternal life?' Christ said, 'Keep the commandments.' *I have!* 'Then go sell all that you have and become perfect; *become perfectly mature spiritually.*' The young man couldn't understand it. He was one whom Jesus didn't call. He couldn't understand it. Didn't want to give it up. But if a person were able to be perfect in the flesh—it's an impossibility but we'll say ok; the only one to do it was Christ—but if a person were able, what about his children? *They inherit the law of sin and death, and what happens? They sin!* ALL have sinned!

"...and it is for this reason that all have sinned.... [that's what it's talking about] ...(For before *the Law*... [until the Old Covenant commonly called *The Law* was given] ...sin was in *the world*. However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist" (vs 12-13).

Didn't He say all have sinned? Jews and Gentiles? That shows God's laws are active and working all the time, otherwise God could not hold them accountable. He says those who know better and sin will be beaten with many stripes. Those who sin and don't know any better will be beaten with few stripes. But they'll still be beaten. That was the parable.

Verse 14: "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the *One Who* was to come.... [Adam was the figure of the Christ] ...But *should* not the **free gift** be even as the offense *was*?" (vs 14-15)—'charisma'—which is *gift of grace*, the *free gift*, freely given. God doesn't charge us for it; in some organizations you'd think God does. God does not charge for it. He gives it to us free.

"...For if by the transgression of the one man many died... [because death was passed to many because of that sin] ...how much more did the grace of God, and the gift of grace..." (v 15). ***That gift of grace is the righteousness of God imputed to us!*** That is a gift! God says, 'Here is the gift of righteousness before Me. You are as Jesus Christ.' God has done that to inspire us to want to do better, but don't get all self-righteous about it because it's through Christ. He's given it to us to inspire us to keep the commandments of God and not get all entangled in our own traditions and things, which are against the laws of God. It is the free gift.

“...which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many? And *should* not the free gift *be* like that which came by *the* one who had sinned?...” (vs 15-16). In other words, shall it not be as it came upon all men to sin, because of the sin of Adam, shall it not be that the grace of God will be given to all of those that God calls? *Yes!*

“...For on the one hand, judgment *was* by one unto condemnation; but on the other hand, the free gift *is by one* to *the* justification of many offenses. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one...” (vs 16-17). In other words, that’s something to think about. Because Adam and Eve sinned, death was passed on to all human beings. From them death comes to all human beings, and it is inevitable.

We’ve heard that the fellow who discovered the process—Pritikin—didn’t invent it, he just discovered some of the laws of health that God had. It was that if you exercise, if you cut way down on the fats—I think he’s gone to the extreme to have no fats, I think the body needs a certain amount, but not animal fats—then the body can recuperate and the heart will recuperate and you can live longer. But he, unfortunately, got leukemia and he committed suicide. Death comes to all men.

How many here have read Adele Davis’ health books. She’s got a lot of stuff there, and I imagine in her lifetime she was popping pills by the carload everyday. I mean, hands full of pills. But she died of cancer of the bone marrow. It’s given once for all to die. Death was because of the sin of Adam and Eve, so it passed to all. The death of Jesus Christ and His resurrection: how much more is that going to do for those who believe in Christ? They’ll be given eternal life. That’s what it says toward all men of the *justification of our offences*.

Verse 17: “For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.... [Where it’s talking about life, it means eternal life. Shall reign in eternal life.] ...So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto **all** men... [all condemned to death because of sin] ...in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto **all** men” (vs 17-18). That could read in the Greek: *into the justification for eternal life*.

Verse 19: “For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, so that transgression might abound...” (vs 19-20). In other words, in order to clearly define that sin *is sin* God gave His laws to Israel to make it

very apparent.

“...but where sin abounded, the grace *of God* did super-abound... [that is able to cover sin, forgive sin] ...so that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace *of God* reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (vs 20-21). That’s why we need the grace of God.

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say?...” Many people have said this, that the more you sin the more grace you need, therefore, the more grace that comes the more it glorifies God because God is glorified in giving grace. I’ve almost heard people say it just that way.

“...Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!....**” (vs 1-2). Here it is again—‘me-genoito’—which is *may this thought never come into existence*. That’s why they said, ‘God forbid’ in the *King James*. It means more than just ‘God forbid.’

“...We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?” (v 2). We can’t live in sin. Sooner or later, if you have the Spirit of God and you have not done to spite the Spirit of grace, you can no longer live in sin. Though you may, through weakness of flesh, be tempted to living in sin, sooner or later you can’t live in that. Why? *Because the Spirit of God is going to prick your conscience so much that you are going to come out of it!* You can’t live in it.

Verse 3: “Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death... [also *death* can refer to the second death] ...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be **enslaved** to sin” (vs 3-6)—‘douleuein’—which comes from the word ‘doulos’—which means *slave, slave of sin*.

Verse 7: “Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin... [if you’re baptized you’ve been justified from sin] ...Now if we died together with Christ... [through baptism] ...we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him” (vs 7-9)

That’s the thing we need to realize. We have, through Christ, been made free from the ‘law of sin

and death.’ We are going to die because we all die in Adam. But we have been made free from the ‘law of sin and death,’ which is in our members—though we still have to fight it because God has not removed it—rather He has given His Holy Spirit.

If we could look at it this way: In order to make two wires from 110 into 220, you have to have a third wire bringing the third lead in. When you do that something changes. You don’t remove the wire, but you add another one. So it is with receiving the Holy Spirit of God. He does not take out of us the ‘law of sin and death.’ But He puts into us His Holy Spirit, which is like that third wire to give us the power and strength to overcome through Christ. That’s why we have the enigma in Rom. 7 about doing the things he didn’t want to do while he still loved God and loved the Law of God.

“...death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin...” (vs 9-11).

- we don’t have to obey the sin
- we don’t have to obey the temptation
- we don’t have to obey the lust that is there

We are: “...dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body...” (vs 119-12).

The sin is still going to be there because of ‘the law of sin and death,’ but don’t let it rule in your body. Don’t let it just completely consume you. When you hear what the homosexuals do you’re going to see how sin rules in their lives; absolutely consuming, ruling their lives. We’re not to let sin rule in our lives.

“...by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves...” (vs 12-13). The choice is still there. There’s still that question of doubt what we’re going to do. But as long as we remain within the grace of God we will receive eternal life.

“...rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. **For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace**” (vs 13-14).

This has been one of the most misunderstood verses that has ever been; a source of controversy. What happens when they were under law? *They were near to God but they didn’t have direct access*—isn’t that correct? They could have their sins forgiven at the temple, but it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to blot out sins before

God in heaven spiritually. That’s why Christ died.

If you are under law, even under the Old Covenant there are still the motions of sin and death. ***But we are under grace!*** What does that grace do? *Grace puts us in contact with God, gives us His Holy Spirit—all the things I said that God does for us—and brings us into the very presence of God the Father through Christ Jesus!* That’s why we are under grace. No way whatsoever is he talking about keeping the laws of God, or the commandments of God the way that God would want us to, because we are under grace; he’s not talking about that at all. We are not under the Old Covenant. We are not under the sacrificial system. We are under the New Covenant—the *covenant of grace*—which brings us into that direct contact with God the Father.

Verse 14: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**” (vs 14-15)—‘me genoito’—*may this never even come into your mind or thought.*

Isn’t that the way that the carnal mind works? *Yes! That’s the way that the carnal mind works!* It’s just the same way with parents. For example: if the kids are going to go someplace, ‘Please let us know where you’re going and how long you’re going to be gone, and when you’re going to come back and be here exactly at such and such a time.’ If you don’t tell them that, they’ll say, ‘Well, they didn’t tell me to tell, so I’m not telling.’ That’s a carnal mind working.

That’s what he’s talking about here. Don’t be carnally minded in it and think that because God wants to forgive our sins, is willing to forgive our sins, is desirous of forgiving our sins, that we say, ‘Well now, God wants to forgive our sins. I’ll sin and then, hey, God has to forgive our sins.’ He said, ‘Don’t let that even come into your thought.’

“...**MAY IT NEVER BE!** Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as servants* to obey... [‘doulos’—plural for ‘douloi’—which is *slave*] ...you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (vs 15-16). That obedience involves *belief, acceptance* and *faith* in Christ Jesus and, of course, keeping the commandments of God.

Verse 17: “But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as

you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto **sanctification**" (vs 17-18)—another word for Holiness.

Verse 19: "For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end ['telos'] result *is* eternal life" (vs 19-22).

"Telos' means *the pinnacle of*. It can mean *the end*, but it also means *the pinnacle*. Where it says Christ is *the end of the Law*, it doesn't mean He did away with it, it means that Christ is *the pinnacle of the Law*. The whole purpose or projection to the Law so that you become *the servants* or *the slaves* to God and you have your fruit unto sanctification and the pinnacle or the end of this is eternal life.

Verse 23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the **gift**... [*free gift* or ['charisma'—free gift of grace] ...of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

I'll just review Rom. 7 because I want you to go through and read it, especially beginning with Romans 7:7: "What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!...." Don't ever let that thought come into your mind, would be a modern vernacular way of translating that.

Paul went on to say, Rom. 7 paraphrased: We know sin by the Law, but the Law is spiritual, Holy, just and good. But I as a human being have sin in my flesh, which is called the 'law of sin and death.' Therefore, because of that 'law of sin and death' it causes me to practice the things that I hate, that I don't want to do. But through the grace and the goodness of God, because I am serving the Law of God and serving Christ through grace with my mind, it is only the 'law of sin and death' in my members that is making me sin and not my pre-determinate will.

Because of this conflict going on, v 21: "Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me." That's a conflict that goes on. You still have the 'law of sin and death' that has been cancelled out spiritually before God because He presents you as Christ, that you are righteous to Him. You have that connection with God, which is like that third wire. You have the Holy Spirit of God, you're under the grace of God, but here is this struggle. God intended that that struggle be there so that we would understand how serious sin is!

Verse 22: "For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man." That is true. Whenever you read about the laws of God, how good they are, the Word of God, that's fantastic! You delight in it! You say, 'Wonderful! Marvelous!'

Verse 23: "But I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. **O what a wretched man I am!**...." (vs 23-24). The whole lesson God wants us to learn in it, as we are yearning for eternal life, is how wretched human life is separate and cutoff from God! It is wretched!

That's why Paul said, 'If Christ is not raised, we're still in our sins!' *and* 'If only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable!' Why? *Because of this battle that goes on!*

"...Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin" (vs 24-25). Because sin is in our members!

The first time I read that, that was so confusing to me. I could not understand that! I think I understand it a little more. I'm sure there's more understanding that we need to get out of it. The more I go over this, the more I understand it. That's why it's important that we go over it in detail.

The most important thing for us to get out of this; we have this fight going on; we're warring against the 'law of sin and death.' We don't want to sin. But we do sin! Here's this catch-22 just ongoing like this all the time.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." Though that 'law of sin and death' is in us, God does not condemn us for it. Why? *Because we can't help the fact that it is there!* We can't get rid of it. Only God can give us His Holy Spirit to compensate for it. Because it still is active in our lives, God does not condemn us for it. But that doesn't mean that since God doesn't condemn us for it that we run out and sin!

Verse 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death." Let's add one qualifying statement: But for God the Father, it has not been removed from you entirely. But as we grow in grace, we are to be circumcised with the circumcision of Christ. Circumcision only removes a part of—like circumcision of the flesh—the skin.

That circumcision in Christ brings the Holy

Spirit to us, it does not take away the 'law of sin and death' entirely, but before God the Father we are free from the 'law of sin and death' through grace, because we are *walking after God's way in God's Spirit!*

As long as we are under the grace of God He is not going to condemn us because we have the 'law of sin and death' in us. Rather, He has compensated for it with God's Holy Spirit. Before God the Father we have been made free from the 'law of sin and death.' It's still there to plague us in the flesh but we are not to yield ourselves to it. We are not to let it rule in our lives. Rather we are to let the Holy Spirit rule in us.

Verse 3: "For what *was* impossible for the law to do..." Why was the law powerless? The law was powerless to compensate for the law of sin and death. The law was powerless to give eternal life because the law stated what brought death. Therefore, what brings death cannot bring life. So, the law was powerless.

Verse 3: "...in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, **condemned sin in the flesh**; in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit: For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who walk according to *the* Spirit mind the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.... [with God] ...because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*. But **those who are in the flesh cannot please God**" (vs 3-8).

That's quite a statement. You need to think on that. Someone without the Spirit of God cannot please God; it is impossible. They can be as good as they want to. That's the whole story of Job: "...cannot please God." Only thing that can please God is where His Spirit is.

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the

body, you shall live. For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God" (vs 9-14).

I hope that we can all ***understand more about the grace of God*** and ***why we need the grace of God***. I wanted to go through this in detail because in part 5 I'm going to go through a majority of the places where the grace of God is used in the New Testament and we are going to see that when Paul starts out his letters and says, 'Grace be to you...' he is saying that there is something coming from God to you. That's a tremendous thing!

We read over that, 'Paul, an apostle to God, grace and peace be to you from our Lord Jesus Christ...'

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 2:11-19
- 2) Deuteronomy 4:6
- 3) Romans 3:9-31
- 4) John 1:3
- 5) Romans 3:31
- 6) Romans 4:15-16, 20-24
- 7) Romans 5:1-21
- 8) Romans 6:1-23
- 9) Romans 7:7, 21-25
- 10) Romans 8:1-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ephesians 2:4-10
- Romans 4
- Galatians 3
- Exodus 25:8
- Philippians 3
- John 6

Also referenced:

- Book: *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus* by David Bivin and Roy Blizzard Jr.
- Sermon Series: *Romans*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5-20-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Grace of God V (Grace Upon Grace) Fred R. Coulter

I just want to mention that sometimes in reading in the English out of the Interlinear—because I’ve studied the Greek and prepared for the sermon—I will just go right through something so fast that you will miss the point. Or, knowing the meaning of the Greek word, I will insert the meaning of the Greek word rather than going through and stopping and saying what the Greek word means. Sometimes I will pronounce the Greek word, which is ‘Greek’ to everybody; it is Greek to me because it’s Greek, but it may be just a little too fast in some cases, and I may do a little creative thinking from the point of view of leaping ahead without filling in the background as I’m going along. So, if that occurs, or if I do that please let me know; I want you to understand.

It is not my intent to do anything other than have you understand and have you learn and to grow in grace and knowledge and closer to God. That’s certainly the most important thing that needs to be. That will help you to help me. What I’m really asking is that if I do that I want you to help me, and you can just raise your hand and say, ‘Hey, I don’t understand, and that’s *Greek* to me’ That would help out an awful lot, and you don’t have to feel that if you ask a question like that, that I am thinking that you don’t know, you don’t understand,’ because that is not the point. That would not be even a thought in my mind. What I’m trying to do is have it so you *can* understand it.

Part of the difficulties that come in, is that it was written in Greek. Some of that Greek has been translated out of the Hebrew into Greek—certain portions of Matthew, Mark, and possibly Luke, so you’re twice removed from what was originally said. Then you come into English and it’s translated into the *King James*, and the *King James* is almost 400 years removed from what we’re using today.

So, when you attempt to get back to what was really said, you can get closer to it when you get to the Greek. You can get the next step closer when you read through the Greek Interlinear. You can come closer if you know how to use concordances and things like this, and try and put it all together.

This is where I’ve been coming from in it, so it’s not my intent at all to go so fast. But in just listening to myself on the tapes I can see where I was going so fast on some of these things, and I assumed that you understood this, that and the other thing, and maybe it really wasn’t as clear as it ought to be.

I know that in dealing with people who know more than one language, if you know two languages then you’re in a situation where that you have greater knowledge than other people, however if it gets in a situation where the Greek is really ‘Greek’ and confusing, then help me by raising your hand and we’ll back up and we will go over it so you understand it, because I think this is really very important that we understand it. I hope that will encourage you to help me in the situation.

Don’t, by any means, ever have it in your mind that if you ask a question I will look down on you for asking the question, because that’s not the point. I would be derelict if I did not answer the question so you would understand. We’re trying to grow in grace and knowledge, and we’re trying to come to a point of understanding God’s Word that will be very helpful to us.

I’ve caught it on the tape when I was listening to the sermon, that I will mention things and I will mention a Scripture and I’ll give you one clue. Unless you see me turning the page to go to that Scripture, don’t go to it, because I will mention a Scripture and start talking about it and you’re busy turning trying to find it and I’m only using it as a reference. ‘Over here it says that, and over there it says, this, and over here it says this.’ I could just picture someone trying to keep up with it. I didn’t intend for you to turn to all of those Scriptures. I hope that I can try and get this in the proper perspective.

1-Corinthians 12:1: “Now brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant concerning the spiritual *gifts*. You know that you were Gentiles, *and* were carried away with dumb idols, as you yourselves were led away again and again” (vs 1-2).

To some people that would be a very insulting statement. I suppose if I ever had the opportunity to walk into Grace Cathedral in San Francisco and stand up in the pulpit and say, ‘You Catholics are led away by these dumb idols,’ I don’t think I’d last too long. They would take that as a very insulting statement. Lots of things that God has inspired to be said when people like that take it in a sense where they might consider it insulting. It really is not meant to be insulting. He’s saying it just as it is.

Verse 3: “Therefore, I am letting you know that no one speaking by *the* Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed...” That was a particular problem at that time. One of the things they had to do before they

could speak in the synagogue was they had where the one would read the Scripture, then you could have others who had the authority to read Scriptures. They wore a little badge on their phylactery, and the one who was the leader of the synagogue could invite them to come and read some Scriptures. Then you had the ones who could get up and they could talk.

When Jesus became such a central figure in Judea and the heavy Jewish populations, what they did to insure the purity of the synagogue was for those Jews to show that they did not believe in Jesus, they had to stand in the synagogue and curse Christ. By cursing Christ they claimed that they had the Holy Spirit of God because Christ was not of God. This is not quite the same problem that we have today. That was the particular unusual problem at that point.

There also may be some pagans who believed in their own saviors, who would call Christ accursed from their religion and claim they have the Spirit of God. You know, things in the world, there's a multitude of everything. It's a Babylon of confusion and everybody thinks they have this or that or the other thing. That's why we have to go by the Word of God.

"...and no one can say *that Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit*" (v 3). That is not just a statement like a Catholic would say 'I believe that Jesus is Lord.' What Paul is saying here in believing Jesus is Lord is that the Lord has complete absolute control over your life. That's what that means. Whereas, like with the Catholics, as we read here with the pope, be faithful to the teachings of the church, and the pope is lord over you.

Verse 4: "Now there are differences of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are differences of operations, but it is the same God Who is working all things in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for *the benefit of all*. For to one, a word of wisdom is given by the Spirit; and to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; and to a different one, faith by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing by the same Spirit; and to another, *the working of miracles*; and to another, prophecy; and to another, discerning of spirits; and to a different one, various languages; and to another, *the interpretation of languages*. But the one and the same Spirit is operating in all these things, dividing separately to each one as *God Himself desires*" (vs 4-11).

I just might mention that in some of the things that I'm trying to do, I know that I'm not a worker of miracles. I know that I am not one that goes around laying hands on people and they

become healed every time I lay hands on them. God does intervene, and He's healed people that I've anointed, that is true. There are some that I have anointed who have not been healed in the sense that they have physically recovered.

I don't think that I am one who is lacking in faith, but I am not the kind like Stephen who is filled with faith. I am not a person who has a direct revelation of prophecy. I understand certain prophecies. I think some of the prophecies can be understood more clearly than others. I am not necessarily one that can discern spirits. Walk in a room and say oh, here's this spirit or that spirit or the other spirit. I'm obviously not one who speaks in tongues, although I can read Greek. I can pronounce the Greek and some German, and that's about it. And you haven't heard me speak in any so-called 'heavenly tongue'; obviously, I don't do that. And you haven't heard me stand up and interpret for anybody, so obviously, God has not given me that gift.

The only gift that I can see that God has given me in the way of a ministry—that I hope will be helpful—is to another the *word of knowledge*, the knowledge of God's Word. This is what I'm trying to impart to you. So, if I go beyond where you are in your knowledge of God's Word so you don't understand it, I'm not serving and fulfilling a purpose for you.

I hope that by the Spirit I'm getting the word of wisdom. I think some of my experiences indicate I'm not filled with wisdom. I'm not lacking in some sense. But if I were filled with wisdom no one could do things to me. I would have it all figured out before they had it done, and such is not the case. I think it's good, once in a while, and we'll see as the Apostle Paul did as far as grace and ministry, there is a lot more to the ministry in relationship to grace than maybe we've given understanding about. But we're not to credit ourselves with any great thing. *We're to give glory to God in everything we do!* About the only thing I feel that God has given me, has been *the word of knowledge* concerning God's Word to be able to just put it together. I'll let it just stand at that.

I find that with my study, I have to go beyond the English *King James Version* of the Bible to study and to grow in grace and knowledge. Does that mean that a person cannot have the understanding of God's Word if all they have is the *King James Bible*? *No, it does not mean that*, because God made sure that in every translation of the Bible there is enough of the knowledge of salvation.

I want us to get deeply into the Word of God as we can to understand God's Word as much as we can but I don't want to do it with a penalty to any of

you of not being able to understand and follow along. For example, when I would say in the sermon here concerning grace, that not one *work of law* will bring you salvation, don't think as though I'm saying in any sense of the word that we are not to keep the commandments of God. We are to keep the commandments of God, absolutely, yes we are. But that is not going to give you eternal life. Jesus Christ alone, *as a gift*, will give you eternal life.

When I say you cannot earn salvation, that doesn't mean that you don't have your works. For example, if someone told you that you would inherit—if you did certain things—a fantastic tract of land. What could you do to earn it?

- A) you can't buy it
- B) there is no hourly wage, or there is no set thing to earn it, but it will be given to you provided that you follow all of the conditions of the will

So, it's the same way with eternal life. God will give us eternal life provided we follow all the conditions of the will—the New Testament—showing the will of God, which means *keeping His commandments*. That's part of it, but what can we do to *earn* the universe? I mean it's all we can do to struggle from month-to-month to earn enough to pay the people we owe. What could we do to inherit eternal life? How much could we give? **Nothing!** We could give everything and still not have it.

Look at Howard Hughes. I hate to use an example because I don't want anything like that to happen to me. So, I say it very cautiously. In the world we see so many examples of rich people such as Howard Hughes who have billions! They can buy this, they can buy that, they do the other thing. They can snap their fingers and Presidents squirm. But look at the miserable life that Howard Hughes led, and became an absolute recluse. Yet, he had control over Presidents of the United States, but look at his life. That's just an example of living.

That's why Solomon said, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!' When I say that there is nothing that you can do to earn salvation, does not in any way diminish from keeping the commandments of God. That's a requirement to receive the gift of eternal life. Too many people look to commandment-keeping as the means to eternal life, the tool for eternal life, when the means is through Christ, and the tool is the Holy Spirit. The condition in which we stand before God is grace. To stay in God's good favor and grace we need to keep His commandments.

As far as what I'm trying to do here, please help me. When I ask: Do you understand? I look around and think, 'Ok, you've got it.' Fine, I'll go to

the next one, when maybe you don't have it. You can help me to help you if you just raise your hand and we'll get everything all clarified that way and that will help out. Once you learn and you go forward the way God wants you to with God's knowledge, it becomes very exciting. It becomes very uplifting. It becomes very positive because you have an extra tool of the knowledge of salvation through which the Holy Spirit can work, the Holy Spirit can lead you and help you, and that's really what the whole goal is.

Let's review just a little bit what we've covered. It's very interesting, especially getting through the situation with the series in the Gospel of John, that John does not spend much time on the *grace of God*. But he prefaces his whole Gospel here:

John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the glory as of the only begotten with the Father*), **full of grace and Truth.**" So, he's prefacing everything that he is saying here in the rest of the Gospel of John based upon:

- a) that Christ was the God of the Old Testament and He was God
- b) that He's the light of all men
- c) that He was full of grace and Truth

Why did Christ have to be full of grace and Truth? *Because He was the very Son of God!* He was God on earth. He was bringing the Gospel of Grace.

One of the things that the Apostle Paul said concerning grace, '*This is the true grace of God.*' I think that if we take those statements for what they are and think about them, if he says this is the true grace of God, then that means that there was a false grace called the grace of God, which was not the grace of God because it was not the true grace of God. We live in a confusing world. Who is the author of confusion? *Satan is!* He loves to counterfeit everything that God does. He comes along with a grace, which allows you to do anything you want to do, and that's called the grace of God, but that is not the true grace of God.

They ran a test of U.S. currency in Florida. What they did was they just went around asking, 'Do you have a \$10 bill?' *Yes!* 'Would you exchange it for this brand new ten?' *Certainly!* They did this to a lot of people. They took the money and they analyzed it and every bit of that money had traces of cocaine on it; just the money that's in circulation in the general population, which tells you that the drug trading down there is so massive, it is so commonplace that you can go at random and you can pick up currency from anybody and it's tainted with cocaine. That's really something—isn't it?

It is just like what Satan does. He will take the Word of God—part of it—and he will use it to his own advantage although it's tainted. Just like that currency is tainted with cocaine, *the doctrines of Satan are tainted with his way* and it is not the true grace of God.

We have the example of Matt. 4 and Luke 4, where Satan does use Scripture to his own advantage. When John writes and says that the Word became flesh and He was *full of grace and Truth*, he's prefacing everything that he says about Christ all through the rest of the Gospel of John based upon that grace and Truth.

Verse 15: "John [the Baptist] testified concerning Him and proclaimed, saying, 'This was He of Whom I said, 'He Who comes after me has precedence over me because He was [existed] before me.'" And of His fullness we have all received... [What is the fullness of Christ that we receive?] ...**grace upon grace**" (vs 15-16).

What does the term *grace upon grace* mean? Remember, I had the one definition there for the definition of grace, that is *grace that increases to more and more*. It was very awkwardly phrased and it kind of left you dangling. Well this is what it means:

- by grace we are *saved*
- by grace we are *called*
- by grace we *stand before God*
- by grace we *overcome*

It is **grace upon grace**, and all of these things are a *gift*. All of these things are given to us so that we don't boast in what we can do, but we boast in the glory of God.

When we come before God, we don't do as the Pharisee is saying, 'God, I thank you I am not as other men, or as this publican down here. I fast twice in the week. I tithe of all that I possess. I'm not an extortioner. I'm not unjust. I'm not an adulterer.' But he missed the whole point. He missed the whole thing of the grace of God. He was trying to receive salvation by works. 'God, I do all of this, I must be in good standing with you because I do this.' No, it is *grace upon grace*. That's why the publican down here beat on his chest and said, 'God, be merciful to me, a *sinner*! I'm a dirty wretch.' God gave grace to him. He said, 'I tell you, that man went to his house justified rather than the other.' So, this is what it means, *grace upon grace*.

Verse 17: "For the Law was given through Moses..."—which is true. The Law is important. The Apostle Paul likens the Law in Gal. 3 to a tutor while we were children before we became adults. Is it important that you had a childhood, whether for good or whether for bad? *Sure it is*, because you couldn't be an adult unless you had a childhood. Do

you cast away your childhood? *No!* Did you learn from your childhood? *Yes!* So, it's the same way.

The Law was given *to lead us to Christ*. Christ did not do away with the law. He specifically said so. But He came to bring something greater than the Law. Something greater than the Law gives, because the Law could not give eternal life. The Law cannot give grace. That's why when a person is hauled before a judge on account of breaking a law, the judge must make a determination. In some cases he is bound by the law because the law doesn't speak, and he can do nothing.

There is a case of that. I forget exactly what it was right now, but I think it had to do with a murder, and since it was not specified in the law about a certain thing the judge could not allow a certain thing to come into evidence, and therefore, the man was released. The Law is very specific, whereas grace is broad and general. Grace is a whole area and arena of living with God, which is greater than just living with the Law.

Verse 17: "For the Law was given through Moses, **but the grace and the Truth** came through Jesus Christ." The word *came* is the same Greek word that means *came into being*. The same word used over in v 3, that all things came into being through Him.

So, **the** grace and **the** Truth came into being so it would be manifest to men and for God to man through Jesus Christ. Not that God didn't have it. Not that God was not gracious. That's not the point. But it did not come into being *for mankind* until Christ came.

For example: you can take many different chemical things, and until you have the right mix of it and come up with the right formula, you have not brought something into being; the same way with Jesus Christ. Eternal salvation was not open to all men until Christ came bringing *the* grace and *the* Truth. It came into being through Jesus Christ in His very person.

Verse 18: "No one has seen God at any time..." This tells us the whole basis of what God is doing. God is interested in grace, not sacrifice. That sacrifice means animal sacrifice, or the sacrifice of human endeavor or deprivation so that you can prove to God how good you are.

Regarding the old TV series: *Shogun*: There's one part in there that really shows the attitude of works. This is where the Jesuit priest 'father' Albeto and the Japanese Jesuit candidates were together and there was another Catholic priest. Before they would let them continue in their Jesuit training, each of these Japanese candidates would have to confess their sins. This one Japanese fellow

confessed his sins and asked forgiveness and then came the word. Yes, you are going to go without food and you'll have only rice and water for 30 days and do this, and furthermore, you are going to be scourged.

The fellow said, 'I'm Samurai and I cannot be scourged,' and just would not relent. The priest would not relent. He was ready to come over and kill him rather than let the guy get off from being scourged. But if a person has repented and asked forgiveness and they really believe it was to God, what on earth good would a scourging do? *That is salvation by works!* The works of so many of this, and so much of that, that's salvation by works. That's forgiveness by works. Whereas, *when it is by grace, it is God's free gift!*

Here is the whole basis of the Apostle Paul's ministry, Acts 20:24. "But I myself do not take any of these things into account... [none of the warnings that he would be in trouble if he went into Jerusalem] ...nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel of the Grace of God."

That's the whole basis of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; it is about the grace of God. I don't want anyone to take me to task because I may say that it has been emphasized in the past concerning the Kingdom of God, which is true. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God must be preached in all the world as a witness, that is true. The Kingdom of God is coming on the earth, that is true. Jesus Christ is the King, that is true. *But no one is going to get into the Kingdom of God without grace!* That's why there is the Gospel of Grace.

"...so that I might finish my course...that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the Gospel of the Grace of God" (v 24). That is fantastic good news. And gospel means *good news*, or as you will read the English in your Interlinear, it says *glad tidings*. The proverb says that good news from a far country is like a well of spring water, which rejoices the person.

If someone comes up to your door and knocks on your door and they say 'Your car has been burned down in the driveway.' What happens? *Your heart sinks* and you look out there. Sure enough here is the cindering hulk of your car; it is gone! Some people just recently in San Jose smelled a little smoke and they had to get out of their apartment; it burned everything they had. Some of these people were just new immigrants to the U.S. They lost everything! That's bad news!

It's the same way when we find out about how sinful we are as human beings. That's bad

news; that's terrible bad news. What is the good news? *If we repent to God and accept the sacrifice of Christ and the grace of God!* That is the *glad tidings* that we are accepted of God!

I suppose that if we received a telegram, which said, 'This telegram is from heaven saying that you are in good standing with God,' we would hold on to that and say that is great, but it doesn't come that way; *it comes by faith and belief!* The grace of God is the good news that God isn't going to hold your sins over you *if* you repent. That is fantastic good news! And then the Gospel of Grace also has to do with receiving eternal life. That's great good news! That's the Gospel of the Grace of God!

Verse 25: "And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God... [he relates the Gospel of the Grace of God and the Kingdom of God together] ... will see my face no more."

This is one of the very key things concerning the grace of God that we have to keep in mind. This is why, regardless of whatever happens, don't get discouraged. Or, if you do get discouraged, don't let things weigh in on you so much that it overwhelms you because God is *the God of grace*. Remember how we read that we receive of Christ *grace upon grace*. That refers to the grace that we stand in. That refers to the grace that we continually receive of God, continually coming.

1-Peter 5:10: "Now, may **the God of all grace** Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself **perfect you, establish, strengthen, and settle you.**"

That's what that means, to *establish you in His grace*. That's quite a very inspiring Scripture. This is the one I turn to when things get tough. I always turn to that. That one always encourages me; holds out some hope. Even if things are tough, God is there. Even when things look kind of bad, God is there and He will help in every circumstance.

Rather than go through every single Scripture, I will go through the main Scriptures. However, I will mention concerning the grace of God that all of the Scriptures from Rom. 3:24 clear through Rom. 8:4:

- explains the entire operation of the grace of God.
- explains the entire need of the grace of God
- explains why God has to give His grace
- explains why salvation by works cannot bring you eternal life

Now let's go back and see some of the other Scriptures, which will be a progression through the New Testament. I think we need to also refresh our memories that the New Testament Church was not without its problems. Obviously, those problems were created because of the Jew/Gentile conflict. We don't have exactly that same problem today as they had back then.

Let me just mention that the Jews were saying that a man had to be circumcised in the flesh in order to be saved. When they said it was necessary that means that it was *obligatory*, that there was no eternal salvation without circumcision. That's what was being preached, and that's what the problem was.

Acts 15:6: "Then the apostles and the elders gathered together to see about this matter. And after much discussion had taken place, Peter stood up and said to them, 'Men, brethren, you know that from *the* early days, God made *the* choice among us *that* by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Word of the Gospel, and believe" (vs 6-7).

That is true! Peter was the first one to speak to a Gentile about the salvation of God and in the person of Cornelius and his household and God had to send him there by dream, vision and revelation. Otherwise, he wouldn't have gone there because the Jews couldn't even be in the same room with a Gentile. That was a Jewish law, *not* a Law of God.

Verse 8: "And God, Who **knows the heart**... [that's the key important thing concerning grace] ...bore witness to them *by* giving them the Holy Spirit, even as *He did* to us." Very important point here: When they said it was obligatory to be circumcised to receive salvation they were saying in effect that it was obligatory to be circumcised before you can receive the Holy Spirit, because if you don't receive the Holy Spirit there is no salvation. That is self-evident.

So he gave them "...the Holy Spirit, even as *He did* to us, and made no difference between us and them, *and* has purified their hearts through the faith" (vs 8-9). *That purification of the heart by faith is an act of grace! That's part of **grace upon grace!***

Verse 10: "Now therefore, why do you tempt God by putting a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

Let me be sure and just interject here what he was talking about was not just circumcision alone but *all of the traditions and rituals of Judaism*, which they could not bear. Even Jesus corrected the Pharisees and Sadducees for that. It was that there was a 'certain sect' of the Pharisees (v 5).

So, you had the problem of the Pharisees coming in there and saying they have to do this, and after they're circumcised they have to do that, they have to do this, and they have to do the other thing. *No!* That puts a yoke of bondage of salvation by works. That's why God dramatically gave the Holy Spirit to Cornelius and his household before they were baptized because God was teaching them that the Holy Spirit is going to come with repentance.

Verse 11: "But **by the grace of the Lord** Jesus Christ we believe **we shall be saved** in the same manner as they also." *You are saved through grace!* That agrees with what we already covered in Eph. 2:4-10. 'By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.'

"...we believe we shall be saved..." through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's a *future* salvation. That's not just being saved from our sins and from Satan the devil and the present time. That is shall be saved in the future, even as they. So then, they went on and talked about the agreement that they would have there.

Verse 21 says that Moses was read in the synagogue every Sabbath Day. We are not talking about *non*-Sabbath-keepers; we are talking about Sabbath-keepers.

(go to the next track)

Acts 18:27 is talking about the preaching of the Lord and so forth: "And when he [Apollos] was determined to travel to Achaia, the brethren wrote to the disciples, exhorting *them* to welcome him; *and* after arriving, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace."

What we're going to see is that the grace of God is the main vehicle that God uses in everything relating to us:

- we *believe* through grace
- we *are granted repentance* through the grace of God (Rom. 2:4)
- we *stand* in grace

and this brings us in contact with God all the time. So we see *this grace upon grace* as we're continuing.

I just wanted to mention in this one Scripture in particular, Romans 4:16: "For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who is of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all."

It is by faith! It is by grace through faith! Those go hand-in-hand. It's very much like, if I could use the analogy that I have before: water. You

have to have hydrogen and oxygen to make water. You need them both. You need to have faith so that you can have grace. You need grace so that you can increase in faith. You have to have both. What I'm covering now is the grace of God having to do

- with faith
- with belief
- with salvation
- with redemption
- with hope

That's quite a bit!

2-Corinthians 2:14: "But **thanks be to God**, Who always leads us triumphant in Christ, and manifests the fragrance of His knowledge through us in every place." Remember, one of the definitions of grace is *thanks*. This is grace be to God for all that He has done, the summation of it, so that we can be in God's sight pure.

Verse 15: "For we are Christ's sweet perfume to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to those *who are perishing*, we are a stench of death unto death; but to those *who are being saved*, we are a fragrance of life unto life...." (vs 15-16).

What he's saying to the world is that if you really believe in Christ it's like *death unto death*, but before God it's like *life unto life*. We are a sweet savor to God because of God's calling. We may appear to be a foul stench to the world because they don't understand us or Christ. I think that would be self-evident, especially in a public setting if you really had to say what needed to be said. You would become an absolute foul stench in their nose.

"...And who *is* qualified for such things? For we are not like the many, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God..." (vs 16-17). Were there a lot of people corrupting the Word of God? *There were a lot of people!*

"...but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ" (v 17). Example: In some of the dealings that I'm having now, I'm in contact with a man who is a minister of a church in San Francisco. He's a black man and he has his own church. We were discussing several things concerning some project he is working on, and I said, 'Well, maybe I can come up and have a conference with you. But I'll make you a deal...'—because he knows I'm a minister, too—'maybe I could come up on your Bible study night and I would cover the topic *what you will look like in the resurrection*.' He said, 'Oh boy, that sounds good. Yeah, I'd like to know what we'll look like in the resurrection. You've got yourself a deal.'

I thought to myself: if I had to stand up there and really lay everything open the way it is in the

Word of God I would be just like *a savor of death unto death and might not escape with my life*. I think the best way to do is do like the Apostle Paul when he was in Athens. He wanted to tell them something about God that they didn't know anything about. So, I think that's the best approach if I have that opportunity. But notice what he said. He said, 'Boy that is interesting. I would like to know that.' Here he's the pastor of the church and has regular Bible studies and so forth.

2-Corinthians 6:1 has to do with the day of salvation: "We then, working together *with Him*, are also exhorting you not to receive the grace of God in vain." Why would he say that? that you would not receive the grace of God in vain? *Because it could be misused!* I think that if you read all of 1st and 2nd Cor. you will see that, obviously, they were misusing the grace of God.

If 1st and 2nd Cor. were not there you would not realize what could happen in a Church of God. It becomes very mind-boggling; it really does. It becomes very, very hurtful the things that go on. Let's hope that we can learn the lessons from that. So, let's not receive the grace of God in vain. Let's receive it in profitability and in Truth.

2-Corinthians 8:5: "And not *only* as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord, and to us by *the* will of God." This is about helping and serving and relieving the brethren who were in deep poverty, and so forth.

Verse 6: "So then, we exhorted Titus that as he had begun *this service*, so he might also with you **make this gift** complete."

This is the gift of helping someone in distress. This is part of your belief in helping people who are brethren in the Church—brethren indeed—not brethren in wolves clothing who come along just to take. But those who have need, that when you help them this is an act of grace on your part as motivated by God's Holy Spirit. So, this is part of our salvation in helping each other.

It blends into the spiritual salvation rather than just the physical salvation of food to eat while you are hungry, or food to eat because there's a famine.

Verse 7: "Now even as you are abounding in every *way*—in faith, and word, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and in the love *that* you have for us—so you should also abound in this gift [grace]."

In other words, let all of the physical things that you do show the grace that God has given to you. Not that you use it as a gauge or a measuring stick, but as the Scripture says when you do your alms don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing. In other words just do it abundantly

from the heart as you are led from God's Holy Spirit. That's what it's mainly speaking of here.

Verse 8: "I am not saying *this* as a command, but *I am exhorting you* through the diligence of others...[that is who have already given for this relief going to the brethren in Judea] ...in order to prove the genuineness of your love. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: that although He was rich, He became poor for your sakes, so that by His poverty you might become rich" (vs 8-9).

What he's saying here is that you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—with that background, with that thought:

- Who was God before He became Christ in the flesh
- Who came to this earth
- Who offered Himself in sacrifice; that is the grace
- He became poor
- He gave up everything so that we could become rich, so that we could receive eternal life

Galatians 1:3_[corrected]—here's where the Apostle Paul was also having trouble and he makes this statement: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." That is interesting. We'll talk just a little bit about the openings because I'm only going to cover a few of those. You will notice in almost every one of the Epistles of Paul in either vs 1-4, and in one occasion it was in v 5, he says, "Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ."

That's really a very comforting statement when you read it and understand it. If you take away the grace from our Lord Jesus Christ and from God the Father then you have friction; you have hostility. Isn't it much better to be in harmony and be in the grace of God? *Yes!* When he's saying grace and peace, now that's the peace that comes from God, because before we are called, *we were*—What does it say in the New Testament?—*enemies of God by wicked works in our mind!* Which means that if you were an enemy you were *at war!* *You were at war with God through your sins!* Here is peace from God. You are no longer an enemy. There is peace; that's what reconciliation means. You are reconciled! You have peace! That's quite a thing!

He says you have *peace* from God the Father and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ, v 4: "Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us from the present evil world... [and that is through grace, by grace have you been saved] ...according to the will of our God and Father; to Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen. I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away

from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel" (vs 4-6).

We're going to see a little later that he talks about the true grace of God. So here's the warning, that ***if you get into another gospel you are falling or removed from the grace of God!*** That is very profound when we think about it. We have all experienced the process that happens when you are being removed from the grace of God by a change in the Gospel that rejects Christ. You can see what happens, "...to a different gospel." I think I've heard another gospel preached.

Verse 7: "Which *in reality* is not another *gospel...*" [there is not another gospel; there's only one Gospel] ...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ." How does one pervert the Gospel of Christ? We'll just make a little summary.

1. You leave off the name of Christ. You cannot preach the Gospel of Christ without the name of Christ.
2. You cannot preach the coming Kingdom of God as an unseen hand from nowhere coming to save everything everywhere. That is perverting the Gospel of Christ.
3. You cannot say that it is in the person of one being, human being—like the pope or some other person who claims something—because that is perverting the Gospel of Christ.

The Gospel of Christ and the grace of God, as it says here, v 3. "Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." The Gospel of Grace is that *you have access to God the Father and Jesus Christ directly*; anything else is a perversion of that.

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God..." (vs 20-21).

How could you frustrate the grace of God? *To make or to render not as effective, the grace of God in your life!* How can you make the grace of God not as effective in your life? *By relying on the dos and don'ts, rather than relying on Christ!* Where he said when they withdrew themselves, when Peter came down. They separated themselves, all the Jews.

- Did that make them better before God? *No!*
- Did that frustrate the grace of God? *Yes!*

It gave two stages of salvation:

1. Gentiles over here
2. Jews over here

That Jewish attitude is still a problem in the world today. Not concerning salvation, but just that attitude in general. He doesn't blunt the grace of God.

"...for if righteousness *is* through *works of* law, then Christ died in vain" (v 21). His whole act of the death and resurrection, and His act of grace, is a thing in vain. This refers back to what he was talking about perverting the Gospel of Christ.

Galatians 1:8: "But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!" There's the penalty for changing the Gospel of God. I think we've seen in the lives of people we know what happens when they change the Gospel of God. Have they not been under a curse because they've done it? *Yes! Sure!*

What he's saying very strongly here, even if we—any of the other ministers under the Apostle Paul, and even the Apostle Paul himself—came preaching any other gospel than that which was given to him by Jesus Christ, *you're cut off from God!* Even if it be an angel from heaven or a purported angel from heaven it isn't true, because ***God's way, God's grace and God's salvation*** is absolutely set through Jesus Christ and through the grace of God. Can't come any other way. That's what it's saying there.

Verse 9: "As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ" (vs 9-10). That has to do with the grace of God.

We just read in Acts 15^[transcriber's correction] where God put no difference between Jews and Gentiles, and then how dare Peter come down there, and some of the other Jews, and then separate themselves and say, 'We're not going to sit down with these other Gentiles and fellowship with them. We're going to go into another room here because we are better than they are. Therefore, because we are better than they then we stand before God better than the Gentiles, so we are justified by separating ourselves.' That's the whole rationale in what they were doing. That is not the case and that's why he was so hard on Peter.

I just want to touch on salvation and redemption, Ephesians 1:6: "To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*." That is very profound verse that we have been accepted of God *in* Jesus Christ, and we could also say *as* Jesus Christ. That's why the grace of God is so fantastic.

Verse 7: "Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence" (vs 7-8). That's what it is, *grace upon grace*. What we're doing today is going through and seeing all the aspects of *grace upon grace* that is given to us.

As we're going through Col. 6 I will maybe give you an example of how you can do a word study in the Bible or a concordance study, because this is literally what we are doing. We are going through every place that has the word grace in reference to the grace of God.

Colossians 1:6: "Which has come to you... [that is the Word of the Truth of the Gospel] ...even as *it* also *has* in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, just as *it is* among you, from the day that you heard **and knew the grace of God in Truth.**" There we have the grace of God in Truth.

Jude 3-4 shows the grace of God *not* in Truth, v 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.... [here again is this attack upon the Truth of God] ...For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness..." (vs 3-4).

I wanted to tie that in directly with Col. 1:6, because this shows that the grace of God in Truth is going to be the message that Christ brought, whereas there may be a counterfeit which turns the grace of God into lasciviousness or license to sin, which goes against what the Apostle Paul taught when he said, 'What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid! Don't let this thought even come into your mind. Don't even let it come into existence.'

Verse 4: "For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

2-Thess. 2:13-17 is a real key section because this, in addition to Rom. 3:24 thru Rom. 8:4 shows the process of salvation.

2-Thessalonians 2:13: "Now we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God

from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation...” That is a gift! *That is grace!* The very calling of God is grace. He chose us to salvation, and salvation is *grace!*

“...through sanctification of *the* Spirit... [we receive the Spirit by faith through grace] ...and belief of *the* Truth... [we believe the Truth of God] ...unto which He called you by our Gospel... [which is the Gospel of the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God] ...to *the* obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 13-14). That’s quite a statement!

How do you obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ? *There are two ways you obtain it; remember just before He was crucified He said, ‘Now am I glorified. Now is the Father glorified.’*

1. you receive the glory of Christ by accepting His sacrifice for you, which was an act of grace that God brought to the world

That is called a glorious thing, and that is why we observe the Passover so you receive the glory of God that way.

2. the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ at the resurrection, referring to what we will be when we are resurrected.

So, these statements—though you read through and they sound very beautiful and flow right along—are jam packed with meaning.

Verse 15: “So then, brethren, stand firm, and hold fast the ordinances that you were taught...” These were obviously the things that they were to carry on traditionally based upon God’s Word, not some new tradition that they could invent.

“...whether by word... [as they were taught] ...or by our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace—” (vs 15-16).

If you follow all the way through everything the Apostle Paul is talking about in v 13:

- about your calling
- about your salvation
- about the sanctification
- about your belief in Truth
- the calling to the Gospel
- the obtaining of glory
- the standing fast in what were taught
- that God has directly dealt with us
 - ✓ has loved us
 - ✓ given us an everlasting consolation
 - ✓ and good hope

All of that is through grace. That’s why this is a very key section in understanding the operation of grace. All of that is through grace!

Then he says v 17: “Encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.”

Titus 2:11 also talks about grace and salvation: “For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared.” *The grace of God that brings salvation!* That is the whole operation of salvation. You are saved through grace. Again and again and again!

Titus 3:3 shows another part of the operation of grace. When I have said that you cannot overcome on your own, but the grace of God in you with God’s Spirit will do the overcoming if you are led of the Spirit of God. I do not mean in any sense that we are not to do anything. We are to do all we can.

Titus 3:3: “For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all kinds of lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another.” That sounds like some churches I know.

Verse 4: “But when the **graciousness** ... [the grace of God] ...and the **love of God** our Savior toward man appeared... [the grace of God] ...not by works of righteousness which we practiced...” (vs 4-5). In other words if you got every good person together everywhere and had them all doing good, would that constrain God to appear to you? *No!* Christ appeared because it was the time that God had determined, not because anyone was doing good. That’s what he’s talking about.

“...but according to His mercy He saved us, through *the* washing of regeneration and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit, which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior; so that, having been justified by His grace...” (vs 5-7).

I went through several Scriptures before we came down to this of *justified by grace*, showing again the whole operation of grace depends upon the love of God, the kindness of God, and that’s how we are justified by grace.

Hebrews 12:28: “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a pleasing *manner* with reverence and awe.” We have something here very interesting. That we still serve God with reverence and Godly fear though we are of the Family of God, though we are the friends of Christ, etc.

Verse 29: “For our God *is* indeed a consuming fire.”

Hebrews 13:8: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and to day, and forever.” What we’re talking about is the grace of God as received by God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Verse 9: “Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines. For *it is good for* the heart to be confirmed by grace...” We are established in the salvation of God and our hearts are established with grace, with God’s goodness and kindness and mercy.

“...*and not by* foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them*”

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
- 2) John 1:14-18
- 3) Acts 20:24-25
- 4) 1 Peter 5:10
- 5) Acts 15:6-11
- 6) Acts 19:8:27
- 7) Romans 4:16
- 8) 2 Corinthians 2:14-17
- 9) 2 Corinthians 6:1
- 10) 2 Corinthians 8:5-9
- 11) Galatians 1:3-7, 3
- 12) Galatians 2:20-21
- 13) Galatians 1:8-9
- 14) Ephesians 1:6-8
- 15) Colossians 1:6
- 16) Jude 3-4
- 17) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- 18) Titus 2:11
- 19) Titus 3:3-7
- 20) Hebrews 12:28-29
- 21) Hebrews 13:8-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Galatians 3
- Romans 3:24-8:4
- Acts 15:5
- Ephesians 2:4-10
- Acts 15:21
- Romans 2:4

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Gospel of John*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5-20-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Grace of God VI (The Works of Grace) Fred R. Coulter

I want to review just a little bit to mention that the grace of God needs to be the whole umbrella under which everything that God does fits—*everything!* It emanates from the love of God and how God deals with us. I think that too many times people get all involved in things relating to law more than it is to grace. What the Bible has is the grace of God and everything is under that. Then you'll have many limiting factors so that you don't go out on a limb and turn the grace of God into licentiousness.

Let's just review a couple of things. Eph. 2 is really the heart and core of the central theme of *being saved by grace*. Let's understand something that we need to look to in relationship to the grace of God, the salvation of God, and so forth: the meaning of grace is *God's goodness and kindness, God's gracious gift!* Whatever we have from God is a gift. Stop and think about everything that we have that we receive from God, it is all *a gift*. We don't earn a thing.

- we didn't earn to be born
- we didn't earn to be called
- we didn't earn anything as far as salvation is concerned
- we didn't earn to be born here in the USA vs being born in Africa
- we didn't earn to be either a man or a woman

All of that came without any of our say so or input.

When God calls us it is with God's grace. *He chooses us!* That's why there are a lot of people running around seeing if they can find God, and seeing *if they can choose* God. But unless God calls them then there is no choosing of God. When God calls us it isn't by our own works, though God requires works that we are to do, and certainly we need to have them. Once you understand the grace of God and understand why God has done the things that He has, and the way He has, then who would want to go out and sin and break the laws of God? It becomes a whole internal motivating moving way of living.

Ephesians 2:1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins..." When you are in a state of sin you are as good as dead. That means everyone walking around is living in a state of sin, they are as good as dead, because unless God calls them—which God is merciful to call us; 'the wages of sin is death'—that is what is going to happen.

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" That's interesting! One of the famous singers is *Prince!* He's the most pornographic wretched person around as far as music goes. Anyone that listens to that needs to have their head examined.

"...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world. But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us..." (vs 2-4). The operation of love transmits down to us in the form of grace.

Verse 5: "even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ..." In other words, the minute that Jesus' sacrifice was accepted by God the Father it was accepted as far as God is concerned *for the sins of the whole world*. But they can't be forgiven to each individual unless three things happen:

- God forgives them
- God calls them
- they repent of their sins

All of those have to take place.

"...(For you have been saved by grace)" (v 5). A person, in the way that the Baptists would take it, say 'once saved always saved.' That is only true if you remain in grace, because we will see a little later you can fall from grace through sin. Salvation is a three-fold thing:

1. you **have been saved** from your past sins

That's what it's talking about here. When you've repented and been baptized you **have been saved** from your past sins

As long as you are walking in the Gospel of God:

2. you **are being saved** from your sins
3. and salvation ultimately **will be** at the resurrection.

It's interesting that salvation, redemption and deliverance all are part of an operation of God, and describe the same thing of salvation.

Verse 6: "And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (vs. 6). That's not something

that takes place now. We are not in the heavenlies right now in the sense that we are with God.

However, we have the Spirit of God, which comes from God. Where is God? *God is in heaven!* He sends His Spirit. That means that when we have the Spirit of God, God looks upon us as if we are there already though we are not, because the operation of God is that He ‘calls things that aren’t as though they were.’

Verse 7, shows us when: “So that in the ages that *are* coming... [when Christ returns] ...He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.... [the Anointed Savior] ...For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves...” (vs 7-8).

That is one lesson that we are all going to learn. Though we can have desire, though we want to do the things that God wants, it is still not of ourselves. We can’t walk up to God and say, ‘God, I’ve never done this, or I’ve never done that, and I’ve never done the other thing, so therefore, You need to give me salvation.’ *NO!* There is not one thing that we can do to earn it, because eternal life and salvation comes from God. However, we are to have good works.

“...*it* is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship...” (vs 8-10). ***We’re the workmanship of God!*** I think that that would help us all understand each other a whole lot better if we would realize that ***we are all the workmanship of God!***

“...created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (v 10). Living under the grace of God includes keeping the commandments because Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments.’ It includes the good works that God said that we should do, which come under the umbrella commandment of ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’

The good work of loving God, the good work of helping and serving each other, those are all the things that God wants. But the best work that can be worked in us is the inner working of God’s Holy Spirit. That’s the best good work that can be done and we are to walk in them. Our way of living is a walk of life, and is typified by the Days of Unleavened Bread that

- we walk out of sin
- we walk out of Egypt
- we walk out of the things of this world
- *we walk toward God*
- *we walk toward the Light*

God Gives Grace:

There’s something that’s very interesting that God does. The principle is: *he who has shall receive*. Remember the one who went out and worked with the talents, developed them and doubled them? One got five with the five, and the other one got two with the two, and the other one with one got nothing. To whom did God give the one? *He gave it to the one that had developed the five!* In one parable it’s five and in another parable it’s ten. So likewise, *once we receive of the grace of God we are to receive more of God’s grace on a continual basis!* As I’ve mentioned, it is a supply of grace that God gives to us.

James 4:6: “But He gives greater grace.... [to overcome the things of the world] ...This is the reason it says, ‘ God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble”

In other words, God’s gracious gift of love, mercy and forgiveness. Most of the time when you ask people: What is the grace of God? *They will say the forgiveness of sin!* That’s part of it. It is also the blessings of God. ***It is everything that God does for us!*** He’s willing to give us more grace if we come to Him in the right way.

Verse 7: “Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” How then are we going to be able to resist the devil and temptations? *By drawing close to God, receiving more of His grace!* That grace in the faith will then cause the devil to leave us. I know, just by experience, and I can say it is true—I hope that you find it so—the ***more*** that you draw close to God in *this attitude the less* you are going to find yourself *sinning and repeating the same sins*, the sins of the mind and all that. Things will fall into place much better because God is giving you more of His grace so you won’t end up doing that.

We’re going to see here about grace and salvation, where they come together. You can’t have salvation without grace, and you can’t have grace without salvation.

1-Peter 1:6: “In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials; in order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes...” (vs 6-7). I think we can all live those things in our lives—can’t we? And we can all look back and see how those things work out that way.

“...though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with

unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—even *the* salvation of *your* souls... [your whole life, your whole being] ...concerning which salvation the prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you have diligently searched out and intently inquired” (vs 6-10).

The grace of God and the way that God deals with us is absolutely fantastic. I think if we understood it more we would treat each other a whole lot better, I'm sure of that.

Verse 11: “Searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and these glories that would follow; to whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the Gospel to you by *the* Holy Spirit, sent from heaven—into which things the angels desire to look” (vs 11-12).

At the resurrection if we see some of the angels we can ask them: What was it that you were desiring to look into? When we're resurrected and meet Christ and all the saints we're going to have a lot of questions that we're going to ask them: What was it like at this point? What happened there?” It will be very interesting. We will see some of the angels and we'll ask them what it was they were desiring to look into.

Verse 13: “For this reason, be prepared in your minds, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ.” We can see with this that the grace of God has a broad application. The grace of God to be given to us, and it brings:

- hope
- salvation
- Truth

1-Peter 5:5 is the parallel account that we have in James 4:6-7 that we just covered. It says that we are to yield ourselves to God. ***He gives grace to the humble***, and how we are to resist the devil in that particular way. There are some other categories, I realize this is kind of a potpourri if you haven't followed through all of the other sermons in this series, t this will not be exactly the easiest thing to follow.

For the Work of the Ministry:

There is another aspect of the grace of God, which is very important for us to realize, and that is the grace of God as it refers to a ministry or work that a minister is doing. It is by the grace of God that

we are able to preach the grace of God. I've seen this as a minister; I have seen that when I really prepare and do the things I need to, that God gives an extra amount of His Spirit to do the things that are necessary as far as preaching. That is part of God's grace.

Acts 14:25: “And when they had spoken the Word in Perga, they came down to Attalia; and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been **committed to** the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled” (vs 25-26). There it shows very importantly and gives a greater degree of understanding of serving. Teaching, ministering and things like this. It is of the grace of God for the work that they were to fulfill.

Verse 27: “They arrived, they gathered the Church together and declared all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there with the disciples *for a long time.*” (vs 27-28).

Here again we find concerning the grace of God and the ministry in preaching and teaching and things like this. Romans 1:3: “Concerning His Son; Who came from *the* seed of David according to *the* flesh, Who was declared *the* Son of God with power, according to *the* Spirit of Holiness, by *the* resurrection from *the* dead—Jesus Christ our Lord” (vs 3-4).

That's the key thing. Remember in the Feast of Unleavened Bread it is not just the Passover but it is the *whole* feast. It starts with the Passover and then you have the whole feast, and remember that the resurrection of Jesus Christ occurred during that time. It says that if Christ is not raised then 'you are dead in your sins' (1-Cor. 15).

He declared then to be the Son of God with power “...according to the Spirit of Holiness, by according to *the* Spirit of Holiness, by *the* resurrection from *the* dead.... [if you carry the authority and the weight of what he just said] ...Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship...” (vs 4-5).

Grace and apostleship in teaching and preaching are tied right together. We're going to see one place where Paul says, 'You were saved by my grace.' Does that mean that Paul gave grace? *No! That means by his ministry!* By the grace of his ministry, which is part of the grace of God.

Verse 5: “Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all the nations, in behalf of His name.”

1-Corinthians 15:10. “But by *the* grace of God I am what I am...”

Let's go back and see that he is talking about the apostles, v 7: "Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage. For I am the least of the apostles, *and* am not fit *even* to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by *the* grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been in vain..." (vs 7-10).

He's talking about *his work* of the ministry. Of course, there has to be a tremendous amount of grace. He understood what he was doing after he did it, that he was persecuting the Church of God and causing people to be killed. He thought for sure he was doing what was right. He was getting letters from the high priest. You can't have any greater authority than letters from the high priest.

Let's liken it to owning property. If you have title to property you go take it and possess it and own it, and no one can deny you. Well here, Paul had the authority of the high priest. Didn't the high priest know what he was doing? *NO!* But he thought he did. Weren't they trying put out *the way* of the Christian life? *Yes!* He caused people to be killed. Now, Paul didn't do that after he was converted. But he said, 'By the grace of God...'

- How much will God's grace cover? *It will cover an awful lot!*
- How bad can a person be before conversion? *I don't know; that is God's judgment!*

We'll look and see what part of the unpardonable sin is. People can get to the point that they think they have done it, and they may have not committed the unpardonable sin, they may be knowingly living in sin and really not wanting to, but really not wanting to change—that is not the unpardonable sin. You really haven't rejected God, but nevertheless, a tremendous thing! I don't know of anyone who has killed people in the Church of God that God has subsequently called, except Paul.

Verse 10: "But by *the* grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been in vain; rather, I have labored more abundantly than all of them; however, *it was* not I, but the grace of God with me."

Then he goes on explaining about the resurrection. We'll see that the Apostle Paul had an awful lot to say concerning the grace of God and his preaching, and the grace in his apostleship.

Romans 15:15: "So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God." He says it a little more directly here

to whom he is writing. What is he writing? *He's telling them what they should be doing!* It's interesting that in the book of Romans there is more discussion concerning the grace of God than any other book, and showing:

- why we need the grace of God
- why human nature is the way it is
- why we need that forgiveness

He says that he is writing this to them because of the grace of God that was given to him.

Verse 16. "In order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles..." That's why a ministry cannot be just because people appoint them or people elect them, or because a friend of so and so, or because there may necessarily be whatever other circumstances. *It is definitely a calling by the grace of God!* He said clearly here:

"...that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, to perform the Holy service of teaching the Gospel of God; so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by *the* Holy Spirit" (v 16).

As you know the whole purpose of going through this in-depth is so that we can cover all the aspects of grace and to cover as many Scriptures as possible. I'm not going to cover every one. I won't have time to do that.

Referring to the ministry that he had and the work that he was doing, 2-Corinthians 1:12: "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in *the* simplicity and sincerity of God (not in carnal wisdom, but in *the* grace of God)..." Paul looked at everything that he did, which is true, in his life as being part of the grace of God. His ministry, his life, what he was doing, and everything.

"...we had our conduct in the world, but more abundantly toward you" (v 12).

This study is a little bit different than just going through in a sermon type thing, but it is to go through and look at all of the Scriptures covering a certain aspect of it. So here we are looking at the aspect of grace in relationship to the ministry of the Apostle Paul, and as it refers to a ministry then to all of the other ministers of God who are truly ministers indeed.

Ephesians 3:2: "If indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you." That grace of God came from God to Paul, and then to the people. Not that Paul was dispensing God's grace and everything had to go through Paul in order for them to get to God. *NO!* That is not true. But the ministry that he had in

teaching and preaching to them *was* the dispensation of the grace of God, which was given to him.

Verse 3. “How He made known to me by revelation **the mystery...**” That could well be translated *secret, the secret of God!* It is kept secret from the world. It’s not a mystery in the sense that the Catholics think of a mystery or the mystery of whatever they’re supposed to be doing. It is ***the secret of God not revealed to the world!***

“...(even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His Holy apostles and prophets by *the Spirit*; that the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel” (vs 3-7).

The Righteousness of Christ:

What is the gift of grace? *The gift that God gives to each one of us, which is the righteousness of Christ!* In order to qualify for eternal life it can’t be on our righteousness. Even though we are keeping the commandments of God from an internal point of view, because we have the ‘law of sin and death,’ we cannot be truly righteous.

For example: if you had a gold coin... If you buy any gold coins be careful. Buy one of these things to test it, because in Syria and Saudi Arabia they are making South African krugerrands—just a little bit bigger than the regular South African krugerrands—with an overlay of gold and inside is lead. We can liken that counterfeit to human nature. It may look good on the outside but it’s got lead on the inside. There is no way that that can ever, ever, qualify to be 100% pure gold, it is an impossibility!

So, with human beings, we have the ‘law of sin and death’ in us so it is impossible for us to ever, ever, be wholly righteous on our own, cannot be done. The *gift of grace* is the giving to us by imputing to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ. When God views us, He views us as He views Jesus Christ. We didn’t earn it anymore than you can change that counterfeit coin, that the inside is lead, into 100% gold. Nor did we earn anything that God gave to us. ***He gave it to us; it is His gift, the gift of grace!***

Paul is also referring to the gift of grace, referring to his ability in preaching and in writing, where he was writing to them by the grace of God. It is the gift of grace of God.

“...*which was* given to me through the inner working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I

might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ” (vs. 7-8). And there again he makes it very clear concerning his ministry based on grace.

Philippians 1—here’s the Scripture that I mentioned concerning Paul’s grace. I know the first time I read that I thought: I wonder if that’s a mistranslation. Once you have any understanding of God’s grace you know it has to come from God—must come from God—otherwise it’s not God’s grace. So, when I read this, I kind of did a double take. You know, you’re eyes kind of cross and you think about it, and you go on. You can know this for sure: ***there is nothing in the Bible that is wrong***, so therefore, there is a proper explanation of it.

Philip. 1:6: “Being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you...” Who’s doing the works in us? *God is through the Holy Spirit!* The inner workings of God’s Spirit; the good work in us.

“...will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (v 6). Have no doubt, God is not going to give up on you. He’ll keep performing it until the day of Jesus Christ, ***if*** we be willing.

Verse 7: “It is indeed right for me to think this of you all because you have me in *your* hearts, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel, ***and you are all fellow partakers of my grace.***” That means they were partakers of *his ministry!* They didn’t partake of grace because God gave it to Paul, and then Paul gave it to them. ***NO!*** Paul came preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God. Through grace Paul was given the ministry. Through the grace that God gave them, coupled with the ministry of the Apostle Paul, then they had their standing in salvation through the Gospel.

Calling of God—Election of Grace:

God is the One Who does the *selecting*. That’s why you see all these great revival campaigns on television, and they all come screaming down and they all give their heart to the Lord. They’re all emotionally stirred up, and I’m sure a lot of them are really wanting to do what is right. I’m sure that many of them are totally sincere in what they’re doing, but why is it that it never follows in a lasting way? *Because God didn’t do the calling*, the preacher did. He said, ‘You all come.’ You have to answer the call of God, not the call of the preacher.

Romans 11:5: “Now then, in the same way, at the present time also there is a remnant according to *the* election of grace.” Strange as it may seem, you go back and you analyze all through the Bible, it’s been hard for people to understand it. Let’s just stop here and we’ll take a little diversion.

Everything that God has done in the calling of people and working of people is an *election of grace*. Every bit of it! You go back to Abraham.

- ✓ When God called Abraham, it was God's choice to call him. *It is by grace!*

It doesn't say it exactly that way, but that's what it is because *everything God does is by His grace*, even getting rid of the wicked from the point of view that it spares the righteous. Here's how God called him.

Genesis 12:1: "And the LORD said to Abram, 'Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house into a land that I will show you.'" He had to get up and just leave everything.

God didn't call Nimrod. Nimrod wanted to go *his way* and become the great lord. These people over here in Gen. 11 said, 'We're going to build a tower and make us a name.' God didn't have any part of that. He destroyed the Tower of Babel, and He calls Abraham.

Verse 2: "And I will make *of* you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great.... [it's not what men will, but what God does] ...And you shall be a blessing.... [by grace God says]: ...And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you...." (vs 2-3). That's exactly the way it is.

- ✓ by grace Isaac was born
At the time God chose! That was by grace.
- ✓ Isaac, when he had his two sons Jacob and Esau
- ✓ by grace God chose Jacob rather than Esau
- ✓ by grace God chose Joseph
- ✓ by grace God chose Ephraim and Manasseh.

That means every blessing that flows from there, it's *by God's grace by promise*, which He cannot break, so therefore, people are receiving the things by grace undeservedly.

- Do we live in this land because of the grace of God then? *Yes!*
- Did we earn it? *No!*
- Did we deserve it? *No!*

We don't deserve anymore than the Aborigine living down in whatever place, wherever in the world, plague infested, either the jungle or the desert, it doesn't make one bit of difference. God did not choose them. Because God chooses us does that mean we are better than the other person? *No!* It is *God's choosing*, so it is all in God's plan.

- ✓ the Exodus was an act of grace
- ✓ the giving of the Ten Commandments was an act of grace

All the way through those things are of the grace of God. You can study all of the Bible with that in mind, that *everything that has been done is by the grace of God!*

We have an example here in Romans 11:4; remember when Elijah, and Elijah said, 'Oh, God I'm all alone and there is none.' God said *no!* "...I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed a knee to Baal.'.... [God has a lot more going than we think] ...Now then, in the same way, at the present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. But if *the election is by grace, it is no longer by works...*" (vs 4-6).

This is a famous Scripture that all Protestants like to use to show you don't need to do anything because if it is by grace then it can't be by works. That's not what it's saying. It's talking about the election of grace is not a result of your work. Do you understand that? In other words, because God calls you does not mean that He does it because you have done something to deserve it. That's *God's election of grace*. It's not of a work that *you* do. So therefore, salvation is by the grace of God, but that does not mean that you do not have works to do.

These works that it's talking about here has nothing to do with the good works referenced in Eph. 2. This is the merit badge work. Like going through school, if you pass the grade you earn the promotion to the next grade. But because you were good growing up, because you are able to do all of these things and you knew about God's work, therefore, God has to, is impelled to, must give to you *a calling* because of that. **NO!** God is not impelled by any of our works. Maybe God will have mercy and understanding, and God will hopefully call, and I hope God does call all my family, but it has to be that **God does the calling**. It is not by works.

Verse 6: "But if *the election is by grace, it is no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace....*" The grace of God for calling is no more grace. But you can line up and if you qualify, just like welfare, if by the lack of work and if by the lack of income you qualify, you earn welfare. People work for welfare by not working. That's sort of turning it around a little bit, but I'm sure you can see the example very clearly.

"...otherwise grace would no longer be grace...." (v 6). Let's look at it the other way:

- *if* when we are called by the grace of God
- if we receive the Holy Spirit by the grace of God
- *if* we repent by the grace of God

- *if* we are walking in the works that God has given us to do—the right works that are included under this umbrella of grace

What if we start relying on the works rather than the grace? *We turn it in reverse, and that's the whole problem of the book of Galatians!* They received the Holy Spirit *by grace!* Then they ended up saying, 'Well now we have this, so let's go do whatever we want to.' Then they fall from grace and depend on *their works*. Sunday-keepers have salvation by works; their works of Sunday-keeping.

We are to keep the Sabbath because God says so, that's what God requires; that is a requirement. We can't go to God and say, 'God, I'm so much better than everybody else because I've kept the Sabbath all my life.' The high priest could say that. He was born into the family of Aaron. He was due by birth, the high priest position at a certain age. Not now, not under grace. I hope you see the difference there.

Verse 6: "But if *the election is* by grace, it is no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. What then? What Israel was seeking *through works*, this it did not obtain. But the election obtained *it through grace*, and the rest were hardened..." (vs 6-7). Well, I won't get into a full dissertation on that. The grace of God by election is *a calling*.

If we have it by our works, what we do then is we go along and we do something and say, 'God, I did this, put Your approval on this.' Well, maybe God didn't want it in the first place. God's approval is not going to be on it. I can go back and see there are a lot of things that I used to do. I'd go along and I'd do and have to look back and say, 'God, yes, this is good, oh approve this, by the way I prayed in your name.' No! It doesn't work that way.

2-Thessalonians 1:11: "For which cause also we are praying continually for you, that our God **may count you worthy of your calling...**" I want to emphasize *calling*, and that Greek word is 'election' or 'selection.' It is not election as we think of as voting but it is God's choice, His election, which is *selection*.

"...worthy of *your calling*, and may fulfill in you all the good pleasure of *His goodness*, and the work of faith with power; so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 11-12). There's the operation of grace through God's calling and through God's bringing us to that.

Paul talks about his calling, even his birth, yes, everything he did as part of the grace of God (Gal. 1:16).

(go to the next track)

A Way of Life Serving Jesus Christ:

Acts 13—here it is even just a little more than the grace of God as a message, but also:

- the grace of God as a way of life
- the grace of God as serving our Lord Jesus Christ

I'll just summarize. He came into the synagogue and then he was teaching about Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead.

Acts 13:38, Paul says: "Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man *the* remission of sins is preached to you. And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses" (vs 38-39). Then you know what happens. The Jews kicked him out, the Gentiles came and said, 'Come and preach to us the next Sabbath.'

Verse 43: "Now, after the synagogue had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshiped *there* followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." That has to do with *the message of God, the way of living!* It is the grace of God. You can see how all encompassing the grace of God really is.

Acts 14:2—here again Paul went into the synagogue, "But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. For this reason, they stayed a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord..." (vs 2-3). It doesn't say how long they were there, but I'm sure that they were there several months.

"...Who bore witness to the **message of His grace...**" What is one of the names of Jesus Christ? *The Word!* Through Whom do we have grace? *Through Jesus Christ!* We can expand this even more. It has more meaning than just the word or a preaching or a message, but it has to do with *everything concerning Christ*.

"...granting that signs and wonders be done through their hands" (v 3).

2-Timothy 1:8. "Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of* the Gospel, according to *the* power of God, **Who has saved us and called us...** [all with the grace of God] ...**with a Holy calling—not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and**

grace...” (vs 8-9). God’s purpose and grace is:

- the calling
- the saving
- everything to do with God interacting in our life

—according to God’s purpose and grace.

Verse 10: “But has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has annulled death... [That is tremendous! People really understood that.] ...and has brought to light *eternal* life and incorruptibility through the Gospel unto which I was ordained a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of *the* Gentiles” (vs 10-11). All of this is by the grace of God.

Jesus as He was growing up:

How was Jesus able to do the things that He did? *By the grace of God!* That’s how He was able to do it. Mary was selected to bare Jesus by the grace of God. The angel came and said, ‘Hail, Mary, you are well favored’—you have received grace from God. There can be no more graciousness given to a person than that. That’s quite a mighty thing to be chosen to bare the very Son of God.

Luke 2:40: “And the little child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and **the grace of God was upon Him.**” Jesus’ whole life, everything that Jesus stood for was the epitome of grace. He needed the grace of God and it was upon Him.

After the incident there at the temple, and they found Him and brought Him back home and so forth, v 51: “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He was subject to them. But His mother kept all these things in her heart.”

I just wonder what Mary thought at the resurrection. Remember when they were all gathered in that room where 120 of them were? I wonder what was in her mind? what was in her heart? *Because of all these things were going on!* Several places Luke said, ‘she kept it in her heart.’ In other words she remembered it.

Verse 52: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature [age], **and in favor...**”—in grace. *He grew in grace!* Not that He was ever lacking in grace. Just like God is always perfect, but God is also growing in knowledge, Jesus was perfect from the time that He was conceived. But at His conception He was not a perfect 20-year-old.

This is why He grew in “...wisdom and stature and in favor [grace] with God and men” (v 52). Shows us quite a bit about the life of Christ as He was growing.

The end of Jesus’ life:

Let’s look at the end of His life, because that was also by the grace of God. Let’s understand one of the verses that we covered in 1-John 1 where it says that Jesus was *full of grace and Truth*, which means then that *everything that Jesus did was directed by the grace of God!* Everything, from the time that He decided to become a human being, and that is by God’s own choosing, God’s *election*.

Everything that we see, God has reached down and He is the One Who has done it. Lots of times we like to think that God does something because we’ve done something, and it’s the other way around. We do something because God has done something. So therefore, we don’t need to get all uppity-uppity about what we do or do not do, because *God is the One Who does it!* James said ‘Don’t say that we will do this or we will do the other thing tomorrow. You say, *if God will. Why? Because if it isn’t with the grace of God you may not do it!*

Hebrews 2:8 talks about Jesus: “‘You did put all things in subjection under his feet.’.... [that is, mankind in general] ...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death, in order that **by the grace of God...**” (vs 8-9).

That’s a tremendous thing: “...by *the* grace of God...” How much does God want us to receive eternal life? *So much so that He sent His Son so that our sins could be forgiven!*

“...by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone” (v 9). That’s a tremendous gracious act that God would give His Son. That’s why it says:

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.” *It’s by the grace of God!*

Hebrews 2:10: “Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

Do you remember how I mentioned that the reason that Jesus sits at the right hand of God is because the right hand is symbolic of salvation and Jesus is our Savior? Add that together with what we read here:

Hebrews 4:14: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus

the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses..." (vs 14-15). In other words He can:

- He feels it
- He understands them
- He knows them
- He has lived them

"...but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He was* without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness..." (vs 15-16). That doesn't mean come barging up like a charging pit bull or elephant. It means that you come confidently, courageously, knowing that you can trust in Christ.

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness **to the throne of grace**..." Christ is there. That grace is to be given. We are to live in that grace, and walk in that grace.

"...so that we may receive mercy and **find grace to help**... [grace is given to help; that means then we get an extra supply of grace] ...**in time of need**" (v 16).

That doesn't mean just run to God whenever things get so bad you're ready to squeal 'uncle,' because there is not a time that we don't need the grace of God. Can you think of a time that you don't need the grace of God? I can't think of one time when we don't need the grace of God. I mean, we need the grace of God in everything we do. So, we need to come to God in that time of need, and of course that is every day.

The Grace of God and Power:

I've heard many ministers talk about, and I've heard people ask: Why aren't there miracles? If we could only do better things there would be miracles. If you only had faith there would be more miracles, because Jesus said if you have 'faith as a grain of mustard seed you can say to this mountain, *be removed*, and it will go into the sea.'

So therefore, we all run around and condemn ourselves because God is not doing the things because we're not doing them. Is that true? *No!* That's not true, because when God *gives grace for power*, God is the One Who decides to give it. If we go to God and by our works we earn it then it's not grace. You don't earn a miracle. Ministers can't earn the privilege of God using them for miracles.

I've known ministers that have fasted, I've known ministers that have prayed. I've even heard them bragging, 'Oh, I'm fasting and praying so we can have more miracles,' and let everyone know.

Well, God could care less. God will do it when it's *His* time, and He will do it in *His* way.

Let's see exactly what was happening here. This is after they were released from prison. They were all praying together:

Acts 4:29: "And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings, and grant that Your servants may speak Your Word with all boldness... [and that's what we need to have, that kind of boldness and confidence] ...by reaching out Your hand to heal..." (vs 29-30). They're asking God to stretch forth *His* hand. Not asking God that they could have good works so that God would have to work miracles through them.

No, they asked God that "...by reaching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your Holy Son, Jesus.'" And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with *the Holy Spirit*, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness" God decided that He was going ... [to give that power, and that He was going to give that grace] ...And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." (vs 30-32).

This is not communism, or that we all run off someplace and sell everything and give it all to the preacher and he puts in the bank and you all go live out here, and when the communal fails then he's got the money in the bank and you have nothing. *No!* They were there together because this is an extension of the time from Pentecost and they all stayed together through that time after Pentecost. Rather than going home they stayed in Jerusalem. That's why they had all things in common. It would be like if we all had to stay here for a while, well then we would have to share and give and things like that. That's what it's talking about.

Great Grace:

Verse 33: "And with great power the apostles testified of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and **great grace** was upon them all." God gives more grace; it's called *great*. In this sense it's not great in what we think of as a great person, but great in the sense of the amount of grace that God gave, or the quantity that God gave.

Grace—Favor or Gift or Acceptable:

Let's see one of these instances. I'll just refer you to the notes on grace so you can look them up if you desire to look up those different areas where the word grace from the Greek 'charis' is used in a different translatable way.

Luke 6:32: “But if you love *only* those who love you, what **praise [grace]** is it to you?” The Greek there is ‘charis’—which means *what grace have you*. In other words, if you only do the things of loving those that love you, there is no grace from God. That’s what it’s talking about. What grace have you? Obviously you have thanks. The people that you love thank you, and you thank them. But it is, “...what **praise [grace]** is it to you?” What grace have you from God? *Because you love those that love you!*

“...For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good *only* to those who are doing good to you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to *those* from whom you hope to receive, what praise is it to you?” (32-34). What grace have you?

That’s why in another instance, the gift that was sent by the Greeks down to Jerusalem, the gift of grain and dates and things when there was the famine down in Jerusalem, it was called *a gift*. It was also called *grace*. It could refer just to the physical giving. If you just give to them, what grace have you?

“...For even sinners lend to sinners, that they may receive as much again.... [in many cases because of interest, a whole lot more] ...But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great...” (vs 34-35) God will count it the way He will through His grace, not through your way of doing things.

How many times has some political mucky-muck been on some board of whatever. I think a lot of them are on United Way, and they are the big this and the big that, and they are giving their time and donating. Then you find out later they’re nothing but crooks under the skin anyway, so you see that’s why God has it so that we don’t plan it. ‘I will join the United Way and I will donate my time and services and I will be noted in the community and then I will run for mayor and I will be elected.’ That falls into the category of doing things that you hope a return for.

Verse 35: “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be *the* children of the Highest; for He is good to the unthankful and *the* wicked.” If He weren’t there wouldn’t be anyone left alive.

Grace and Gifts:

God gives certain gifts and that all ties in with 1-Cor. 12 about the gifts and so forth. This is a word that means *freely given*. Even our

understanding of God’s Word, even our understanding of the things that we have of God.

1-Corinthians 2:12: “Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things **graciously given** to us by God.” *No charge!* That’s why it says that *you can’t buy your way into the Kingdom of God*. Simon Magus tried to buy the Holy Spirit. *It is freely given unto us!*

Romans 12 talks about the grace of God that is given to us in reference to the gifts differing one from another. We’ll see how this ties right together. Paul is speaking here of the grace that was given to him.

Romans 12:3: “For I say through the grace that was given to me, to everyone who is among you...” This is part of God’s giving of grace to the apostle Paul for the effect of preaching. He is speaking to every one that is among you.

“...not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think with sound-mindedness, as God has divided to each one a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, but all members do not have the same function; likewise, we, being many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another. But each one has different gifts **according to the grace that is given to us...**” (vs 3-6).

The giving of this gift, whatever it is. Some people have one gift one way, some have a gift another way. That is all from the grace of God. *It is given to us!*

“...—whether prophecy... [speaking or preaching] ... *let us prophesy* according to the measure of faith; or service, *let us tend* to service; or the one who is teaching, *let him tend* to teaching” (vs 6-7). Paul goes right on showing that all of these things then are exercised through the gift of a grace of God.

1-Peter 4:10: “*Let* each one, according as he has received **a gift from God...** [‘cheritos’—*the gift*] ...*be using* it to serve the others as good stewards of *the* grace of God...” The giving that God gives to us, the calling that God gives. All of it has to do with the grace of God.

There’s one other section that is important that we need to understand that has to do with the grace of God and each of us individually. This kind of flows into one of the other sections that I have. There is a whole section that I’m not going to cover except just a few Scriptures, which has to do with the opening and closing of each of the epistles, referring to the grace of God.

Grace and Peace:

1-Corinthians 1:3: “**Grace and peace** be to you...” That’s very important. When we understand the grace of God we have more peace. I think that we have really begun to understand that and learn that, and we are going to preserve that peace by the grace of God.

Verse 3: “**Grace and peace** be to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always concerning you, **for the grace of God that has been given to you in Christ Jesus** (vs 3-4). You think of it in a personal way. Christ is the One Who has given it to you. That shows how actively God is involved in our lives.

Talking about with our speech, Colossians 4:5: “Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside *the Church*, redeeming the time. *Let your speech be* always with grace... [in other words in a good and positive and kind way] ...seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer each one” (vs 5-6). It just becomes part of our way of life, the way we walk, the way we talk, and everything then reflecting the grace of God.

Affliction and Suffering:

Sometimes you will see someone who is afflicted with something and God does not intervene to do anything for them. God does not heal them, though they pray, though they’ve been anointed or whatever. God has another purpose in mind for them. We had one such a lady—Esther Greisinger—who was much that way. She did more to help people in her state of weakness than she could have done any other way because of the grace of God that is given to her for that very purpose.

Paul is talking about his affliction that he had. When he had the vision and he didn’t know if he was in the body or out of the body he says, 2-Corinthians 12:5: “I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the Truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me. But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh...” (vs 5-7).

We know that he had this terrible eye condition where in Galatians it said that they didn’t even want to look upon him. When he wrote the book of Galatians it was with such large letters so that he could read it. It says, “...a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me...” (v 7).

That doesn’t mean that it was a demon because obviously Paul was not bothered with

demons. A messenger comes from the word ‘angelos’—which is also translated *angel*. This has to do with a messenger or probably was a messenger from Satan...BAM!...just like it was with Job, the disease was upon him. But that doesn’t mean that it was there on him, or that he was demon possessed, or that he was demon bothered.

In other words God allowed that messenger to afflict him with this affliction, and then obviously left him. Just like during the affliction of Job, was Satan there with him all the time? *No, only to afflict him!* When the affliction was gone it was Job and his three friends, and God up there listening to what’s going on. Satan was not there. There are some people who thought that this means that Paul had a demon with him all the time, just to kind of correct him. *No!* He had an affliction that was a messenger from Satan.

Once he received it then it was to buffet him, “...so that I might not be exalted. I besought the Lord three times for this, that it... [what ever the illness was] ...might depart from me; but He said to me, ‘**My grace is sufficient for you...** [God’s grace is sufficient] **...for My power is made perfect in weakness.**’ Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong” (vs 7-10). Understanding fully the grace of God he understood what it meant to be afflicted.

There are several Scriptures that we want to cover in the opening and closing of some of the epistles. It’s interesting that if you go through and study it, Paul and Peter talk more about the grace of God than any of the others. It is very important for us to understand that when they wrote their epistles, and when they wrote these letters and they said ‘the grace of God be with you. grace and peace, and love and mercy of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,’ there is an actual blessing that comes with that. It’s a very important thing that they put in there.

Here the Apostle Peter says, 1-Peter 1:2: “*Who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you.”

That is quite an introduction, and lots of times we go studying along and we want to get to the important things so we cut out the first verses and we cut out the last verses and we don’t realize how important that is for us. Go through and you study those and you read those and they are important to us.

It does it twice here in Romans 16:20: “But the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen**”—*so be it*. So, if he says the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you, Amen, it means that *he wants the grace of God with you*.

Verse 24: “**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.**” That’s one of his more powerful endings.

2-Corinthians 13:11. “In conclusion, brethren, rejoice! Be perfected; be encouraged; be of the same mind; be at peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Greet one another with a Holy kiss. All the saints send salutations to you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit... [that is the fellowship, the inner fellowshiping of the Holy Spirit with you] ...*be* with you all. Amen” (vs 11-12). That’s almost one of the best endings that you could have, right there.

Galatians 6:18: “Brethren, **may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit**.... [in the spirit of your mind] ...Amen.” That’s a significant verse.

Ephesians 6:23: “Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. **Grace be with all those whose love**... [grace and love go together] ...*for* our Lord Jesus Christ is uncorrupted. Amen” (vs 23-24).

It might be very inspiring for you to read through the first three or four verses, and the last three or four verses of every one of the Epistles of Paul and I think you will see how much *the grace of God is involved actively, just like it said, ‘and the grace of God be with your spirit!’*

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 2:1-10
- 2) James 4:6-7
- 3) 1 Peter 1:6-13
- 4) Acts 14:25-28
- 5) Romans 1:3-5
- 6) 1 Corinthians 15:10, 7-10
- 7) Romans 15:15-16
- 8) 2 Corinthians 1:12
- 9) Ephesians 3:2-8
- 10) Philippians 1:7
- 11) Romans 11:5
- 12) Genesis 12:1-3
- 13) Romans 11:4-7
- 14) 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
- 15) Acts 13:38-39, 43

- 16) Acts 14:2-3
- 17) 2 Timothy 1:10-11
- 18) Luke 2:40, 51-52
- 19) Hebrews 2:8-9
- 20) John 3:16
- 21) Hebrews 2:10
- 22) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 23) Acts 4:29-33
- 24) Luke 6:32-35
- 25) 1 Corinthians 2:12
- 26) Romans 12:3-7
- 27) 1 Peter 4:10
- 28) 1 Corinthians 1:3-4
- 29) Colossians 4:5-6
- 30) 2 Corinthians 12:5-10
- 31) 1 Peter 1:2
- 32) Romans 16:20, 24
- 33) 2 Corinthians 13:11-12
- 34) Galatians 6:18
- 35) Ephesians 6:23-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 5:5
- Genesis 11
- Galatians 1:16
- 1 Corinthians 12

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 5/20/12
Corrected: 2/2016

Justification by Faith I

Fred R. Coulter

Why is there so much confusion in religion? I think part of it lies in the fact that today that we are so ‘TVized’ with sound bites, clips and 20-30 second spots. If you watch a program every 8-12 minutes there’s a commercial, and you can go do this or that or the other thing. We’re in the age of instant this, instant that and instant everything else.

People like to have ‘religion’ that is instant—instant understanding, instant explanation—so that they can go on about their jobs, business or whatever they want to do. Instead of really delving into the Word of God so they can understand it, they go on their merry way with an explanation that they think is acceptable. If you have not studied the Bible in the past we may leave you in the dust. I’m sorry if that may happen, because I’m going to assume that those who are watching, listening or reading this are going to know their Bibles to a relatively good degree so that we can understand what *justification by faith* really is.

Justification by faith is one of the most basic, but one of the most complicated and difficult things to understand. People have not taken the time to really study their Bibles, nor have they taken the time to understand the forces and pressures that were in the Church at the time the New Testament was written. Everyone will agree that in order to be saved you have to be *justified by faith*.

In order to be justified by faith an awful lot has to be understood before you can understand the simple operation. The reason that this becomes so confusing, is because you have:

- Judaism practices on one side
- Protestants and their view of grace with no works at all
- Catholics who say that grace can only come by works

All of this has created a great confusion! People become *mentally* burdened down to try and figure it out. Let’s see if we can sort this out and get some sort of semblance as to what it means to be *justified by faith*.

I think you’re going to find that once you understand some certain basic concepts that you’re going to find it’s much easier to understand *justification by faith* through grace, rather than justification *by works of law* through law-keeping. Because of that, there is a conflict in the New Testament.

1-John 2:4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.” It’s very clear that we are to keep the commandments in that particular

passage. There’s another passage that says ‘sin is the transgression of the Law.’ There’s another passage that says very clearly that sinners will not be in the Kingdom of God. Jesus said that ‘not one jot or one tittle will in any wise pass from the Law until everything is fulfilled,’ and that ‘as long as heaven and earth still stood, His Word would still remain.’

We read in the Old Testament where the commandments of God are ‘righteousness.’ We also read that the commandments of God ‘make us wise; give us understanding.’ We also know certain things concerning the commandments of God, which are very important to do and to teach. However, here comes a very difficult Scripture to understand, because we know that we need to keep the Laws of God, we know we need to keep the commandments of God, but how do you understand Rom. 6? This is one of the most favorite Scriptures for the Protestants to show that it doesn’t matter that we keep the commandments of God.

However, there’s a movement now within the Protestants to where they are trying to get the United States to run the country based upon the Ten Commandments. That creates a little confusion. When you really think about it and analyze it, the reasons the Protestants say that you don’t have to keep the commandments—that they’re done away—outside misunderstanding some Scriptures, is because they want some sort of *justification* so they don’t have to keep the Sabbath so they can keep Sunday.

They turn to a Scripture like this: Romans 6:14: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace.” If you believe in keeping the commandments of God:

- Could you explain this Scripture?
- Do you know what this Scripture is talking about?
- Do you understand what it is saying?
- Does it say that we should not keep the commandments?
- Does it say that we’re not subject to the laws of God?
- What is it really saying?
- What is it really teaching us?

This will add a little bit to the confusion, Romans 10:4 (KJV): “For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes.” It says that Christ *ended the Law!*

Then they go to another Scripture, Col. 2, which says that Jesus put the commandments and ‘nailed it to the cross.’

But then you come to the very last chapter of the book of Revelation, let’s see what Jesus said

about commandment-keeping in relationship to eternal life:

Revelation 22:14: “Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments...” The Greek there is ‘poieo’—which means *blessed are the ones who are doing the commandments of God!* We’re going to see a little later where it looks like if you’re trying to say and justify yourself by *works of law* you are ‘under a curse.’ That is where the problems and difficulties come, because people equate *works of law* or *justification* with commandment-keeping and confuse that with *justification by faith*.

I hope that I can present it in such a way that you can understand it. It’s not going to be instantaneous! It’s not going to be a 9-second or 30-second sound bite. I appreciate your patience. Get out your Bibles and study and go along with it so you will be able to understand what I’m saying.

Here’s how it’s important it is, v 14: “Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to *eat of* the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.” Do you want to be in the Kingdom of God? Do you want God to open the gates for you and say, ‘come in’? *I’m sure you do!*

Let’s read one more verse, which is a very basic verse, which tells about commandment-keeping; so that you understand that commandment-keeping is required. Then we are going to learn something about the *function of law*. It’s a matter of what the *function* is. It’s a matter of understanding what it can do, and what it cannot do.

1-John 5:2: “By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.” For all of those that believe that just love is all that is necessary, here we have *love* and *commandment-keeping* together. We see that they are required.

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” There’s nothing difficult about the commandments of God. That is the point that John is making here.

What we need to understand is that there was a cross-current of things that were taking place, which made it appear as though you could receive salvation by *keeping law* and *rejecting Christ*. That is a Judaism problem. I’m going to refer you to Mark 7, a section where Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees and religious leaders concerning their traditions. There’s something you need to know about the Pharisees’ interpretation of the Law of Moses.

They claim that not only did Moses receive the written law from God, but that Moses received

the *oral law* from God. That oral law was passed down from mouth to ear down through all the generations until they finally had it codified in the Talmud and the Mishnah. This was also called the Law of Moses. Included in that were many of the traditions that Jesus condemned the Pharisees for, which was a *work of law to justify them to Judaism*. That was separate then from the rituals that God required for sacrifices, to justify them to the temple. In either case, a *work of law*, through a *tradition*, a *rule or regulation*, *commandment or decree of men*, did not justify them to the temple.

When God gave the laws concerning the sacrifices and the things they needed to do, that only justified them to the temple that was on earth, not to God Who is in heaven above. They did not receive eternal life under what is commonly known as the Old Covenant. They only received the blessings in the flesh *physically* for obeying in the *letter of the Law*. Jesus came and brought access to the Father in heaven above. Now we are talking about something that is far more important, far more reaching than what was under the Law of Moses. {see sermon series: *Judaism vs Scripturalism*}

It was Paul’s custom whenever he preached he would go into the synagogues and preach to the Jews, because it was to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. Forty years later—after the Jews rejected Jesus Christ, after they rejected God’s way—then everything that the Jews have been doing has been a repudiation of Christ; it has been an anti-Christ movement. They’ve been trying to work out *their own* ‘religion’ and salvation—their own way—but only bringing upon themselves multiple curses.

You can read through the whole chapter of Acts 13 and just see the historical flow of the problems that Paul had with the Jews and Judaism. Judaism, by the way, was NOT the Law of Moses. Judaism is based strictly on the *traditions* of the elders and it was accumulated and put into print about 200_{A.D.} It is a complete and absolute repudiation of Jesus Christ.

It is a true thing where Jesus said, ***‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and none can come to the Father but by Me!’*** That’s what Jesus said. Theoretically, it is possible to reject Christ on the one hand and then say, ‘I’m going to keep the commandments on the other hand.’ That commandment-keeping will do you no good, because it’s not coupled with faith and love. ***Unless you believe in Christ and accept Jesus Christ, even the Law of Moses does you no good for salvation!*** Please understand that. Do not confuse that with the fact that under the New Covenant with Christ commandment-keeping is still required. But commandment-keeping does *not* bring right standing with God alone. It must be through Jesus Christ.

So Paul—when he was preaching to them—said, Acts 13:38: “Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man [Jesus Christ] *the* remission of sins is preached to you.” This is very important for you to know and understand that under the Old Covenant—even though they offered the sacrifices—*their sins were only forgiven to the temple*. They were not forgiven to God in heaven above. They only had access to God indirectly through the mediation of angels at the temple.

Now God is giving us access to the Father in heaven above to where anyone who believes and accepts Jesus Christ, repents and is baptized, is given the gift of the Holy Spirit and has access to the Father in heaven above. That’s why commandment-keeping is required; so you don’t sin. But commandment-keeping without Christ will not justify you one single iota.

In a sense, theoretically, those who say that you cannot earn salvation by commandment-keeping are right only to the extent that if you just try and keep the commandment and reject Christ, it is true all your commandment-keeping will *not* bring you eternal life. The answer is very simple: the Law was not made to bring life. The Law was made to define sin. The Law was made with the commandments and the Law together, to give us the minimal acceptable conduct that God has laid out for us.

That’s why Paul was saying that it was forgiveness of sin, v 39: “And in Him **everyone who believes...**” We need to stop and take some of these verses and look at them word-for-word.

- Do you believe *in* God?
- Do you believe that there is a God?

James 2 tells us that ‘if you believe there is a God, you haven’t done very much better than the demons.’ The demons were the angels who rebelled with Lucifer, and they don’t believe God, but they believe there *is* a God. There’s a vast difference, because if you really believed God

- you believe what He says
- you would believe on His Son Jesus Christ
- you would accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

So, there’s a vast difference! Do you *believe* God? I want you to think on that for a minute! I want you to just reach back in the back of your mind and ask yourself: If I believe God, is there anything I won’t accept that God requires of me? In other words, if you say, ‘I believe there is a God’ you’re no better than the demons. If you say, ‘I believe God,’ then you cannot be a *yeah but* person—which is: ‘God, I see this is good, but I don’t want to do it that way. God, I don’t want to do it Your way, I want to do it *my way*.’ That’s precisely what the Jews did.

Isn’t it ironic, the ones that had the very Word of God, the ones that preserved the Old Testament for us, the very ones to whom Jesus Christ came, were so deceived and deluded in their own self-righteousness, that even Jesus had to say that they were ‘of their father the devil.’ That is a pretty tough sentence, don’t you think?

Verse 39: “And in Him everyone who believes... [that entails an awful lot] ...is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” I want you to follow along and I want you to be *spiritually* and *mentally* involved in what we are covering here so that you can understand what is being said. This is the most vital and important thing that there is.

- What is *justification*?
- What does it mean to be *justified*?
- *To make right a wrong!*

You understand that very clearly in relationship to getting a traffic ticket. If you’re speeding and you get a traffic ticket, the officer writes up the ticket for you, you sign saying that you’ll appear in court. You go to court, the judge says, ‘Okay, I don’t accept your explanation, you’re guilty, you were speeding—or whatever you were doing—and the fine will be \$50.’ You pay the fine and you’re free to drive. That is *justification*. Your transgression was breaking the traffic law and resulted in a sin against the society. The only way you can be brought in *right standing* with the society was to pay the fine.

If it were a more severe thing, you might even spend some time in jail. Once your jail-time is done, you have been *justified* to the society. I hope you understand this in relationship to God. The question is: How are you *justified* to God?

Before we get into that, let’s just backtrack a little bit. Let’s take the case of your speeding ticket again. Suppose you say in your own mind, ‘I don’t like that policeman; I don’t like the way he talked to me. Besides, I really wasn’t doing what he said I was doing. I know I got this ticket here, but I’m not going to go to court. I’m just not going to show up at all, but I’m going to be a good boy and I’m going to drive real carefully so I don’t get anymore tickets.’

Fine! You ignore the notices that come, that you would appear. You ignore the notices that you have a warrant for your arrest issued—because after the third notification you didn’t show up—but you were a ‘good boy’ and you were driving your car within the speed limit and getting no more tickets—right? Then one day you slipped, and you went by the police officer and he saw your license number on the back of your car and he looked down on his list of warrants, and lo and behold, your license number was there. He turned on his red lights and siren and pulled you over.

You looked at him and said, ‘What am I doing? I wasn’t speeding.’ He said, ‘I know you weren’t speeding, but you are under arrest.’ *For what? I’ve been obeying all the laws.* ‘You’re under arrest because you didn’t take care of the matter of your other ticket.’ *I’ve been a good boy; I’ve been driving nice.* ‘That doesn’t matter, you are under arrest because you didn’t take care of this matter.’

We can take it one step further. Maybe you can understand it with a little more severe type of crime. There was in Canada a very nice man. He was a favorite among his co-workers. He was always diligent, always on time, congenial, easy to get along with, until one night one of his co-workers saw the TV show broadcasting from the United States that is called *Unsolved Mysteries*. He saw the story about this man who murdered his wife, kidnapped his children and later abandoned them. Guess who the man was? *The model worker!*

He figured that if he ran away and didn’t break any more laws that everything was all right. Well, it wasn’t! That man got on the phone and dialed the number and the next morning the police came and arrested him and took him off under an extradition order—which is automatic in this particular case—and he was brought back as a fugitive from the law, because *he was not justified to society!*

To be *justified* means to *make it right!* Now we come to the crux of what we need to do as far as human life. How are we *justified* to God? That is the question!

Verse 39: “And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” None of the Laws of God were ever designed to bring *justification* or *the correction* of a wrong.

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures telling us what law is to do for us. There are certain functions of law, which are very, very important, tell us what sin is.

Romans 3:20: “Therefore, by **works of law**...”—any work of any law—please keep that in mind—is required to do, to keep, to obey, but it doesn’t *justify*. *Law-keeping does not make right the path of law-breaking!* Something else has to *make right* that path of law-breaking. In relationship to God it is called *justification* and it has to be *by faith*.

Here is what law does, v 20: “Therefore, by **works of law**... [‘the’ law is not in original Greek. It is in the *KJV* and creates some confusion, unfortunately] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him; for through *the law is the knowledge of sin.*” That’s what the Law is to do; to give us the knowledge of what the sin is. Paul said later on, ‘What! Shall we sin that grace may abound? **GOD FORBID!**’

Trying to be justified by *works of law* is a misapplication of the use of law. Law was never intended to justify us to God in heaven above. Rituals—through the Old Covenant, through the Law of Moses—were designed to justify them to the temple, not to God in heaven above.

Let’s read what the problem is and how to resolve it. Let’s begin to understand from this point of view and concerning the question: Is Christ the ‘end of the Law’?

Romans 9:30: “What then shall we say? That *the Gentiles*, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the righteousness that is by faith.*” This ‘righteousness means *right standing* before God the Father in heaven above. The Gentiles who believe in Christ were in *right standing before God the Father* in heaven above, though they were never given the Law of Moses. God never dealt with them before the New Testament and preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

Verse 31: “But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness... [because God’s Law is righteous] ...did not attain to a law of righteousness.” If you follow the laws of righteousness and you don’t accept Jesus Christ, even the laws will do you no good to put you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above. We’re talking about the function of what God is doing.

Why did this happen? Why was it that this happened? That Israel—or the Jews—did not obtain to the righteousness of God? But the Gentiles, who were considered by the Jews worse than animals, never to be touched, never to be around, never to be in the company of. We know that that caused problems later on. In fact, we find this in Gal. 2.

- Why did this happen?
- God called them out of Egypt!
- God brought them into the ‘promised land’!
- God gave them His blessings, His laws, His commandments and said, ‘Follow Me!’

They had everything given to them, but what did they do? *Because they didn’t want to submit to the righteousness of God, they had their own righteousness!* Even though they had a law of righteousness, it didn’t do them any good.

Verse 32: “Why? Because *they did not seek it by faith*... [They didn’t *believe* God! They didn’t *believe* Jesus Christ!] ...but by works of law, for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling.” Who was that Stumbling Stone? *Christ is called the Stumbling Stone!* (1-Cor. 2). They stumbled at Christ.

- they didn’t want to believe that He was the

Son of God

- they didn't want to *believe* that His life and sacrifice was given for the forgiveness of sin
- they didn't want to *believe* that God would do such a fantastic, wonderful, loving, great and phenomenal thing

Just for each individual! 'No! We're righteous! We have law!' But law without Christ is like water without hydrogen *or* oxygen—it won't work!—you must have both.

Verse 33: "Exactly as it is written: 'Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.'"

Paul goes on to say, Romans 10:1: "Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge" (vs 1-2). They weren't willing to accept the knowledge of God. Before they had their traditions, they had their washings, bathings, their do this, that and the other thing. But they didn't have the knowledge of God, and they refused to accept the knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Verse 3: "For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish **their own** righteousness..." What made a person acceptable in the synagogue? Let's use the example of John 9: Remember the man who was born blind so that God could be glorified through the miracle that Jesus did in restoring the sight to this blind man. Let's look at the righteousness of God in healing the man so he could see, as compared to the righteousness of law or works as demanded by the Pharisees.

So, he and his mother and dad came into the synagogue and he said, 'Is this your son?' *Yeah, we know it's our son.* 'How did he receive his sight?' *Well, if you want to know how he received his sight ask him, he's of age.* So, they asked him and they said, 'Well, I don't know if this man was a sinner or not, but has it ever been heard that a man born blind was made to see? I don't understand how this man could be a sinner.' *He's a sinner and you're deceived, and if you don't reject Him we're going to kick you out of the synagogue.*

Kicking him out of the synagogue was a *work of law*. You had to go by *their* rules, *their* regulations, reject Christ and believe in them. They had their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God. Perfect example right here: *a work of a law—their own!* So, they kicked him out of the synagogue for being ignorant of Jesus Christ and going about to establish *their own* righteousness! (Mark 7).

"...have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ *is the end of works* of law for righteousness..." (vs 3-4). For justification, not the elimination and the absence of law altogether—please understand that! Christ ended all justification by law; ***He did not end law-keeping or commandment-keeping.*** I hope that is clear. It's a little difficult to understand, but Christ is the *end of law* for righteousness by *works*. "...to everyone who believes" (v 4).

Now let's go back to Rom. 3 and we'll follow through the rest of the chapter, and I will try and explain it to you so you can understand it. But let's keep in mind that by *a work of a law*:

- if you do not *believe* in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- if you do not *accept* Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior
- if you do not *keep* His commandments

—as He said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments'—you do not have any justification to God the Father in heaven above. You can go about and establish your own righteousness; you can have laws and rules and regulations, another rule of *a law, a work of a law.*

I know a church where they used to have it that if the women wore any makeup they were harlots. If they had skirts that came above the top of the kneecap they were indecent. The law that that church established was: if there were any women walking through the door and they had any makeup on or if their knees were showing they should be expelled.

To some people this may sound very righteous, until you realize the fact that there are prostitutes that wear long dresses and no makeup. Think on that! Because it's of the heart; it's what you believe; it's what is your *heart standing* before God that is important, not necessarily the outer expression of who you are. It can get into certain things where you have lewd conduct, and obviously that is law-breaking.

That's just another example of *a rule* or a *work of law* to make people righteous. That doesn't make them righteous. Jesus said that if a 'man looks upon a woman to lust after her, he has committed adultery already in his heart.' It doesn't matter what kind of façade you put on, it matters what is going on in the mind and heart.

Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better? Not at all!..." Jew vs Gentile! They still say, 'we are the chosen people.' If you have never read anything concerning the Talmud; if you've never read anything concerning the attitude of the Jews toward other people, then it's very difficult for you to understand what Paul is writing

here. Most people today try to understand the vacuum of the present day, rather than the historical background. If you haven't done any historical background study, you may find yourself kind of missing the boat in trying to understand this.

"...Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin" (v 9). Everyone has sinned! It's not the circumcision of the flesh outwardly that makes a person righteous before God, it is the circumcision of the heart *inwardly* and not of the flesh (Rom. 2). If you don't understand how that would really make Jews just gnash their teeth. Paul—being a former Pharisee—really laid it on the Jews.

Verse 10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!'" Every single human being by nature is a sinner. In order to have that sin and that sinning within justified before God, law-keeping will not do it. Law-keeping is required that you don't continue to live in sin, but you must have a transformation and conversion of the mind. That can only come about with the justification from God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Verse 11: "'There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way... [gone out of the way of God] ...together they have *all* become depraved. **There is not even one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!**" (vs 11-12).

The only reason that anyone can do any good is if they have the Spirit of God *in* them, and that they are living by the *ways* of God. That's the only way! It has to be Christ *in them* that is doing it. You cannot of your own!

That's why Protestantism is absolutely so deluding to people. They say, 'If you believe.' *Okay, I want to believe!* 'You open your heart and let God come in.'

(go to the next track)

You don't open your heart and let God come in; **God has to call you to Him!** In other words, it's the other way around, God has to open His heart and bring you into Him. *He* has to justify you; *He* has to forgive you. You are not good enough to invite God into your life. Do you think you're good enough and righteous before God on your own, that you can say, 'Oh, God, I invite you into my life.' That may be well-intentioned on your part, but unless you go through what God says you need to do: with repentance, baptism, receiving of the Holy Spirit and the true justification that comes from God—you can't have in your mind that 'this is good work and I'm going to do this; wonderful, God is on my side—it's the other way around. **You better be on God's side!** Maybe that will help get some of the

priorities straight here.

Verse 13: "Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips." I point to the Middle East. Do you think the PLOs and the Jews are ever going to get along? That's not going to be solved until Jesus Christ returns!

Verse 14: "'Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under [within] the law..." (vs 15-19).

If you're understanding and living within the Law and the Law says that you shall not commit adultery, then it means you shall not commit adultery, shall not steal, shall not bow down to idols, shall have no other gods before God—it's telling you what you shouldn't do! It's telling you how you can live without having transgressions multiplied in your life. The Law is speaking to you, that's correct, that's right, nothing wrong with it, that's fine.

- Are you listening to the Law?
- Are you listening to God?

Don't try and have the Law do something it was never intended to do.

"...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty [judged] before God.... [God is in charge!] ...Therefore, **by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him...** [not just what a church may agree to, but in His sight] ...for **through the law is the knowledge of sin**" (vs 19-20). That's what the Law was designed to do. when you transgress the Law, what does the Bible say? *That is sin!* 'The wages of sin is death.'

- the Law was designed to show what sin is
- the Law was designed to point out that whomever transgresses it is worthy of death

Therefore, that which was designed to point that out cannot bring eternal life. Only God the Father can give you eternal life through Jesus Christ. That's what *justification* is all about.

Key important understanding, paramount, profound, v 21_[transcriber's correction]: "But now, *the* righteousness of God... [the right standing through justification of God] ...**that is separate from law** has been revealed..." It's not the absence of law, but is separate from. It is not reiterated in the Law that you have the righteousness of God the Father in His sight through law-keeping. Law-keeping is a separate function. Justification and the righteousness of God is a separate function. Law-keeping is

something you can do. Forgiveness of sin and right standing with God the Father in heaven above—through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to justify you to God the Father—is a function of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ through the power of God’s Holy Spirit ***IF you believe!*** Completely different! Two different functions!

Let’s use another example: If you have a high-powered car with fuel injection and needed a high-octane fuel, do you suppose he could run that car if he filled the tank with peanut oil? It wouldn’t work! It would gum it all up! It wouldn’t function! *Exactly the same way if you try and justify yourself to God the Father in heaven above by:*

- not repenting
- not being baptized
- not receiving the Holy Spirit

It’s just like pouring peanut oil into a high-powered car; it won’t work! It wasn’t designed for it. But if you go to God in repentance, go to God and confess your sins and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God. You *believe in* Jesus Christ, you *believe* God; then you are *justified* and you are *committed* to keeping the commandments of God, as Jesus said, ‘*IF you love Me, keep My commandments.*’ I hope you understand that.

Verse 21: “But now, *the* righteousness of God *that is separate from...* [Moffett translates it *aside from*] ...law...” That doesn’t exclude it. That doesn’t kick it out. That doesn’t do away with it. But *justification* and the *righteousness* here is ‘separate from law’] ...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets”—‘ek’—*the righteousness coming out from God to you.* It’s a gift! Think of it! A tremendous gift that comes from God that puts you in *right standing with Him*, because He has called you.

That’s something! Think on that! This *justification by faith* is greater than you have ever understood before. It is magnificent! It is not whether to keep law or just have grace, it’s a matter of what God is doing and to understand the terminology involved in it.

Verse 22: “Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...” That’s something that is also very profound. This is in the genitive case or the possessive case. It means *by Jesus’ very own faith!* Don’t you think that Jesus had to have faith to come to this earth? It talks about God’s faith.

A lot of people wonder if God has faith. *Yes!* God has faith. It’s a gift of the Holy Spirit that comes from God. If God doesn’t have it to give, then how can He give it? *God has faith! Christ has faith!*

Don’t you think it took a lot of faith on Christ’s part, a lot of faith in God the Father, for Christ to say: I will become that sacrifice. I will let You reduce Me to a pinprick of life in the flesh, Father, so that I can:

- be born as a human being
- live as a human being
- walk in all Your ways
- be filled with Your Holy Spirit
- be the sacrifice for all the sins of mankind
- let You justify them through My blood and My resurrection’

That’s what it is! Through Jesus’ very own faith! It’s not some kind of faith that you can work up. You have to have your faith added to it. But how can you have that kind of belief that we are talking about unless it comes from God?

“...toward all and upon **all...**” (v 22). Not just select people because they happen to be in one place at one time, but *all* as Acts 2 shows that God has called.

“...**those who believe;** for there is no difference” (v 22). There is no difference whether you’re male or female, whether you’re tall or short, skinny or fat, black or white, Scythian, Barbarian, Oriental or whatever—it doesn’t make a bit of difference, because God is the One Who is doing it, and it’s not a club election by men for a society, brotherhood, sorority, or fraternity. Now you see very clearly what we’re getting at here.

The reason is, v 23: “For **all have sinned...** [everyone] ...and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely...”—without cost; without obligation. God did it *freely!* You might look at the case of Simon Magus (Acts 8), he tried to buy the Holy Spirit. You can’t buy it! It is given *freely*, but

- You must *believe!*
- *That’s your cost!*
- You must *repent!*
- *That is your cost!*
- You must be *baptized!*
- *That is your cost!*

But it doesn’t cost you any money. That’s why it says, ‘All that believe, come and drink. You that have no money, come and buy’ (Isa. 61)—it’s *free!*

“...justified freely **by His grace...**” (v 24)—*forgiveness, mercy, love, kindness, goodness, lovingness* of God. Grace is the whole umbrella of the relationship that we have with God. It’s called *grace* because you can’t earn it, you can’t work for it, you can’t do anything to deserve it yourself. It comes through Jesus Christ and through grace.

Now, that is differentiated from under the Old Covenant of law-keeping, under the Pharisaical

rules and regulations of do this/do that; don't do this/don't do that and that sort of thing. It is grace *freely!* Catholics, on the other hand, say that only grace can come by *your* works. You're not going to get the *grace of God* by your works. Works won't do it. You must be justified to God *first*, and then do the works of God in the proper and right way.

"...being justified freely by His grace **through the redemption...**" (v 24)—buy back, purchase back. God is the One Who is doing the buying. You don't go to God and buy from Him; He comes to you and buys you back out of the slavery of sin, out of the bondage of sin. You are redeemed!

"...that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [advocating, mercy seat] ...through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past... [God's *right standing, justification*—making right your past sins, for the remission of sin, which are past] ...**through the forbearance of God...**" (vs 24-26).

Let's understand something here very clearly: *God does not give us a blanket forgiveness for all future sins!* Technically, there is no such thing as a *future sin*; though in the future you *will* sin. Is that double-talk? *No!* I'll explain it this way: If you rent an apartment for 30 days and you pay for your 30 days, and right at the end of the 30 days you decide you're going to rent again. At the end of that 30 days you pay your rent. How would you like it if the landlord came and said, 'I want you to sign a lifetime lease and pay me in advance everything.' You'd say, 'I can't do that.' That has not yet occurred. How do I know how long I'm going to live? It's the same way with sin.

There's no such thing as a *future sin* because the future is not here and you can only sin in the minute. All sins are *present* while they're taking place; *past* when it has occurred. God is not going to come down and say, 'Here's my grace go do anything you want.' *No!* He does give a mechanism on what we do if we sin, and when we sin in the future. We have to confess our sins:

1-John 1:6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth." What is Truth? *Jesus said about the Father, 'Your Word is Truth!'* What do we receive from God when we repent and are baptized? *We receive the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth!* When we're walking in the ways of God we are walking in the Truth.

John says here that "...we are walking in the darkness... [and we say that we have fellowship with God] ...we are lying to ourselves, and we are

not practicing the Truth. However, if we walk in the light, **as He is in the light**, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from **all sin**. If we say that we do not have sin..." (vs 6-8). I have yet to meet someone who says, 'I'm perfect.' But there are some who would say, 'You know, I don't have any sin.'

"...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we **confess our own sins...** [obviously, to God, not to a priest] ...He is faithful and righteous, to **forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (vs 8-9). God is there to help. God is there to forgive. But you can't go out and just live a life of sin after you've had God's grace given to you and poured out upon your life.

Let's see about this faith and grace and walking in 'good works' motivated by the Spirit and power of God. Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace **you have been saved through faith**, and this *especially* is not of your own selves..." It is not something you work up. Obviously, you can't work up grace, because that has to come from God. Obviously, we saw that it was the *faith of Jesus*—Jesus' faith in you—which then gives you the motivation. God's Spirit comes and *leads* you to repentance—not of yourself!

"...*it is* the gift of God, not of works..." (vs 8-9). Doesn't matter how great you are, or how good you think you are, unless you're right with God that doesn't count. It doesn't matter how many Sabbath's you've kept all your life, what if you end up breaking the Sabbath right at the end, you're still a sinner. You can't say, 'O God, look at all I've done over here all these years.' Maybe God will be merciful and keep it in mind, but *'sin is the transgression of the Law; the wages of sin is death!'*

It's not of works. It's not something that you can do: "...so that no one may boast" (v 9). That ought to be self-evident. What would happen if it were possible to do it by works, and someone did it? They would go up to God and say, 'You owe me eternal life after what I did. My whole life was nearly perfect. Why, God, I was better than Job.' Look what God did to Job!

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them."

Romans 3:25: "Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [a continual atoning mercy seat that we can come to in time of need] ...through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness... [to bring right standing to you] ...in

the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is of the faith of Jesus*” (vs 25-26).

- God is the One Who does the *justification!*
- God is the One Who makes it *right!*
 - you have to come to see how wrong you are
 - you have to be convicted by God’s Spirit in your heart
 - ✓ to see your sins
 - ✓ to repent of your sins
 - ✓ to confess your sins

Then God justifies you through His mercy and goodness, but you have to *believe, be believing—constant, ongoing*—in Jesus.

Verse 27: “Therefore, where *is* boasting?...” You can’t brag or boast as to how good you are, what your genealogy is, who your father was, who your mother was or who your grandfather or grandmother was. It doesn’t even matter if you were the son of Moses, *if you’re not justified by God it doesn’t matter who you are*. You can’t boast on anything. I can’t boast on anything.

“...It is excluded. Through what law? *The law* of works? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith. Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified... [in right standing before God the Father] ...by faith separate from... [not without; not the absence of] ...**works** of law.... [doesn’t mean *to the exclusion of*] ...*Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the God* of the Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the Gentiles*, since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith” (vs 27-30). God is the One Who is going to do it.

Verse 31: “Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law.” How is law established? It is established this way: Once you have been justified to God the Father in heaven above through the very sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, He gives you the heart and the willingness:

- to want to serve Him
- to want to love Him
- to want to keep His commandments
- to want to walk in those good works which He has foreordained that you should walk in

He wants to put His laws and commandments in your mind, in your heart, in your inward parts; to be a very part and fiber of your being. *That’s what establishes law!*

Let’s use another example: Does the enactment of legislation to create law make people obedient? *No, it doesn’t!* Here in California there was this deranged man who took an AK47 rifle and

gunned down 30-plus people on a school ground killing five innocent children. Then he took the gun and shot himself. Do you know what happened immediately after that? You would think that people in droves would immediately say, ‘Bring all the AK47s and heap them up here, let’s get rid of them. *NO!* They had a run of people coming into the gunshops to buy those guns as quickly as possible, lest the law be changed and they couldn’t get them.

Making a law does not make people righteous, it only tells you what you should and should not do. But if you have people who have God’s laws in their heart and mind—through the Holy Spirit of God, by the power of God, through the grace of God—that are in right standing with God the Father through Jesus Christ, you establish law, because the people are not out there looking for ways to break the law. They are looking for ways to keep the Laws of God, to keep the commandments of God. You establish it!

Let’s cover a couple more things so we can understand about being justified. In Romans 4 it talks about the belief of Abraham, and the blessedness of this righteousness or right standing with God that says:

Romans 4:7: “Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.... [justification] ...Blessed *is the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin. Now then, *does* this blessedness *come* upon the circumcision *only*, or also upon the uncircumcision?...” (vs 7-9). Then it goes through how Abraham *believed* God. What this belief did was make him the ‘father of the faithful.’

Verse 20: “And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God; for he was **fully persuaded...**” (vs 20-21). This tells us what kind of *belief* we have to have:

- No doubt!
- No hesitation!
- No reservation!
- No looking for a gimmick!
- Are you *fully persuaded* that God is right?
- Are you *fully persuaded* that through Jesus Christ alone you can have
 - ✓ the *forgiveness* of sin?
 - ✓ the *justification* of God?

—as Abraham was. “...he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do. As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness” (v 21-22). Counted to him as *right standing* with God, because he *believed God!* Not just *in* God, he *believed God in what He said.*

Verse 23: “But it was not written for his

sake alone, that it was imputed to him; rather, *it was* also *written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead” (vs 23-24). We’re going to see a two-step sequence to *justification*:

Verse 25: “Who was ^[#1]**delivered for our offenses...** [took upon Him the sins of the whole world] ...and was ^[#2]**raised for our justification.**” To be put in right standing with God the Father in heaven above.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) 1-John 2:4
- 2) Romans 6:14
- 3) Romans 10:4
- 4) Revelation 22:14
- 5) 1 John 5:2-3
- 6) Acts 13:38-39
- 7) Romans 3:20
- 8) Romans 9:30-33
- 9) Romans 10:1-4
- 10) Romans 3:9-26
- 11) 1 John 1:6-9
- 12) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 13) Romans 3:25-31
- 14) Romans 4:7-9, 20-25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Colossians 2
- Mark 7
- James 2
- 1 Corinthians 2
- John 9
- Romans 2
- Acts 2; 8
- Isaiah 61

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

Judaism vs Scripturalism

FRC:bo
 Transcribed: 10-14-12
 Corrected: 2/2016

Justification by Faith II

Fred R. Coulter

What is it that you can do as a law, rule, declaration or a commandment that deserves the worthiness of God to forgive your sins? That's kind of a tough question— isn't it? Let's look at it another way, from a different point of view: What is it that you can do that will indebted God to you to make Him do something for you? God *is* God Who created the heavens, earth—everything—all human beings. You being a human being, what can you do to make God do something for you? **NOTHING!**

Simply because God is greater than you! If you do something that compels God by the force of what you do, that He is absolutely indebted to you to do something for you by obligation to you, then *you* are greater than God! If you understand that concept, then you will understand why you cannot be justified to God the Father in heaven above through:

- a work of law
- a tradition
- a rosary
- helping neighbors
- feeding the poor

—whatever it may be that will compel God to do something for you. If you really understand that, then we can understand the concept of justification by a *work of law*—which *never* justified anyone to God in heaven above.

During the formation of the New Testament Church, there was this crossbreeding of Judaism—the rituals of the sacrifices—and circumcision, which the Jews *mistakenly* thought would compel God to do something for them. That's still the whole attitude that Judaism has today, that they are the 'chosen people' and God *must* do something for them. Well, if you look at the response of God to Judaism, you will see that that whole attitude is completely wrong.

What can you do that is worthy of the forgiveness of your sins? *or* What can you do that is worthy of the death of Jesus Christ to be applied to you? Once we have that concept clearly in mind; once we realize that our debt is to God, ***God has no debt to pay back to us!***

Romans 3:20: “Therefore, **by works of law...**” The King James has, unfortunately, ‘by the deeds of the law’; that makes it sound like that it has to do with the commandments of God, so therefore, the Protestants assume that you don't have to do any law-keeping at all. That is an incorrect conclusion based upon the erroneous assumption that is *the* deeds [works] of *the* law.

In the Greek it is “...by works of law... [any work of any law] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him...” (v 20)—in His presence. Justification means *to make right a past wrong*. All of your law-keeping, after you've had law-breaking, does not rectify or justify or bring to a resolution your past law-breaking, because law-breaking is sin.

“...for **through the law is the knowledge of sin**” (v 20). That's what the Law does. The function of law is:

1. to tell us what sin is
2. to define the minimum standard of conduct that God will accept
3. to show us how we ought to live

No human being is perfect, so therefore, the Bible says *all* are sinners, ‘*all* have come short of the glory of God.’ That's what we're talking about.

You cannot take the Law, which was not designed to give life, but was designed to show us how to live and that transgression of the Law is death. You cannot take that and say that this is a function to force God to give us eternal life.

- What does it take to receive eternal life?
- What kind of justification is necessary?
- What is the price that has been paid, by God, to make that justification possible?

That's where we need to approach it.

Verse 21: “But now, *the* righteousness of God...”—the right standing before God through justification—‘dikaiosis’—*the right standing through justification before God!* The justification of God or from God or God's justification:

“...that is **separate** from law...” (v 21)—‘without’ (KJV)—unfortunately it gives the connotation of *the absence of* or *having no part of* when the Greek really means *separate* and *apart from*. It doesn't mean *without*, *the absence of*. It's not throwing away the Law. It's just separate from, it's not an operation of law.

“...has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the* righteousness of God that is **through the faith of Jesus Christ...**” (vs 21-22). God's very own faith; Christ's very own faith; it's not something that you have that you can do, that you can work up, but it has to be ***the very faith of*** Jesus Christ and that is imputed to you, given to you though you are not worthy of it.

We'll see how this operation works. So therefore, there is no law that says ‘you do this, you do that’ and you do the other thing’ and you will receive eternal life. God did not design that eternal life would come through law. Otherwise, if it were

by law-keeping, then it would be theoretically possible for a man to be perfect. Therefore, he would earn his own salvation, God would be forced to give eternal life and then he would not be subject to God, but he would be a competitor of God.

“...toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference” (v 22). You read that and you don’t understand that the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles was so sharp and divisive at the time of the beginning of the New Testament Church that the Jews had all kinds of laws, rules, regulations and traditions that they wouldn’t even be in the company of Gentiles.

We’re going to see in the book of Galatians that the problem that Peter and others were carried away with, that they were going back to Judaism: Separation from Gentiles rather than accepting what God is accepting. So, “...there is no difference.”

Verse 23: “For all have sinned... [every human being has sinned and we will see why] ...and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified... [all your past sins made right] ...**freely**...” (vs 23-24).

- you can’t buy it
- you cannot work for it
- you cannot earn it
- you do not deserve it

But God, in His mercy in calling you, has given it to you *freely!*

“...by His grace...” (v 24). God’s gracious goodwill, love, blessing and calling. Grace is something that we stand in; we *stand within* grace. In other words, it is the sum total of the relationship that we have with God. Whereas with the Old Covenant, the sum total and relationship with God was to keep law or not keep law. Under that covenant that God had with Israel, they didn’t receive eternal life. They only had *physical* blessings for a *physical* nation, to receive *physical* things that most people look to in life today.

“...through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [a mercy seat, a continual atoning source of mercy coming from God] ...through faith in His blood...” (vs 24-25). We’re going to talk about the blood of Jesus Christ. We’re going to see the *operation of justification* through Jesus Christ.

Let’s understand right here that Jesus Christ, before He became human, **was God!** He took on the form of a human being, took within Himself the ‘law of sin and death’ and was sacrificed to cover for the sins of **all** human beings. Technically, theoretically, practically, actually there is nothing that you as a human being can do to earn justification, to buy eternal life, to be in a position to force God to give

you the Holy Spirit because you’ve done something. ***It has to be done freely, and through Jesus Christ!***

“...in order to demonstrate His righteousness... [that is the making right, putting in right standing] ...in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God... (vs 25-26).

I’m going to show step-by-step how justification takes place:

I. We see that justification comes through the blood of Jesus Christ

Romans 5:8: “But God commends **His own love**...—very emphatic in the Greek; like saying this is my Bible, but if you wanted to be emphatic you would say: this is MY Bible. When it says in the Greek that “...God commends His *very* own love...” it means coming directly from God the Father toward us.

“...to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **Much more**... [greater; eternal life is greater, far beyond this] ...therefore, having been justified now **by His blood**...” (vs 8-9).

Justification begins with the accepting of the shed blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.

What happens if you don’t accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? *You’re really in a tough position!* There’s no other way that it’s going to come about. Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Life, and the Truth and none comes to the Father but by Me.’

God is not like the world. The world likes to have everything nice and broad and everything can apply and we all accept each other in love and peace. *No!* Love and peace can only come from God’s way. The love and peace of human beings turns into war, killing, fighting, destruction and sin!

It’s not whether you’re going to do it this way over here and ‘get to heaven’—the Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants, Universalists—‘we’ll all get to heaven some day.’ Not one word about Christ. *It’s going to be through Jesus Christ and Him alone*, because God has determined that that’s the way it’s going to be!

Verse 9: “Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (vs 9-10).

1-Cor. 15 tells us something very, very important. It tells us how the operation of justification takes place through what God has done. We’re going to see how this then will tie in with

Rom. 4:25

1-Corinthians 15:12: “But if Christ is being preached that He rose from *the* dead...” I’ll just state very categorically:

- you have no forgiveness
- you have no justification
 - ✓ unless Christ rose from the dead
 - ✓ unless you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

“...how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?” (v 12). Most people today who profess Christianity do not believe in a resurrection. They believe in going to heaven. You’ve got a wrong belief!

You’re not going to force God to do anything for you because you believe you’re going to heaven. Sorry about that; that’s the way God is. Don’t argue with me; you argue with God. I’m just reading what the Scripture says.

Verse 13—the key: “For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain... [it’s worthless, it’s vanity, it’s nothing] ...And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; 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 13-17).

In other words, you can’t just accept the death of Jesus Christ. You cannot just accept the blood of Jesus Christ and say everything is fine. If you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, “...your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins.” Keep that in mind!

Verse 18: “And those who have fallen asleep... [died in Christ] ...in Christ have then perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable. But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep” (vs 18-20).

Notice how important the resurrection of Jesus Christ is: *IF* Jesus Christ was not raised from the dead and that you believe, you cannot have justification by faith—which means you must believe in the operation of God and what He’s provided, or you have no justification at all.

Let’s see how very important Romans 4:25 is. We have two things that we’re tying together:

II. We are able to attain a state of justification because of the resurrection.

Romans 4:25: “**Who was delivered for our**

offenses and was raised for our justification.” Very powerful! Very important! We must trust in the power of God not only for the forgiveness of sin, but that He raised Jesus Christ from the dead!

It’s very clear that if a person does not believe that, there is no justification before God. A person may have a ‘religion.’ A person may, in this society, be what we would call ‘a good person.’ But that’s different than what it is to be justified to God the Father in heaven above.

Maybe you will understand this even more. The great God Who loves the whole world—remember John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him... [faithizing; believing into Him] ...may not perish, but may have everlasting life.” It’s got to be through the very Son of God—Jesus Christ. ***It isn’t going to be any other way!***

There’s another little trick that comes along with the way that some people preach. They say, ‘it’s going to be all grace and we don’t have to keep the commandments of God.’ That is not true! We need to keep the commandments of God.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Very important! ‘Lord’ means your boss, master, ruler, guide, one whom you are following. You can’t go to some Maharishi guru and he’s going to lead you to peace. *He’s going to lead you to the nirvana of Satan the devil!* That is not of God! It is through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Verse 2: “Through Whom... [no one else] ...we also have access by faith into this grace...” God is giving you the greatest and most wonderful relationship that He can possibly establish with you though you yourself are a sinner, always coming short of God’s way. God is there once you are in this grace, or standing within this grace.

“...in which we **stand**...” We hear about political parties. They have a platform that they stand on. They have this plank, that plank and the other plank, and that is the embodiment of their beliefs. Similarly we have this: The only way that you stand within the grace of God—the grace of God covering your life—is through Jesus Christ our Lord!

- You *must believe* that He is the Son of God!
- You *must believe* God!
- You *must believe* what God has said!

We’ll see how this whole operation comes together as we go through and understand about *justification by faith*. Once you understand that, though it’s complicated to explain, it is the ‘simplicity in Christ,’ which is that you can have

direct access to God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ our High Priest Who sits at His right hand.

- You don't have to go to a temple!
- You don't have to go to a cathedral!
- You don't have to do laps around the beads!

You have direct access whereby you can cry 'Abba, Father' at any time! But you cannot abuse that privilege. You cannot live in sin and have that continue to be given to you. It's given to you by the gracious love and operation of God wherein you stand.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 2-3).

- What happens with this conversion of the mind?
- What happens when you understand what God has done in greatness for you?
 - Doesn't matter what the problem is!
 - Doesn't matter what the tribulation is!
 - Doesn't matter what you go through

because

- ✓ God has called you!
- ✓ God has justified you!
- ✓ God has forgiven your sins!
- ✓ God has given you the power of His Holy Spirit to be the impregnation in your mind

—so that you likewise can be resurrected at the return of Jesus Christ!

We view things differently. We don't look at every trial that comes along as some great overwhelming thing, but we know that God is going to work it all out in the long run.

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance" (v 3). You can't be a flash-in-the-pan 'Christian'; you can't be a fair-weather 'Christian.' You've got to go through the thick and the thin. As Paul said, 'Don't think it any strange thing if some of these trials come upon you'; just remember what Jesus Christ went through. Paul said that he wanted to be 'conformed to the suffering of Jesus Christ' if it would bring him the very fellowship and union with God.

Verse 4: "And endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope. And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts..." (vs 4-5). That you love God more than anything else. You have to get down to asking yourself: Do you love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength and with all your being? That's what the justification, grace and Holy Spirit of God should be

doing for us!

Regardless of what goes on around you or in your life, or what experiences that you go through, the paramount, most important thing in your mind, that you love God that way. That God's Holy Spirit has been 'shed abroad' to you. That God's Holy Spirit is *in you*. ***That the very love of God is more important than your life itself!*** So, the stakes are very high.

We're not talking about a 'religion' to do 'good.' We're not talking about something to make people happy or better and better. We're talking about something that is going to be for eternity! ***We're talking about eternal life, eternal love through all circumstances!***

"...through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time... [pre-determined by God] ...Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends **His own love** to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood... [His sacrifice, then the resurrection for justification] ...we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies [of God]" (vs 5-10).

Everyone who is carnal-minded is an enemy of God. The mind of the flesh, or the carnal mind, is 'enmity'—same Greek word for *enemy*. You're fighting God!

Quick little test: What is it you're willing to argue to God about? *Think on that!* If you're willing to argue to God about anything, you are still partially *an enemy* of God, *because you do not believe God!* That may sound a little strong, but you need to think about it.

A lot of people would say, 'Well, Lord, I agree'—thank you that you agree—'that we ought to have one day in seven. But as for this Sabbath bit, every week on Saturday, I don't know about that. It seems to me that...' If that's the way you think and reason, or if you've heard people reason that way, *they're enemies of God!* Maybe you never thought of it that way before.

You can take the Catholic version of the Ten Commandments and they have removed out of it the second commandment pertaining the making of idols and bowing down to them. They've made the third commandment the second one. They've taken the fourth commandment and made that the third one, and they also took out two verses of the fourth commandment pertaining to the Sabbath, because God says *the seventh day* is the Sabbath. Oh no, they want to have Sunday.

If you can argue with God about Sabbath; if you can argue with God and cling to your Sunday, *you're an enemy of God!* You may not think so because 'God is on your side.' But the question is: Are you on God's side? If you were on God's side, then you would keep the Sabbath because Christ is the 'Lord of the Sabbath.'

I just want you to stop and think, and test yourself. Ask yourself: Am I an enemy of God? *Oh no, I love the Lord! But I go to church on Sunday. You're an enemy of God!*

- you won't except His Sabbath
- you won't except His way

You say:

- oh yes, Lord, I accept Your grace
 - oh yes, Lord, I want Your love
 - but don't tell me which day to go to church on, Lord
- Do you love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul and with all your being; to let God tell you what to do?

or:

- Are you going to be so presumptuous as to continue to tell God what you will and will not do?

You're an enemy of God!

Let's find out *why* this is happening, v 11: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation." Through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection you have had every sin of yours blotted out, as if it didn't exist!

Remember what we read in the first part of Rom. 4: 'Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin.' That's a tremendous thing. Then he explains why sin came about. Why is it that as human beings we're enemies of God? Why is as human beings we sin? We need to look into that and see what Paul says.

Let's begin to understand why human beings sin, and why we have a sinful nature. Having a sinful nature, there is nothing that we can do that is purely righteous, that we can compel God to do something for us.

Verse 12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world... [we know that was through Adam] ...and by means of sin *came* death... [the wages of sin is death; that has been applied from the time of Adam all the way down through all human kind until now] ...and in this way... ['houtos'—for this reason] ...death passed into all mankind..." Death was given inherent within us at the time of the cursing of Adam and Eve. Death was made a part of

our very being.

Therefore, there is nothing that we can do carrying around sin and death in us that is ever going to be righteous enough to compel God to do something to give us eternal life. God has to give it as a gift. God has to do something with this nature. God has to do something to overcome this, or to compensate for it. Or we could go even one step further if an antagonist would say, 'God, why did you make it possible for all human beings to die and You live forever?'

That's why Christ came! That's why Christ died! His death—of His perfect physical life—pays for all the sins of all human beings, because God created all human beings, and Jesus—before He became human—was God! Because of the sin of Adam death passed to all men.

"...and it is for this reason that all have sinned" (v 12). Because of the very fact that you have 'the law of sin and death within your members' (Rom. 7), that's why you sin. So, you are in a helpless position unless God does something for you. That's why God *freely* gives it to you, because ***you can't earn it!*** No human being can earn it! That is why all have sinned!

Verse 13: "(For before *the* Law... [the law given to Israel] ...sin was in *the* world...." That's kind of an awkward way of saying, 'Listen, before God gave the codified Law to Israel, there was still sin in the world.' Which is saying sin is the 'transgression of the Law' so the Laws of God still applied even before the Law was codified and given to Israel. All you have to do is read the first part of the book of Genesis until the calling of Israel out of Egypt to see that that is a true thing.

"...However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist" (v 13). If there's not a law to define what sin is, it can't be imputed to you. It becomes a little complicated, a little heavy to understand. That's why we can't do this in a 30-second sound byte.

You have got to, with the Spirit of God, let your mind understand the Word of God, so you can realize what God is telling us. Then when you do, you realize the fantastic thing that God has done for us.

Verse 14: "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam..." Adam saw God face-to-face; Adam was created by God; Eve was created by God—to the affront to God; to choose to sin! To choose that way even before death was passed to them. That is a tremendous sin! That *way* is upon the shoulders of Adam and Eve.

God is saying, through Paul, even though other people didn't sin in the same way, with the same magnitude, with the same great results that occurred as Adam did...

"...who was a type of the *One* Who was to come [Christ].... [Then Paul makes a comparison]: ...But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*?...." (vs 14-15). The sin of Adam; what a great magnitude that was. Think how great that was! It passed sin and death to all human beings. Wasn't that of a tremendous and great magnitude? *Sure it was!* Even of a greater magnitude should also be the *free gift* of righteousness and eternal life through the justification that is in Christ.

"...For if by the transgression of the one man many died... [that is, all human beings die] ...how much more... [than that; how are you going to overcome this?] ...did the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?" (v 15).

We need to stop and think of the great magnitude of the sacrifice, the life, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and what God is doing with that!

- Do you think God is doing anything in vain?
- Do you think that this was just an exercise and 'religious' practice that God did?

or

- Was this not for the very salvation of the entire world?
- *Yes, it was for the salvation of the entire world!*

Of course, in God's time, in His plan, and in His way!

Verse 16: "And *should* not the free gift be like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment ... [or the sentence of death] ...*was* by one unto condemnation, but on the other hand, the free gift *is by one* to the justification of many offenses. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.)" (vs 16-17).

It's only going to happen through Jesus Christ. That is greater than all that happened through Moses and 'the law of sin and death' being given to all human beings, and as a result of all their sin, tragedy and wretchedness that we see about us in the world today. That's what we need to understand. That's why *justification by faith* can only be by *belief in Jesus Christ!* It can't be by a *work* that you do. It can't be by something that you think of. It can't be by an accomplishment that you set out to

do. It must be in total love and submission to God, and acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the grace of God.

Verse 18: "So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto all men, in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto all men."

(go to the next track)

We have justification to eternal life! But eternal life is only going to be given for those who love God; for only those who accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Verse 19: "For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* [Jesus Christ] shall many be made righteous." The sum of it is this: Once you accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! But you must come to repentance. It doesn't mean that you negotiate with God and you accept Christ on *your* terms. It means that you *accept Christ on God's terms!*

That's where the Protestants have it all wrong. 'As many as receive Him, gave He authority and power to become the very sons of God.' (John 12:1_[transcriber's correction]). That doesn't mean you receive Christ on *your* terms. *NO!* You receive Christ on *His* terms to eternal life! If you do, God is going to give you that righteousness, so that God—

- instead of viewing you as the sinner, which you are
- instead of God viewing you as the enemy of God, which you were

—views you as He views Jesus Christ Himself. That is a tremendous *justification*.

It would be like walking into a court and you know you're sentenced to death. The judge looks down and says that you will die. God says, 'I'm going to change the circumstances for you *if* you accept Jesus Christ, *if* you repent, *if* you are baptized. I will view you as I view Jesus Christ Who was spotless and without sin. I'm going to view you this way, and I'm going to put you in standing with Me. Not under the threat of death, but under the blessing of grace and life. I'm not even going to calculate your sins to you. I am going to remove them from you 'as far as the east is from the west.' Furthermore, I'm not even going to remember them. But you have some things, once you do that, that you also have to do. There are some requirements that are given.'

Verse 20: "Moreover, the law entered, so that transgression might abound... [that you really understand what sin is] ...but where sin abounded, the grace *of God* did super-abound." In other words, grace can cover all of that upon

the conditions that God has laid out.

Verse 21: “So that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace of God reign through righteousness... [the right standing before God; grace is going to rule in your life; of which then following God’s way is an integral part of it] ...unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 6:1: “What then shall we say?...” If God is going to do this; if God is going to be so generous, kind, good, merciful and gracious and actually view you as if He is looking at Jesus Christ Who was perfect. What do we do then? Go live our lives any ole way we want to?

“...Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?” (v 1). That we may have more sin, with more grace, more sin, more grace? This is what the Jews were accusing Paul of.

Verse 2: “MAY IT NEVER BE!...” May this thought never come into existence; so you don’t live a life contrary to the laws and commandments of God. You don’t continue in sin! You don’t continue as an enemy of God! You are *completely in Christ!* You belong to God! You belong to God the Father!

“...We who died to sin... [Have you died to sin? A sinful way of life?] ...how shall we live any longer therein? **Or are you ignorant...**” (v 3). That’s quite statement—isn’t it? It’s talking to Christians that are supposed to know.

“...that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?” (v 3). So, when it comes time for you to be baptized, **you are literally dying the death that Jesus died** to pay for your sins. That’s a fantastic thing to contemplate. You’re baptized *into the death* of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him **through the baptism into the death...**” God made baptism where then it’s fully immersed in water; you actually go under the water and it’s the closest thing you can come to—literally, symbolically—of death and still live. It is true that if the minister didn’t pull you back up out of the water, you would die. That’s why God has baptism by immersion.

This sprinkling stuff, daubing stuff, pour stuff doesn’t work! That isn’t what God commanded. The people who do that are in rebellion against God. People who do that are still enemies of God, because they’re not doing it God’s way. Once you become Christ’s, you put down all of your hostility to God’s way. You become just like Jesus said, ‘not My will, but *Your will* be done!’

- Is that how you have surrendered your life to God?
- Is that how you view your whole very

existence and being to God the Father through Jesus Christ?

That’s what it’s talking about here!

The Greek says, “...we were buried with Him...”—‘sune’ and comes from the word *synagogue*, which is pronounced: sune-na-gog-ae—meaning a gathering or assembling together. So, ‘sune’ means to conjointly become part of the death of Jesus Christ. Think of that! **You become part of the very death of Jesus Christ through the baptism that you take**, so that:

- you *die* to yourself
- you *die* to your sins
- you *die* to the world
- you *die* to the motivation of your own way

—that you can be raised out of this watery grave to walk in newness of life! It’s a whole total dedication to God.

“...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, **we also should walk in newness of life**” (v 4):

- being renewed in the spirit of our mind
- being renewed in our attitude toward God
- being renewed in the way that we live, walk, think, breathe and do everything as a Christian

Verse 5: “For if we have been **conjoined together in the likeness of His death...**” I want you to understand that! I want you to take seriously the death of Jesus Christ. Not this thing that is a sing-songy Protestant to where God ‘so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes...’—what does that mean to anybody? Or to see ‘John 3:16’ put in the end-zone at a football game. What does that mean to anybody? *It doesn’t mean a thing!*

I want you to understand the fantastic thing that God is doing. God is not only taking the life of Jesus Christ and applying to you, He is joining you with *His death!* He is joining you with *His life!* At the resurrection we are going to be *as Christ is!* That ought to be something that should inspire us and move us and give us greater understanding, depth, knowledge and joy. That’s why it’s such a pity that so many people argue about the Bible. They get their little old pet doctrine and being an enemy of God, come and brandish about supposedly ‘new doctrine’.

Listen, one of the greatest tricks of Satan the devil is to quote Scripture. The Bible shows that it has to be put ‘rightly together.’ Unless you have this concept, this knowledge, this understanding; unless you really live this kind of thing with God, then you’re lacking in understanding. You can grow in grace and knowledge, but I want to emphasize how

very important it is that you are buried with Him, in the very "...likeness of His death..."

"...so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man... [the old self] ...**was co-crucified with Him...**" (vs 5-6). When we come to the Passover time and we talk about how Christ was beaten, spit upon, and the spear was thrust into His side, you, upon accepting the very sacrifice of Christ, are saying, 'yes, that was also done to me.' I want you to think on that, and let that become a deep, vital, important part of your very heart, mind and being in your relationship with God.

Someone is surely going to say that that's morbid, wretched, why are you dwelling on that? *Unless you can see the morbidity and the wretchedness of human nature in your own self, then you cannot understand the greatness and the glory and the grace that God has given to make this possible for you!*

Verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed... [annulled, it's existence is legally put aside] ...so that we might no longer be **enslaved** to sin." That's what people serve. You want a good example of it, look at someone who smokes. Are they not subservient to that cigarette. Every fiber of their being is focused in on that cigarette, or drug, or alcohol, or whatever their pet thing may be. They are servants of sin!

Verse 7: "Because the one who has died... [through baptism in the death of Jesus Christ] ...**to sin has been justified from sin.**" You've been justified, not freed (*KJV*); it has been made right! You have been freed from sin only in the sense that in the presence of God it has been removed. You are *not freed* from sin in the sense that 'the law of sin and death' has been removed and taken from you and now you can no longer sin. ***He who has died through the baptism of Jesus Christ has been justified from sin!***

Verse 8: "Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more; **death no longer has any dominion over Him.** For when He died, He died unto sin once for all..." (vs 8-10).

God, Who created everything that there is through Jesus Christ, sent Him as the sum-total of all human beings combined. His one death applies to all human beings **IF** individually they repent of their sins, they are baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"...but in that He [Christ] lives, He lives unto God [the Father].... [totally dedicated to God] ...In the same way also, you should indeed reckon

yourselves to be **dead to sin...**" (vs 10-11).

If you are dead to sin, you're going to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and being; and you're going to know what God has done with a great and fantastic sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You're not going to be arguing with God anymore.

Maybe you might have to argue, discuss and talk about doctrine that some are trying to foist off that is not true, not from the Bible or some person's half-cocked idea of what they believe in God. You must defend the faith, that is absolutely true! But you yourself live to God as Christ lives to God. Go back and read some of the statements that Jesus said,

- I always do those things that please God—do you?
- I have not come to do My will, but the will of Him Who sent Me—do you?

That's what we have to look to. It's completely different. It's not a matter of 'playing religion'; it's not a matter of choosing Catholicism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, Lutheranism, Baptistism or anything like that.

- It's a matter of where is Christ!
 - It is a matter of what God is doing!
 - It is a matter of your standing with God!
- It's not a matter of denomination or religion*
- It's a matter of life and death!

"...but **alive to God through Christ Jesus** our Lord. Therefore... [as a result of being *alive to God*] ...do not let sin rule in your mortal body..." (vs 11-12). He's not saying that you're not going to have some sin come along. We have to confess our sins when we sin. But he's saying not to let it *rule* in your body. Don't let it reign and control your life.

I'll just use the example of the Sabbath: God says that it is a day that we gather together to worship Him and study His Word. It is a day in which we rest from all of activity that we do in the world. If you're wanting to let *Life* reign in your life—let Christ rule in your life—you will want to do that. But if you're arguing with God and you're saying, 'Well now, that sounds like a good idea, but I really don't know whether I want to do it or not.' Then you're letting sin *rule* in your life. You're letting sin, and your lust *dictate to you* how you will live, rather than letting *God tell you* how you should live—through Jesus Christ!

Verse 12: "Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the dead...*" (vs 12-13).

Many times we hear the story of someone

who had a second chance to live. After they realize that they were as good as dead, or were dead, and still were afforded the privilege of living longer. A lot of people have changed their mind and changed the direction of what they had been doing. Should we not also do that in relationship to how we live our lives in relationship to God the Father. As someone who has been resurrected from the dead as it were, "...alive from the dead..."? *Yes! That's how it needs to be!*

"...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you...**" (vs 13-14). Let's understand this. Here's a very key, important difficult Scripture to understand, but becomes very simple in light of what I've said:

"...**because you are not under law...** [for justification] ...**but under grace** [for justification]" (v 14). That's what it means in the Greek. It doesn't mean 'the' law, as it says in the *King James*. **You are under righteousness for justification!** Paul has to go on and explain, because a lot of people stop right there and say, 'We don't have to keep the laws of God anymore. It's just *grace*; brother/grace; love, brother, grace—that's it. *NO!* You live your life for God. Didn't we just read this? You live your life as though you are raised from the dead. That's what it means to be *under grace*.

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law [for justification], but under grace [for justification]? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**" Why, I ask, for those who are Protestants, do so many say that you don't have to keep the Laws of God; you can live in sin and God's grace covers all. Paul said that you're deluded! "**MAY IT NEVER BE!**"

Verse 16: "Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are **servants** of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Not a hired workman, but a slave, something that you are chained to.

Verse 17: "But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin... [past tense; that was your former life, but not now] ...but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine [teaching] which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness **unto sanctification**" (vs 17-19). That is, you are in the right and proper standing with God.

Verse 20: "For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore,

what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death" (vs 20-21). Look at your life!

- What did it amount to?
- Where was it going?
- What did you have in perspective of life?

As you came from birth on down through your life to where you finally came to the point somewhere along the line, you realize that you're going to die. You realize that death is at the door.

- What did your life amount to?

Verse 22: "But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life **through Christ Jesus** our Lord" (vs 22-23).

Now, I realize that you've had to concentrate and follow through to get all of the thoughts concerning this. But there are a couple of other things we need to cover so we can conclude the thought.

I hope that you will understand what, in some ways, is a very difficult portion of Scripture to understand, especially for those who know that we ought to keep the commandments of God. There are certain things in the *King James* that are very difficult that had to do with several definite articles, which are not there in the original Greek.

Let's understand how fantastic this justification is through Jesus Christ. Let's understand that you can't earn it, you can't work for it. Let's understand, review and remind ourselves that the Jews had their own laws and separation from the Gentiles. That had nothing to do with the Laws of God. That had nothing to do with the determination of God.

You read the Old Testament and God says that the 'stranger is to keep the Sabbath'; the stranger is to have the same law as you. He is to be accorded the same rights as you, especially if he is circumcised.

Here we have a little throwback to Judaism on account of the behavior of the Apostle Peter and also of Barnabas. Galatians 2:11 "But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned." Some people look at that and say that Paul was a troublemaker. Why didn't he take Peter off to the side and say, 'Peter, we ought to handle this in private.'

God was not going to all the crossbreeding of Judaism in the Judaism religion, Judaism rules, Judaism regulation, Judaism separation—which God never had a part of. Furthermore, you need to know

and understand that Judaism was *never* the Law of Moses—though the Jews, even today, claim that it is. It isn't so! That's one of the big lies!

Peter was to be condemned publicly! What Peter was doing was a public act, which needed public condemnation.

Verse 12: “For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party. And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?’” (vs 12-14).

So, it had nothing to do with the laws of God! Please understand, separation of people has nothing to do with the laws of God! That was a law of Judaism. Those from Jerusalem were coming down still clinging to some things of Judaism. Peter was dissimulating with them, causing dissention within the Church, causing trouble and strife with the Church. They were saying, ‘by this we are better than the Gentiles, because we separate ourselves and don't keep company with them.’

God accepts us because we separate ourselves from them! That's what was going on here. This rule of the Jews of not keeping company with the Gentile was a *work of law* that the Jews imposed as a tradition of the elders. I want you to have the picture really clear.

Peter and the other Jews in Antioch and even Barnabas were saying, ‘All you Jews come over here and eat, and all you Gentiles go over here and eat. Yes, this is in the presence of God, but we are better than you. This is our work of law.’

‘Now, if before this time, Peter, you were eating with all the Gentiles and you were eating as a Gentile would eat, why then do you make them do things that are Jewish by separating yourself? And why do you compel the nations to Judaize?’ That was the problem. It was never a problem with keeping the commandments of God.

Verse 15: “We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified **by works of law**...” It is *a work of a law* because *a work* was separating yourself from the Gentiles, which was *a law* of Judaism. They felt that that would make them in better standing with God if they had nothing to do with these beasts, the Gentiles. That's the attitude that the Jews had.

So, Paul is saying, ‘We know that you're not going to be justified by *a work of a law*. That's not going to make you in right standing with Jesus Christ. *No!*

“...but... [you are justified] ...through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be **justified by *the* faith**...” (vs 15-16). Not by *a work of law* over here that you're doing, but by faith in the great, marvelous sacrifice and wonderful working of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Do you not see what a paltry thing that Peter was putting Christianity in, in that particular thing?
- Do you not see what an absolute down playing of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that Peter was putting upon the Gentiles by saying, ‘We'll be justified by following a *work of law*'?

You Gentiles, you do this little *work of law* over here and you'll be fine, and we Jews have this little work of law over here and we'll be fine.

Where is Christ in all this nonsense?

That's what Paul was asking. He's saying, ‘Peter, you know better! You know that a work of law won't justify you. You know that it's only through faith in Jesus Christ that you have justification before God—not what you're doing.’ I hope that makes it clear.

Verse 16: “Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [the very faith of Christ *vs* a law of Judaism] ...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law; **because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.**”

Works of law will not justify you because a work of law was never designed to bring justification; only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and belief and acceptance in that sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners... [because we're not perfect] ...*is* Christ then *the* minister of sin?...” He's saying very clearly, ‘Peter, what you're doing is sin. Yet, you're still seeking the justification, which comes from God through Christ, trying to do it through this *work of law*. Don't you dare come along and say that this is an instruction from Christ, because it isn't! Christ is not the minister of *your* sin!’ That's what he's saying!

“...MAY IT NEVER BE!” (v 17). Christ is not going to be the minister of sin. We can even read in the Old Testament where God says, ‘Israel, you

made Me serve with your sins!’ And He sent them off into captivity because of it.

- Do you think that Christ is going to serve in our sins?
- Do you think we can lay down a rule and law that’s going to make Christ obligated to follow it?
- *Of course not!*

As the Apostle Paul said, ‘I speak as a fool!’

Verse 18: “For if I build again those things that I destroyed...” Paul is saying of his own life as a Pharisee, as a Jew who followed all of those traditions, even to the point of getting letters of condemnation to haul people back to be put in prison or to be stoned to death from as far away as Damascus.

Following all the laws of Judaism, Paul says, ‘if I start building again those things I threw down, threw away when I was converted: “...**I am making myself a transgressor**” (v 18). Don’t bring God’s name into it and say, ‘God is ministering this.’ *No!* ‘It’s my own individual action that I’m doing. God has nothing to do with that. I’m the sinner!’

Verse 19: “For **I, through law...** [for justification] ...**died to law...**” Or because the ‘wages of sin is death’; “...to law...” without Christ is dead! That’s what he’s saying.

- He’s not saying that he’s doing away with the Law.
- He’s not saying that he’s destroying the Law.
- He’s not saying that he’s throwing away the operation of the Law.

He’s saying that but for justification, you’re dead! “...in order that I may live to God” (v 19).

- not to a *rule*
- not to a *regulation*
- not to a *doctrine*
- not to a *structure*
- not to a *corporate thing*

But **to GOD** he may live. Now you know why Peter was to be condemned. Now you know why Paul publicly took him on.

Verse 20: “I have been crucified with Christ... [right back to Rom. 6; how do you consider your life? Are you crucified *with* Christ?] ...yet, I live.... [still in the flesh] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I...” Not for me; it is not my life; it is not ‘God, You’re up there and this is my life and I will do with my life what I want to do.’ Isn’t that the attitude that most people take? *Yes!*

Paul says, no! He says “...I live...” but it’s not I, it’s not for me. He’s saying, ‘Peter, I’m not saying this for me. I’m not here condemning you because of me. I am here saying this because of the

rotteness of what this represents before God.’ Maybe you’ve never had that explained to you that way, but that’s what it means.

“...**but Christ lives in me...**” (v 20). Does Christ live in you? Is that the very reason why you consider yourself still alive? That Christ, through the power of God’s Holy Spirit *lives in* you! That’s what justification is all about. How stupid, how paltry, how degrading to get some *work of law* in there to substitute for Christ. That’s what he’s saying.

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, **Who loved me and gave Himself for me.** [you have an obligation to God because of what Christ has done] ...I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain.” (vs 20-21). Do you see how serious the problem became? This is a tremendous lesson for all churches to realize.

- they cannot setup *their own* doctrines
- they cannot setup *their own* teachings apart from what Jesus Christ has taught

—because you are using a form similar to Judaism to condemn people, to exclude people.

You cannot take the Bible and use it as a weapon against people. It is the Word of God to bring life! I hope you more thoroughly understand the difference between justification by *a work of law* to men or a group or organization vs justification by faith in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, so that you through the grace of God can be in right standing with God the Father in heaven above.

- Cherish that!
- Love that!
- Hold it close to you!
- Thank God for it!
- Praise God for His goodness and mercy to you!
- Let the grace of God be upon you and on you and in you through Christ Jesus our Lord!

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

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Romans 3:20-26
- 2) Romans 5:8-10
- 3) 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
- 4) Romans 4:25
- 5) John 3:16
- 6) Romans 5:1-21
- 7) Romans 6:1-23
- 8) Galatians 2:11-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 12:1
- Romans 7

FRC:bo Transcribed: 10-14-12 Corrected: 2/2016

Justification by Faith III

Fred R. Coulter

Why is the Bible so confusing, so difficult to understand in certain places. In studying the writings of the Apostle Paul, even Peter made the comment that Paul wrote ‘things which were sometimes difficult and hard to be understood.’

In going through *Justification by Faith*, there are several difficulties that we need to be aware of concerning the Word of God, concerning the Bible that you may have. Most people have a *King James Bible*, and in the main the *KJV* is generally acceptable and generally good enough, and generally clear enough so that you can understand the meaning of it. However the *King James Bible* in the critical places in Galatians that we are going to cover, it is very hard to understand; it is very difficult to understand, and it causes a great deal of confusion.

{recommended: *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* used in this transcription}

It causes the confusion because if you’re going to want to please God and do what is right, we know we have to keep the commandments of God. We absolutely know that and understand that! However, we also need to realize that what is called *justification through Jesus Christ by faith* is a different thing than commandment-keeping or *works of law*.

So, if you can just bear with us, just follow through with me, I’m going to try to make this clearer and more easy for you to understand. However, I’m not going to be reading from the *KJV*. In this particular section in Galatians, the second chapter, it is most difficult because of the way that the *King James* translators have translated this section of the book of Galatians. It makes it appear that the Laws of God are not to be kept, if you follow Christ. This absolutely is not true!

We know that Paul wrote in Rom. 2:13 that not the *hearers* of the Law are just before God, but ‘the *doers* of the Law shall be justified.’ We’re going to cover several things in this section on *Justification by Faith*, which I hope are going to clear up some of these difficulties for you.

Let’s review where we left off in part two of *Justification by Faith*, and review the situation where Paul is talking about *works of law*. When you read it in the *KJV* it says, “...**the** works of **the** law...” It really is not that in the original Greek.

Let also mention something that is very important to understand: While it is commendable that we have such things as *Strong’s Concordance*, *Young’s Concordance*—which are very good; they can help out an awful lot—please understand that it

is a very limited tool when it comes to understanding the original language in either the Greek or the Hebrew, because you need to understand the *way* that the language is used. The *Strong’s Concordance* only gives you the root word with all the multiple definitions of the root word, which may or may not be of some help to you in studying the Bible.

It is helpful in certain aspects of it, so that you can learn some things. But for establishing doctrine or trying to understand difficult Scriptures, you must have at least a working knowledge of the language. If you have a working knowledge of the language, then you will be able to understand where the pitfalls are—the obvious ones—in the *King James* translation of the Bible.

I’m going to be reading the Greek Interlinear by Zondervan. {note to reader: Scriptures in transcription are from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order*}. I have a working knowledge of Greek and it gives the English between the lines. It also has a column with the *King James*.

The problem that Paul was having with Peter and those at Galatia was that they were going back into law-keeping for justification, because that’s what it was under the Old Covenant. They had law-keeping with justification to the temple, never to God the Father in heaven above. Please understand that! Under the Old Covenant they never had justification to God the Father in heaven above, because that is not accomplished through law.

Law can only bring you so far. The justification or the righteousness that is in Christ is a different kind of justification, a different kind of righteousness, which is only done through Jesus Christ. That is why it cannot be done by law.

The Jews, as we also know, Jesus corrected very severely for all their traditions: their *dos* and their *don’ts* and the washing of hands and pots and pans and everything else that they had. He said, ‘Full well you reject the commandments of God that you may keep *your traditions*.’

One other thing about tradition that you need to know and understand: Tradition was counted by the Jews—classified and equal to and in some cases—even better than the Law of Moses.

When they had *their* laws, everything that they did was to justify them in the flesh. Another problem that they had in the New Testament was that their traditions said, ‘We Jews, since we are the chosen ones of God, must separate ourselves of those of other nations—whom the Jews called Gentiles—because we cannot associate with them

because in associating with them we become unclean to God.’

You will never find that in the Bible. You will never find the Bible saying that those who are following God should separate themselves from other people. Even in the Old Testament it says there will be *one law*—for the stranger and for the Israelite—there shall be no partiality. That was a *Jewish tradition* that made them very much anathema. This wall, the barrier, that they built, which was torn down in Christ.

So, when Paul came to Antioch and Peter was there, they were keeping, apparently, a Feast of Tabernacles, Peter and some of the other Jews separated themselves from following Judaism. The problem here is not whether to keep the Laws of God or not, the problem is *how these laws were applied* and in particular those laws of justification that came from Judaism.

Galatians 2:14: “...I said to Peter in the presence of them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles... [nation-like] ...and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?’” That was the key thing.

- Was there any Law of God saying to separate yourself from other people which you’re eating? *No!*
- If they did separate from other people, did that make them better than anyone else? *No!*
- If you wash your hands with soap and water, does that change your heart and mind? *No!*
- If you go stand in another part of the room, does that change your heart and mind? *No!*

You need to understand something about a *work of law*: It is something that is done outside of you. A work of law is a contrivance—especially by the Jews here in Judaizing—that set them apart, to make them feel better. Did it make them more righteous? *No, it didn’t!* As a matter of fact, spiritually it was a sin!

Verse 15: “We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that **a man is not justified by works of law...**” (vs 15-16). That’s very important to understand, because the *KJV* says: *the works of the law*—‘the’ is not in the Greek or the original. It is: “...**a man is not justified by works of law...**” Why?

- Why can you not be justified by *works of law*?
- What is the basis of law?
 - ✓ law was designed to tell us what sin is
 - ✓ law was designed to point out where you go wrong
 - ✓ law was designed to be required by all human beings to do

All of your present law-keeping does not undo or forgive or blot away all of your past law-breaking. That is why by *works of law* no one is going to be justified. The reason being is we are talking about *justification to God the Father in heaven above*, and that cannot be accomplished by something that you do as a law. *That can be accomplished by a change of heart, mind and attitude!*

“...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [literally Jesus’ own faith] ...we also have **believed in Christ Jesus...**” (v 16).

- Do you believe in Christ Jesus?
- Do you really, literally, **believe**
 - ✓ what He did?
 - ✓ who He was?
 - ✓ what He represented?
 - ✓ what He did for mankind?
 - ✓ what He has done for you?
- Do you **believe** that?

It’s very interesting that there are some people who think that the works that they have to have are all kinds of laws that they need to do. Granted, Paul said, ‘What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!’ That is not saying that we can break the commandments or laws of God. *NO!* It’s an entirely different thing when you believe.

John 6—this is when Jesus fed the 5,000 and He fled away from them because they wanted to make Him king, because they were going to have all this free food, they supposed. When they came and found Jesus:

John 6:26: “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied. Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, but *for* the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.’ Therefore, they said to Him, ‘**What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?**’” (vs 26-28). Very interesting statement. What did Jesus tell them? This ties right in with Gal. 2.

Verse 29: “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘**This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent.**’” He’s saying that you *must believe* in Jesus Christ. You cannot have a ‘religion’ over here claiming the Laws of God—as the Jews supposedly claim—and have contact with God, because you reject Christ. Christ is *the Way, the Life and the Truth—there’s no other way!*

The justification that we are talking about has to do with *belief*. That is called *justification by faith*. If you *believe* then you have something more powerful than a law that says *to do* or not to do. Belief means that it comes from the *inside!* Belief

means that it is something that you are involved in, which then is greater than any law. Why is that greater than any law? *Because it gives you the spiritual power and capacity*—with the power of God’s Holy Spirit—to have that faith, understanding and total yieldedness to God the Father—through Jesus Christ! I hope it will become clear to you.

Galatians 2:16: “Knowing that a **man is not justified by works of law**, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...”

I know that for some people this may be very hard to grasp. Let’s again use the example of the Jews, then we will use examples of the Catholics or Protestants.

If a Jew keeps the Sabbath: God says to keep the Sabbath. God says, ‘Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy. Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, Holy unto the Lord. In it you shall not do any work; you, nor your son, daughter, man servant, maid servant, the cattle that is within your gate. For in six days God made heaven and earth and the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day and sanctified the seventh day, therefore, you shall keep the Sabbath.’

What if someone over here says, ‘I’m going to keep the Sabbath, but I reject Christ. I don’t want anything to do with Him. I think He is of Satan the devil. I think He is a blasphemer. I think He is a false messiah. But I’m keeping the Sabbath.’ Does keeping the Sabbath do that man any good whatsoever? *NO!* He doesn’t *believe* in Christ!

The Catholics have said that grace can only come through works. Therefore, you must have the works that the Catholic Church says you must do or you don’t have grace.

- Does grace come by works?
- or*
- Does grace come by belief?
 - Does grace come by faith?

Maybe you’ll understand why it said there in James 2 where James says, ‘You show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith *by* my works.’ What he is doing is motivated from within with God’s Spirit to do what is right.

Let’s take this one step further: What then if you believe in Christ and you follow what Christ says: ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments’ and you keep the Sabbath. Do you have benefit in keeping the Sabbath? *Yes!* You have benefit in keeping the Sabbath, however, **justification must take place first through Christ**. Then commandment-keeping of the commandments of God do benefit you. They really do!

Let’s see another example of commandment-

keeping so that you will understand that it doesn’t come by law-keeping.

Matthew 19:16: “Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, ‘Good Master, **what good thing shall I do...**’” Isn’t that what everyone wants, God doesn’t want something you can do. God wants *you!* God doesn’t want you over here mechanically keeping a law because it’s written down. God wants you to love Him. So therefore, as a consequence of that love and faith, then you keep the Law in the right spirit and attitude.

Have you ever kept a law that you didn’t want to keep? What was your attitude? (grumble grumble) That’s why with Christ it can’t be that way.

“...‘Good Master, **what good thing shall I do** that I may have eternal life?’ And He said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.’” (vs 16-17).

Do we have a conflict here with what we’ve been saying? *No!* We don’t have a conflict! The young man was depending on his commandment-keeping to save him. Jesus said to enter into life, keep the commandments. That is a condition!

Verse 18: “Then he said to Him, ‘Which?’ And Jesus said, ‘You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’.... [and the young man thought he had it made; he was ready to get eternal life] ...The young man said to Him, ‘I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?’” (vs 18-20). What did Jesus say? Did He say, ‘Bless you, sonny, you’re a good boy’? *NO!*

Verse 21: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you desire to be perfect... [completely sincere, totally dedicated] ...go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.’” Notice how the emphasis is on *following Christ*.

Verse 22: “But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions.” God doesn’t want an action that you can do. God wants *you!* That’s why He said to go sell everything that you have; don’t depend anymore on your material riches over here. His commandment-keeping was fine, He didn’t condemn him for it. But it has to be beyond commandment-keeping. Commandment-keeping is part of it: ‘If you will enter into life, keep the commandments’—that’s very clear.

Galatians 2:16: “...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by

the faith of Christ, and not by works of law; **because by works of law shall no flesh be justified**.... [law only tells us what to do. It doesn't justify] ...Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then the minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor. For I, through law, died to law... [because 'the wages of sin is death'] ...in order **that I may live to God**" (vs 16-19).

Do you live to God? *or* Do you have a 'religion' over here that you practice whenever you *feel* religious. Total difference.

Verse 20: "I have been crucified with Christ... [conjoined in that burial at baptism] ...yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I... [He is not motivated for himself] ...but **Christ lives in me**...." That's what *justification by faith* accomplishes: Christ *in you* by the power of God's Holy Spirit. That cannot be accomplished by any law.

"...For the life that I am now living in the flesh, **I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God**... [That God put *in* Paul by the power of His Holy Spirit; Paul is living *by that faith* with Christ in him.] ...Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through works of law, then Christ died in vain" (vs 20-21).

Here's where the confusion comes in, Psalm 119:172: "...all Your commandments are righteousness." So, *if*—through law—righteousness does not come, what is it talking about? Is this some sort of conflict? *No, there isn't any conflict!* There are two kinds of righteousness:

1. *of the Law*—just the keeping of the commandments
2. *justification*—that can only come through Jesus Christ

The reason being is that God determined it that way. There was never a law that could give life. The law only causes death. Even if a person kept the laws as best they could all through their life—what happens? *As in Adam, we all die! The wages of sin is death!*

The righteousness that we are talking about here is not righteousness that can be from law-keeping. This is a righteousness put in right standing before God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ.

How is that accomplished? This becomes the very most important thing for us to understand, for us to realize, before we go on any further in the book of Galatians. This righteousness that it's talking about here is putting you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above and is on a much higher plane than commandment-keeping. The

righteousness of the Law—which is fine—is okay, but that does not put you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above through the Holy Spirit. There's something else that has to take place for this justification.

Let's see how this righteousness comes, which is called *justification*. The terms *justification* and *righteousness* in this particular sense that we are talking about are nearly synonymous. The Greek word is the same—'dikaios'—which means *to justify*.

Romans 5:8: "But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood..." (vs 8-9). Can any law take the place of the blood of Christ? *NO! No law can take the place of the blood of Christ! You are justified by His blood*; that is step #1.

- What if Christ just died and wasn't resurrected?
- What if He died and shed His blood?
- Would a person be justified?

Let's see something very clearly, that we need to understand concerning justification through Christ. It has to be through His blood, because He was our sacrifice. He *is* our sacrifice. 1-John 2 says 'a perpetual, continual atoning mercy seat through Jesus Christ.'

What if Christ died and wasn't resurrected? There are a lot of people who believe that Jesus was a prophet. There are a lot of people who believe that He lived. But they don't believe that He was the Son of God. They don't believe that He was resurrected from the dead. As a matter of fact, the Jews paid the soldiers to say that His disciples came and stole the body away, and they believe that unto this day. Yes, that was even a prophecy, because unto this very day many of the Jews believe that.

- What if that were so?
- What if Jesus died and wasn't resurrected?

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?... [a modern heresy going on, even back then] ...For **if there is no resurrection from the dead, neither has Christ been raised**" (vs 12-13).

If Christ was not raised *you're not justified*, because it takes the blood of Christ and the resurrection of Christ, and His acceptance of God the Father to bring that justification so *you* are put in righteousness—or right standing—with God; which is actually God imputing to you, or crediting to you—though you don't deserve it—the very

righteousness of Christ.

Verse 14: “And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain. And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; 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 14-17). You have no justification.

But Romans says that ‘while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and being much more justified *by His blood!*’ There is no law that’s going to be substituting for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—period! Hands down! Understood!

Even Job had to learn that lesson. Maybe you can go back and understand why Job was so corrected, even though in the letter of the Law he was a perfect man. That didn’t change his heart, mind and attitude. That did not bring him belief in God, belief in Christ. He was *trusting in himself*. So much so that Job said, ‘This is so unfair. I wish that there were someone to referee between me and God.’ That’s a pretty stiff case of self-righteousness.

- *Works of law* cannot substitute for the blood of Jesus Christ.
- *Works of law* cannot substitute for the resurrection of Jesus Christ so that we are justified.

Verse 17: “But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished” (vs 17-18).

Romans 4:25: “Who [Christ] was delivered for our offenses and **was raised**... [from the dead] **...for our justification.**” Please understand, justification comes by:

1. the blood of Christ
2. the resurrection of Christ
3. Christ going to the Father

We also understand that every sacrifice of animals that was given under the Old Covenant, when the blood was drawn from that animal, the sacrifice was not complete until that was taken into the Holy of Holies; until it was taken into and accepted by God.

In the same analogy or parallel, if you have an animal sacrifice and slit its throat, and you just let the blood fall on the ground and do nothing else with the sacrifice, that sacrifice, even as a work of law, was of no effect; likewise with the sacrifice of Christ. ‘It’s impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to forgive sin’ (Heb.). But this man died **once for all** and **by His blood and sacrifice** has our sins been cleansed.

This becomes very interesting when you put it all together; and this ties this together with righteousness, the true righteousness which is *put in right standing with God the Father in heaven above!*

John 16:8^[transcriber’s correction]: “And when that one [the Holy Spirit] has come, it will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment: **Concerning sin**, because **they do not believe in Me**” (vs 8-9). What is this telling us? *If you don’t believe in Christ, you are yet in your sins!* That lack of belief, in itself, **is a sin!** That’s what Jesus said right here.

III. Acceptance by the Father

Verse 10: “**Concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father** and you no longer will see Me.” There’s the third step, Jesus had to go to the Father. He had to appear before God the Father to put away all the sins of those who repent.

Is that clear? The righteousness that we are talking about in the New Testament, through Jesus Christ, **can only come through Him.**

- it cannot come by any other means
- it cannot come by knowledge
- it cannot come by prophecy
- it cannot come by law
- **It can only come by belief!**

If you are keeping the commandments of God and not believing in Christ, your commandment-keeping does not put you in right standing with God.

Let’s see how this works in another case, and here’s how this righteousness begins; you have to have a start somewhere. We’re going to see that in this case the Pharisee was not sinning, but his law-keeping did not justify him because his heart was not right.

Luke 18:10: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain.’” (vs 10-12). Let’s analyze something here. Let’s go back and think about this for a minute.

- Is it what God wants you to do to not be an extortioner? *God doesn’t want you to be an extortioner!*
- Does God want you to be unjust? *No, He requires that you be just!*
- Does God want you committing adultery? *No, God does not want you committing adultery!*

Then he compared himself with the other

person and said, ‘Boy, I’m better because “...I fast twice in the week...” Is it good to fast? *Nothing wrong with fasting!* “...I give a tithe of everything that I gain [possess].” Is there anything wrong with tithing? *No, there’s not a thing wrong with tithing!* But what did it do for the Pharisee? Did it change his heart, mind and attitude? *No! He had hatred in his heart!*

Law-keeping in this sense—without God, without Christ, without the Holy Spirit—led to contemptuousness toward other people.

Verse 13: “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’ I tell you, this man went down to his house **justified, rather than the other....**” (vs 13-14).

Why? *Because justification begins with repentance!* That’s why law-keeping begins with understanding the law. Repentance means that you recognize your sinful helpless self! Then only God can help you; only God can make you right. When you are put in right standing with God, then you want to keep His commandments. It’s a whole different motivation. Christ becomes paramount instead of law.

(go to the next track)

Where law is paramount and Christ isn’t mentioned, they’re falling into the problem and difficulty that they had in Galatia. They were depending on the law and the law brings death and fear and all the things in between, because no one can do it. No one can keep it in the way that Christ did.

What you have to do is believe in Christ. What you have to do is understand about the sacrifice of Christ. You have to have that applied to you. That’s why when we go to Acts 2, here is how it is when you begin on that road of that kind of justification.

This is Peter speaking and he’s giving the sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:36: “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.” You have to be crucified with Christ! You have to be buried with Him through watery baptism into that grave to be conjoined unto His death.

Peter is saying that *you* have crucified Christ. Let’s take it personally. *My sins*, for my part, killed Christ. *Your sin*, for your part, killed Christ!

- What can justify that?
- What can make that right?
- Can a law?

- Can law-keeping make that right?
- ***NO! It has to begin with repentance!***

Verse 37: “Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart...” That’s what the justification through Christ must do:

- it must start in your heart
- it must start with your realizing that you need the mercy of God
- you need the forgiveness that comes through Christ

Here they were “...cut to the heart and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’” (v 37). Just picture yourself this way:

What if unknowingly you got into circumstances where you killed someone? You didn’t know that you did. How would you feel? Let’s make it an even more gruesome example so you will get the magnitude of it. What if you lived in an area where you were afraid of burglars coming into your house and robbing you? You had a gun and what if one night you were awakened and you heard someone downstairs and you thought for sure this was someone robbing your valuables. You quietly got up and you got your trusty little gun and you pulled back the lever to cock it and you walked down the stairs real quietly and you saw this outline of someone. You all of a sudden got startled and shot them.

BAM! and your wife was screaming upstairs, ‘What going on?’ and came running downstairs and turned on the lights and you killed your own son!

- How would you feel?
- What would you do?
- How would you make that right?

There isn’t any law-keeping you can do to make that right—none whatsoever! It’s the same way with Jesus Christ. You have killed Christ! Your sins literally drove that spear into His side, drove the nails into His hands and feet, and ***only God the Father can make you right through the justification which comes from God and that must be through repentance!***

Verse 38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘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.’”

- That, my brethren, ***is justification!***
- That, my brethren, ***is the righteousness*** that is in Christ Jesus

—which cannot come by law! I hope that is clear! Some people, just like Paul said, are going

to say that we are saying, ‘Let’s be sinning so that grace may abound.’ Even Paul had to say, ‘God forbid!’

Once you come to this understanding, once you have repented, once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord and Master, and Ruling King in heaven above, are you then going to look to something else to bring you salvation? *or* Must you always look to Christ? ***You must always look to Christ!***

Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but **Christ lives in me....**”

- Does Christ live in you?
- Does Christ motivate you?
- Isn’t it much greater to have Christ in you than to have the Law written over here on a plaque?

It’s fine, nothing wrong with it, but the Law was never meant to do what Christ can do.

- Does Christ live in you? *That’s something you have to answer and find out!*

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, **I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God, Who loved me...**” (v 20). Remember that God loves you. Remember, ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever may believe on Him may receive eternal life.’

- Do you *believe*?
- Do you *understand* what kind of belief that that takes?

That belief you can’t work up! It isn’t like one of these ‘energizer bunnies’ that you windup and crank it up from within. It’s not *your* faith; *it’s Christ’s faith in you!*

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me **and gave Himself for me**” (v 20). Relinquished everything that He had as God, before He became human, for you!

Verse 21: “I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain.” Do you understand it? *I hope so!*

In the light of this, Paul says, Galatians 3:1: “O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you... [deceived, misled] ...*into* not obeying the Truth...”

What is Truth? ‘*Your Word is Truth!*’ Jesus said to ‘sanctify them through Your Word.’ Paul said here: “...who has bewitched you *into* not obeying the Truth...”

- Are we to obey the Laws of God?
- Are we to keep the commandments of

God?

- *Certainly! God expects that!*

As a matter of fact, God expects that of every human on earth. That’s a requirement of just being a human being.

Our requirement is greater than that! Our requirement is to *believe* in Christ Jesus. What is part of obeying the Truth beyond keeping the commandments and laws of God? *Believing on Jesus!* The Greek is *into*, so deep, so profound, so moving it is *into*, because it’s with the very power and Spirit of God and Christ is *in* us.

As Paul said, ‘The just shall live by faith!’ These things are revealed from faith to faith: the faith of God to you and your faith and belief, as a result of that, back to God. That’s what Paul was saying here.

“...before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified, was set forth in a written public proclamation? This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by works of law, or by ***the hearing of faith?***” (vs 1-2).

That’s an incorrect translation in the *King James*: ‘*the works of the law.*’ Is it by *works of law* that you received the Spirit? *No! You receive the Spirit by repentance!* Isn’t that what Peter said, ‘Repent and be baptized and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ A fantastic and marvelous thing, a great and wonderful thing. That’s what it really is; it’s fantastic!

“...did you receive the Spirit of God by works of law, or by ***the hearing of faith?*** Are you so foolish? Having begun in *the Spirit*, are you now being perfected in *the flesh?*” (vs 2-3).

That’s how many people start out. They believe in Jesus Christ, they’re baptized, they accept the sacrifice, they start keeping the commandments of God, and pretty soon Christ is way off over here and everything is do this, do that, do the other thing, and don’t do this, don’t do that, don’t do the other thing. And you can’t be a Christian unless you are right here in this one place, and this is the only thing.

NO! NO! NO! Back up! **Where is Christ in all of that?** That’s what you have to ask: Where is Christ in your life? That’s what Paul was saying. You started out in the spirit, now are you going to be perfected by the fleshly things of law-keeping that you can do?

Verse 4: “Have you suffered so many things in vain, if indeed it *has been in vain*? Therefore, *consider this*: He Who is supplying the Spirit to you, and Who is working deeds of power among you, ***is He doing it by works of law or by the hearing of faith?***” (vs 4-5). Is it that you believe in God that way? That’s what he’s asking!

Then he begins to cover a broad area beginning with Abraham. We get the overall principle of everything that is involved.

Verse 6: “*It is exactly as it is written: ‘Abraham believed God, and it was **reckoned to him for righteousness.**’*” It’s the same thing with you. Can you be perfect? *No, you can’t be!* Can I be perfect? *No, I can’t be!* Why? *Because flesh is never perfect! Human beings are never perfect!* God did not make human beings perfect.

Isn’t it kind of foolish for us to pretend that we’re perfect? Isn’t it kind of foolish to pretend or try and make ourselves perfect by thinking that there is something we can do from ourselves to give us life? *Nonsense! It won’t work!*

Same way with Abraham. Abraham *believed!* That “...was reckoned to him for righteousness.” God said that belief and faith puts you in right standing ‘with Me, because I accept that.’ Who gave Abraham the belief and faith in the first place? *God did!* It was “...reckoned to him for righteousness.” Same way with you: God views you as He views Jesus Christ, in that very righteousness of Christ, which is the justification that we are talking about.

Verse 7: “Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham. Now, *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles [nations] by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’.... [Remember, this was done before the ritual of circumcision was required.] *...It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham” (vs 7-9).

- Is that how you believe God?
- Do you believe what God says?

Abraham was really in quite a predicament—wasn’t he? This is quoted in the book of Genesis. God came to Abraham and said, ‘I want you to look at all the stars in heaven.’ It’s not like us today. We live in these dirty, rotten, wretched cities and we have smog, fog, exhaust and dirt. You go out a look up at the sky and it’s all that you can do to tell that it’s blue.

Back then he didn’t have any of that. Abraham stepped out there at night and no streetlights to inhibit looking at the stars. It’s like being in certain places on earth, the stars look like they almost come right down on top of you.

He stood out there and God said to Abraham, ‘Look at all these stars, Abraham, count them if you can. I tell you, so shall your seed be.’ Abraham didn’t have a son. Abraham had been waiting pretty close to 20 years at that point to have a son. He was old. Sarah was old.

But what did it say of Abraham? *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness!* Could you do that? Here you are a 90-year-old man and your wife is 80, you’ve got another 10 years before you’re going to have the son. Took you out at night and stood you on top of a hill and said, ‘Look at all those stars up there, so shall your seed be.’

There’s no account there where Abraham says, ‘Oh, God, how can that be, I’m just an old man.’ He *believed* God! That’s why it was counted to him for righteousness. That is what is so fantastic.

- Do you believe in Christ?
- Do you believe in that seed of God that came through Abraham: *Jesus Christ?*

You need to get that in mind so you’ll understand more, v 10: “For as many as are *relying on works of law are under a curse.*” Remember, that’s setting aside Christ. Why are people under a curse who have *works of law?*

“...because it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them’” (v 10).

The law is the law and if you don’t do every little bit of it, you are under a curse. In other words, ‘the wages of sin is death’ (Rom 6:23).

Verse 11: “Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of* law; because *it is written*, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”

If you have been justified by ^[1]**the blood of Christ**, if you believe in ^[2]**His resurrection**, if you know that He went to present Himself ^[3]**before God the Father**—to present His sacrifice of Himself to put away sin once for all—if you believe that and live by that then you are living by faith.

Verse 12: “Now then, the Law is not based on faith...”—because the Law says, or the law doesn’t say. If the Law doesn’t say, then make another law so the law says.

“...but, ‘The man who practices these things shall live in them.’ Christ has redeemed us **from the curse of the Law...**” (vs 12 13).

Protestants seem to believe that this means Christ has ransomed us from requirements to keep the Laws of God. But Jesus said, ‘think not that I have come to destroy the Law or Prophets; I’ve not come to destroy but to fulfill. I say to you not one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled.’ That hasn’t been done yet, so it’s still all in force.

He came to redeem us not from the Law, but from the curse! What is the curse? *The wages of sin is death! Sin cuts us off from God!* Christ came to bring us back to God; buy us back; redeem us from

the curse of the Law which is *in our sins we're already dead*. That's what He's redeeming us from. Not from the obligation to keep the commandments of God whatsoever.

- He's redeeming us *from our sins!*
- He's redeeming us *from our nature!*
- He's redeeming us from *the way that we have been living!*

"...having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree')... [referring to His crucifixion] ...in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*" (vs 13-14).

Paul is giving a very full and complete explanation, and this becomes pretty heavy, a little difficult to understand. I did not understand this for many years, even being a minister, I did not fully comprehend or understand this.

We'll come to a verse here that really caused me to ponder, and then I began to realize and understand the difference between the righteousness that is in law, and the righteousness that is in Christ Jesus. There are two different kinds of righteousness. The righteousness, or justification, in Jesus Christ puts us in right standing with God the Father in heaven above. The righteousness of the Law only puts us in right standing with the temple on earth.

Verse 15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it."

Example: What if you bought a car. You signed a contract that your payments would be \$150/month. That contract that you have signed is a covenant and becomes part of the law of the land. Can that company come back in six months and say they've changed their mind. Even though this contract says that you have four years to pay for this car at \$150/month, we are going to demand of you \$450/month because we think that's what we deserve.'

Do you have to pay the \$450/month? *NO!* That's an add-on. Can they add on to it? *No, they cannot add onto it!* They cannot change it once that it is confirm and signed. They can't change it. The law is that that contract is within law, you must follow it, you must pay \$150/month. That's what you are required. Now, if you voluntarily want to pay more, that's up to you.

On the other hand, let's look at it the other way: What if you looked at that contract and say, 'Well, \$150/month; I think I'm only going to give them \$75/month.' You start sending them

\$75/month and you get the bills that say that you're short \$75 and now you have to pay plus a late payment, the second and third month comes and a letter comes. You just ignore these because you only want to pay \$75/month. One day you come home and your car is gone! You get on the phone and try and find out where your car is and, lo and behold, you found out they repossessed it!

You call them up and say, 'What did you take my car for?' *You did not keep the law of this contract!* 'I gave you \$75/month.' *No, the law calls for \$150!* 'I didn't want to pay it.' *Then you don't get the car!*

Law is cut and dried! You can't add to it or change it. It's the same way here with the promises given to Abraham. Once the promise was given, it says, 'by two immutable things God could not swear by any greater than Himself' so He swore by Himself. And it's impossible for God to lie! Let's get that in mind and please understand this.

Verse 15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it. Now, to Abraham..." (vs 15-16). We're talking about a promise between God and Abraham. Isn't that much more important than your contract with your car? *Yea! Absolutely!*

"...and to his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, 'and to *your* seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'and to *your* Seed,' which is Christ. Now this I say, *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ **cannot be annulled by the Law**, which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect" (vs 16-17).

That's what the Jews were saying, 'We don't accept Christ; we don't believe in Him; we believe in the Law and we will accept nothing else but the Law.' Paul is saying that God 'promised this righteousness 430 years *before* the Law was given to Israel.' So, we have the promise given to Abraham; 430 years later we have the Law given to Israel.

Did that change what God had promised to Abraham? *No! Because that promise to Abraham was one promise, one covenant!* Go back and read that there were more promises and more covenants given to Abraham:

- there was the promise and covenant given *concerning Christ*
- there was the promise and covenant given *concerning the nation of Israel*, which was to come
- there was the promise and covenant of the *physical land* that was to be given to the descendants of Abraham
- there was the promise and covenant of

eternal life

All of those are different and separate promises and covenants. Neither one interferes with the other. So, the Law that was given to Israel 430 years after the promise given to Abraham doesn't do away with the promise given to Abraham. That's what Paul is saying.

Verse 18: "For if the inheritance *is* by law... [of eternal life and the Kingdom of God] ...*it is* no longer by promise...." Just like the contract that was made. If it's in the contract and the contract says so, that's all that can be done. That's one of the reasons why Christ came and died; to literally break that marriage covenant that He had with Israel. When Christ died, He was symbolically dying as the Husband of Israel. We know that marriage is binding until death.

So, when Christ died, that fulfilled and ended all of the promises that were given concerning the promises through law. Now the promise is through spirit, through the resurrected Christ. We now are going to serve:

- in newness of spirit
- in newness of attitude
- in newness of the way that God wants us to live

The inheritance and blessing and promise did not come through law.

"...But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise. **Why then the law?**.... [very good question] ...It was placed alongside *the promises* for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom *the* promise was made..." (vs 18-19). People look at that and that seems to be the hardest thing to understand.

Some people say that this means that the sacrifices were added to the Law given to Israel—a law added to a law. NO! That is not correct. What are we talking about here in the whole thing?

1. the promises of God
2. the covenant given to Israel given 430 years later

The apparent full meaning of Galatians 3:19:

Why then the Law? That is the purpose of the Law, which is the Old Covenant in relationship to the original covenant and promise given to Abraham. It was appointed.

The Old Covenant given to Israel was ordained in addition to and placed alongside of the promise given to Abraham for the sake of transgressions, that is to point out clearly what sin is until

the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made.

We are talking about the promises given to Abraham. We're talking about the Law given 430 years later. Just like any other contract.

- Is a promise a contract? *Yes, it is!*
- Did God contract with Abraham and Abraham contract with God? *Yes!*
- Can that contract be set aside? *No!*
- Can you add to it? *No!*

But you have the other promise of the Law, which was given to Abraham, for Israel. That was placed alongside of; didn't replace the promise. It was in addition. It was a separate thing that was given "...until the Seed should come to Whom *the* promise was made..."

I hope that this hasn't been too heavy or too difficult for you.

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

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Galatians 2:14-16
- 2) John 6:26-29
- 3) Galatians 2:16
- 4) Matthew 19:16-22
- 5) Galatians 2:16-21
- 6) Psalm 119:172
- 7) Romans 5:8-9
- 8) 1 Corinthians 15:12-18
- 9) Romans 4:25
- 10) John 16:8-10
- 11) Luke 18:10-14
- 12) Acts 2:36-38
- 13) Galatians 2:20-21
- 14) Galatians 3:1-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 2:13
- 1 John 2
- Romans 6:23

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 10-14-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Justification by Faith IV

Fred R. Coulter

Let's begin in Galatians 3:6, and because this is so difficult, we need to review so that we can really grasp and understand the concept. The reason we need to do that is because there are false conclusions drawn by the Protestants, the Catholics and the Jews.

1. The Protestants believe that they can have Christ and not keep any commandments at all. Based upon some of the Scriptures we are going to cover that's the conclusion they come to.
2. The Catholics say that you can only receive grace through *works* that the Catholic Church has **put down through canon law**, which in effect then becomes a *work of a law*.
3. The Jews do not recognize Christ at all and everything is through Moses, through the Law and through *their traditions*.
 - How do you receive salvation?
 - How did salvation come?
 - Why do we need Jesus Christ?
 - Are the Protestants correct over here in saying that we can have Christ and not obligated to keep any of the commandments of God, except those we may choose to do?
 - Are the Catholics right in saying that we can add all of these other laws on and you must do these works in order to have the grace of God?
 - Are the Jews right by saying that we don't recognize Jesus at all and it's through Moses and through the Law?

That's really the heart and core of the problem that we have in understanding Galatians. There are several cross-currents that take place as we get into it. To compound it even further and make it more difficult.

Unfortunately, at this point the *King James Version* of the Bible does not do the translation properly, because they add definite articles which make it appear that you are doing *works of law* related to the commandments of God.

Let's understand what it's teaching us here, and let's keep those concepts in mind so we can understand where the error comes from. When error and Truth are mixed so closely together, it's very difficult to pull the Truth out unless you understand the Truth and the error.

Here is the heart and core of the whole reason of why we have salvation through Jesus Christ. I think when we get done with it you're

going to understand why *salvation and justification must only be through Jesus Christ*.

Galatians 3:6: "*It is exactly as it is written: 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned [given] to him for righteousness.'*" It was calculated or imputed, or given to him for righteousness. We're going to see that the Bible talks about two kinds of righteousness:

1. righteousness that comes from law-keeping, which puts you in right standing *with the temple*
2. righteousness through Jesus Christ—reckoned to Abraham—puts you in right standing *with God the Father in heaven above*

All of us would agree that is the greater righteousness!

- How does that greater righteousness come?
- Does it come by *works of law* of any law?
- How it is accomplished?

Verse 7: "Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham. Now, *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles [nations] by faith... ['Gentile' is a Jewish racist term] ...preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.'* *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham" (vs 7-9).

Verse 10 is the real critical verse, which people say tells us that we should not keep the commandments of God. That is not true! The commandments of God, as we have learned, are to be kept, but there is a limit to the effectiveness of commandment-keeping. The Law tells us what sin is. The Law tells us what we should do. The Law actually is for *all* people to keep. It's a requirement of human existence.

Justification with God the Father in heaven above is a different process. You can't take the process of *works of law* and substitute that for the sacrifice and life of Jesus Christ. This is why Paul says:

Verse 10: "For as many as are *relying* on works of law are under a curse..." This is where the Protestants say if you try and keep the commandments of God you're under a curse. That's not true! Because it says, 'Blessed are those who do His commandments, and a good understanding have they.'

- Why is there a conflict?
- *The Law was never designed to give eternal life!*
- What is the result of the Law?
- *Death!*
- Why is the result of the Law death?
- *Because the wages of sin—which is the transgression of the Law—is death!*
- Has anyone ever been perfect?
- *No! No one has ever been perfect!*

So, everyone is under the curse of the Law, because they couldn't continue in everything that was written in the Book of the Law to do them.

- What is the curse?
- Is the Law a curse? *No!*
- What is the curse? *Sin is the curse!*

Please keep that in mind when we read this.

Verse 10: “For as many as are *relying* on works of law... [rejecting Christ for salvation] ...are under a curse, because it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them.’” *The curse is sin!*

Verse 11: “Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of* law... [God never designed the Law to justify what the sacrifice of Christ justifies] ...because *it is written*, ‘The just... [the one who has been justified] ...shall live by faith.’” (vs 10-11). There's a difference in faith in relationship to law. Faith is that:

- you *believe* what God has said!
- you *believe* God!
- you *believe* in Jesus Christ!
- you *believe* what He has said!
- you live and follow *His* way!

Is that any different from God's way? That is literally, actually, completely *God's way!*

Verse 12: “Now then, the Law is not based on faith...” You can read it, look it up, there's no faith involved in the Law. The Law says...; the Law doesn't say... Christ says *believe Me and follow Me!* Does He tell you what you're going to have to go through in that faith and that belief? *No, He doesn't!* Faith is different than law.

“...but, ‘The man who practices these things shall live in them.’” (v 12). Even though a human being is not perfect, there's still a virtue in keeping the Law. But that doesn't take the place of Christ. That does not remove sin. That does not give you the Holy Spirit. That is a different and separate function that has to come in a different and a separate way. So that we clearly understand this we'll review just

little bit more here:

Verse 13: “Christ has redeemed [ransomed] us from the curse of the Law...” Bought back from the *curse* of the Law, not that the Law is a curse. The curse of the Law is sin! He has ransomed us from sin. ‘You are bought with a price’ (1-Cor. 6). You are not your own, and you ransom back the one who pays the ransom then tells you what to do, Christ has ransomed us from the *curse* of the Law.

“...having become a curse for us...” (v 13). We know that it says, ‘Christ became sin for us, Who knew no sin’ (2-Cor. 5:21). He took upon Himself *our* sins. What law can you substitute for that? *You can't substitute any law for that!*

“...(for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’)... [He was crucified] ...in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and* that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (vs 13-14).

Let's look at a couple of examples of what faith requires vs law vs doing something. Let's see what kind of thing we must do.

After Jesus fed the 5,000; people really got excited about that, because they saw the disciples going along and breaking off the bread and fish and it just kept replenishing itself. They fed the 5,000 out of a few loaves and a few fish. And certainly they wanted this to continue as a continuous supply of food, so they came and found Jesus and they said, ‘Rabbi, we've been looking for you.’

John 6:26: “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles... [which was a powerful miracle by the Spirit of God] ...but because you ate the bread and were satisfied.’” They were carnal-minded. They only wanted the fleshly things. They didn't care about the miracle that was performed to do it, that that may have been done by the power of God. They were concerned that they ate the food.

Verse 27: “‘Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, **but for the food that endures unto eternal life**, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.’.... [this is what people always do]: ...Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?’” (vs 27-28).

Everyone wants some sort of work. Everyone wants some sort of direction of what to do, so that they can do it externally. They don't want to get involved internally in it where it requires something of them. That's why they asked: “...‘What shall we do, in order that we ourselves

may do the works of God?”

Verse 29: “Jesus answered and said to them, **‘This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent.’**” It’s saying that you believe on Jesus Christ, and *belief* takes far more of your being, far more of your ability, far more of your involvement than to just do a law.

For example: If there’s something that you can do; what if the only thing you had to do was go to a vending machine and put in four quarters and draw out of there whatever you wanted? That is *a work!* You don’t have to believe in the vending machine. You don’t have to understand how it goes. You have no part with it. You do it sort of mechanically, automatically. There’s nothing involved in it.

- Does God want that kind of behavior?
- Does God want that kind of rote follow the law kind of thing?

No! God wants more than that! He wants you to *believe!* It takes belief in what Jesus Christ said, and it requires far more than just keeping the commandments.

Matthew 19:16: “Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, ‘Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?’” What is the *work* that we may work to do the works of God? Jesus didn’t say at that point to keep the commandments—did He? *No!* He said to *believe on the One Who has been sent*—which was Himself. I’ve even heard that applied to a minister, that you’re to believe the minister. Well, *the minister does not substitute for Christ!* Here he wanted to do some good thing that he may have eternal life.

Verse 17: “And He said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But **if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.**’”

Is there some contradiction here? *No!* *There’s no contradiction* because commandment-keeping is part of what is required. But commandment-keeping is NOT Christ! Keep that in mind.

Verse 18: “Then he said to Him, ‘Which?’ And Jesus said, ‘You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ The young man said to Him, ‘I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?’” (vs 18-20).

Do you see what it is? When someone says there is a law: What do I lack, yet? Read the book of Job. What lesson did Job lack? *Repentance!* What he

had was *works of law!* It got so that he was so involved with it and thought that he was doing so good that God *owed* him something. He even said at one point, ‘Oh, I wish there were an umpire between me and God to referee this dispute, because it’s unfair that I’ve been treated this way. After all I’ve been so good.’

We find almost the same attitude here with the young man, v 21: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you desire to be perfect, go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.’ But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions” (vs 21-22).

There is no law that says to sell all that you have. Christ can tell us and we have to believe and we have to follow. Let’s see how these things work, so that we can understand what the law-keeping cannot do, and what is required.

Luke 18:10: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself... [not to God but with himself] ...in this manner: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain.’” (vs 10-12).

Let’s stop and look at this again. Is there anything wrong with not being an extortioner? *No! God doesn’t want you to be an extortioner!* You should not be one. God does not want you to commit adultery, or be unjust, or to be a person that you might consider a derelict.

But then on the other hand, look what he was relying on; v 12: “I fast twice in the week...” Nothing wrong with fasting, but does that obligate God to you? *No!*

“...*and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain.” Is there anything wrong with tithing? *Nothing wrong with tithing; God requires it!* But here’s a perfect example of someone who is relying upon law and the righteousness of law to make himself acceptable before God. It takes something else!

Verse 13: “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’” What is the key difference here?

1. law-keeping without repentance
2. repentance so that they can be put in right standing with God

What did Jesus say? Verse 14: “I tell you, this man went down to his house **justified...**” That’s what we are talking about: ***justification because of***

repentance and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!

Acts 2:36—this is Peter preaching the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the Day of Pentecost: “‘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.’ Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart...” (vs 36-37).

They were repenting; they saw something that was greater; now we are looking at the sacrifice of Christ; now we are looking at the life of Christ and justification comes in three steps:

1. we are justified by His blood
2. He was raised for our justification
3. He went to God the Father to get that justification for us

There had to be the *death, the shedding of the blood, the resurrection and the acceptance of Christ* as that sacrifice.

- What law can replace that? *No law!*
- What can you do? *You must believe in that sacrifice of Christ, and you must repent!*

They were pricked in their heart! You must have a conversion *inwardly spiritually*, done by faith and belief in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

“...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘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’” (vs 37-38).

With that in mind let’s look at a couple of other Scriptures that are profoundly important, so that we understand what we are talking about when we go back to Gal. 3.

Here is a verse I am sure that has been very difficult for you to understand in the past, Matthew 11:12: “For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a *great* struggle, and *the* zealous *ones* lay hold on it.... [It was difficult getting into the Kingdom of God.] ...For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John” (vs 12-13).

- Does that mean that the Law was done away? *No!*
- What happened with John?
- What did John do?

Luke 16:16: “The Law and the Prophets *were* until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it.... [What is the difference? Notice the clarifier]: ...But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away

than *for* one tittle of the Law to fail” (vs 16-17). Jesus clarified it to make sure that they understood the laws were still binding and in effect.

What does it mean, “The Law and the Prophets *were* until John...”? What happened from that point on? That’s the key thing we need to understand. Let’s see what happened with John. Instead of just looking to the Law; instead of just looking to the Torah; instead of just looking to the temple—now what was going to happen? *Something greater was going to happen!* That’s why Jesus told the woman at the well, ‘Woman, believe Me the hour now is, and is coming, when you shall neither worship in Samaria nor in Jerusalem for the Father seeks those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.’

What happened? Let’s see what happened beginning with John the Baptist, Matthew 3:1: “Now, in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘Repent...’” (vs 1-2). There is the key! The Kingdom of God is heralded by *repentance!* It’s a vast and completely different thing. You repent from your sins, and sins are ‘the transgression of the Law’ that is a curse. Who redeemed us from the curse of the Law? *Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the Law!*

“...John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand’” (vs 1-2). *Repentance* was preached from that time forward. *Repentance* was the main and the important thing that took place.

Let’s see what Jesus preached. Let’s see what He said. Now we are going a step beyond just the Laws of God.

- they are good
- they are righteous
- they are perfect
- they are Holy

But it doesn’t accomplish what the sacrifice of Jesus Christ accomplishes.

Mark 1:14: “Now, after the imprisonment of John, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.” Remember, Jesus said that the Law and the Prophets prophesied until John, and from that time the Kingdom of God is preached. What is the preaching of the Kingdom of God?

Verse 15: “And saying, ‘The time has been fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is near at hand; repent, and believe in the Gospel’”—which we have seen as the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, the Gospel of Grace. What does that involve?

We are going to see the magnitude of *justification by faith*. We are going to see what that requires. It required *greater* than law-keeping by human beings. It required the *life and the death* of God! Is that not greater than law-keeping? Is not the death of Christ greater than your death? *Absolutely!*

John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word **was** God.” That’s why the Gospel is of a greater magnitude than the Law.

That’s why a Jew over here cannot reject Jesus and say, ‘I’m going to keep the Law and God is obligated to do something for me.’ *NO!* Since Christ, God is not obligated to do anything for the Jew. Therefore, if he keeps the Sabbath without Christ, his Sabbath-keeping does him no good. It’s better than Sabbath-breaking, but it doesn’t require God to do anything for him. If you reject Christ, if you don’t believe in Christ, if you hate Christ, what good does your law-keeping do over here?

Now let’s look at the Protestants on the other hand. They say, ‘Okay, we believe Christ, we accept Christ, but we don’t have to keep any commandments.’ They, in effect, make Christ the minister of sin.

What you really need is to understand that there is grace of God, there’s repentance and then commandment-keeping falls into a subordinate position. It is required! It is not paramount over here as in the case of the Jews. It is not abrogated over here in the case of the Protestants. What Christ did was greater than any law-keeping. You cannot take law-keeping and affect the same thing as Christ.

On the other hand, you cannot go ahead and say, I claim Christ and do away with commandment-keeping, because Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments. I am the Way, I am the Truth, I am the Life.’ We’re talking about a very profound thing here:

John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word **was** God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him” (vs 1-3).

Tell me something: Is it greater to have God come down on Mt. Sinai and speak the Law? *or* Is it greater that God came as Jesus Christ—in the flesh—and lived a perfect life and gave Himself for us? Gave us a way to eternal life? Which is greater? *Christ is greater!* Now maybe you understand it says ‘the Law and the Prophets were until John and from that time it’s preached the Kingdom of God. That’s far more important.

Verse 4: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it” (vs 4-5). Sometimes people stumble over the Truth.

It’s kind of like Churchill said one time, ‘People go along and stumble over the truth, they pick themselves up and dust themselves off and go on their merry way and forgot what they’ve come across.’ It’s the same way here, when the *true* Light shines, the very life of Christ. Can you imagine what it was with Christ coming to His own, doing all of those miracles, going through everything that was done at that time, and people vehemently blasphemously rejecting Jesus Christ and all that He did. They just didn’t comprehend it.

Notice how it starts out with God and then it always comes back to John, because John is the focal point where the promises given to Abraham, that Christ would come, were fulfilled.

Verse 6: “There was a man sent by God, whose name *was* John. He came for a witness, that he might testify concerning the light, so that through him all might believe” (vs 6-7). We’re talking about *belief!* We’re talking about the power of belief, which is greater than any force of law.

Verse 8: “He [John] was not the light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the light. The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world” (vs 8-9). That’s a profound statement in itself. He’s saying that that light of life, which every human being has—by creation—came from God! Every human being then has an obligation back to God.

Verse 10: “He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him.” That’s incredible! That is an incredible statement when you really understand it. The world new Him not! The world accepted Him not! How many in the world really understand Christ the way that He really is? the way that He was? what He requires for us today? *Not very many people, because:*

Verse 11: “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him; but as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name; who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of *the* flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but by *the* will of God” (vs 11-13).

What does it mean to receive Christ? This is a key Scripture that Protestants use. How do you receive Christ? The Protestants say that you open up your heart and you let Him in.

- Is that receiving Christ?

- Under what terms do you receive Christ?
- What did Jesus say? *Repent and believe the Gospel!*
- What did John say? *Repent and be baptized!*
- What did Peter say? *Repent and be baptized!*

That's how you receive it! You receive Jesus on His terms! Not on your terms. You receive Jesus Christ the way that He has said, the way that God the Father has said. Not that you are good enough to receive Jesus in your heart, because you're a good person. No! That's not true! That makes you the same as the Pharisee who says, 'Thank You, God, I'm not as other people. I'm good enough to open my heart to You.' No way! You receive Christ the way that God says to receive Him.

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the glory as of the only begotten with the Father*), full of grace and Truth." That's the only way to salvation, through Jesus Christ.

Verse 15: John testified concerning Him, and proclaimed, saying, "This was He of Whom I said, "He Who comes after me has precedence over me because He was before me." And of His fullness we have all received..." (vs 15-16). What do you receive? *You receive from God!* You don't accept Jesus and receive Him on your terms; you accept the terms of God!

"...and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses, *but the grace and the Truth came through Jesus Christ*" (vs 16-17). Now what are we doing? *We are worshipping and adoring God! Christ! Not law!*

I'm sure that this will become very clear to you. For those who do not fully understand about Jesus Christ, but who are fixated and focusing in on law, this may seem a little contradictory and a little difficult for you to understand.

But let's realize that even Jesus said, 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for commandments, the doctrines of men.' And they reject the commandment of God. Jesus also said, 'Not everyone who says to me *Lord, Lord*, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but the one who is doing and practicing the will of My Father.'

With that in mind let's go back to Gal. 3 so that we can understand exactly what we're talking about here. Galatians 3:15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, **no one nullifies it, or adds a codicil to it...** [Paul is establishing a principle that is true] ...Now, to Abraham and to his

Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, 'and to *your seeds*,' as of many; but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' which is Christ. Now this I say, *that the covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ...*" (vs 15-17).

In other words, confirmed by God to Abraham that it was going to go to Christ—the promise from which eternal life would come—Paul says: "...cannot be annulled by the law, which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect." (v 17).

You have the promise given to Abraham at one point; 430 years later the Law was given to the children of Israel. Does this Law change the promise given to Abraham? *No! It does not change the promise given to Abraham!* What are the two things that we are talking about:

1. the Law
2. the promises

Verse 17: "Now this I say, *that the covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by the law, which was given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect."

You cannot say, 'We have the Law, You must give us eternal life.' Eternal life does not come through law. The promise of eternal life did not come through the covenant given to Israel, called the Law.

Verse 18. "For if the inheritance [of eternal life] *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise.... [God promised it to us. We must *believe* that He's going to give it.] ...But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise."

- Why the Law?
- What is the purpose of the Law?
- What is the means of the Law?
- What is that in relationship to the promise given to Abraham?

Verse 19: Why then the law? It was placed alongside *the promises...*"

(go to the next track)

Did the addition do away with the promise? *No!* The promise stands superior because it was given first.

The apparent full meaning of Galatians 3:19:

Why then the Law? That is the purpose of the Law, which is the Old Covenant in relationship to the original covenant and promise given to Abraham. It was appointed.

The Old Covenant given to Israel was ordained in addition to and placed alongside of the promise given to Abraham for the sake of transgressions, that is to point out clearly what sin is until the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made.

In this translation, I brought to bear all the focus of the other Scriptures into this verse, because that's what it's talking about. We're not going to have isolated out here and say that we're going to do away with the Laws of God.

The Protestants believe that because the Law was added to the promise of Abraham that now we don't have to keep any commandments. That is not true! What did Paul say? 'What? Shall we sin that grace may abound? God forbid!'

"...for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, until the Seed should come to Whom *the* promise was made, having been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator" (v 19).

Christ's covenant with us was not ordained through angels; it was ordained by God the Father and Jesus Christ Himself! With the Old Covenant there was the layer of the angels between God and the individual. With the Old Covenant you had:

- the laws
- the sacrifices
- the washings
- the oblations

—everything that was done to justify them in the flesh to the temple. That's all the Law was designed to do. Once a year, the mediator—the high priest—went into the Holy of Holies and, through the hands of an angel, the ceremony was carried out so that God could deal with Israel through the angels.

Now we don't have the intermediary at all. We go directly to God. That's why we cry out in our heart, 'Abba, Father.' We have something greater than coming to a temple. We have going into the very presence of God the Father in heaven above.

Verse 20: "Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one, but God is one." There were many mediators, many priests. There were all the people out here on the one hand and then there was the high priest, the mediator, on the other, and then the angel carried out that mediation between Israel and God. It was a very hands-off, removed process. That's why there was no eternal life through the Old Covenant, though they had the Laws of God.

Verse 21: "*Is* the law then contrary to the promises of God? MAY IT NEVER BE!... [May this thought never come into existence, which is far more powerful—isn't it?] ...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then*

righteousness would indeed have been by law." This is a difficult Scripture to understand, so we'll take this apart step-by-step.

"...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life..." The Greek comes from 'dunamis'—*had the power to quicken, give life*. Does any law give life? What does law do? *Law defines conduct!* The transgression of the Law is not eternal life; the transgression of the Law is eternal death.

1-Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God..." Very clear!

- What was preached from the time of Jesus Christ? *The Kingdom of God!*
- What are we to inherit? *The Kingdom of God!*
- How must we inherit it? *We must inherit it with eternal life!*

That's why I put in Galatians that if the inheritance be by law—that is of eternal life in the Kingdom of God—flesh and blood cannot do it.

"...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 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).

Notice that the focus is entirely different. The focus of this is eternal life, to live forever in the Kingdom of God. The focus of law is to live in a community of flesh and blood human beings so that you have a means of having a societal structure whereby you can get along and love your neighbor as yourself. Quite a vast difference.

Verse 53: "For this corruptible must put on 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).

What is the whole purpose of Christ coming? The sacrifice of Christ? *The life, death and resurrection of Christ is to receive eternal life!* That our dying—as in Adam we all die—is going to be overcome through the victory of the resurrection.

Verse 55: "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Now, the sting of death is sin..." (vs 55-56). As in Adam we all die—why? *Because we all have the law of sin and death in us, and we're going to die in Adam!* Is death still the result of sin? *Yes!* Can we also die the second death for our own sins if we don't repent? *Yes!* (Rev.

20-21). Yes, there is the second death!

But for those who have salvation, "...the sting of death *is* sin... [the law of sin and death in us; our own transgressions that we repent of] ...and **the power of sin is the law**" (v 56).

Understand clearly: That is why the Law cannot give life. There is no life flowing from the Law. Life flows from *God* Who is Life. The strength of sin is the Law. When the Law is broken it demands death. Death is the *curse of the Law*. What did Christ redeem us from? *He redeemed us from the 'curse of the Law' so that we can have eternal life!*

I hope this will help us understand why the Law is not able to give life. The Law's proclamation is that if you break the Law you die! That's why! There is no promise of life in law.

Galatians 3:21: "...**For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, then righteousness would indeed have been by law.**" What kind of righteousness? *The righteousness that puts us in right standing with God the Father in heaven above, which is through Christ!* This righteousness means that *you have been justified and put in right standing* with God the Father through the blood of Christ, through His resurrection and through His appearance and acceptance to God the Father where He has remained and is perpetually there to service us with the power of God's Holy Spirit and to lead us by His Holy Spirit. **No law can do that!**

Does that release us from any obligation to keep the Laws of God? *May it not be! No!* We are to serve in 'newness of spirit' with love, with belief.

Verse 22: "But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin, so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ the promise might be given to **those who believe.**" You have to believe that God has done such a fantastic and wonderful and marvelous thing, that He would send His Son, that the One Who is the Creator of everything that there is, came and lived and died and was resurrected. *You have to believe that!*

That excludes an awful lot of people. We can say, because the Protestants say they believe that, they are closer to the Truth than the Jews, than the Catholics, than the Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims or any of the other 'religion' that all have different *works of law* that they do.

Verse 23: "Now before faith came..." Where does faith come from? Whose faith are we talking about? What did we learn in Gal. 2? **We are justified by Christ's very own faith!** That faith could not be imparted to us until Christ died and was resurrected and He sent the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a gift

from God! Before faith came—even though there were certain ones under the Old Covenant that had faith in God—they didn't have the very faith of Christ as we can have it today.

"...we were guarded under law..." The *KJV* says that we were under a 'schoolmaster'; that sounds kind of like a taskmaster. Is there anything wrong with being *guarded*? *There's nothing wrong with being guarded, protected by the Law!* If you lived in the virtue of the Law and did those things, fine. That gave you a better life than living in total sin. Look at law-abiding citizens in the community, don't they have a better life than those who are drug addicts, those who are drug dealers, those who are murderers and rapists and so forth? *Yes!*

So, being guarded by or protected by the Law, when you live within it, there's nothing wrong with that. But there has to be *more* to life than that. That's why even law-abiding citizens say, 'What is there in life? 'I've been good!' But what is there in life?'

I'm dealing with a man who is strictly against religion. I can understand why. I had to do quite a bit of business with him. I think he knows I'm a minister, but I think he's very dumbfounded that I have not tried to convert him. I know that only God the Father can call him and convert him. I also know that he can't stand 'religious' people who try and palm off their 'religion' on him. He's fed up with Catholics, Protestants and they have so turned him off—which happens to a lot of people—that he's just going to try and muddle his way through life.

Well, if God is going to call him, and if our relationship builds on a business basis, maybe one day he'll ask me. Then I'll be in a position to tell him, when he asks, and he will be willing to listen.

He's a reasonable decent guy. He's honest and forthright, but he doesn't have Christ. He's going to live his life, and he's got quite a bit of money, and he's beginning to ask—I can hear it when he's talking, because his brother just had a sudden bleeding ulcer and was sick with the flu and taking ten aspirin twice a day. You know how he got his ulcer. The aspirin created the ulcer, he vomited up blood and fell out of the shower and his wife thought he was nearly dead. His heart stopped; they took him to the hospital; it took him time to get him blood. So he has a little stroke effect on his left side.

He's just going to himself, why? My brother is good man. He's doing good things. In the back of his mind he's saying, 'He's worked so hard for all that he has and now that he has it, what happens. Then he had another brother die of a stroke, and I think he's about 55. So, this is going through the

back of his mind.

- that is the futility of the Law
- that is the futility of life without Christ

Before faith came!

Do you understand that even in your own life? *That's hard for us to understand! Why? Because we know Christ! We have been given that opportunity through Christ, so maybe you'll understand a little more now.*

"...having been shut up unto the faith that was yet to be revealed.... [The faith that is now currently being revealed. That's what it's talking about.] ... In this way, the law was our tutor *to lead us to Christ...*" (vs 23-24). The Law is to teach us:

1. we shouldn't sin
2. law is not the ultimate that there is

There's got to be something greater and beyond, and it is *to lead us to Christ* "...that we might be **justified by faith**" (v 24). That's what it's all about.

Verse 25: "But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor, because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (vs 25-26). What does that mean? *That means, put very simply, have graduated from the sandbox!*

How would like to live life perpetually in the fifth grade. About age 40 you would know that there was something greater in life than the fifth grade! So, when Christ has come, something greater than the Law has come—right? *Yes! The Son of God! The Law taught us what was right and wrong, but it didn't take care of what was right and wrong; **only God can take care of that!*** That's what it's talking about here.

Verse 25: "But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor." That doesn't mean that we don't keep the Laws of God. It means that we do them now through love, automatically. Why? *Because the Laws of God are in our heart and mind because we love God!*

When you first learned to drive, and if you had a stick-shift, you had to be very careful. You'd get it in gear and the instructor would say to ease down on the throttle and ease up on the clutch and let it go real easy. The first time you did it BAM! you killed it; stopped and he says you didn't do that right, you let the clutch out too fast and you didn't give it enough gas. So, you do it again, and you'd drop the clutch and the thing takes off!

What was happening? *You were being tutored by the teacher!* He was telling you what was right, what was wrong; he was the law in that sense; a law figure telling you what to do.

Now that you've learned how to drive it,

when you get in to start the car, do you say, 'open the door, sit in the car, put in the key, turn on the ignition, push in the clutch, turn the starter, put it into first gear, let off the break, put down your foot gently on the throttle, let your foot up on the clutch gently and go? Now shift into second gear because it is time? Now shift into third gear because it is time? Now we're going down the street 30 mph, now shift into fourth gear?'

That's an overextended exaggeration of what it would be like to constantly live under a tutor. You don't go around and say every day 'I shall not steal; I shall not commit adultery; I shall not lie; I shall honor my father and mother; I shall have no other gods before me.' *NO!* It's all automatic! You recognize when there's another god before you. You look for ways to keep the commandments of God. You don't look for ways to break the commandments of God.

That's what it means, v 25: "But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor, because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many *of you* as were baptized **into...** [the Greek is 'eis'] ...Christ did put on Christ" (vs 25-27). How are you put in this faith position with God? Through law-keeping? *NO! Through faith in Christ and baptism!*

When you have that, how is it that some people say that you don't have to be baptized, all you have to do is accept Christ, receive Him? *NO!* You don't receive Him according to *your* terms. You receive Him according to *His* terms, and *you must be baptized!*

Verse 27: "For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." Is it greater to have Christ *in you*, **or** to have a lapel pin that has the commandments written on it? ***It is greater to have Christ in you!*** If you take the commandments of God and say, 'that's fine, that came through Moses, but I don't believe in Christ. I'm going to work out my own salvation *my way*. Can you save yourself even with the Laws of God? *NO!* Even with the Laws of God you have no forgiveness of sin, because forgiveness of sin and justification does not come with law-keeping. It comes through Jesus Christ, repentance and baptism.

- Can you have salvation through the laws and rituals of Hinduism? *No!*
- Through Buddhism? *No!*
- Through Mohammedism? *No!*
- Through Catholicism? *No!*
- Through Protestantism? *There may be a question mark, according to how they keep the commandments of God!*
- How can you have it? ***Through Jesus Christ alone! No other way!***

Can you have salvation by attending a church, because a church says if you walk out that door you are no longer Christ's? *NO!* Can you have salvation because the Church says, if you walk in this door, if you're a woman you must be dressed in a certain way; if you're a man you must be dressed in a certain way? *NO!*

Salvation comes directly from God the Father to each one of you individually, therefore, when you really fully understand about grace and Christ and the Holy Spirit, you do not need a hierarchy over you telling you how you can have access with God. You have it directly. It's not through an apostle, through the evangelist down through the pastors, elders and finally to little ole you sitting here in the church. Through them do you receive God? *No way! That is a work of a law stated by a man! It's between you and Christ!* Therefore, *no one* can take your salvation from you. It is through Christ. You *must believe* in Christ Jesus.

Verse 27: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.... [When you have that]: ...There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female..." (vs 27-28)—before God. In this physical life we're still male and female, and there are certain things that God requires. But it's saying here there is no respecter of persons with God. If you are Christ's it doesn't matter

- where you were born
- what your lineage is
- who you are
- who your father was
- who your mother was
- who your sister was.

It doesn't matter if you are male or female, God is dealing in your life on an equal and individual and separate basis for salvation. *That's why law cannot substitute for Christ!* That is absolutely something!

"...are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (vs 28-29).

I know that it's been a little tough and difficult. These are pretty weighty Scriptures. Like Peter said, 'Paul wrote some things hard to be understood' because we are dealing with eternal life and we're dealing with all the mixture of these terrible little heresies that came along and tore the Church apart.

- Once we have gotten through all of this complication, can you understand the simplicity in Christ? *Yes!*
- Do you understand the proper perspective of commandment-keeping? *Yes!*

God is greater!

This helps you have more love and respect for God, more love and respect for each other, and it relieves a great burden from everyone. You don't have to live the other person's life to make sure that they are good. You can help them! You can love them! Let God deal with them! Let God make sure that they are good! You take care of your life and ***make sure that you have that faithful right contact with God the Father, through Christ, and God will also take care of you!***

That makes it very simple, very good. Just think how if this were preached, this would stop the gossip chain that has ruined people's lives. Just think how if this were preached, this would stop the ministerial gestapoism that has been executed upon so many people. Not only those that we know of, but also in denominations like the Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Catholics, different things like this, where they have had ministerial and priestly gestapoism exercised in their lives.

That's why we all need to point to Christ and all need to love Him in faith. Now we have the complete structure on the foundation so we'll know what Paul is talking about.

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

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Galatians 3:6-14
- 2) John 6:26-29
- 3) Matthew 19:16-22
- 4) Luke 18:10-14
- 5) Acts 2:36-38
- 6) Matthew 11:12-13
- 7) Luke 16:16-17
- 8) Matthew 3:1-2
- 9) Mark 1:14-15
- 10) John 1:1-17
- 11) Galatians 3:15-27
- 12) 1 Corinthians 15:50-56
- 13) Galatians 3:21-26, 25-29

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 6
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Revelation 21; 22
- Galatians 2

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 10-14-12
Corrected: 2/2016

Faith For Salvation?

Fred R. Coulter

- What kind of faith do you need for salvation?
- What is faith in the first place?
- Why do you need it?
- How intense must you have faith?
- Under what circumstances must you have faith?
- How is it going to work in your life?
- What is it going to produce?
- How is it going to affect your salvation?

There are a lot of ‘good-time Charlies’ out there that, sure, as long as everything is going nice, and smooth, wonderful, good, fine, and you have all the physical things, everything is great, you can have faith.

Let’s see what Jesus said about that kind of viewpoint, or attitude, or outlook, however you want to phrase it. And especially in this world we have several things that we need to consider that come in and:

- takes away faith
- rob us of faith
- give us a shallow faith
- give us a weak faith
- not really comprehending what God wants us to have

Matthew 6:24: Jesus said: “No one is able to serve two masters...” That is the whole key concerning faith.

- you can’t have faith whenever you want to turn it on and off
- you can’t have faith when you come to church, and then you don’t need it the rest of the week
- you can’t serve two masters

Either God is your master, as Jesus said, *or* you have the world and you have Satan as your master. There may be some what you might call ‘middle ground’ in between, from the depths of Satan to the conversion of Christ. However, in reality there is a sharp line of difference: *either you belong to God or you don’t*; it’s that simple.

That’s why you can’t serve two masters. Think of this when you’re on the job: How about if you had two bosses? One would come along and tell you to put a package on the table. The other one comes along and says, ‘I told you not to put it on the table. Put it on the floor.’ So, you put it on the floor. And the other boss comes back and says, ‘What’s it doing on the floor? I told you to take it off the floor and put it on the table.’ It’s an impossible thing! And

likewise, when you get to marriage, too. That’s why God said that the man is the head of the wife. And he’s the head of the family. You can’t have two bosses. You can’t serve two masters.

“...for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (v 24). And mammon means material things, and so forth.

Then He said concerning the material things, so we would get the lesson, He says, v 25: “Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious about your life...” That means, don’t be worried, or be concerned for the things of living.

“...*as to* what you shall eat and what you shall drink; nor about your body *as to* what you shall wear. Is not life more than food, and the body *more* than clothing? Observe the birds of heaven: they do not sow...” (vs 25-26). They don’t do anything that we would do in trying to raise a crop.

“...neither do they reap, nor do they gather into granaries; and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they? But who among you, by taking careful thought, is able to add one cubit to his stature?” (vs 26-27)—or change one hair to another color? It’s an impossibility! You can’t do this by thought. *God has to provide it for you!*

Verse 28: “And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor, nor do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. Now, if God so arrays the grass of the field...” (vs 28-30).

Go out and look at it, there are beautiful flowers, and beautiful creation in the grass, in the trees, in the land, and it’s magnificent. If God made that so beautiful, “...which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, *shall* He not much rather clothe you...” (v 30).

“...**O you of little faith?**” (v 30). Because when things are going good then people can have faith. But when things are going bad... Jesus did not say that we’re going to have it easy in this life, because life is hard, life is difficult. Jesus said that ‘in the world you will have tribulation.’ So, in tribulation can you have faith?

Let’s see how everyone did when they were fed of Jesus. Oh my, did they not want the food? This is the account of feeding the 5,000 in John 6. This was a fantastic thing that was done. So, they came running after Jesus and said, ‘Let’s make Him king!’ Jesus slipped away, got in one of the boats,

went across the Sea of Galilee, and was on the other side. Then when they came to the other side looking for Him, He had already gone by night back to the other side. They came back over and said, ‘Lord, how did You get here? Oh, we want You, Lord! Oh, we desire You, Lord!’

Jesus told them in John 6:26: “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied. Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, **but for the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you;** for Him has God the Father sealed’” (vs 26-27). So He’s talking about, that what you have to do is then search after Christ.

So, they were a little puzzled on this, and they said to Him—and this is a good question; we could probably give fifty sermons starting from this as a lead-out Scripture:

Verse 28: “Therefore, they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God: that you **believe in Him Whom He has sent**’” (vs 28-29). “...believe in...” has a much more profound meaning as we really understand it in the Bible and as the Greek reveals it to us.

I’ll just summarize much of the rest of the chapter, where Jesus said He was the Living Bread that came down from heaven. He came down to do the will of the Father; and that no one could come to Him except the Father draw him to Jesus; and none can go to the Father unless they go through the Son.

Then He told them, v 53: “Therefore, Jesus said to them... [all the ones who were there] ...‘Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves.’” This is kind of a crazy thing to say—isn’t it?

- Is God advocating that we become cannibals?
- Is God advocating that we become blood drinkers?
- Is God advocating that we become like vampires and Draculas?
- Is that what Jesus is saying?

It is kind of a little difficult thing to understand, but that’s all encompassed in understanding about the New Covenant, the very body of Christ, and the very blood that He shed for the crucifixion and the forgiveness of sin through His shed blood. That’s what He’s talking about.

Verse 54: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him

up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him” (vs 54-56).

We’re going to see this was really pounding in on the ears of these so-called disciples who were following Him. It even says that they believed on Him. But this was a difficult thing to understand, even though Jesus explained it.

Verse 57: “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.”

Let’s stop here and think about this for a minute. In order to have faith you’re going to have to live by Jesus Christ. That faith is going to have to be *always active and in motion, and a living thing* within your life.

- What kind of faith is required for salvation?
- How do we get it?
- Where does it come from?

All of these things are all involved in it. And once you have faith, is that the *final* answer? That’s also something we need to understand, which we’ll cover in this sermon.

Verse 58: “This is the Bread, which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever.’ These things He said in *the* synagogue as He was teaching in Capernaum. Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said... [followers, learners] ...‘This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear *it*?’.... [understand this; difficult] ... But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, ‘**Does this offend you?**’” (vs 58-61). In other words, ‘This is so basic and, yet, this offends you?’ The disciples were upset.

Verse 62: “What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before? **It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing...**” (vs 62-63). The physical things profit nothing! They are all going to perish with the using. They are all going to change with time. Every one of us are going to be older.

When I was a child, I know I did. We lived out on a farm and I had to walk a tenth of a mile to go to the bus stop to catch the bus to go to school. When I was in the third grade that was the longest, it just was terrible to walk that tenth of a mile. That seemed like forever. Everything was so big. We lived on 20 acres and we thought: that’s a lot of land. Well, I had the experience of going back there when I was about 40, and that tenth of a mile appeared to be nothing. The house that we lived in was small, and the 20 acres where the farm was looked teeny.

The highways were narrow and, you know, everything changes with time. ***The flesh profits nothing!*** *Whatever you may be as a person, without God, you're nothing!*

Verse 63: “It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are Spirit and *they* are Life.” Jesus Himself was the *living* Word that came down out of heaven.

- He gave us His Truth
- He gave us His Word
- He gave us what the Father taught Him to give us

Verse 64: “‘But there are some of you who do not believe’....”—or you don’t have faith. Just like in English, to have *faith* is the noun of *believing*. Here they were not having faith; they weren’t believing; ***they believed not!***

“...For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones that did not believe, and who would betray Him” (v 64). Of course, we see that from that time many of His disciples went and walked no more with Him.

Verse 65: “And He said, ‘For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father.’ From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him” (vs 65-66). I want you to think about this Scripture.

- Why didn’t they walk with Jesus anymore?
- What is it that you would allow to come between you and God, that you would follow God no more?
- Is there something in the flesh that would offend you?
- Is there a man who would offend you?
- Is there someone you would be mad at?

That’s why Christ went through everything He did; so that He would set us an example that there was *nothing* that turned Him back from the Father. *Not a thing!* Not even the crucifixion and all the things that He endured. Right at the end, what did He say when He was already nailed on the cross? He said, ‘*Father, forgive them; they know not what they do!*’

But look at the disciples here. They couldn’t even take a little saying, ‘You’ve got to eat My flesh, and you’ve got to drink My blood.’ They became all upset, and they left. And I’m sure some of them left in a huff, and said, ‘Boy, that’s the craziest thing I’ve ever heard! I can read in the Bible that we’re not to have cannibalism and drink blood! This is insane!’

- What would it take for *you* to be offended?

Verse 67: “Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Are you also desiring to go away?’.... [Are you going to leave, too?] ...Then Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and **we have believed and have known that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**’ Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is a devil?’” (vs 67-70). That really says an awful lot.

So, the faith that we’re talking about for salvation has got to obviously be greater faith than these followers of Jesus who left Him. And even greater faith than the disciples had at this time. Later when they received the Holy Spirit they had faith, but at that particular time they didn’t.

John 8 (summarizing)—go through and read the whole account, where Jesus said, ‘If you follow the Truth, and obey the Truth, and believe Me, the Truth shall set you free.’ And they said, ‘Well, we’re not in slavery to anyone.’ You know the whole account, how they went on, and even those who believed Him then accused Him of being born of fornication, accused Him that He was not of God. Then Jesus said, ‘You are of your father the devil.’ Notice what they did, and here’s how much faith they had:

John 8:59: “Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed.” Even today we have temple stonings over there between the Arabs and the Jews. No different now than it was then.

But here, these people were willing to be ‘good-time Charlies’; they were willing to be fed with the bread, and fed with the fish, and, ‘Yes, You’re of God.’ *Then He gives them something a little difficult to understand, and they turn around and don’t follow Him anymore!* Then it comes to the point when He really levels in with them and says, ***‘If you continue this way, you are of your father the devil.’*** And they get angry and pick up stones and go after Him. Wonderful, isn’t it?

Let’s see another occurrence and another lesson. And here, then, Jesus begins to teach a little bit about faith, and what kind of faith that we can have, and so forth. And here it is in the example, as we find out, of the cursing of the fig tree.

After He cursed the fig tree; Matthew 21:20: “And after seeing *it*, the disciples were amazed, saying, ‘How quickly the fig tree has dried up!’ Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, **if you have faith and do not doubt...**” (vs 20-21). Why would He say “...do not doubt...”? *Because there are many times that even though you have faith, it’s not going to happen exactly as you thought it would work out that way!*

- What do you do when you have a doubt?
- Do you sort of, ‘Oh well, I shouldn’t doubt’ and bury it in the back of your mind?
- Is that how you handle a doubt?

If it is, I’ll guarantee you it’s going to pop up again, and again. If you have another doubt you say, ‘Oh, well, I’m not to have doubt.’

- What do you do if you have a doubt?
- Do you just file it in the back of your mind and store it up there?

No! That’s not how to handle doubt! If you have a doubt you pull it out of the back of your mind, you put it right on the table, and you take the Word of God and you examine the whole subject and topic, and go through it, and make sure from the Word of God. You eliminate the doubt. You cannot let any doubts build up in your mind. We’re going to see one of the doubts that you cannot have, absolutely cannot have, because you can’t have faith for salvation if you have this kind of doubt.

“...if you have faith and do not doubt, not only shall you do the *miracle* of the fig tree, but even if you shall say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it shall come to pass” (v 21).

That’s qualified later on where Jesus said that *we ask according to the will of the Father*. So, if it is according to the will of the Father, and you take and have the faith to cast it out into the sea, and it obeys you, then that will happen. But I’ll tell you one thing that is harder, *harder* to do, and **that is to let God convert you!** To convert a mind from being carnal and hostile and an enemy of God into one who has faith in God, loves God, and serves God is far more profound than moving a mountain, because the physical things don’t count. Even though you may have the faith to do it. Later on we’ll see that it’s even qualified one step further.

Verse 22: “And everything that you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.” Let’s talk about how this kind of faith comes:

- Do you just kind of work it up within you?
- Is it something that is there that you’ve just got to kindle?
- How does it come?

Let’s first of all begin with a very basic thing that is absolutely true. Before you can have faith, the kind of faith that is required for salvation, you have to have something else. You have to do something on your part toward God. That is what is called in the Bible *repentance*. God grants you this. ***It must be that God grants you the repentance!***

I don’t know how many of you have ever had the experience that, being a Christian, you go along and you sin, and you really don’t think too much about it. But God keeps working with you. Then there comes a time when you come to the full understanding of what you have done, and the magnitude of it in relationship to God and Christ, and the sacrifice of Christ, that you come to your senses. Just like the prodigal son, when he was out there in the hog field feeding the swine, he ‘came to himself.’ Likewise, God helps you come to yourself.

Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you** to repentance?”

We know the very first thing that was preached by Peter was, ‘Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.’ So, you’ve got to have that repentance. That repentance has to come before anything else, and God has to give this to you. ***When you repent, you are granted repentance unto life!***

Let’s see how that is explained. After the Apostle Peter went to Cornelius’ house, and God gave the Holy Spirit to those who are called in the New Testament *Gentiles*, and how that Peter was taught through the vision that God is ‘no respecter of persons,’ and that those:

- who believe
- who have faith
- who rely and trust in God

are going to be led to repentance and receive the Holy Spirit! That’s the whole purpose of Acts 10.

Peter is explaining, Acts 11:15: “And when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came upon them, even as *it also came* upon us in *the beginning*.”

God had to do something very important. He had to show those Jews, who were strict separatists through Judaism before, that now that separation was going to be no longer. In order to show that that was going to be, then God gave the Holy Spirit, and gave it in the way that is demonstrated in Acts 10; so they would know that the Holy Spirit was going to be given to all people, *for those that He called to repentance!*

Verse 16: Then I remembered the word of *the Lord*, how He had said, ‘John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the Holy Spirit*.’ Therefore, if God also gave them the same gift that *was given* to us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I *to dissent?* Do I have the power to forbid God?” (vs 16-17). This is quite a confession on his part, and it’s really quite a fantastic thing that occurred.

Verse 18: “And after hearing these things, they were silent; and they glorified God, saying, **‘Then to the Gentiles also has God indeed granted repentance unto life.’**”

Now we have repentance unto life, the receiving of the Holy Spirit. What else does God give? ***God gives that faith necessary for salvation!*** These things we’re to grow in and develop from that time on. But it’s not something for a person to come along and say, ‘Oh, I have faith!’ We find that in James 2 that some people said, ‘I have faith,’ and James said, ‘That’s not doing too good. Even the demons believe in God and tremble. So, don’t go bragging on your faith’

Let’s see what kind of faith that we are really talking about. Just as God gave the gift of repentance to them, God also gives you other gifts. Part of the gift, the free gift of God’s Holy Spirit, also is that faith, which then:

- makes you wise unto salvation
- helps draw you close to God
- that faith is going to be tested
- that faith is going to be tried

You’re going to have experiences that you go through so that you can really have that faith in God and believe. What kind of faith is that going to be?

Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace you have been saved through faith...” *Grace* is another whole broad topic of God’s great magnanimous gift. And grace includes everything that functions in a Christian’s life *through faith*.

“...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God...” (v 8). In the final analysis, even though you have things you have to do that God requires of you and me, I cannot save myself and you cannot save yourself. God must save you by faith, and it is ***His gift***; just like *the Holy Spirit, repentance and eternal life!*

Verse 9: “**Not of works...**” Not of something that you can do.

- What can you do to grant you eternal life?
- What can you do to whip up your faith?
- Have a positive attitude?

I’ll tell you what, you confront some of the spiritual trials that you will go through, and I’ll tell you how long your positive attitude is going to last. Long enough to snap your fingers. That is not a gift of God, that’s just *pump yourself up* by your own ability, your own vanity, and pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. That’ll get you a little ways, but how far is it going to go spiritually? Remember what Jesus said: ***‘The flesh profits nothing.’*** This faith has to develop, has to grow, and expand into the love of God.

Let’s see how these things develop. I’m sure you’ve experienced some of these things. I talked to a lady way back on the east coast in the northern part of the United States. She’s back there all alone. She’s wondering about the trials and difficulties she’s going through. I assured her it wasn’t anything different than other people are going through, because you can be guaranteed one thing: ***the trial of your faith is going to come!***

- What are you going to do when it comes?
- Are you going to exercise the faith as it comes from God, as the gift of God?
- What kind of faith does that have to be?

or

- Are you going to let the trial drag you and pull you down to nothing?

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace (vs 1-2)—which means that you must believe that the only atoning sacrifice for your sins is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

That one thing justifies you to God! You must believe that! That being the case, you can’t add all kinds of things to it that *you* or *I* are going to do for God.

In talking with this lady back there, she said she went to visit some people at the House of Yahweh. And she said, ‘Boy, what a confused, divided mess that is. Every word that has any connotation that doesn’t fit their little mold you mustn’t speak.’ I tell you, ***that is not faith!*** *That is works!* Do this, do that, don’t do this, don’t do that. We have access to this grace by faith:

- that God is merciful
- that God is kind
- that God has called you
- that Jesus was sacrificed for you

What is this to do for us, once we really know and understand and believe that to the very depths of our being?

Verse 2: “Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand...” That’s where you need to stand. You have to have the conviction of mind, and the determination of the Holy Spirit. ***Not by will.***

I heard a minister say, ‘Well, brethren, now that we have this Truth, we must ***set our will*** to obey God.’ You can set your will all you want—

- unless you have the gift of faith, which comes from God
- unless you have the conviction of mind through the Holy Spirit

—setting your will isn't going to do anything. That's another work that people would do, if you set *your will* it works the other way.

- let God's Spirit convict you
- let God's Spirit give you that determination
- let God's Spirit work in your life

Then let **God's will** be done in your life. Not that you set *your will*. It isn't going to happen. It may get you a certain place. It may take you along the road a little bit, as the Apostle Paul said, 'In will worship.' But that doesn't get you any place. That won't bring you salvation. You must worship God, *not your own will*. You must have the gift of faith, which comes from God, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..." (vs 2-3)—in difficulties.

What kind of faith is that that you glory in difficulties? We've seen some good examples of that: we've had two members in our little group die after they suffered terribly. But I tell you one thing, their spiritual attitude and their spiritual faith in God was greatly multiplied through what they experienced.

- Will tribulation separate you from God?
- Will a hard saying out of the Bible separate you from God?

If that's the case

- Do you have faith for salvation?
- How profound must this faith be?
- Do you have faith because you want to remove a mountain?
- Do you have faith because you want to be healed?
- Do you have faith because you want an increase in your job?

or

- Do you have faith unto salvation and eternal life, regardless of your circumstances?

The Apostle Paul can tell you if you read what he went through. When Paul ended up, every church he had raised up turned away from him. Yet, he kept the faith of God. You think on that for a minute!

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character..." (vs 3-4). That's why the trial of your faith, being more precious than gold tried in the fire, it's going to be tested.

"...and character *brings forth* hope. And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love

of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us" (vs 4-5). So, we've got to have:

- that faith
- the experience
- the endurance

and that brings hope and love!

What are the three main things? **Faith, hope, and love!** But they've all got to be tried. Because we're not talking about just living a comfortable life here now. We're talking about eternal life forever.

Let's see that this faith is being tried; that it's being tested. God is going to test it. Like it says, 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that has come upon you'

- How are you going to show that you truly have faith?
- How are you truly going to know that you have faith unless it's tried?

1-Peter 1:5: "Who *are* being safeguarded by the power of God through faith for salvation..." What kind of faith is required for salvation? We're about ready to begin to answer that. I want to show that this faith is to salvation.

"...*that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time. In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials" (vs 5-6).

Now let's think on this for a minute! Is faith going to make you happy and jumping up and down with joy all the time? 'Oh, clap hands! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let's have faith! Let's have faith!' and be like some silly televangelists on TV? *and* see these people on there, 'Oh! Oh! Wonderful joy!?' **Never happen! That's not true Christianity!**

It says, *though* "...you are in [heaviness (KJV)] **distress...**" There are going to be times when you are discouraged. What do you think heaviness/distress means? There are going to be times when you are down; there are going to be times when you're going to wonder, 'God, what am I going through?' That's what this means, and maybe not just one trial. How many of us have this in mind? We think: 'Oh, well, do you know what kind of trial will I go through?'

Any kind of trial you prepare your mind to go through, that's not the one you're going to have!

(go to the next track)

If you can walk by faith, *you're going to live by faith, you're going to act by faith!* And if you're going to believe in God, you're going to be tried and tested, because this is a matter of salvation in 'manifold temptations.' They will come! There were times when the Apostle Paul felt total despair. But God was able to lift him up and give him faith and joy beyond it, because he saw beyond that. He had the kind of faith that we're talking about here. That faith was made perfect.

1 Peter 1:7: In order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes..."

A lot of us would really get excited if we had sitting before us a huge, gigantic rock of solid gold. But do you get excited when you go through a trial and you have faith, and you see that:

- God is seeing you through it?
- God is there to help you?
- God is there to be with you?

What does it matter what the trial is? Maybe it's:

- sickness
- weakness
- other people
- persecution
- husband and wife problems
- parent/child problems
- neighbor problems

Whatever the problem may be. Maybe it's

- you work
- food that you need
- clothes
- that you can hardly endure to believe God

Having faith in this world is absolutely so alien to God, that it's incredible. It's hard for you to see that little flicker of God in your life. That's when you really need to turn to God. *Your faith being tried is more precious than gold that perishes, though it be tried in the fire!* Why?

"...though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ; whom, not having seen, you love..." (vs 7-8). There again, we have *faith, love and hope*. We have trials and difficulties. Let's see a little bit more how this goes on and teaches us.

"...in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory" (vs. 8).

- How can you do that?
- How can you—in trial, difficulty, tribulation—joy in God when you're going through so much misery?

Heb. 11—we'll get the answer. Here's the kind of faith that you need for salvation. And this is the kind of faith that God wants you to have, that you grow in it. It's His gift that comes to you:

- through trying
- through experience
- through difficulties
- through having to battle your own stupid, carnal, evil human nature
- through having to live in this rotten, wretched, miserable world

Many people say, 'Oh, we live in such terrible times at the end here.' Listen! There is no time in human history that Satan hasn't been around. There's no time in human history where it really was 'the good old days.' Human existence is the same. Did Jesus live in 'the good old days'? If He did, why was He crucified? This is the important thing:

- Do you have faith in spite of all the circumstances around you?
- In your faith, what are you seeking?
- Are you seeking *some thing*?
- Are you seeking *some person*?
- Are you seeking *some event*?
- Are you seeking *some sign*?

or

- Are you seeking *the person of God Himself*?

That's the important thing! Faith must grow to where you are seeking the very person of God. Because to believe in Jesus means much more than we've understood.

Hebrews 10:38: "Now, *it is written*, 'The just...'"—the ones who have been justified by God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

"...shall **live** by faith... [we're going to see this again a little later in the book of Romans] ...but if anyone draws back, My soul does not delight in him.' But we are not of *those* who draw back unto destruction..." (vs 38-39).

If you draw back, and you read all of Heb. 10 and 11 and what people went through, how their faith was exercised and tried; *they didn't pull back!*

So, Paul says, "But we are not of *those* who draw back unto destruction..." If you pull back and cast your faith aside, where are you headed? *You're headed into the Lake of Fire, and you're no different than 'the son of perdition,' made for destruction!*

"...rather, we are of faith unto *the* saving of the soul" (v 39).

Hebrews 11:1: "Now, faith is *the substance*..."—not just confidence. Confidence and conviction are true; but it is the substance. This table

here is substance; it is made of something physical. *Faith is the spiritual substance!*

- you can't see it
- you can't feel it
- you can't touch it

But it is there and *you can exercise it!* It is the *substance* by God's Spirit.

"...of things hoped for... [you believe God] ...and **the conviction** of things not seen" (v 1). That's what we have to have. We don't see the end, yet. But we have the evidence that we will be there, because of the faith that God has given, which is the gift of God. And that must grow, like we're to grow in grace and knowledge; like we're to grow through trials and temptations and difficulties. It is the substance, the evidence.

Verse 2: "For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the Word of God...*" (vs 2-3).

Now we're able to see and comprehend so much more of the vast universe. I read an article the other day where they discovered, through the Hubble telescope, a bank of galaxies that they say is 6-trillion light-years across. Now my little pea brain cannot comprehend that. And if that be so, how do they know? Yet, they can take a picture of it.

That this vast universe, and the things we see around us were *made of those things that are not seen*. And we can have a little more proof of this: Whenever there is a solar flare—where on the sun there's a great huge explosion that sort of loops out around from the surface of the sun. This radiates dust in small minute particles into the earth. And those particles are so small that they penetrate all the way through the earth. They actually have instruments sensitive enough to measure those. Doesn't that give us, even the physical evidence that the things that are made are made from the things that don't appear? You can't see it.

Verse 6: "Now, **without faith it is impossible to please God...**" There's no way you're going to please God without faith.

- doesn't matter what you do
- doesn't matter what you build
- doesn't matter how many people you feed
- doesn't matter how many homeless you take care of

It does not matter how many, whatever you want to consider. ***If you don't have faith you're not going to please God!***

I just want to say something concerning the commandments of God. If you have faith you will keep the commandments of God. But if you don't

have faith, then you'll end up with a whole bunch of dos and don'ts and regulations like the Jews have. They've worn the law to a frazzle, because they don't have faith and they don't please God. So, the kind of faith that pleases God *comes from God*, but you have a part in that.

"...For it is **mandatory** for the one who comes to God **to believe...** [required; absolutely necessary] ...that **He exists...**" (v 6). There is nothing greater, and there is nothing truer, and there is nothing else worthy of worship in this world ***but God Who exists!*** And this is the kind of faith that we do need to grow in to salvation. Therefore, it doesn't matter what men can do to you. It doesn't matter what's going on in the world, because you believe:

- that God is
- that God is love
- that God is mercy
- that God is kindness

In spite of your circumstances, regardless of what it is, ***that God is greater than those circumstances!*** And if you're going through a trial, suffering, temptation or difficulty, know that God will deliver you from it. He has promised that He will. And even if you die in that, you've endured unto death *believing*. So, you've got it made, you will be in the resurrection!

But you've got to have this kind of faith. You must believe that God *is*. If you believe that God is, then there won't be any room for doubt, because that's how you take these doubts and examine them, in the light of God's Word.

- it is God whom you are seeking
- it is God whom you are after

You're not after some thing, some person, prestige, a name, a title or whatever. ***You are truly seeking God in your faith!*** That's the kind of faith that is required for salvation.

"...For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (vs 6).

You've got to have this diligent seeking after God. That's the kind of reaction that you're going to have with faith. So therefore, you can believe under any circumstances that *God's way is right*. The day is going to come, as it already has in the past, when people are going to be lined up and they are going to be asked to renounce God and take *the mark of the beast* or lose your head.

I'll guarantee you one thing: if you don't believe that God is, that God loves you, in spite of any circumstances, in spite of the fact they're cutting off your head, or chopping off your hands, or

whatever it may be, that *God loves you and that your faith resides in God because He is!* Now, that's the kind of faith that's required for salvation.

Psalm 42:1—here's the kind of attitude that we need to have: "As the hart pants after the water brooks, so my soul pants after You, O God"—seeking God.

Hebrews 11:6: "...For it is mandatory for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Here is a real diligence in seeking after God, wanting God. That's why David was a man after God's own heart, because David was seeking God. Not something that God could give him. Not something that God could do for him, **but God Himself.**

Psalm 42:2: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" Tremendous! Fantastic!

This is the kind of faith that we need to grow to. If you find yourself without that kind of faith, let me tell you: just take your Bible, you study it on your knees, you use it as a vehicle for prayer. You go through the book of Psalms; you ask God to help you in growing in faith. That faith must come from God. Ask God to bring you through whatever trial or temptation or difficulty that you are in. He will do it.

Psalm 63:1: "O God, You are my God, earnestly I will seek You! My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You, as in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, to see Your power and Your glory—as I have seen You in the sanctuary. Because Your loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You." (vs 1-3). Tremendous attitude that David had! Absolutely fantastic!

- What is this going to do in our lives?
- How is this going to be accomplished?

Let's see how this is to be done. It's something that in the Greek conveys a very profound meaning.

- How can we exercise this faith?
- How can we grow in this faith?

Romans 1:17: "For therein *the* righteousness of God is revealed from **faith unto faith**, according as it is written: "The just shall live by faith." **Faith is a way of life!**

Let's look at this phrase "...from faith unto faith..." This becomes very profound, I think, and very important. The little word *to/into* in the Greek is 'eis.' To live is revealed "...**from faith unto faith**..." **It is from the faith of God into you, and that faith back to God!**

So your belief—like it says, that you believe in God, and believe in Christ—means *into*. It is a

moving, profound, and deep spiritual thing. That it's not just something that you have, but it is a moving and active kind of faith *between you and God*. Your faith to God, and God's faith to you is His gift, and back to God. It's just like two-way circuitry, as we would liken unto electricity. That is *living faith*. **That's how you can live by faith!** And that is absolutely important, and there's just nothing more profound than that: "...from faith into faith..."

Let's see how this faith is "...from faith unto faith..." It's an interacting, spiritual thing between you and Jesus Christ and God the Father. That's why, brethren, **never let any man interfere with your faith between you and God!**

Let's see something that is very profound. Let's finish answering the question:

- What kind of faith?
- we can in this sense:*
- Whose faith?
 - Just yours? *No!*

It has to come from God!

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.**"

- What does that mean?
 - Does that mean you're following the tenants that Jesus has given?
- or**
- Does it mean something else?
 - **It actually means Jesus' own faith!**

In Mark 11 Jesus is talking about *faith*. The same thing that we covered, right where we started out about 'the cursing of the fig tree.' They came by, saw it all withered:

Mark 11:22, "And Jesus answered and said to them, **'Have faith from God.'**" What does that mean? In the Greek it's a little more. It means, *to have the faith of God* or *have God's faith*. That's why it is *from faith unto faith*. It comes from God as a gift of the Holy Spirit, which then gives you faith, **His gift**, and it goes back to God, and back to you, and continues in this *spiritual flow*. This is the very faith of God, or, God's own faith. **That's the kind of faith that is required for salvation!** Not something that you can whip up. Not something that you have or possess alone. But something that has to come from God.

And what is this going to let you do? How are you going to view your life? Let's see how this is going to affect our lives. Here again, it is the faith of Christ or *Christ's very own faith*. That's how you live.

Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but **Christ lives in me...**” If Christ is living in you and me, whose faith do we have? ***We have God’s own faith in us!***

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God...” (v 20)—or by the Son of God’s very own faith. That’s how we live. That’s how we continue to live in the flesh.

- regardless of the circumstances
- regardless of where we may be
- regardless of what may be happening all around us

That’s why it becomes so very, very important.

Let’s see what this faith will do for us, and what this will activate in our lives, and then we’ll take it one step further. We need to bond this all together in a whole converted package!

Romans 8:31: “What then shall we say to these things? ***If God is for us***, who *can be* against us?” Now let’s stop here and think about this statement:

- Did God call you? *Yes!*
- Did God give you His Holy Spirit upon repentance and baptism? *Yes!*
- Does God want you in His kingdom? *Yes!*
- How much does He want you in His kingdom?

So much that He sent His own Son to be crucified, die and be resurrected so you could partake of God’s eternal spiritual life and be born into the Kingdom of God!

“...if God *is* for us...” I want you to understand this. Whenever there’s a difficulty that comes along, God is ***for*** you, in spite of the seeming difficulties and trials and circumstances that you may find yourself in. If God be for you, which He is:

- What can be against you?
- Can Satan be against you? *No! He won’t succeed!*
- Can circumstances be against you? *No!*

It doesn’t even matter if you die in them, as long as you are in faith with God!

Verse 32: “He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also grant us ***all things*** together with Him?”

Listen! The little difficulties we’re going through here now are nothing. They’re pipsqueak. They are nothing. “...all things...” means *the whole universe*. God is going to give us the Kingdom of

God. We have an inheritance that is absolutely incredible!

Verse 33: “Who shall bring an accusation against *the elect* of God? God *is the One* Who justifies. Who *is* the one that condemns?... [ridicules, criticizes] ...*It is Christ* Who died, but rather, Who is raised again, Who is even *now* at *the right hand* of God, *and* Who is also making intercession for us. What shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (vs. 33-35).

This is what we must grow into. Not only have faith, not only have hope, but grow in that love of Christ. And there again, we can say, ‘Christ in us.’ Christ’s love for God the Father. And Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My commandments; and if you love Me you will keep My sayings.’

Verse 35: “What shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?”

This doesn’t sound like a very cheery, rosy, Christian life—does it? *A little difficult!* What are your circumstances? I think most of us have had tribulation and distress and persecution. But none of us have been scrounging on the ground looking for a little crumb of bread, or nakedness, or peril, or sword.

Verse 36: “Accordingly, it is written, ‘For Your sake we are killed all the day long...’” And really, when you get down to the bottom line, what difference does it make if you are killed? Why should you fear what men can do to you? It is God Who is going to resurrect you. It’s says,

“...we are reckoned as sheep for *the slaughter*.’ But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which *is* in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 36-39).

And that’s the kind of faith we need to have, rooted in that love. Let’s see that not only do we have to have that kind of faith for salvation, but ***we’ve got to have the love of God, which then perfects this faith***. It doesn’t matter about your abilities. It doesn’t matter about how great a person is, or what they can do, or any accomplishments that they have, or whatever. Because ***there isn’t one thing that you have or can do that God didn’t give you the means or the ability to do it one way or the other***, even though you had your part in it.

1-Corinthians 13:1: “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I

have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.” All that knowledge is not worth anything unless it is the way of God.

Verse 2: “If I have *the gift of prophecy...* [be able to preach fantastic sermons; know the future] ...and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith... [of yourself] ...so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”

So, there is the final qualifier that is there for the kind of faith we need. It doesn't matter if you can remove mountains. ***If you don't have love, then your faith is nothing!*** So, *the kind of faith that is required for salvation is the kind of faith:*

- that has the love of God behind it
- that inspires you
- that moves you
- that you have that *faith unto faith* from God
 - ✓ that love of God to you
 - ✓ shed abroad by the Holy Spirit

in you going back to God! And that you truly, absolutely love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your being, and with all of your strength. If you have that with your faith, *there is nothing that can be against you at all*, whatsoever—period!

Let's see how this faith is going to act in our lives, and the thing we need to look to and focus in on. Here the Apostle Paul expressed it so clearly, and so vividly, and so right for us:

Philippians 3:7: “Yet, the things that were gain to me...” It doesn't matter what there is in this world. Whatever it is, what “...things were gain to...” him.

“...these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord...” (vs 7-8).

- His faith
- His hope
- His love
- His Spirit
- His life in you and me ***to God, back to us***

“...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ and may be found in Him... [seeking God Himself] ... not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law... [or through law] ...but that *righteousness*, which *is* by the faith of Christ...” (vs 8-9).

Jesus' very own faith in you! That's the kind of faith that's necessary for salvation. Then you can go through whatever difficulties, trials or tribulation, whatever it may be, because *you know*:

- God loves you

- God is for you
- God has called you
- God will see you through everything
- nothing can be against you whatsoever

“...the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; **that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...**” (vs 9-10). You're looking forward to that resurrection and the very power of it.

“...and the fellowship of His sufferings...” (v 10). Paul said, ‘I wanted the fellowship of His suffering,’ because Paul persecuted the Church and killed church members. So therefore, he said he wanted that fellowship of the suffering of Christ.

“...being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead; not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving...” (vs 10-12). This is what this living faith will do. ***The faith for salvation is that we follow after!*** We always keep going God's way, regardless.

“...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead, I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (vs. 12-14).

That's the kind of faith that we need for salvation! This is what the Bible teaches us. Let's, through God's Spirit, ***grow in that faith and perfect it in the very love of God, that we can truly be in the Kingdom of God and the sons of God!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 6:24-30
- 2) John 6:26-29, 53-70
- 3) John 8:59
- 4) Matthew 21:20-22
- 5) Romans 2:4
- 6) Acts 11:15-18
- 7) Ephesians 2:8-9
- 8) Romans 5:1-5
- 9) 1 Peter 1:5-8
- 10) Hebrews 10:38-39
- 11) Hebrews 11:1-3, 6
- 12) Psalm 42:1
- 13) Hebrews 11:6
- 14) Psalm 42:2
- 15) Psalm 63:1-3
- 16) Romans 1:17
- 17) Revelation 14:12
- 18) Mark 11:22
- 19) Galatians 2:20
- 20) Romans 8:31-39
- 21) 1 Corinthians 13:1-2
- 22) Philippians 3:7-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 10
- James 2

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2-8-16

Human Nature I (Imagination, Pride and Covetousness) Fred R. Coulter

- Why is human nature the way that it is?
- How did human beings come to have human nature?
- Especially in the form of the nature that we have it today?

Let's look at just a couple of Scriptures and let's understand what the Bible says about human beings. What I'm going to do with this sermon, I'm going to build on quite a few things that we've covered in the past, quite a few things that we have touched on, but we're going to view them in an entirely different way.

I don't think we have fully grasped how the human mind is able to deceive itself in sin, and able to justify itself in what it does! And it surely does! When you look and go just across the whole spectrum of human nature, human beings—whether it's individuals, groups, a tribe, a nation, state or whatever it may be—you run across all these difficulties and problems with human nature.

Here is one Scripture which sums up man at his very best. We're talking about his very best. When I read this Scripture, I want you to just think about Job. Job was perfect, even God said he was perfect. He was perfect in his *works*, but that didn't change his nature. That was the whole key. *He had to repent!* Even the things that he did in perfection was based upon accumulating notoriety for himself.

Man at his very best state: What is man when he's all cleaned up? when he's all combed? or a woman is all cleaned up and combed, primed and made pretty?

Psalms 39:5: "Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth..." In other words, the length of his life is no more than just the width of the hand, as far as comparing this to God.

"...and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely **every man**... [every human being] ...**at his best state is altogether vanity**. Selah" (v 5).

You can see this in everything that human beings do. "...at his best state is altogether is vanity..." in its selfishness, its pride, its lust, and all those things that make up vanity. Vanity you might say would be like a huge large circle, and inside of that you have lust, pride, sin and foolishness, and you have all of the sins of the flesh.

Verse 6: "Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain...." This is man at his very best, at his very, very best.

Since man at his very best is altogether vanity, maybe this will help us understand:

Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way, which **seems right** to a man..."—that seems right, natural, and even, in some cases, can seem good. Again, I refer you to Job.

"...but the end thereof *is* the way of death" (v 12). Now, this puts us as human beings in kind of a very worthless condition. Think about it! It's really not funny; it's tragic, but it's humorous in a way when you think about all the things that as human beings we do, that it's just so much gas and vanity in the wind going by.

How did man get this way? Let's understand something about human nature. Let's see what has happened because of sin. In a way, we might say that God has been a little harsh on humanity for passing this on to all human beings. But that is not necessarily true, because with human beings we can exercise choices. I mean, even though man *at his very best state is altogether vanity*, he can still exercise choices. He does not have to become totally evil, even though in his very best state he is totally vain. What do I mean by that?

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death..." That says an awful lot more than what we've given it credit for. It says an awful lot more than what we thought it has said.

"...and in this way death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned... [then it says something here concerning Adam]: ... (For before *the* Law, sin was in *the* world. However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist; nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam..." (vs 12-14).

What did that sin do? *Death was passed to all human beings!* Do you know of any human being who has perpetuated his or her life in the flesh? *No!* Even the book of Ecclesiastes points out that death is the great equalizer, because of the sin of Adam.

Verse 12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way **death passed into all mankind**..."

Let's look at it this way: Every human being that has been born, has within it its own death at the time of conception. Would that be too broad of a statement? *No, that's exactly true!* Death can happen

at any instant from conception forward. Scientists know that in the cells of human beings, there is a point to which they do not regenerate in the same fashion as they did when they are growing or when they are young, and therefore, this brings on what we know as *aging*.

In some rare cases this aging can hit little children, to where at age 8, 9 or 10 they are, in fact, 70 or 80-years-old in chronological age! {progeria} but there have been some of them where they become arthritic, lose their hair, and they very seldom live beyond 15-years-old. In fact, when they die they look like they're they are 70, 80 or 90.

So, death was passed on to human beings because of the sin. Let's examine Gen. 1-3 just a little bit. We won't get into it too deeply, but let's really think on these as we go through. One thing that God has blessed us with, and it has helped me, and I'm sure likewise it helps every one of us, is that in preaching every week, in preaching to people who study their Bibles, we all grow in grace and knowledge if were willing to extend ourselves and to do it.

I don't like to give the same old sermon all the time. I've heard many sermons on Gen. 1-3. But are there more things for us to learn out of Gen. 1-3? *Yes, there are many more things!* This gets down to the basic problem of *human* nature: *lust, covetousness and pride!* Which then is built upon the building blocks of the *human imagination*, and with the added interjection of Satan the devil into those thoughts, then you have tremendous degrees of sin.

The only one that I recall in the Bible, of which Jesus said, 'behold here is an Israelite in whom there is no guile.' Jesus said that of Nathaniel. Now that means *no deceit*. Guile means *deceit*. That would be the highest level we could attain to, just in the flesh; the very highest level!

Still the Bible says that is vanity at it's very best. It doesn't produce anything spiritually lasting so we can live on forever and ever. *That's just a human being in the flesh who does not have deceit!* I've met some people like that: they're open, they're honest, they don't have any guile, they're not tricky, they're not trying to manipulate, they're not trying to take. But do they still have 'the law of sin and death' in them? *Yes, they do!*

The ultimate other extreme would be Satan the devil. As far as human nature would go, the ultimate extreme would be someone who is evangelically serving Satan. I mean, to do Satan's business in an evangelistic determined type of way. That would be the worst evil that a human could give himself over to; there can be nothing worse

than that. So, in human behavior you have these extremes, even though human nature has 'the law of sin and death' in it, and *this is what cuts us off from God!* This is why we need the grace of God to overcome that 'law of sin and death.'

Let's just review. We know in Gen. 2 it talks about the two trees that God made after He made Adam and Eve; how He put them in the garden, and He said:

Genesis 2:16: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may freely eat of every tree in the garden, but you shall not eat of the Tree of *the* Knowledge of Good and Evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die'" (vs 16-17).

I'm not saying anything that you don't know or could even quote by heart. But I want to emphasize it, because we need to ask another question as we go along. What happened to human beings when God pronounced that curse upon human beings? In a sense it still with us!

They ate of the tree. The eating of it was basically a *projection of lust* to Adam and Eve by Satan the devil. When they ate of it, and their eyes were opened, it means their minds were open for what? *It says to know good and evil! Their minds were open—and I feel that means that it left their minds open—so that they could be influenced by Satan the devil!*

- Are human beings confronted with attacks of Satan the devil? *Yes!*
- Eph. 6 talks about putting on the full armor of God.
- What else happened to human beings?
 - we're not going to dwell on what happened to Satan
 - we're not going to dwell what the curse was to him
 - *we're going to find out about human beings*

Genesis 3:16: "To the woman He said, 'I will greatly increase your sorrow and your conception—in sorrow shall you bring forth children....'"

Is that basically true today? *It is true!* Not only just in bearing them, not just the pain of it, but *their sorrow!* What happens? Too many kids break their mother and father's heart. Why? *Because of sin!* That happened!

"...Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you'" (v 16). Whenever that is thrown aside... You can look at it today, women have thrown that aside today, and they want great careers, and they want to go work,

and yet, they've neglected the most important thing in society: rearing of the children.

- Is it important to rear children?
- Is it hard to rear children?
- Does it always come out the way you want? *No!*

Remove that from the society for one or two or three generations, and what you have? *You have a society that doesn't know:*

- who it is
- what it is
- what male is
- what female is
- what home is
- what authority is

They don't understand about love or anything like that.

I heard someone on one of the talk shows. I think it was Dr. Dean Edell, and he said most women who go out for careers, the child is born and two weeks later it's sent over to the childcare center! They're selfish! They don't want to face the reality of having to take care of children, nor do they have the love or the intelligence. They can have a career and do this and that and the other thing. This is not to put women down. It's not to say men are superior. We're all different. But when God orders something, instructs us that way, that's the way it is. Who is going to argue against God? *We are not going to change it!*

Verse 17: "And to Adam He said, 'Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat *of* it!"—the ground is cursed for your sake. **In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life.**"

I think living here in America we have it a little easier than that. However, don't be too surprised at what's going to happen in the future.

Verse 18: "It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you, and *thus* you shall eat the herbs of the field; in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you shall return" (vs 18-19).

This doesn't tell us everything that happened; this is just a summary. So therefore, we can conclude what happened to human beings at that point.

- a) we know death was passed on by inheritance from that point
- b) we also know that 'the law of sin and

death'—*the proclivity to sin*—was also passed on by inheritance

That's why Jesus said of little children and babies, 'Bring them to Me, because of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The law of sin had not yet been activated in their minds. There's a time when it's activated; there's a time when it is ripe for Satan. There have been times in your life when you've done things, and you look back at it, and say I wouldn't do it now.

- *Why? I have wisdom!*
- *Why? You want to follow God's way!*
- *Why? Because what you did then didn't work right!*

What else do you suppose happened? Not only cursing the ground, but also cursing the animals? *This change in the nature the animals, and also in human beings!* You can say whatever you want, maybe I might be going too far, but also at that time, from that time on, the different sicknesses and diseases were passed on—the potential of them—in the human genes. If there's death, what is there always leading up to death? *Generally sickness!*

Do we not all carry in our bodies, the proclivity to have cancer? Is that not known today? *Yes!* The proclivity for different things are all within the structure of us, and there isn't anything we can do to change it. Maybe this will help you understand why God said don't eat certain foods. I think that there's a chemical reaction in the body, over a long period of time, that takes place that we would never even know.

I saw a special report on brain disease and some things that people have. It was a report on nut scabies in sheep, in pork, and in human beings. What it does in the brain, it deposits these little hard elements in there after the sickness. They think it's because once the scabies gets into the human system, it combines with what is in the human system. Then it starts developing these hard scales, and they actually calcify parts of the mind and so forth.

So, when God tells us to do something, be it a small thing... Like don't eat pork, shrimp, lobster, and most people would not want to eat a snake or lizard. That's basically the diet of some of the aborigines in Australia. One of their biggest meals is to find a huge great big lizard, or get a nice kangaroo rat! We say, 'Oh, ugly, awful!'

There are things that God wants us to do, beyond just the physical thing. That's just a physical example. We can see that, and we can see the results of it, but **we can't see the results of pride, vanity, imagination and lust.** That's in the mind, and God

is concerned about the mind.

IMAGINATION:

Were going to talk a little bit about the imagination, because everywhere you go in the Bible... I would like you to just start reading a little bit every night, maybe a chapter or two, the whole book of Jeremiah. I think you're going to be absolutely amazed that *God based all His judgments against the Jews upon their heart*. We'll see a couple Scriptures that will prove that.

God judges peoples and nations by their heart! Individually and collectively, I'm sure, on a percentage basis. That's why you get into things such as why pornography is so evil to a society. It's based on lust, and it stirs up the imagination. It leads to all kinds of things, that's just one. You could take the same thing concerning witchcraft, Buddhism and all these things that stir up the mind.

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the **wickedness of man** was great on the earth..." Great, overwhelming!

Referring to an earthquake that occurred: There are people in Mexico City that don't know if they're going to live or die. They don't know if their relatives are alive or dead. That's a terrible, terrible, horrible catastrophe that has happened to them. For them to have it happen twice; the aftershock being almost as much as the first one. *Terrible!*

"...and **every imagination...**" (v 5).

I want to key in on imagination, because imagination is the thing by which we think. That's the thought process. Whether it be the baking of a loaf of bread, designing a house, or lining up colors in the garden. Whether it's building an airplane, or a space launcher, or whatever. *You use your imagination!* Now you also use your mental process and imagination for character, whether for good or whether for evil. If it is evil, then notice what happens:

"...of **the thoughts of his heart** was only evil continually" (v 5).

Why did it get to that point? Why did society come to a point where evil was only thought of continually? Were getting closer and closer to it. And we have the added things that they didn't have then. There's television, and now not only just television. You can get a satellite dish, and you can have 150-plus channels covering all the goodness and all the evil of human beings.

Those things that happen make an impression on your mind—everything you see, everything you hear, everything you have done—is recorded in your mind someplace. You Think about

some of the experiences that you have gone through and you think about some of the sins that you have sinned. That's why we need God's grace and forgiveness to overcome, to compensate for, and to get rid of those things. That's why we have to have our mind cleansed with 'the washing of the water by the Word.'

Gen. 8:21—Here we find another very important Scripture, which gives us a little more understanding concerning the evil imagination of the heart. God said:

Genesis 8:21: "...I will not again curse the ground for man's sake—although **the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth...**"

Notice that it doesn't say *from birth*. Although 'the law of sin and death' is in him from birth, the sin part is not activated until his youth. Why is this an inherited thing? Some people think it's not inherited, but it's acquired. It is there, but it's just like any other part of the brain it must be taught. That's how it gets worse.

- Can it teach itself?
- Can the human mind teach itself to do certain things? *Yes it can!*

If you are just totally isolated somewhere, you could teach yourself to do certain things: to eat, to work, to dig, to climb, to build, to think.

Could you then find a civilization where there was never any sin? *No!* The 'law of sin and death' is *in* us from birth, and it is amplified and magnified by the society around us, or by our choice we can turn back from it—either one. But we still can't get rid of it. That's why Christ has to do it for us. This is something that is inherited!

Hey, just take a look. You have your own children; we had ours. Born in the church. *Hooray!* They're going to be marvelous, wonderful.

- Are they perfect? *By no means!*
- Did we try the best we could? *Absolutely!*
- Were we perfect? *Absolutely not!*
- Do they have human nature? *Yes!*
- Do they have sin? *Yes!*
- Do they have pride? *Yes!*

But it's not activated to the degree that it is in those who gone off and filled their mind with rock music, listen to every rebellious thing that comes along, and where they been allowed to pour all kinds of evil into their mind. Do you see the difference?

Sin can be activated and stirred up, and lust, hate, evil and satanism and all of this can be stirred in. That happened because of what Adam and Eve did, and it was passed on to all of us. It says very,

very clearly there, *it was passed on to all of us!*

PRIDE:

Pride is the major net result of this human nature! There are many Psalms and other things you can do to add to your study. As we come to the Day of Atonement, let's understand that to be *at-one* with God, there are two things that have to happen.

We have to love God with all our heart, mind, and being. He's got to give us His Spirit, and compensate *the law of sin and death* within us, and also He has to give us His grace. There's no way that we can be in contact with God without His grace.

Were going to see the whole activation of pride, sin, covetousness, wickedness and all these things come to the fore:

Psalms 10:1: "Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble? The wicked in his pride pursues the poor... [We can sure see that can't we? That has happened!] ...let them be taken in the schemes that they have imagined" (vs 1-2).

So, we have pride and imagination. What do we have in the world today? What is one of the things that people are told? *They are conditioned in school on any development and success program you will have; they will say that the key to your success is how you think of yourself!* Isn't that true? And that 'you need to tell yourself how good you are; you need to be able to accomplish whatever you want, and let no one put a guilt trip on you. That is a substitute for loving yourself. ***That is not the way God wants you to love yourself!***

First of all, you must love God, and *then* you must love your neighbor, and *then* you must love yourself. But the ***false love*** of pride and vanity to exalt over other human beings ***does not come from God!*** That is not of God; that's of human nature inspired of Satan the devil. It is devised by wicked imaginations. There's one Scripture that says, 'As a man thinks in his heart so he is.' That's just the way it is.

Verse 3: "For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire..." Perfect modern psychology. Build yourself up: great this, great that, great the other thing; do this, do that, do the other thing.

COVETOUSNESS:

...and blesses **the covetous** but despises the LORD" (v 3). We're going to talk about covetousness, because pride, covetousness and imagination all tie together. This is a real key Psalm because it brings them all together, right within the

same Psalm.

Verse 4: "Through the pride of his countenance the wicked will not seek God; in all his thoughts there is no place for God."

This tells you another thing: If God is in all your thoughts then you're overcoming pride, vanity and imagination. That's how you do it. You can't get rid of it, but you can overcome it.

Verse 5: "His ways prosper at all times. He is haughty, and Your judgments are far from him. As for all his enemies, he sneers at them. He has said in his heart, 'I shall not be moved; from generation to generation *I shall never be* in adversity.' His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud; under his tongue are mischief and iniquity" (vs 5-7).

We're talking about someone who is given himself over to the law of sin through:

- imagination
- covetousness
- wickedness
- evil devices

and is showing just how they function. But in truth and in reality this works in all human beings.

How do you think people get hooked on cocaine? How many are hooked on cocaine? *Millions are hooked on cocaine!* The more they get into it, the deeper they get, and the deeper they get into it the more they have to justify themselves and reassure themselves. The same way for those who get into perverted sex, the more they get into at the deeper they have to get into it. If they don't, then they can't justify what they've done so far.

You can't have room for God in your thoughts. You cannot let God come into your thoughts at all if you're that type of human being. That's why there's so many atheists around. They have their own belief system. Based upon:

- their pride
- their evil imagination
- their covetousness

Verse 8: "He sits in the hiding places of the villages..." What is that Scripture that says, that the 'evil will not come to the light? Men will not come to the light because their deeds are evil, lest they be reproved.'

"...in the secret places he murders the innocent..." (v 8). Not only by actually doing it. I mean you talk about innocent. How many little kids have been picked up and just murdered? stolen away? kidnapped? How about those who are murdered with the tongue? How about the slander

and deceit that takes place with that?

“...His eyes are on the watch for the helpless. He lies in wait secretly like a lion in his den...” (vs 8-9). I think this sounds like the big bankers and American farmers today. Like a lion waiting to devour.

“...He lies in wait to catch the helpless; he catches the helpless and drags him off in his net. He crouches and bows down, and the hapless fall into his mighty grasp” (vs 9-10).

They are the ones who are ready to do his work. They will even put on an air of humility. How about the scam on silver and gold? They had a man who got into some kind of hot-shop or whatever it is, and they had him as an undercover agent there, and he had a hidden camera on him at all times. It showed what absolute evil and determination and lying that some of these guys would do over the phone to take people out of their money. To buy silver, and to buy gold, and to buy hedges and all. It's gone! Just deliberately lie!

It showed were this one person would say, well just a minute I'll see if I can get a better deal for you. He put them on hold and turned around and laugh with his cohorts, saying, 'What will we do? I'll call him back and say the good news is, the bad news is, and 'blah, blah, blah,' and we'll get his money.' Just deliberate! I have never seen anything so deliberate in my life. Just absolutely cunning!

We're living in Bible days; we are! It's alive! the Bible is living, and it does work and it is true!

Verse 12: “Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up Your hand; forget not the humble. Why do the wicked spurn God? He has said in his heart, ‘You will not call into account’” (vs 12-13).

God is going to require it, and He's going to required of the whole world; all we have to do is read the book of Revelation. In a way, we would have to say that if these things were not part of us by inheritance, and they're only learned, then were talking about some kind of evolution here, which is really not true.

What I mean by that is that if you take the notion that people do not inherit the law of sin as well as the law of death within their members, then you could take people and put them in a perfect type environment and you would not have sin. So therefore, what you're saying in effect is that sin is evolutionary, and you really don't have it. But that's not true. Sin is there, and you can develop sin, and go into degrees of sin.

That's why Jesus said, Mark 7:21: “For from within, out of the hearts of men...” So, it comes from

within. It is there, the potential is there. Otherwise it wouldn't happen.

“...go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man” (vs 21-23).

They come from within. We want to focus in on, what did He say in addition to it? *Covetousness and pride!* We do have such a commandment against covetousness, and in order to understand all sin you must understand *covetousness*. You cannot truly understand sin unless you understand covetousness, strange as that may be.

The 10th commandment, Exodus 20:17: “**You shall not covet...**”

Coveting is a mental process. Coveting is a sin that takes place *before* the action. Many people do not understand that coveting in the mind is just as great a sin as doing the physical act. That's why the Bible says you shall not hate, because ‘he who hates his brother's is a murderer.’ *It's in your heart!* If it stays in your heart—and it lodges in your heart, and it grows in your heart—then you're just increasing the sin.

Verse 17: “You shall **not covet** your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's.”

You can pick up the paper, and you can just lay the paper out, and you can go through all the sins that are there, and it will be based on covetousness or lust. *Lust and covetousness* are almost interchangeable words.

They arrested some men for doing the scam. They were two salesmen working for Apple computer. So, they went to these distributors of Apple computer, retail sellers, and said we want a promotion for this school district up over here in this county, and we want you to sell them at a discount to them. They were willing to do it, but then they began buying parts of reject Apple computers. And they went over to this other company and said, we want you to assemble these for us. What happened, they were assembling these fake Apple computers. So one of the employees over there called Apple security and said, these men are salesmen and are bringing these parts, and were putting these together. Do we have authorization to do it? *So, they got on to what they were doing!*

It was all based upon *covetousness!* They

were coveting their neighbors business! There it is right there: "...anything that *is* your neighbor's." Anything of anybody's! Remember the parable that Jesus gave when the Pharisee said, 'Who is my neighbor?' The basic bottom line is that *anyone is your neighbor*, be it near or be at far. *It's all based on covetousness and lusting!*

Let's see that God's Spirit really gives us an understanding concerning *covetousness*. There are people in the world who know that you shouldn't have wrong thoughts. Yes, but they put up with the all the things that are based on covetousness.

- What is pornography based upon? *Covetousness/lust!*
- What is getting rich for nothing based upon?
- What is this whole California lottery based upon? *Covetousness/lust!*

Has to be, because:

- you want to put in \$1 and get back \$5
- you want to put in \$1 and get back 1\$-million
- you want to put in \$100 or whatever, and get back...

It is all based on *covetousness!* That's why conscientiously through the years, I had no such desire.

We've heard the sermons; when you go up to Lake Tahoe, don't go over to Reno and gamble. Well, people should not have to be told not to go to Reno and gamble. Obviously, it's based on covetousness! Does that mean if you run up and you put a couple nickels in a machine that you're covetous and sinful? *No!* but all you have to do just step back and you watch those people, the ones that pull two, three and four machines—I've seen them do four machines—sit there and work this, and what are they there for? I mean they're drinking their drinks and puffing on their cigarettes, what are they there for?

You hear the bells in the background, and you can see this trance they get into. *It's a hypnotic covetous trance!* 'I'm going to win some money!' Then they realize that maybe they have lost it all. Just go to Reno and look at them with all of the things that they're doing and have pity on them. Don't say, 'Those old dirty evil people.' You have *the law of sin and death and covetousness* in you, too, like anybody else. That can be stirred up. So, let's see what Paul says about it:

Romans 7:7: "What then shall we say? *Is* the Law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin except through the Law...." That's why it's there to tell us what is right what is wrong, the law tells us that.

"...Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the Law said, 'You shall not covet.'.... [covetousness and lust just go hand-in-hand] ...But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind of lust...*" (vs 7-8).

(go to the next track)

Once you understand about covetousness and how you can think on it and multiply it, that's where the sin comes in. To have a thought come through your head, which is not a correct thought, there's no sin in it. We will see a little later that you have to add on to it, you have to multiply it, you have to say, Here comes a thought:

- let me snuggle up that thought
- let me think on that thought
- let me amplify that thought
- let my lust get involved and I'll just dream away

That's what it means evil imagination of the heart; that's exactly what takes place.

Now that's not to say that there is not constructive thinking. There's plenty of constructive thinking in doing things that are right and so forth. *We're talking about the operation of lust.*

"...because apart from law, sin *was* dead" (v 8). Sin is not dead. Sin is active! Sin is alive! Working all the time! So, *the law* is active, is alive and it's there all the time.

Verse 9: "For I was once alive without law..." That means apart from the law. That doesn't mean they didn't have any law at all. That's apart from the law.

"...but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life, was found *to be* unto death for me" (vs 9-10).

Now why is the commandment which God gave for life, 'unto death'? *Because you do not have the means within you to do it perfectly!* That's why! And one of the reasons God gave the Law was to show how sinful sin is and to amplify it, as well as define it.

Verse 11: "Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me.*" That means death! That's why Paul said that he was alive without the law once, he really wasn't living, because he had *the law of sin and death* in him.

Verse 12: "Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and

good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me..." (vs 12-13).

In other words, to really show what sin is. What's one of the sayings? *A little bit won't hurt you!* Just little bit of this, a little bit of that, a little bit of the other. 'Try it, you'll like it' type of thing. When you're dealing with sin, then it can multiply, and it gets into more and more evil. What we need to do is just realize—though it may operate collectively, individually, or whatever in a person's life—*that's why we need to we need to rely on God and His grace.* That helps us more than anything else, because this is always here.

"...by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful" (v 13).

In other words, you understand how that through:

- covetousness
- imagination
- lust
- pride

these things multiply; these things can just expand and get completely out of hand. Those are the things that wars are made out of; those are the things that despots thrive on.

Let's see the results of lust, covetousness, pride—all of these things—once we get to the point of rejecting God, or a nation does. Again this is not something that we are not aware of. As long as all of us have been in the Church, I'm sure there that there's hardly a Scripture that we have not read once. I mean I'm sure all of you have read through the Bible at least once, whether it was consecutively or a part at a time or whatever. If you haven't, just take a little Bible and set it aside someplace, and just everyday read a chapter or two, and when you get to the genealogies, skip over them, don't worry about that. Just read the Bible, and read from beginning to end. If you do, it'll probably take you a couple years to do it. But just let that be kind of a side project in your Bible study. Everywhere you go, you'll find that the Bible fits together—a piece here and a piece there.

Romans 1:28^[transcriber's correction] we find that they did not like to retain God in their knowledge: "And in exact proportion as **they did not consent to have God in their knowledge...**" because this is literally all one great thought all the way to the end of the chapter. But what I want to pick up on is how these things multiply and increase.

Verse 19: "Because that which may be

known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them."

It sure is! You think about today. Sending these rockets and satellites clear out into space and the things in the heavens. This thing that they did in sending the satellite through the tail-end of one of these comets, they said they learned more about comets in that one thing then anything else. The things that they did on getting the pictures of the sun and what the sun is doing. You look at that, the only thing you can say is, 'Oh, God, how fantastic!' Every time I see these pictures from the satellite showing the earth down below, I think: Ahh, that is something, that is just fantastic! ***God has revealed Himself through the things that are made.*** But people like to see God face-to-face. They say, 'Well, I've never seen God, I don't know whether it did or not.'

Well, I tell you one thing; I'll just give you a little test. One day if you come home, and you find your window broken, and your door jammed open. You walk in the house and you find that your TV is gone, your recorder is gone and all your stereos are gone. You look around, and you see all your drawers pulled out, you see where you had your money stashed away, all your jewelry is gone, and you go on in the kitchen and you find all your silverware is gone, every precious thing you've got. Now, you make a conclusion:

- What is your conclusion? *A thief has been here!*
- Are you right? *Yes!*
- Was a thief there? *Yes!*
- Did you see him? *No!*
- Do you know who it was? *No!*
- Is he going to get caught? *Chances are he won't!*

If he does he won't have enough evidence against him to really stand trial and be put away. You take the exact same principle. How many have seen God face-to-face?

- Have you seen His handiwork?
- Have you seen what He's made?
- Have you seen what He's created?

These things testify 'The heavens declare the glory of God and there is not one language to where their sound is not heard' (Psa. 19). That means that this testifies that God is Creator. It says God revealed it to them, manifested to them. It's true!

Verse 20: "For the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are

without excuse.” Were talking about just people in the world. Does God judge the world? *Yes!*

Verse 21: “Because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their **own reasonings...**—*imagination!* That’s exactly how lust and sin is produced, conceived and brought forth.

“...and their foolish hearts were darkened. While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things” (vs 21-23). We still have it today—don’t we? *Sure we do!* Everything that that is!

Verse 24: “For this cause, God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves.”

So, you see how *imagination, lust, pride, foolishness*—all of these things—multiply! Or you can get away from them and they can be contracted down *with God’s help and with God’s Spirit!* Otherwise it will just multiply until there’s death and corruption, total death and corruption, which is what we have here: *we have a progression of what happens!*

Verse 24: “...through the **lusts of their hearts...** [lust and covetousness does an awful lot] ...to disgrace their own bodies between themselves.”

And you can immediately think of all the sex sins, but you can also think of the other sins that are there of drug taking. I don’t know how that would be in a heart transplant, and some of those things. Ghastly! They were confronted with the thing that they had to implant a heart—in England or someplace—and the recipient found out that the heart donor had AIDS.

Verse 25: “Who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie...” Haven’t they done that? Anything that smacks of God is just held in contempt! Who are the greatest offenders in that? *The religionists!* Just to look at them you’d think: I wouldn’t want to have anything to do with ‘religion.’

“...and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen. For this cause, God abandoned them to **disgraceful passions...**” (vs 25-26)—*vile affections!*

You see what happens when you go too far. When I say *you*, is not *you* as a person, to pick on you as an individual, *vs* me who’s doing preaching here, but I’m saying ‘you’ in the sense that that

applies to anyone, including me. When a person reaches a point that they go too far, that he or she goes too far, God gives them up to *vile affections*. You can see how that has happened. Just look at the tremendous problems in the world.

“...for even their women changed the natural use *of sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use *of sex* with the woman, were **inflamed in their lustful passions** toward one another...” (vs 26-27).

Again, *degree; burned* in their lust. It starts out with *covetousness*. ‘**You shall not covet.**’ Then it comes to ‘burned in their lust one toward another.’ I don’t want to beat a dead horse, but AIDS is not just beating a dead horse. That is a total threat to this whole civilization. We are not just talking just about a flu bug, or a measles bug, or whooping cough; we’re talking about death stalking the land.

It’s because men are *burned in their lust* one toward another. They wanted to have ‘gay pride.’ Pride against what? *Pride against God! Holding their fist up to God!*

“...—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error.... [it was proper; whatever God did back to them was proper] ...And in exact proportion **as they did not consent to have God in their knowledge...**” (vs 27-28).

We see that actively in the society today. People do not want to retain God in their knowledge. You see it in the judiciary system. There are some people who *want* to retain God in their knowledge. There are a lot of Protestants who are vainly trying to hang on, and want to retain God in their knowledge. I’ll guarantee you one thing, the more that they stick with the Bible the better off they’re going to be. God won’t necessarily turn his back on them.

But how many people *do not* like to retain God in their knowledge? And just think what an effrontery it is to God. We have on our currency, *In God we Trust*. When new currency comes out, I just wonder if that’s going to be there or not. They’re not trusting in God anymore.

“...**they did not consent to have God in their knowledge...**” You can’t even mention it; you can’t mention the name of God in school. You can swear and curse and jump up and down, that’s fine. But to go pray to God in the public school, that’s death. I mean ‘that’s infringing upon us. *Don’t like to retain God in their knowledge!* You can just carry this on and on and on with many, many different things. What happens?

Step 1—God gave them over to vile

affections; v 24: “For this cause, God also **abandoned them to uncleanness** through the lusts of their hearts...”

Step 2—If that doesn’t work, then v 26: “For this cause, God abandoned them to **disgraceful passions...**”—*vile affections!*

Step 3—You don’t want God around, so “...**God abandoned them to a reprobate mind...**” (v 28).

Now, that’s quite a progression—isn’t it? First *uncleanness*, then to *vile affections*, and then to *a reprobate mind!* What happens with that? **A mind void of any Godly judgment at all!**

“...to practice *those* things that are immoral... [we could say even rational; not even rational] ...being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice...” (vs 28-29). We have all these things:

- pride
 - wickedness
 - covetousness
- that ties in with*
- the sex sins of humanity

Isn’t that one of the biggest sins humanity has always had? *Sure it is!* Right on down the line, every society, every generation. That’s why they’ve found some of these societies clear backup in the foothills of the Himalayas, and they say now they can just beam in satellite television there, and they’re sporting around T-shirts with Michael Jackson on them and listening to rock ’n roll. Here’s a society, is it perfect? *No!* Was it perfect when it was discovered? *No!* They were just given over to idolatry and just terrible things.

That’s why God sent them up there to 10,000 feet. That’s terrible! I wouldn’t want to live at 10,000 feet! There are Bolivians at 15,000 feet. I think one of these days we are going to understand why God has put them in such a hateful deprived environment. If this progression is true, then that pretty well applies to their lives and societies.

“...covetousness, maliciousness... [all that is true] ...full of envy...” (v 29). See how these things follow one right after another. It’s almost like links in the chain and are all together.

“...murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions... [maligning people one and another] ...whispers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, **inventors of evil things and practices**; disobedient to parents” (vs 29-30). Do we have invention of evil things today? *Ah, just so many!*

Verse 31: “Void of understanding...” Isn’t

that true? When you get to the point without understanding, you can’t even reason with them. You can’t even be rational to them.

“...covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*” (vs 31-32).

It is all based upon covetousness, every bit of it! It all starts in *the mind*. What is in the mind is projected out into the environment. It’s not the way that most psychologists say. Most psychologists say that the environment creates what is in the mind. That is not true! *The mind creates what is in the environment!*

- Did not the mind of God create the things out here? *Yes, that is true!*
- What do human beings do then? *They come along and say, ‘Aha, I want to put a house over there.’*
- Did not the mind affect the environment? *Yes! ‘Aha, I want to teach my children this.’*

You take this house right here. This is the environment that they have reflected of what they want. Go to your house, the same thing; come to my house it’s the same thing. We all affect the environment. When we come to these points, we start letting *covetousness* get involved. Then it leads to:

- murder
- hate
- pride
- envy
- jealousy

and all the evil things that take place!

You can have a lot of discussion on this and just the operation of it, because what we’re doing were really understanding *why*. As we’ve said before, we need to keep walking toward God, walking toward the Light, and it’s a thing we have to do every day, brethren.

1-John 2:15: “Do not love the world...”—because the world’s going to come to an end! Love not the world, the society. We’re to love the people in it. We’re to ‘love our neighbors as ourselves.’

“...nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—^[#1]**the lust of the flesh...** [so it comes in many different ways] ...and ^[#2]**the lust of the eyes**, and the

[#3] **pretentious pride of physical life**—is not from the Father, but is from the world” (vs 15-16). Who’s the ‘god of this world’? *Satan the devil!*

Verse 17: “And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

It shows, that if you are not loving those things—*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life*—then you’re going to be able to have a little more control and understanding through God’s Spirit.

Let’s see where it is that Satan is able to stir up, to amplify, to multiply that sin that is in every human being.

Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience.”

It is also a *spiritual* thing that takes place, Satan’s spirit. God’s Spirit is there warring against Satan’s spirit.

Verse 3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world.”

That shows you how all this works, and every human being is subject to it. What we need to do is see how we can become ‘**un**subject’ to it.

We can see how this applies in an individual and group and a leadership way. We can see this among many politicians today:

2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”

All you have to do is just tie in Rom. 1 at that point. What happens when they deny Christ? even though they may be ‘religious’?

Verse 2: “And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed.”

That’s how you exalt yourself over other people. You speak evil of them to justify. I went through a sermon showing how people do it; they build themselves on the bones of others by speaking evil of them.

- Is this not the core of politics today? *Yes,*

it is!

- Is this not the core of gossip and slander against people? *Yes, it is!*

You speak evil of the Truth!

Verse 3: “Also, through **insatiable greed**... [*covetousness*; today that is also called socialism] ...they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching.” That’s how you get a following, *through covetousness*. How many people have been bilked into different things through covetousness.

I tried to help one man untangle one of his financial things. He got into buying notes and loaning money. He would put in \$10,000, and in 30 days he would get back \$15,000. This money was to be used to buy repossessed homes and sell them. He would get his money back; 50% of on his money in 90 days. Well you could see in a year you could double and double your money. You could have four times in a year. ***This was through lust!***

- Did he get bilked? *Yes, he got bilked!*
- Did he get talked into doing things he shouldn’t have? *Yes, he did!*

He had his accountant check it out, he had his attorney check it out, and then he did things he shouldn’t have. He did things not in escrow, and got robbed! I tried to get a loan together to redeem the whole thing, talking the lenders into doing it.

Through covetousness, do people flock to it? *Sure they do!*

Who was this fellow they had an Oakland? He said, ‘Money is our god! You send me \$400, and I’ll guarantee you’ll get money back.’ They finally arrested him and sent him off to jail. It was the Church of Hocking.

- Did he have a lot of followers? *Sure he had a lot of followers!*
- Based on what? *Covetousness!*

Then God gives a little warning, v 4: “For **if** God did not spare *the* angels... [Are angels greater than men? *Yes!*] ...who sinned, but, having cast *them* into Tartarus, delivered *them* into chains of darkness to be kept for *the* judgment; and **if** God did not spare *the* ancient world...” (vs 4-5). I mean, how seriously should we take sin?

Well, I remember when I first went up to the Continental Divide, I figured, boy I want to put to a test all these things that people have told me. It was up in Wyoming, and the land rises so gradually when you’re on the Continental Divide. When you’re at sea level you think that 11,000 feet is

almost straight up and down, but no it's almost flat up there; it's just gradual. So, I stopped my car, I was visiting some of the brethren, and I climbed up one of these mountains up there, one of these hills, where they said there were fossils up there. So, sure enough, I got up there and guess what I found? *Fish fossils!* How did they get up to 11,000 feet if there were not a Flood?

How serious is sin? *So serious that God destroyed the old world!* All of it, except Noah and the seven persons with him.

"...but saved Noah, *the eighth*, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought *the Flood* upon the world of *the ungodly*; and having reduced *the cities* of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, condemned *them* with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example *for those* who would be ungodly in the future; and *if* He personally rescued righteous Lot..." (vs 5-7). That means that Lot was *just* before God.

"...who was oppressed by the lawless ones *living* in licentious conduct" (v 7).

Do you get frustrated when you see all this wickedness going on? *Sure you do!* God knows how to deliver you, don't worry about it. Don't sit there and fret and stew. Are you going to change them? *No!* Can you walk up and down in your front room and be mad and angry at them? *Yep!* Just look at mirror and say, 'Hi, Lot.' Lot was going through that. I do! I'll be sitting there watching news, and I'll just get down right upset at things taking place. Just terrible, hideous things!

Verse 8: "(For that righteous man, dwelling among them, through seeing and hearing *their* lawless activities, *was* tormented day-by-day *in his* righteous soul)."

Can you imagine living in Sodom? I'm sure there's some brethren over in San Francisco and they are kind of stuck. If I were over there I would find the 'first camel' out and get out of there.

Verse 9: "*The Lord* knows *how* to rescue *the* Godly out of temptation..." Remember that, because when we get to, 'how can you overcome the law of sin and death and what should you do?' then just remember God is there to take us out of the temptation.

"...and to reserve *the* unrighteous to *the* day of judgment to be punished; but particularly those who walk after *the* flesh in corrupting lust, and hold in utter contempt *the* lordship of God..." (vs 9-10). I want you to notice how *lust and covetousness* just breeds all of these things.

"...*They are* audacious and self-willed. They are not afraid to blaspheme *the* Divine powers whereas, angels, who are greater in strength and

power, do not bring a railing condemnation against them before *the* Lord. But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and destroyed—..." (vs 10-12).

There are some people that God says are made to be taken and destroyed. Why? *Because they reached such a degree of evil in their lives, there's nothing left to do!* You can't redeem them in this life. In the second resurrection, maybe there will be redemption for them, but not in this life!

"...blaspheme those things of which they are ignorant, *and* shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption. They are bringing upon themselves *the* reward of unrighteousness, while finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires day-by-day..." (vs 12-13)—seeking pleasures and thrills.

"...*They are* stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you" (v 13). Imagine what kind of point the Church had come to. I mean, stop and think of it for minute, that here Peter was saying these people were associating with you in your Feasts. *Ghastly!*

Verse 14: "Having **eyes full of adultery** and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged* in seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings—cursed children." Were talking about *adultery and covetous practices*, and "...eyes full of adultery..."

Matthew 5:27: "You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you... [so here is Jesus speaking] ...everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.... [God will judge on that] ...And if your right hand shall cause you to offend, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is better for you that one of your members should perish than *that* your whole body be cast into Gehenna(vs 27-29).

What is more difficult than cutting out your eye? If you cut out your eye *you can still lust!* *You can still imagine!* Where did Jesus say these things come from? From just the eye? **No! From within!** *It's harder to have a thought removed from your mind* than taking out the eye, even though it would be better if you were lame. He's using a parable here, in analogy, to show you how deeply rooted that sin is. Jesus said it's the sin for those things, and it's a sin for a woman to lust after a man, just as much it is for man to lust against a woman.

2-Peter 2:14: "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin..." When people just give themselves over that kind of thing, they can't cease from sinning, they can't stop from sinning. Every man or woman they look at they thoroughly undress.

“...they are engaged in seducing unstable souls...” (v 14). That’s exactly what they do. How do you think people get conned into these things? That’s exactly what they do with these runaway teenagers. They get on the street and beguile them. Aren’t they unstable souls? They run away from home in the first place. You can take this Scripture and you can just think on how this applies in so many different ways.

“...having a heart trained... [exercised] ...in *lustful* cravings—cursed children” (v 14). Something that is exercised [trained], and it’s built up, it’s repeated, it’s multiplied and it’s compounded. Just remember Rom. 1 and how it progresses.

Verse 15: “Who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, *the son* of Beor, who loved *the* reward of wickedness. But he received a rebuke for his own transgression; *the* dumb donkey, speaking in a man’s voice, restrained the madness of the prophet. These *false prophets* are fountains without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever. For **they speak bombastic words of vanity...**” (vs 15-18).

And every time I think of that I think of Adolph Hitler and Mussolini, and I think of Martin Luther King and Nikita Khrushchev: *great swelling words of vanity!*

“...enticing *others* through *the* lusts of *the* flesh...” (v 18). That’s how they pull them in. *Lust of the flesh!* Can people be enticed with lust? *Oh sure! Absolutely!* It is one of the quickest ways people can be enticed to do things.

“...by granting indulgences to sin, *and* *ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception. While promising them freedom...” (vs 18-19). Haven’t we heard that? That’s how this nation is corrupted—isn’t it? *Through ‘liberty!’*

- freedom of expression
- freedom of press
- freedom of this and that

“...**they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage**” (v 19). That’s the whole key, right there. We will tie it in with Rom. 6.

“...they themselves are the servants of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage” (v 19). That’s why we’re called the servants of God. The Greek is ‘doulos,’ which means *slave*.

Verse 20: “For if, after escaping the moral

defilements of the world through *the* knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ... [here is something for us to think about]: ...they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning.”

That is true! If a person forsakes God and goes that way, it’s just going to be just one terrible thing after another. They will reach a point where they won’t have any conscience to be pricked at all. *Not at all!*

Verse 21: “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the Holy commandment *that was* delivered to them. But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: *The dog has returned to eat his own vomit; and the sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing place in the filthy mire*” (vs 21-22).

They do that. They get pigs already for the for the fair, and they clean them and scrub them and make them look absolutely just ‘piggy pink.’ You take them home in the truck and you let them out into the pigsty, and they go out there and wallow in the mud and grunt. Just imagine that from the *spiritual* point of view, if we went back into the world and back into all these evil things, *it would be exactly the same thing!*

This gives us some of the keys on how we overcome. Romans 6:11: “In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof” (vs 11-12).

In other words, *don’t let it rule!* You are going to be fighting and overcoming sin. You are going to be doing that the rest your life. You’re going to do it, because *the law of sin and death* is still in your members and in your mind. So, you’re going to have to be overcoming. But:

- don’t let it rule
- don’t let it control
- don’t let it dominate your life

‘that you should obey it in the lust thereof.’

Verse 13: “Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace” (vs 13-14).

That’s why it’s very important that you live within God’s grace continually on a day-to-day basis, *so that sin will not rule over you*. And it

won't! Sin will not rule over you!

Verse 15: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? MAY IT NEVER BE!"

In other words He's saying the same things as we have here in Rom. 7. Because the law of sin and death is in there, should we just go ahead and sin? because it's there anyway? *That's a satanist philosophy!* Didn't we see that thing trying to expose Satan-worship? They said, 'Our philosophy is whatever comes into your mind you do it.' And the basic things that humans think of, they do with vigor. That's a satanist philosophy! That's why He said, God forbid! absolutely not!

Verse 16: "Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

Then sin starts because of *lust, covetousness and pride!* Righteousness starts with *repentance, humility and love of God!*

Verse 17: "But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness" (vs 17-18).

If you're in the grace of God, and you are fighting and overcoming sin, you are free from sin, because it *doesn't rule* you! It's part of the thing you're overcoming in life. It doesn't rule you!

Verse 19: "I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification. For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed?..." (vs 19-21).

I think just even studying through and preparing for this sermon, and just thinking about this, I've come to a deeper understanding of how sin is such really a terrible, terrible thing. Like it says here, you're *ashamed* of it. And you think, 'Oh ghastly!' You really do. *That's part of repentance!*

"...For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (vs 21-23).

Of course, *the way that we draw closer to God and eternal life is also to:*

- *understand our very nature*
- *understand that we need God's help, Spirit and grace to overcome our nature*

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 39:5
- 2) Proverbs 14:12
- 3) Romans 5:12-14, 12
- 4) Genesis 2:16-17
- 5) Genesis 3:16-19
- 6) Genesis 6:5
- 7) Genesis 8:21
- 8) Psalm 10:1-10, 12-13
- 9) Mark 7:21
- 10) Exodus 20:17
- 11) Romans 7:7-13
- 12) Romans 1:28, 19-28, 24, 26, 28-32
- 13) 1 John 2:15-17
- 14) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 15) 2 Peter 2:1-14
- 16) Matthew 5:27-29
- 17) 2 Peter 2:14-22
- 18) Romans 6:11-23

Scripture referenced, not quoted

- Ephesians 6
- Psalm 19

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2/16/16

Human Nature II (Overcoming Sin in the Mind) Fred R. Coulter

Let's just have a little review of some of the things that we've covered in part one concerning human nature.

Mark 7 tells us where all of our sins originate. It's one thing to overcome something that is exterior from you, it is another thing to overcome what is interior *from within* you. They're two different things.

Look at it this way: Suppose you have a garden and you want to keep it nice and tended to, you can go out and get rid of the exterior weeds. You can hoe them up, pull them up, whatever, to get rid of them and they're gone. Maybe you have to come back and keep at it to keep them down. But if you have a plant that will not produce, or is producing improperly...

I don't if you've ever planted corn, but sometimes when you get some of the hybrid corn, you get some of the weirdest things when you get some of these sort of offspring or off shoot seeds. They will have three rows of kernels and then nothing, etc.

There is something interiorly wrong with that plant! To solve the problem with that plant, you have to go back into the genes and chromosomes and find out what's wrong with the seed.

In a way, that's kind of what it's like with human nature. Many times we like to have everything on the outside look really good, and we can do that. People can dress up nice; they can look nice.

Someone just gave me a clipping of this murderer who when he left the courtroom he said, 'Hail Satan!' You watch when they show excerpts of that trial, he will have his hair combed, he will be nice and clean. Thanks to the taxpayers he'll get into the dentist and have all of his teeth fixed. You will look at this person and wonder how is this person capable of all of the things that he's charged with?

You're only looking at the outside! It is exactly the same way with overcoming sin. If you try and get rid of things on the outside, which may represent a temptation to you, you are not changing the *inside*.

Lots of times, in being able to analyze or understand and see what it is that we need to overcome, we fail to emphasize that the origin is *inside*. There is a particular way to overcome the human nature from within.

After having listened to all the sermon tapes for the Feast of Tabernacles, I like to listen to them because it helps me to remember what I have said and what I haven't said. I am beginning to think that one thing that will not be changed during the Millennium will be the inherited human nature.

Satan will be removed, but the inherited human nature will not be removed. Otherwise, there would be nothing to overcome and no proclivity for sin at all. Then you would have perfection in the flesh, and if you had perfection in the flesh then you would have a contradiction of terms.

Let me just summarize Mark 7; here's a good example concerning washed or unwashed hands, and *the tradition of the elders* was that if you had come from the marketplace and didn't wash your hands, you were defiled spiritually; you were unclean spiritually.

Then Jesus went on showing, through this whole example, that it's not those physical rituals that you do outside your body such as the washing of hands and pots, cups, brazened vessels and the like that will change your spiritual relationship with God; or that those things will overcome human nature. It's the things that are *within* that will cause the problems and difficulties.

Mark 7:20: "And He said, 'That which springs forth from *within* a man, that defiles the man. **For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts...**'" (vs 20-21).

Now, we could take each one of these and amplify them greatly, but you can just think about all the foolish thoughts and things that happen, even with children.

One of the biggest difficulties we had is what the children picked up at the public schools. But it's still there; human nature is still there, even in little children. Sweet little babes that haven't matured, that part of their mind is not activated, yet. Certainly, even though these things come from within, some of them are learned, but they stay as a permanent part of their character and being. It's still from *within*: 'Garbage in, garbage out.'

But, we have defined exactly for us where the problem lies; *it lies within!* You can read Matt. 23 where Jesus castigated the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites and said, 'You're just like whited sepulchres; you're white, clean and beautiful outside, but within you're full of dead men's bones.'

Everything is within! And this is the whole key! There can be no conversion unless there's a change *within!* There can be no overcoming unless there is overcoming first *within!* I'll guarantee you that is a whole lot harder than cutting off a hand, a foot, an arm or a leg. You can take out both eyes, cut off both arms, both legs, take out one lung, half the liver, have the spleen, eight or ten feet of the intestine, half the stomach and still live! ***And still sin, because it's within!***

Verse 21: "For **from within, out of the hearts of men**, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders." Those are two primary things that are causing us more trouble than anything else today. Look at the AIDS epidemic. It's because of adultery and fornication, and because of evil thoughts.

Now they want to have a textbook on homosexuality—as an approved textbook—in the San Francisco public schools. You know they're going to get it in. When the wrath of God gets worked up, it's going to be awful! It's going to be terrible! I've said, somewhat believingly and somewhat jokingly in the past, that God is just going to solve the problem by sinking San Francisco. He may just end up doing that, yet, with one nice earthquake.

Verse 22: "Thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile..."—deceit. We've done sermons on lying. That's from within, out of the heart.

Sidebar: Our daughter had one of her friends—supposedly—run around and tell all kinds of horrible lies about her. Told lies to all of her friends to try and get rid of them. She suffered terrible from it and caused problems at school about it. Then one of her other friends stole some earrings that her grandmother bought her. *That's from within, out of the heart!* So, we've been going through all the facets of lying and deceit and so forth, which falls right into the situation with human nature.

"...licentiousness..." (v 22)—lasciviousness—license to do evil. There's a drug called 'ecstasy' and they take this thing and it makes them super-high for a long time. Every song is your best song, and everyone you dance with is your best friend. Then the dancing with rock music and everyone leaps around like a bunch of primitive... These lights going around with the colors totally hypnotic, absolutely hypnotic. Now I understand why some of these old hard-shell Baptists say that dancing is of the devil. That kind of dancing *is of the devil!* That's what lasciviousness means, just giving yourself over to it.

"...an evil eye... [an eye that looks for evil,

looks to perpetrate evil] ...blasphemy, pride, foolishness; **all these evils go forth from within, and these defile a man**" (vs 22-23). That's what causes sin! How does it get within?

- partly we inherit it with human nature
- partly we learn it from those around us
- partly it is there because Satan can put in and take out

Acts 5—when they asked Ananias and Sapphira about why they did it, Peter asked them, 'Why has Satan put it into your heart to lie?'

Matt. 13—those who receive the Word of God, and it's there for a little while, Satan comes and takes it out. ***The problem is within!***

Works of the Flesh:

If you drank a test-tube full of PCP you would surely die; 100% PCP. But what if you have 100 parts per billion in your drinking water? Are you still getting PCP? *Yes, you are!* It is the same way with human nature. You have a little bit or you have a lot, but you still have it.

That's the whole lesson of Job. He may have done all these nice things on the outside, *but he still had human nature!* The further he went along, the worse he got. Then God had to talk to him, and the sum of it was '*no thought can be withheld from You*'—*God!* It's the same way with overcoming, we have to overcome from *within!*

Galatians 5:19: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*... [they are pretty much identical to what Jesus gave, only expanded] ...adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry..." (vs 19-20). Of course, one of the biggest sins is ***idols in the mind!***

"...witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that **those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God**" (vs 20-21).

- there's the problem
- there's the source

We concentrated in part one on lust, and how lust is at the heart and core of everything that there is in this world (1-John 2:16-17).

Exo. 20—We want to do something with the Ten Commandments. We want to make them more like a circle rather than a ladder, stair or list. When you list out the Ten Commandments you go one thru ten, but if you put it in a circle and you slice it as a

pie down to the center, and you start off with commandments one up here and you go around to commandment ten, commandment ten and one come right back together. That's exactly what they do.

Exodus 20:17: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."

When you covet, this is something that happens in the mind! I want to tie the Scriptures in part one together so that you can see how the Ten Commandments really come back full circle.

Ezekiel 14:4: "Therefore, speak to them, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "**Every man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart...**"'" It says in the book of Jeremiah that 'they worship the work of their hands.'

If you setup an idol in your heart, that is *covetousness*. Does that come right back to the first commandment, which says that 'you shall have no other gods before me, and you shall make no graven image of any likeness.'

What happens if you don't make any graven image with your hands, chisel out of a tree or whatever? You have the works of your hands such as a car or something that you have made or own and you consume all your time with this. That's *another god* before the *true* God. You see how all of these things come back together? What if you continually desire something that belongs to someone else? *That's an idol in your heart and mind!* That comes right back to the first commandment.

Think of the Ten Commandments as all interlocking in a circle. You've seen these pie-shaped diagrams where they have a slice out of it, just realize that the way that the Ten Commandments all fit together. Let's see what this commandment was designed to reveal. Also, with the addition of the Holy Spirit of God, it is designed to reveal to us the things that we need to overcome.

Romans 7: "What then shall we say? *Is* the Law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin except through the Law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the Law said, 'You shall not covet.'"

The tenth commandment—*thou shalt not covet*—has to do with all the inner-reasonings of human nature that generate sin. That's why you take things like pornography, which is so evil because it creates sin in the mind. After having a whole generation where pornography is part of freedom of speech, let me ask you:

- How is society?
- Have they activated those things that they find in the pornographic books?
- Did we not have a man in northern California who kept a woman as a sex slave for seven years?
- Do we not have people who are involved in all kinds of terrible heinous acts because of pornographic movies?

Because of videos that they can secretly run down to the video store and rent out, and no one knows what they're renting out. They can go home and watch it.

- Does it not affect them?
- Does it not affect their mind?
- *Yes, sure it does! Yes, yes, yes it does!*

When it talks about that Paul would not have known lust, "...except *that* the Law said, 'You shall not covet,'" this is talking about the whole mental process that takes place when *sin begins in the mind*.

Verse 8: "But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment..." In other words, God put that commandment there to make it binding. It wasn't an accident!

"...worked out within me every *kind of* lust..."—concupiscence (KJV). I can best define it as *the multiplicity of sin that the mind generates*.

At the Feast we were looking out at the beautiful lake and there are statistics that show that the lake is so cold that if someone goes into the water they'll probably go all the way to the bottom and never be found again. This is from someone not thinking evil.

I wonder how many the mafia has dumped in there? You see how the human mind is? That's why there has to be control starting *within!* You cannot let your mind wander and the imagination carry on. '***As a man thinks in his heart, so he is!***' This is the commandment that takes care of that.

"...because apart from law, sin *was* dead" (v 8). If man did not have law there would be no such thing as sin, there would not be such a thing as the penalty of sin.

Verse 9: "For I was once alive without law..."—living in the flesh, he didn't know about God's laws the way that he should. He's comparing to the time after he was converted. We were all that way once, too. We all knew there were certain laws, even laws in society, and in certain cases who cared and who didn't care.

Let's take the example of human nature and smoking: I'm amazed at how many people still smoke. They can get these labels: Warning! This

will ravage your health! You may die of cancer, emphysema, kidney disease and maybe 150 other related diseases. What do people do, they go buy cigarettes and smoke. That's just the deceptiveness of human nature.

But we're going to see the words of a man who was dead in one of these advertisements for smoking. It was Yul Brenner and he died of lung cancer, and he knows that he got it from smoking. After he recovered temporarily from his first bout with cancer, they did an interview and he said, 'If I had to do it all over again I would never smoke.' The American Cancer Society ran that ad on television, so you could see a dead man speak while he was still alive. He's dead because of sin.

It's the same way spiritually. We're out here wandering in the world, and we're living, we're alive. If we don't understand about God's laws and when we begin to understand it the next thing happens.

"...but **after the commandment came...**" (v 9). The commandment didn't just walk up to the Apostle Paul and knock him on the head and say, 'I'm the commandment.' *NO!* When he came to conscience realization of *the meaning* of the commandment.

"...sin revived, and I died" (v 9). In other words, he saw the complete ramifications of all the sin, what sin would do. You can read 'the wages of sin is death' but that really has no meaning.

You can drive down the highway and you can see billboards that some good Protestants put up there that says: 'The wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life.' Does that affect very many people as they're driving? No it doesn't! Doesn't mean a thing!

Here it is that "...the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (v 9—he understood about the wages of sin! You really do not understand unless you come to that conviction of it as God intended it to.

Verse 10: "And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life... [because God intended for you to live well] ...was found *to be* unto death for me; because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*" (vs 10-11).

- Does sin deceive you? *Sure it does!*
- What is the commandment? *The wages of sin is death!*
- How was he to escape? *Through baptism!*

Verse 12: "Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and

good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** But sin, in order **that it might truly be exposed as sin in me...** [it's from within] ...by that which *is* good... [the commandment is good, which defined it] ...was working out death; so that by means of the commandment, sin might become **exceedingly sinful**" (vs 12-13). That's where the battle begins with us as Christians; we understand it.

Verse 14: "For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin." Let's see how this works. Here is just a typical average thing that happens.

Lust and Covetousness:

Proverbs 21:25: "The desire of the lazy man kills him..." That's why we have welfare, handouts, giveaway programs and things like this.

"...for his hands refuse to work. **He covets greedily all the day long...** [that can happen to anybody, whether you're slothful or whatever] ...but the righteous gives and spares not" (vs 25-26). This can happen to an entire population.

Ezekiel 33:30: "And you, son of man, the children of your people are still talking about you by the walls, and in the doors of the houses, and speaking to one another, each man to his brother, saying, 'I pray you, come and hear what is the word, which comes forth from the LORD.'" This puts a lot of 'religious' people in kind of a tight position.

Verse 31: "And they come to you as the people come, and they sit before you *as* My people, and they hear your words. But they will not do them. For with their mouth they show much love, *but* their heart goes **after their covetousness.**"

That is a perfect example of what is called 'modern psychology' and much of what is called the New Age Movement, which is basically 'you can do as you think you are.' You can do anything; just visualize it in your mind. All they're doing is setting up covetousness.

- it's right to have goals
- it's right to visualize goals

But when it comes to the point that it's an idol in your mind that it becomes covetousness, then you don't want that at all. That's why we are told to 'live by faith' and 'to give us this day our daily bread and keep us from the evil one.'

Sure they show much love, all this positive thinking. I heard this woman on a talk show say, 'I'm just getting into myself.' That's all a part of this type of thing; we're reading it right here. "...their heart goes after their covetousness."

Verse 32: “And lo, you *are* to them as a singer of love songs *with* a beautiful voice, and able to play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them. And when this comes to pass; (behold, it will come) then they shall know that a prophet has been among them” (vs 32-33). That certainly happened during the days of Ezekiel.

Jer. 6—here’s the whole population after covetousness, greediness and lust, *all based on lust!*

Jeremiah 6:13: “For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain [covetousness]... [they’re breaking that tenth commandment] ...and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely.” I’ve had to rescue people who have been dealt with falsely when I was a loan broker.

If I told you all the aspects of what some people went through and were bilked because of people dealing with them in a terrible, terrible way it would just make your hair stand on end. Sometimes you have to cut your losses and run, that’s about all you can do. It was all because of dealing falsely and covetousness, the whole thing, and the client had their own part in it, too.

2-Peter 2:9: “*The Lord knows how to rescue the Godly out of temptation... [that is key in overcoming] ...and to reserve the unrighteous to the day of judgment to be punished.*” God’s hand is not slack; it’s going to come.

Verse 10: “But particularly those who walk after *the flesh* in corrupting lust, and hold in utter contempt *the lordship of God...*” Not despising a physical government, but that’s despising the government of God. The government is going ‘sit on His shoulders.’

“...*They are* audacious and self-willed. They are not afraid to blaspheme *the* Divine powers, whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring a railing condemnation against them before *the Lord*. But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and destroyed—blaspheme those things of which they are ignorant, *and* shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption” (vs 10-12).

In this society we’re rapidly getting to that point. I don’t know how God measures societies, but I know He does. Remember when God came down and talked to Abraham and They told Abraham what was going to happen to Sodom and Gomorrah, and ‘see if the cry that comes out of there is a great as we’ve heard.’ Somehow God judges the societies.

Talk about all the things that we can do to bring sin into people’s lives, as far as the society,

and I just mentioned some of them today. We’re setting ourselves up for a much more rapid fall than any other society. When it goes it’s going to be sudden. *The only protection you’re going to have is God!* That’s just where it is!

Verse 13: “They are bringing upon themselves *the* reward of unrighteousness, while finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires day-by-day. *They are* stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions... [from within] ...while feasting together with you.” Have we not experience that?

Verse 14: “Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin...” There comes a point when mentally people cannot cease from sin. Maybe you’ve never thought of it that way before, but that’s what it’s clearly saying.

“...*they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings...” (v 14)—covetous practices; it’s a heart that you exercise and magnify. I’ve given sermons showing how the sin increased (Rom. 1), and when it increases to a certain point then God gives them over to something else. Then it increases to another point, and then God gives them over to another thing.

We saw the steps in Romans where God gave them over to more and more depths of sin as they went along. They have exercised their hearts with covetous practices.

“...—cursed children who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, *the son of Beor*, who loved *the* reward of wickedness” (vs 14-15). Go back and read the account about Balaam.

I’ve had one person say to me, ‘Why was that so wrong?’ He had totally missed the whole point. You don’t get paid for doing sin against the people of God and come and ask God for permission to do it. There’s a classic example of a person totally given to sin, totally given over to wickedness, and when he went to curse, *God made him bless!*

That proves my point that God can even make a liar write the Bible correctly, if that was all there was left to use. God uses Holy men that He’s tried and proved. I don’t think Moses was very much willing to write something down that wasn’t true:

- after he was in the presence of God for 40 days and 40 nights
- after God talked with him on the mountain
- after Moses had the command of all of those plagues to bring down upon Egypt.

No sir, he wouldn’t have put anything down that wasn’t true!

- How about Joshua?
- How about Samuel?
- How about David?
- How about Isaiah?

Do you think Isaiah is going to write something that isn't true? *God told him to get up and walk naked in the streets to show what He was going to do to the people!* Do you think he would dare write something that wasn't true? *Of course not!*

Verse 16: "But he received a rebuke for his own transgression; *the dumb donkey*, speaking in a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet. These *false prophets* are fountains without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever. For they speak bombastic *words of vanity...*" (vs 16-18). That's the whole sum of human nature: ***vanity!***

"...enticing *others* through *the* lusts of the flesh by granting indulgences to sin..." (v 18). A good example of that is the lottery system and when they have their great lottery drawings.

I met someone in a store who was buying lottery tickets and I asked him if he had won anything. He said, 'Yes, nothing big, but three \$1 and two \$5; but I've spent over \$200.' Classic example!

The Bible lives and walks right in front of us. How anyone can say there is no God and the Word of God is not true is incredible!

"...and *ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception. While promising them freedom..." (vs 18-19). Isn't it true; look at South Africa. They were going to get one man and one vote and everything is going to be fine.

"...they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage" (v 19). That's your own mind! You enslave yourself with your own sins and your own mind. That is why there is ***the circumcision of the heart!***

Imagination:

Here's where people end up using the *covetousness and imagination*: God gave us a mind so we can think, reason and visualize. Nothing ever happens until we visualize it first. Whether you're making something, putting something together, whatever, you must visualize it first then you can understand.

It's the same way with sin. People have to visualize it, especially in those corrupting sins. Note Rom. 1:19-31—that whole chapter is talking about all the sins. Here's what God saw and still sees,

because remember that He said, 'The end-time will be like as it was in the days of Noah; 'so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.'

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that **the wickedness of man was great on the earth...**" That's exactly what God sees today. It is great in the earth.

"...and **every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**" (v 5). Didn't we read earlier where they're just given over to covetousness continually, exercising it continually.

What I think we should do is let's just, in this framework, watch the things that occur on television and in life.

(go to the next track)

The very situations that you come across, observe all the advertisements—whether written or something on television or radio—and think about them in relationship to what we are studying here. Think about them in relationship to how much these are designed to *incite lust!* In particular the automobile ads! Then watch for the imperceptible things, which are there for less than a second, that are designed to incite adultery and fornication.

I think you're going to be absolutely amazed! You just think about it! How does that come about? *Because the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually!*

Gen. 8 tells us about the time of the full activation of this. It starts out as little kids, in degree.

Genesis 8:21: "And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in His heart, 'I will not again curse the ground for man's sake—although the imagination of man's heart is evil **from his youth**; and I will not again smite every living thing as I have done.'"

I don't want to put any age on God's 'youth.' I don't know if that means 12-years-old up, or if that means from 7 up, 6 up, or whatever. ***"...man's heart is evil from his youth..." up!***

There are people whom you can call upright people, but that doesn't change the mind! It is in the mind, in the imagination!

Jeremiah 7:24: "But they did not obey..." They didn't listen to God.

Verse 23: "But this thing I commanded them, saying, '**Obey My voice**, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people; and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, so that it may be well with you.' **But they did not obey...**" (vs 23-24).

- it was the same way then as it was before

the Flood

- sure it is, exactly the same way
- people didn't listen

“...nor bow their ear, but **walked in their own counsels, in the imagination of their evil heart...**” (v 24). What is the Proverb we should all have memorized?

Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25: **“There is a way, which seems right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death.”**

Jeremiah 7:24: “...that’s how they went backward and not forward.”

If you read Jeremiah on how God judged the people, you will see that He judged them according to the collective evil of their heart and wicked imagination. If we can use that as a gauge, maybe this gives us an idea of who is near the judgment of God, is to this nation and to this world.

Jeremiah 11:7: “For I earnestly forewarned your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and warning persistently, saying, **‘Obey My voice.’** Yet, **they did not obey nor bow down their ear,** but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart. So I will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them. And the LORD said to me, ‘A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the people of Jerusalem. **They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear My words...**” (vs 7-10).

Verse 11: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, **I will bring evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape;** and though they shall cry to Me, I will not hear them.’”

Jeremiah 6:18: “Therefore, **hear, you nations,** and know, O congregation, what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth; behold, **I will bring evil on this people...** [notice how God judges]: **...even the fruit of their thoughts because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My Law, but have rejected it**” (vs 18-19).

It says in another place that they ‘feared the sword; I will bring the sword upon them.’

Proverbs 12:20: **“Deceit is in the heart of those who imagine evil...”** To think on evil, to let their thought roll over evil. What is the deceit that happens? *They delude themselves into thinking that this evil is acceptable!* With the imagination the thought enters in, then it is acceptable. It’s rolled around much like a nice piece of candy that you want to enjoy and you put in your mouth and sort of roll it around and savor it. Then you let it

disintegrate very slowly.

That’s what people do with sin to justify it in their mind. Of course, there is an alluring, magnetic quality of evil, which attracts human beings. That’s Satan’s pull to bring people into it. Then he can condition them a little bit at a time. They begin to roll it over, to savor it and think on it. A person can end up, as Jesus said, ‘You’ve heard it in times past that you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you that whosoever looks upon a woman *to lust after her in his heart* has committed adultery already with her.’

This is the exact process that we’re talking about; the rolling over of these evil things that are imagined and it creates deceit in the heart. That deceit, sooner or later the person who is exercised by that does not know right from wrong, a person who can not discern right from wrong.

Proverbs 6:16: “These six *things* the LORD hates; yea, seven *are* an abomination unto Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, **a heart that plots wicked imaginations...**” (vs 16-18). That tells you just about where most of the movie producers and scriptwriters are.

“...feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness *who* speaks lies, and he who sows discord among brethren” (vs 18-19). Of course, all of those things will sow discord among the brethren.

Jeremiah 23:17: ““They still say to those who despise Me.’ The LORD has said, ‘You shall have peace!’ And they say to everyone who walks after the imagination of his own heart, ‘No evil shall come upon you!’”

Read the whole chapter of Jer. 23 and God lays it right at the footsteps of the ministers and prophets that those things have happened.

How to Overcome:

Let’s concentrate on how to overcome, because it begins in the mind. I’ve had difficulty overcoming things in my mind and you have to, and each thing will be a different set of circumstances.

I want to make sure and reiterate to all of us that *you cannot overcome without the Spirit of God and you cannot overcome without being in the grace of God.* It’s impossible to even start. That’s why so many ministers tell the congregation to not bother keeping the Ten Commandments because it’s impossible to keep them.

They are only looking to the physical outside of it, but what we’re looking to is how are we change internally? How can we fight sin? We’re

presented with it much more intensely than any other generation.

As they were walking along the Sea of Galilee, Peter, James and John did not see billboards. They did not have 7-Eleven convenience stores filled with pornography right up on the first shelf as you walk in. They did not have television sets in their homes. Let alone now where you can select 120-plus channels all the way from 'religious' programs to pornography all day long. It's there! They didn't have it where you could be driving in a car and you could turn on a radio and all of a sudden something comes over the radio that's very irritating. At least it's pretty quick to turn off the switch.

I don't know about you, but I know that as far radios are concerned, I'm looking for information or music as I'm driving, but I tell you that I am 'commercialized' out. I turn the dial off! I don't know what they do with those things, but everything is a gigantic crisis to get this 30-second or 1-minute commercial pounded into your head. It's just like taking a wooden mallet and a spike driving it right into your ear.

So, they were not confronted with the same things that we have, with the intensity that we have. We are more aware of it than any other society.

James 1:12: "Blessed *is the* man who endures trials because after he has been proved... [successfully overcome] ...he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." Isn't that what Abraham did? The obvious has to be that you overcome the temptation, and when you have, you will receive a crown of life.

Verse 13: "Do not let anyone who is tempted say, 'I am being tempted by God'..." You can't walk into a 7-Eleven store and there's pornography right there, or a liquor store and all you're doing is going to buy a bottle of wine. You can't say, because there's a pornography magazine, *that you are tempted of God. No, you are not!* You're tempted of the magazine, *not God!* God does not send those kinds of things.

God gives you a choice to obey! That's your choice. God does not set evil in front of you to tempt you. God gives you the choice: Will you obey or not? That's it!

Deut. 30:15-20—God has set before us life and good, death and evil; *choose life!* God does not try us or present us with evil alternatives to choose. *We either obey God or not!* I hope that's why we're all here collectively, we've all chosen to obey God rather than follow vanity.

"...because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*" (v 13).

- When He tried Abraham (Gen. 12) did He try Him with evil? *No! God gave him the choice to obey!*
- What happens when you're tempted with evil and you obey God? *He gives a way out!*
- Did He give a way out to Abraham? *Yes, He did!*

1-Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For God, Who *is* faithful, will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able to *bear*; but with the temptation, **He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear it.**" Or, in some cases:

- avoid it
- escape it
- flee it
- run from it
- understand what's going on

James 1:13 "...He Himself tempts no one *with evil.*" Does God try us? *Yes, He does!* If you take it literally as it is in the *King James* then a Christian is not supposed to have a trial.

Verse 14: "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust." That is the key thing that must be overcome.

As long as we're in the flesh, that has to be overcome daily. In other words, the weight and power of God's Spirit in you must be more than the lust that wells up in you, so that you can put the lust away.

You control it internally with the Spirit of God; that's how it's done. That's how you overcome sin. You don't say, 'Let us keep the Sabbath' and don't do this, that and the other thing, and you're sitting here thinking 'I'll sure be glad when the Sabbath is over so I can do this, that and the other thing. Make the Sabbath a delight and call it Holy of the Lord.

Verse 14: "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and **is enticed** by his own lust." It's an active process that takes place "...and is enticed..."—that you're deceived by it. You're ensnared and entrapped by it.

Verse 15: "And after lust has conceived..." Lust and conception of lust is then in the mind. How long does it take for that to happen? *It depends!* Sometimes it can happen instantaneously and one follows the other. Sometimes it will be over a period of time. That's why accountants get away with embezzling money: over a period of time, a little bit here and a little bit there. Next thing you know they

have \$200,000 stashed away, or whatever.

“...it gives birth to sin...” (v 15). What is the conclusion here? Let’s think about this for a minute.

What if you’re just driving down the road or working in your house? What if you’re just standing there doing dishes and BING! there’s an evil thought that goes through your mind?

- Have you sinned? *No!*
- Have you been tempted? *Yes!*
- Is lust there to grab hold of it and do something with it? *Yes!*
- Is God’s Spirit also there to help you overcome it? *Yes!*
- What should you do? *That’s where it is ‘be instant in prayer!’*

Ask God to strengthen you right there! Sometimes you can’t get rid of that thought right away, so what do you do? *You do what the mind was created to do! Put in something good from God’s Word!* That’s why it’s good to memorize Scripture! If you memorize it, it’s in the mind, so if you need to call upon it, you *can* just like that.

“...and sin, when it is completely finished... [there’s a time when sin is lodged in the mind and it’s not an act, *yet!*] (and): ...brings forth death” (v 15).

What happens if the sin is never activated in an overt action? Is it still sin? *Yes!* And it becomes one of those things that becomes an idol in the mind. It’s still idolatry and that will still bring forth death, because God judges us according to our heart.

It does not have to be a physical sin, that’s bad enough, that’s sin. Jesus said, ‘Whoever looks upon a woman *to lust*, whosoever looks upon his neighbor’s goods *to lust*, whosoever plans sin and crime *lusts*, and when you execute it, then you have done it!

You can go along and something happens to you, and you all of a sudden find out that you’re having hateful thoughts toward an individual, thoughts of hate. How about if someone does something to your life in a permanent way? That’s why Jesus said, ‘You’ve heard it said of old time you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy, but I say to you to love your enemy, do good to those who despitefully use you, hate you, and persecute you.’ Because if you end up hating because of what someone else has done, then you are as much a sinner as the one who has done something to you. It all has to be controlled here in the mind.

Let’s see what we need to do and how we need to control this.

2-Peter 1:4: “Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises...” There are promises of overcoming; there are promises of God’s Spirit to help us. We *can* overcome! I guarantee you one thing, when you really claim those promises and you put your life in God’s hands every day under His grace, it’s going to be whole lot easier overcoming those sins in the mind.

- not because you’re better at it
- not because you’re more special at it
- not because you’re any better than you were

—but *because of God’s Spirit!*

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

We will see one way to avoid temptation and lust, and that is to learn by the examples of other people, as well as your own experience.

1-Corinthians 10:5: “But with many of them God was not pleased... [with those who were in the wilderness] ...for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now **these things became examples for us**, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted” (vs 5-6).

We can take those examples that we’re to learn, know and understand in what is called the Old Testament. That’s part of the Word of God, brethren! “...so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”

Verse 7: “Neither be idolaters...” and all the things that were there.

Verse 11: “Now **all these things happened to them as examples, and were written for our admonition**... [teaching, learning and all the things that we need to do] ...on whom the ends of the ages are coming.”

Here’s another way to avoid the sin, and this takes action within. You have to make a decision to do this:

1-Corinthians 6:18: “**Flee** sexual immorality...”—get rid of it, because if your mind is all involved and enticed, *you are going to sin*. Flee it! Run from it! Run from fornication!

“...Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body... [any other physical sin] ...but the one who commits sexual immorality is **sinning against his own body**. WHAT! Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and you are not your

own? For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (vs 18-20).

That's the key! *Use that Spirit of God to have the mental change and action you need!* There is a mental battle involved in sin; that's where the victory must be won! That's why it says that *our faith will bring us the victory!* It's the faith that comes from God through His Holy Spirit.

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in the flesh... [we still do that, we're still human beings] ...we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal..." (vs 3-4). That's where the warfare and struggle is.

People who do not use the weapons of the warfare that God gave, but just let things go, they entrap and ensnare themselves in so many evil and horrible things, and it all starts with the imagination.

One of the worst deceptive things that has come upon this nation has been the rapid widespread use of drugs, and in particularly *cocaine*. That is also mentally deceiving once people imbibe in it.

I've noticed people's noses and if you take cocaine your nose is all red. I've notice some people that I've wondered about; it's so widespread! I can say that I've never known anyone that that I can sit down and talk to and they tell me that they take cocaine. I'm just wondering about some people.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal..." Can't be just physical means. That's why the whole thing of Judaism didn't bring about salvation because it was all physical or carnal—*exterior!* Here it is *interior!*

"...but mighty through God to the overthrowing of strongholds" (v 4). That's in the mind! What is the hardest thing to do? *Change a mind!* When you try to convince your children of that, you know that!

I always told my children that no matter how hard they set their will, my will is going to be harder! I will enforce the will of God in our family—period! It has to be mighty at times. It's the same way mentally to get the sin out. You're dealing with *strongholds!*

There are parts of the human mind—being as deceptive as it is—even with the Holy Spirit of God, it is right there that won't let go! So, we have to have God's Spirit to determine it.

Here's what it does, v 5: "Casting down vain imaginations..." We went through all the evil imaginations; they have to be cast down. That means to be rooted out and destroyed.

"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God... [you have to use God's Spirit for that] ...and **bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ**" (v 5). That's where it begins! That's why we need to have God forgive us of our sins every day so that they don't build up; sin can build up.

One of the greatest things that Satan would like you to do is carry around the little sin that you nurture, and that you're ashamed to go repent of.

- Repent of it!
- Put it under the blood of Christ!
- Put it under the grace of God!

"...bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ." That's how to do it!

Verse 6: "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled"—the active process of it.

Take James 1 and 1-Cor. 10 and put them side-by-side and see how you can use the tools of God and the Spirit of God to overcome.

Galatians 5:13: "For you have been called unto freedom, brethren; only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh; rather, serve one another with love." That's why we're the 'No Hassle Church.' We're trying to serve each other by love.

Verse 14: "For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you bite and devour one another, watch out lest you be consumed by one another" (vs 14-15). We've all seen how that works.

Verse 16: "Now *this* I say, walk by the Spirit..." In other words, let your daily life be motivated by the Spirit of God, and you walk in the Spirit, always being 'wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.'

"...and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (v 16). It doesn't mean you won't be tempted; you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh, because God's Spirit is going to be there to 'cast down imaginations, cast down vain reasonings.' All these things that exalt themselves against God.

Verse 17: "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under *works of law*" (vs 17-18).

That doesn't mean you don't have to keep it, it means you are not under the penalty of sin because of breaking the Law, if you are walking in the Spirit.' This is what it's going to produce:

Verse 22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering...” You have to keep at it; it’s not going to come at once, it’s a lifelong thing.

“...kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.... [then Paul tells you how to do it]: ...But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh...” (vs 22-24)—with God’s Spirit and through baptism.

Luke 14:26—Jesus says: “If anyone comes to Me...” Taking up your cross and following Christ; you’ve crucified the flesh and the lusts thereof.

“...and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, **he cannot be My disciple**. And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple; for which one of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *sufficient* for its completion; lest perhaps, after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish’?” (vs 26-30).

Luke 9:23: “Then He said to all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him **take up his cross daily**, and let him follow Me.’”

Have one rule in your life that will be good: *If there has been sin today and you repent of it today, when you get up in the morning, don’t drag that in and spoil the next day!*

That’s what it means to ‘not to let the sun go down on your wrath.’ Get rid of it and let the next day be a nice day. I think if you follow that, that’s going to help you. As husband and wife, if you have had a little difficulty or you’ve had sharp words with each other, when you get up in the morning *it never existed and you go on from there*.

Galatians 5:24: “...crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit. We should not become vainglorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another” (vs 24-26).

Then it shows in Gal. 6 all the things that we are to do. Here’s what else we are to do, and how we are to walk in the Spirit and have the weapons of our warfare spiritually and mighty through God.

I’ll tell you one thing, if you’ve had a particular sin, lust or problem in overcoming, if you do what it says here, I’ll guarantee you that the day is going to come when you *know* that you are released from that, and you will feel just great. That’s not to say that it won’t come back and bother

you, someday, somewhere down the road in the future, because sin has a habit of that. But you will know that you are released from that through the power of God.

Colossians 3:1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, **seek the things that are above**... [that’s how you overcome sin] ...where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.”

Just go over some of the Scriptures what it’s going to be like to be a resurrected spirit being. Get your mind on that and then look back on the sin that has been bothering you, and it will be pretty small.

Verse 2: “Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died... [through baptism] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory. Therefore, put to death your members which *are* on earth...” (vs 2-5).

Put to death, crucify with the sword of the Spirit. It’s an ongoing daily overcoming process. Then it lists all of them:

“...—sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience” (vs 5-6).

Verse 12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering... [those are the things to put in and think on] ...forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*. And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection. And **let the peace of God rule in your hearts**, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...” (vs 12-16). Then you’ll see how you can be overcoming.

“...teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...” (v 16). That’s another way of overcoming, too. Sing a song or a hymn. Sometimes when you’re praying just open the book of Psalms and just start singing the Psalm as you read it.

“...singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him” (vs 16-17).

That’s how you overcome and put down all

the sin and lusts. That's where you need to begin: *in the mind!*

We're well aware of the nature of human beings—aren't we? Now we need to know about the nature of God. That's what we need more of than anything else.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 7:20-23
- 2) Galatians 5:19-21
- 3) Exodus 20:17
- 4) Ezekiel 14:4
- 5) Romans 7:7-14
- 6) Proverbs 21:25-26
- 7) Ezekiel 33:30-33
- 8) Jeremiah 6:13
- 9) 2 Peter 2:9-19
- 10) Genesis 6:5
- 11) Genesis 8:21
- 12) Jeremiah 7:24, 23-24
- 13) Proverbs 14:12; 16:25
- 14) Jeremiah 7:24
- 15) Jeremiah 11:7-11
- 16) Jeremiah 6:18-19
- 17) Proverbs 12:20
- 18) Proverbs 6:16-19
- 19) Jeremiah 23:17
- 20) James 1:12-13
- 21) 1 Corinthians 10:13
- 22) James 1:13-15
- 23) 2 Peter 1:4
- 24) 1 Corinthians 10:5-7, 11
- 25) 1 Corinthians 6:18-20
- 26) 2 Corinthians 10:3-6
- 27) Galatians 5:13-18, 22-24
- 28) Luke 14:26-30
- 29) Luke 9:23
- 30) Galatians 5:24-26
- 31) Colossians 3:1-6, 12-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 25
- Acts 5
- Matthew 13
- 1 John 2:16-17
- Romans 1:19-31
- Deuteronomy 30:15-20
- Genesis 12
- Galatians 6

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2/16/15

Human Nature III (Cast Down Imaginations) Fred R. Coulter

Many times we go back to the beginning of the Bible and there is a reason why. There are many things that we can learn.

I was watching a woman in a café and just looking at her demeanor it was very evident that she was confident, and you can tell just by observing someone how they feel about themselves. That triggered a thought in my mind that whatever happened to human nature makes it impossible for the human mind to perceive the good of God in the way that it should be perceived.

It can perceive what the human mind views as good, but it cannot differentiate between real good and that which appears good. There is a difference. There are many things that appear very, very good.

{note sermons *Evil Works* #s 1-2} I think this will tie it all together.

They know that synthetic vitamins, which you can produce from petroleum and coal; extracting out of it the different chemicals and break it down into the same components into what we call *vitamins*. There are also what are called *natural vitamins*, which are those things that are found naturally in the various foods.

I talked to a biochemist once who said that the *synthetic vitamins* appear to do everything that *natural vitamins* do, but there's a difference. There's a difference between the shadow and the real thing, or looking into a looking glass and seeing an image of the real thing. The *synthetic* vitamins can do certain things in the body, but over time it predisposes it for an early demise.

Human nature likewise cannot see that the good it perceives is truly not good, because something happened to human beings when Adam and Eve sinned.

In talking about how we are made, Genesis 1:27: "And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God..." At the resurrection, since we're made in the image of God, I don't think there's going to be too great a change in how we may appear, as we appear in the flesh as Jesus did after His resurrection, there was not much difference in how He appeared then than how He appeared before He died.

We also know that when Adam and Eve were created they obviously did not have human nature as we know it today. Jesus said, 'From within, out of the heart of man, proceeds adultery,

fornication, evil thoughts, murder, pride, lust and all the things that come out from within (Mark 7).

We also know that you can take any human society anywhere in the world, as isolated as it may be, and they are still subject to human nature and sin. That means—much to the chagrin of the liberals and the communists—that you cannot create a human government that is a structure outside of the human mind that is going to correct the problems of the human mind.

Concerning *communists*—the former Soviet society officially rejected any notion of God. They had a society in which people are supposed to work together side-by-side, arm-in-arm and they are all treated the same and all get the same amount of pay for what they do. They're all a ward of the state and are taken care of from the cradle to the grave.

- Did they change human nature? *No! They did not change human nature!*
- Did they have the same problems that we have in the USA? *Yes, they had lying, cheating, stealing!*

I think they had less murder, but only because they don't allow them to have any weapons. But we're not given any statistics on the criminality of the Soviet society. The first murder did not occur with the Saturday-Night Special. The first murder occurred with a club or a stone, as we find in Gen. 4.

There's another example of a society: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel and how many other children that they had; a very small society. What happened? *Sin was right there!*

We need to understand a little bit more about human nature: the beginning of it, the origin of it. I want to review a couple of things in Gen. 3. I won't belabor the point how the temptation came. Here is what Satan answered Eve when she said:

Genesis 3:3: "...'You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" And the serpent said to the woman, 'In dying, you shall not surely die!'" (vs 3-4). Of course, we know the meaning and aspect of that:

1. the false doctrine of the immortality of the soul
2. Satan knew that in the instant that they ate of it, they wouldn't die that instant

The phrase that God told them that 'in the day that you eat thereof, in dying you shall surely die.' There was no space of time involved for when

they would die. But the death sentence came.

Verse 5: “For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be like God, deciding good and evil.”

Verse 22: “And the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to decide good and evil...’” When you read that statement, we know that man is not as God. We do know that. So, this statement—in its translation—is a little misleading.

Do human beings know good and evil as God knows good and evil? *No!* That is not what it is talking about precisely. Let’s sort our way through this:

When Adam and Eve were created, they had no knowledge of evil. The only thing that they knew was what God gave them—their language, place to live, food to eat—was good.

Genesis 1:31: “And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly good...*” That we know.

In trying to understand this let’s find out what the word is for *know* is: to know we’re *knowing* in the Hebrew is ‘yada.’ It’s a very broad word, has a very broad application. It means to *observe* or to *recognize*. That’s different from *knowing*. When we say *know* in the English language we are saying from the point of view of experiential knowledge, *you know something to be definitely a fact*.

When God says that *He knows*, that means that God knows *everything!* Is there nothing that God knows? *God knows everything!* There is a vast difference in what happened to Adam and Eve and what God really is.

Knowing is a causative; knowing the causative instigation of it, or designation. It means to acknowledge, or have an acquaintance with evil. That’s different.

Logically, you could say that if a person who knew good to really truly be good would always choose good. But it doesn’t happen logically. Why? *Because man’s perception of good, or his knowledge of good is not good as God’s good is good!* Much like the synthetic vitamin is not the same as the authentic natural vitamin; it is *a shadow of it or the reverse of it*.

Know/knowing means *to be acquainted, comprehend or consider, cunning* and also *to discern or discover, to be familiar with or instruct*.

See how broad the word is? It’s meaning in one place is not necessarily the exact same meaning

in another place. To say that *they are as God*—‘one of Us,’ as God said—to *know* good and evil, I would assume means *acquainted, exposed* or *taught evil*. God was not taught evil. He understood evil from the rebellion of Satan the devil. He was acquainted with evil, but God knew evil and what the end result would do.

To know also means *to come, to give, to have or to take; to learn, perceive, regard, have respect to, to tell, to understand*—to know.

The whole word is very, very broad! That’s where a misunderstanding can come in. In reading this, you would have to conclude that:

Genesis 3:5: “For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be like God, deciding good and evil.” Then you will notice that there’s one thing missing when you read:

Verse 22: “And the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to decide good and evil...’” What is missing? *The phrase: “...your eyes shall be opened...”*

God did not say that Adam’s eyes were open. So, this phrase that he has “...become like one of Us...” did not say he became as God. He became as God and Jesus Christ *only in the sense of having an acquaintance and an experience* with good and evil. Their perception of good and evil was actually the lying part of the statement that Satan gave when he said, ‘Your eyes shall be opened.’ What actually happened was *their eyes were closed!*

Let’s see what 2-Cor. 3 says about human nature. Then we will tie that in with Rom. 8.

2-Corinthians 3:13: “For *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face...” You know the whole account that he went up and was on the mountain with God 40 days and 40 nights and he came down and his face shined.

“...so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory* that is *now* being set aside. **But their minds were blinded...**” (vs 13-14).

So, the lie that Satan mixed in with what was a partial truth that *you should know good and evil*. The lie was that their eyes would be opened. It didn’t open their eyes, it blinded their eyes to the truth of good and evil. What does it say of Satan the devil? *Who blinds the eyes!*

“...for to the present hour the same veil *has not been removed, but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant; which *veil* is removed in Christ” (v 14).

Isn’t it true that when we’re converted, our

whole perception of good and evil changes. Isn't that what Paul said concerning lust and covetousness? *He said that he was 'alive once without the Law.'* That meant that he really didn't perceive the Law. What was Paul? *A Pharisee!* Concerning the Law, Paul was blameless! But Paul didn't have the spiritual perception to understand sin as sin really is, and evil as evil really is.

Paul said that 'when the commandment came, sin revived and I died' so that sin would 'become exceedingly sinful. *That's what the blinding does!*

2-Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness... [she was *deceived*] ...so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ."

I had someone ask me one time that with all the doctrinal disputes that people get into, where is the simplicity of Christ? *That's true!* The simplicity of Christ is that you *trust in the grace of God and Jesus Christ as your Savior!* Everything else then begins to fall into place.

Now let's see what happens with that deception, 2-Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness... [walking in human nature] ...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe..." (vs 1-4).

When you don't believe God then you set yourself up for being blinded. When Satan said that your eyes will be opened and that 'you will know good and evil and be as gods,' that's not exactly the same thing that God is talking about, where it says that 'they are one of Us to know good and evil.' Their minds, instead of being opened, were blinded. Their minds were closed.

- What happens when someone comes under the power of Satan the devil?
- Is he not the power of darkness?

Colossians 1:13: "Who has **personally rescued us from the power of darkness** and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love."

Verse 12: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has **made us qualified for the share of the**

inheritance of the saints in the Light."

So, if their eyes were opened, which they weren't, they should have understood the Truth, which they didn't. Their eyes were closed and they were blinded, and they were under "...the power of darkness..."

How does that power of darkness appear? *As an angel of light* (2-Cor. 11:14_[transcriber's correction]). It appears as light, but it is, in fact, darkness!

If we follow along and really put this together, this will help us understand why Job could not perceive that his good was not the good of God.

Acts 26 will really prove what I'm saying. This is where Christ was saying to Paul that he was sent to the Gentiles:

Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes... [their eyes were closed by Satan; blinded] ...that *they* may turn from darkness to light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God, so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me."

There's another example of how Satan weaved this lie in there. Instead of having their eyes opened, they were blinded. What did it do from then on? *It cut them off from God!* The perception of good and evil was different from what God intended it to be, but they had an acquaintance of evil, they were instructed in evil, and they also were instructed of God previous to the sin.

Let's see what happens. We're talking about the mind and how we think, perceive and view things. I'm sure that the more people accept the Truth of God, the more that they see things in a realistic light, whether they are converted or not.

Even to run a society there has to be some semblance of law and order, and the more that these laws, and the order, is based upon what we find in the Bible, the better off that society is. The further away you get from it the worse it becomes, so it's a matter of degree of deception. That's why God has to intervene and call us particularly and remove this from us, because it can't be done any other way.

Romans 8:5: "For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh... [they always think in physical terms] ...but those who walk according to *the* Spirit mind the things of the Spirit."

- Were you perfect this week? *No!* Did you have to go to God to have your sins forgiven? *Yes, you did!*
- Did you have to claim the grace of God? *Yes, you did!*
- What were you minding?

- Were you concerned about the physical things and you just went on sort of blindly along the way and didn't even realize that there was sin?
- Were you concerned about some physical aspect of something?
- Were you so concerned with the physical aspect of eating, drinking, making money, or going here and there to survive and exist as Jesus said that the Gentiles do, that you were willing to break God's laws to accomplish that?
- *No! You were minding the things of the Spirit!*
- Is it not spiritual to go to God to have your sins forgiven? *Absolutely, yes, it is!*

When I first read this, I thought that someone who was spiritually minded, or who had the Spirit of God, there would not be any entrance of sin in that mind at all. But I didn't understand about 'the law of sin and death' being in us, that it's there all the time.

What is your mind on all the time? Consistently? I don't mean if you're sitting watching a football game, or something like that, that you're thinking great thoughts of the Bible. But then, on the other hand, while you're sitting watching the game and some of these ads come on, immediately I get up and turn it. One of these days I'm going to get some of the 'free speech' time and I'm going to ask the stations why they have to have females in every advertisement and some of them no less up to 10-12 private area shots in the ad? It's beyond me! It's just completely ridiculous! I might need more than the 30 seconds that they give on the 'free speech' time.

It just upsets me to no end, and I think it's a terrible exploitation of women that that has to go on all the time. Even during the football game, yes, my mind will be on the things of the Spirit as soon as I start discerning something that isn't right.

Verse 6: "For to be carnally minded is death..." Are we seeking after death? *No! We're seeking after life!* When I was sitting in this restaurant, it dawned on me: "...to be carnally minded is death..." Yes, it is death! How many people were in there smoking away? and have justified it in their own mind? *They're going to do it anyway!* To be carnally minded you justify the things that you do in your own mind and don't repent of it as sin! Vast difference!

"...but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (v 6). When you know that you're right with

God you feel good. It gives peace of mind! It is life because it's going to lead to eternal life. Those who are carnally-minded and are trying to fight the Spirit of God, then they have a lot of torment, because they haven't come to the point yielding to the Spirit of God.

Verse 7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God..." Why? *Because that blindness covers their eyes and their heart!*

"...for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it be. But those who are in the flesh cannot please God... [if you're just in the flesh alone] ...However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." (vs 7-9).

Rather than having their eyes opened as Satan claimed they would, they had their eyes closed, and they had their minds changed to a carnal mind *through sin*.

They ate, Genesis 3:7: "And the eyes of both of them were opened..."—which was really not an opening; it was really a closing. They now could comprehend sin, which was going into darkness, not into light.

"...and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...." (vs 7-8).

Obviously, then something happened to human nature, and it is passed on to all human beings. Let's review this and this will help us to really grasp the situation concerning the human mind and how we can overcome sin. The Catholics call this the 'stain of Adam's sin on your soul.' It's not the 'stain of Adam's sin,' it's the curse that God gave to all human beings as a result of Adam's sin. We know that:

- the whole environment changed
- the nature of animals changed
- the nature of human beings changed

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin came death; and in this way death passed into all mankind; and it is for this reason that all have sinned."

There was not death until they ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Then death was sure, and was inherited and passed on to all human beings; the human mind, the human nature is passed on to all human beings.

I think we can answer the question: Does this have to do with the spirit of man? *or* Does this

have to do with the structure of our mind? I don't know whether I can answer the question directly, but the Apostle Paul said:

Romans 7:18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me" (vs 18-20).

This, we know, is called 'the law of sin and death.' It dwells in people, and it can be activated in varying degrees, in varying circumstances within different people. That's why you find good, upright sincere people—as good as Job—perfect in the flesh. But he was not perfect before God. Why? *Because he inherited the law of sin and death!* It's from *within!* These things come from *within!*

Verse 21: "Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me." I've experienced that, and I'm sure that you have. Every time you have done something really good, I can almost guarantee it that a couple of days later you're going to do something really bad. Especially if we get to thinking that this was 'good, and how good I am, I finally made it.' Guaranteed, two or three days later, or maybe even the next hour, you're going to do something really bad. Why? *Because you're depending on yourself and not depending on God!* It's just that simple! That's God's way of letting you know we haven't made it, yet!

Verse 22: "For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members."

Part of you as a human being, human nature; it's from within! It's key thing, just like one of the Scriptures about '*casting down imaginations.*' That's a very important thing to overcoming, and you have to use the Spirit of God in order to cast them down.

Verse 24: "O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death?" Isn't that the way you feel when you really 'come to yourself.' You're wretched and miserable! I hope that I'm not talking to anyone who has not experienced that. I'm sure I'm not; I'm sure that you've all gone through that!

Verse 25: "I thank God *for His salvation*

through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin."

Where does the sin come from? The spirit of man? *or* From our physical, carnal brain? The way that we've inherited the structure? *I would have to say that from the physical, carnal brain, and the way we've inherited the structure!* The 'law of sin and death' is there; part of it. Just exactly where it is, I couldn't tell you. I imagine it's part of all of it, because all of our cells are in the possess of dying.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation..." This is the thing we need to understand about God's grace. *If* we are in God's grace, *if* we have God's Spirit, does God know that we have the 'law of sin and death' dwelling in us? *Yes, He does!* Therefore, we are not condemned for having it. Did we get the 'law of sin and death' because we wanted it? *No! We inherited it!*

IF, through Jesus Christ, we repent of our sins—we change, grow and are looking to the forgiveness, which comes from Jesus Christ and the life that comes from God—*there is no condemnation!*

"...to those who are *in* Christ Jesus... [and Christ in you; you have to be *in* Christ Jesus] ...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death" (vs 1-2). That's why there's no condemnation, because God looks at it as if we've been completely released from it.

This is why it's important in overcoming, that we begin with the mind, '*casting down imaginations!*'

(go to the next track)

Let's answer a question in Rom. 8, which has to do with those that are in the flesh. Does that mean you should not have a physical body? Literally you could take it to that extent. *No!* It means those who are not carnal-minded, which is the same Greek word that means fleshly. If you are living your life *after the flesh*, that doesn't mean you are just a fleshly human being *vs* if you live your life after the Spirit, that you are now a spirit being.

It means *whether you have the Spirit of God or not, whether you are operating solely on a carnal mind without the Spirit of God!* Without the Spirit of God there is a certain essence of good that people can do. But if you scrape just a little below the surface you're going to find that that's not so. When they're confronted with the Law of God, a hostility develops because it enmity.

There's a certain choice that God gave us that we can choose and either make that 'law of sin and death' less effective in our life by choice, by following that which is good—God's Word... I'm talking about someone in society—and it would apply to a lot of Protestants and we could say 'good' Catholics—who are truly trying to follow the commandment of loving your neighbor as yourself. They can keep that carnality to a lesser degree, but it's still always there.

When they're confronted 'smack dab' with the thing that 'you are a sinner' then immediately you get this kind of enmity reaction. Try the Sabbath. Try getting rid of Christmas or Easter. They have all the 'good' they do on Christmas and Easter; **that is not the good of God!**

Where it says that 'they that are in the flesh cannot please God, it means those who are carnal-minded, or fleshly-minded cannot please God.

Now let's review how to overcome human nature. You're not going to do it on your own. You're not going to have or create 10,000 rules, as the Jews have done, to try and control sin by building a wall around the Ten Commandments. That isn't going to solve it. It has to begin in the mind, and you need help and God's strength.

2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh." Though we are in a fleshly body, we are not fighting a fleshly battle, a carnal battle.

Even in this society of what we can say are just carnal-minded people—as we've seen the degrees of the 'law of sin and death' and carnality—God also sets before them to choose good or to choose evil. We're responsible for what we do. That's in the society. That has nothing to do with being called of God into the Kingdom of God. That's a different issue unless you come to the point of knowingly committing the unpardonable sin!

- Yes, we are responsible!
- Yes, we are to choose!

That's why the arm of the law is there, and God put it there. What man does with it, with his own reasonings, then we will find out whether it's going to be a reasonable thing or not.

We're talking about how we overcome ourselves. This is the important thing. We're just like the Apostle Paul; with his flesh he sinned, the 'law of sin.' Obviously, the 'law of sin and death' was in his members, it was a part of him. It was something he could not get rid of himself. Neither can we get rid of it. We can overcome with God's Spirit, and with God's grace He completely overlooks it. That's why Paul was accused of saying,

'Let us do evil so that grace may abound.' **NO!** He said, 'GOD FORBID!'

It's really nice to know—and I think we need **to know and understand** that:

- **if** we are Christ's, which we are
- **if** we are striving to overcome, which we are

then God does not condemn us! That helps us an awful lot with our relations with each other, because we don't have to be jumping up and down, yelling and screaming to make people do something that Christ is going to give them the time and allowance of time to 'come to themselves' to see and to do.

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal..." Not using carnal-minded devices. All you have to do is read some of the laws of society, developed by carnal-minded men, as to how to stop crime. They can never come to the solution as to how to stop crime, because you cannot create enough laws to stop crime, *because crime comes from within!*

Our weapons are not fleshly, without, or just physical things that we see or do. Example: trying to overcome sin would be to go and confess to the priest and do a hundred laps on the beads. That's a carnal-minded approach! What you need to do is repent of your sins to God, and cover it with the blood of Jesus Christ, and *then ask God for His Spirit to start using His Spirit to control your mind!* That's where sin begins! It begins in the mind!

Verse 4: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, **but mighty**... [God's Spirit is stronger than the 'law of sin and death'] ...through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds." There are times when you have a sin that's lodged in your brain. Have you ever had that happened? And you can't get it out? **That's a stronghold!** You have to keep coming back and asking God to help you.

Here's what you do, v 5: "**Casting down vain imaginations**..." That's where it begins. When a thought starts that is not right, you begin casting it down, you don't take it and begin toying with it.

When you take a thought, which is a thought of sin, and you start toying with it, it's going to generate. That's why we have the Days of Unleavened Bread. Leaven is sin during that time, because that's what happened with the thought. You take a thought or imagination and you begin expanding it. Isn't that the terminology that they use for using your imagination: *Expand your imagination! Expand your horizons!*

Well, if it's used in a right way, fine. But what if you're expanding sin? That's the biggest trick of this 'positive mental attitude' thing. They actually help you create a mental barrier to harden

your conscience against sin. I've seen that happen. I saw it happen to a minister; nice young vibrant fellow. He got into this 'positive mental attitude' thing and the great salesmanship thing:

- you are what you think you are
- you can be anything you want to be
- don't let anybody deter you
- don't let anybody stand in your way
- rules and regulations are made for those who cannot think
- get above rules and regulations

The next thing you knew, he was divorced. First he started committing adultery. I know that when he started getting into it, I said, 'Hey, be careful, you're going to lay yourself open and one of these days Satan's going to come along and cut you off.' And he sure did! He got all involved in adultery, involved in lying and cheating, divorced his wife and left two fine little kids and then went on and married some... and divorced her and went on and married someone else. ***He could not see what he was creating in his mind!*** That was not being able to discern the 'good' *that is evil*.

It's good to accomplish things, it's good to be successful, but only if it is done properly. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy and said, 'The law is good ***if you use it lawfully***, properly.' It's the same way here. When these thoughts come around:

Verse 5: "***Casting down vain imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...***" It's going to puff up.

A good example of this exalting against the knowledge of God: the Pharisee and the publican and the way the Pharisee prayed and exalted himself and the way the publican prayed and humbled himself. The Pharisee was committing the worst crime of all; he was using the laws of God, which are supposed to be for good, to exalt himself over other people and put them down.

I've seen that, too. So, when we're dealing with people, let's not do that by saying how good we are and how bad they are. They don't know. If a person doesn't know, they don't know. But if they're willing to listen—that is the key—and sometimes you have to shock them into it. Sometimes you have to be blunt and say, 'This is the way it is, and you know it.' When they're silent, you know you've reached them. When there's not too much talk back, you know you've reached them! They don't want you to know that you've reached them, because they're not willing, yet, to admit that you have reached them. Sometimes that's the way that it is.

I know exactly what's going to happen.

What happened when it really got to the point that we were all told that we are 'the one, the only Church of God in the whole world,' and everybody else is wrong? *We began being scattered!* Now there are literally thousands of Churches of God, more the way that God would want them to be—not a pillar of salt standing as an obelisk in the earth for all to see, but—as sprinkled salt in the earth, here and there everywhere.

I'm sure that there are other brethren in other locations that are learning, that if they come together every Sabbath and are yielding to God's Spirit, sooner or later they're going to grow in grace and knowledge and they're actually going to be taught, fed, learn and grow spiritually more than if they're in this great, giant organization.

We all accepted the fact that the Church of God Seventh-Day was nothing when it was really quite something! That's using God's Word to exalt yourself over other people. God doesn't want that either. What we have to do is:

Verse 5: "***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.***" That's how we need to really tackle the problem of overcoming.

Make yourself one mental rule: ***Don't drag the sin into tomorrow!*** Hopefully, let the sun go down and let there be peace. Whatever it is, even if you have a family argument, just realize you're not going to solve anything by continuing to argue. End the issue, drop it, say no more, go on and let it be a new day at sunset.

Verse 6: "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience..." Take action to correct it. One of the best ways to control your mind is to let the Word of God dwell in you richly, as we do in singing songs and hymns. If you're really bothered by something, get out the hymnal and sing some hymns.

Even in the case of Saul, remember when he was bothered by an evil spirit? He felt better when David played songs for him. By that I'm not saying that every time you want to overcome a thought that you're bothered by an evil spirit. Don't anybody jump to that conclusion. But I'm saying that even in that extreme situation, so how much more if you're trying to overcome a problem: prayer, study, songs, letting God's Word dwell in you richly.

"...whenever your obedience has been fulfilled. Are you looking at things according to their appearance?...?" (vs 6-7). That's what was wrong with the people in Corinth. They were looking at things by just the outward appearance.

We used to do that a lot in the Church, too. ‘Oh my, that’s a nice suit you’re wearing.’ Didn’t we have it in the Church where people looked on the car that they drove, or the home they lived in...? Isn’t that the object of tongue-wagging, slander, gossip and tearing people down, ‘comparing yourself one with another’? That’s what they were doing.

“...If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself... [in other words, you think it over to yourself] ...for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s. For even if I should boast somewhat more concerning our authority, which the Lord has given to us for *your* edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be put to shame in order that I may not seem as though I am frightening you by means of epistles. ‘For on the one hand,’ they say, ‘*his* epistles *are* weighty and strong; but on the other hand, *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech *is* contemptible’” (vs 7-10). So, they had their problems comparing.

Verse 11: “Let such a one think about this: that exactly as we are in word by epistles when we are absent, so *we will be* in action when we are present. But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves... [are not wise] ...**have no understanding**” (vs 11-12).

That’s one of the first things that we are not to do in the way of being carnal-minded. Someone asked one of our members about the Church and the first thing they asked was how many there were. She said, ‘What difference does it make?’ *Who attends?* ‘What difference does it make?’ The questions are:

- Are we in Christ?
- Are we learning God’s Word?

Those are the questions. We have seen that huge does not mean spiritual. The worst Feast I ever spent was in the largest crowd that was ever there. I remember the comparison: ‘Well, you know we have all these physical things because of the blessing of God. That Sardis Church over here is dead.’ In other words, ‘if you’re poor and don’t have too much, you don’t count to God.’ Isn’t that comparing yourselves among yourselves? And we all participated in it—didn’t we? We all remember. I’m not going to be too inclined for that kind of comparison. What good is it going to do in the final analysis anyway? The ultimate judging is going to be whether Christ is going to have us in the Kingdom of God. That’s what counts!

1-Peter 2:1: “Therefore, having put away all

wickedness... [it takes work to put I aside] ...and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders.” He’s talking to Christians! Put it aside! You have to use God’s Spirit to overcome it; cast it down!

Verse 2: “As newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow.”

1-Peter 1:14: “As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, *as you did* in your ignorance.” That’s all another part of mentally overcoming.

1-Peter 2:9: “But you *are* a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a Holy nation, a people for a possession of God, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy. Beloved, I exhort *you*, as strangers and sojourners, **to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts** which war against the soul” (vs 9-11).

What are we to do? *We’re to flee certain things, like fornication and idolatry!* Get away from it! Control the mind! How do you control the mind? *You get your mind on something else! Get your mind on the Word of God!*

If you want to allow your imagination to grow in a thing that is proper, just sit down—I like to do this—and think what it’s going to be like to be a spirit being. I don’t think that there’s anything you can think on any better than that. You can let your imagination just encompass all the Scriptures that you know.

One that I’ve always thought of: What is it going to be like to meet Christ and He says, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’ What is that going to be like? *That will take your mind away from sin right away!* You could care less about sin! Control your mind from fleshly lusts.

1-Peter 4:1: “Consequently, since Christ has suffered for us in *the* flesh...” We beat ourselves up with our own sins, because we keep them too long. We’re not willing to cast them down, go to God and have them forgiven.

“...**arm yourselves also with the same mind...**” We’re to have the mind of Christ; that’s what we’re to grow into. “...the same mind...” which is totally dedicated and determined to do the will of God. Christ had to overcome. He said, ‘You overcome and I overcame.’

“...because the one who has suffered in *the* flesh has finished *living* in sin... [that is Christ and also us] ...*to this end: that* he no longer live *his* remaining time in *the* flesh to *the* lusts of men, but to

the will of God” (vs 1-2). That’s what we let rule in our mind: the will of God, the Spirit of God.

Verse 3: “For the past time of our lives *is* sufficient to have worked out the will of the Gentiles, when we ourselves walked in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference in your behavior*, they are astonished *that* you do not rush with *them* into the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they revile *you*” (vs 3-4). I haven’t had anyone do that lately. I’m so far removed from all that sort of thing.

I got an invitation to go to a Christmas party. I’ve heard people say that there’s not anything wrong with a Christmas party, it’s just a party. I’ll tell you exactly what would happen if I did: I’d sit there and would be more miserable by the minute. I would! People would come along and say, ‘Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.’ I’d just kind of nod. I could no more go to one of those Christmas parties and have a clean conscious than I could walking into a Catholic Church and bowing down to an idol.

There would be one condition that I would have gone. If I could have stage center in front of the Christmas tree and tell them what it’s all about. However, I would soon be invited to leave. So, I decided to take the invitation and drop it into the wastebasket and forget about it. I’d get about four or five more because I did belong to the California Association of Residential Lenders. It was their great party and bash.

If it was anything like Halloween is, everywhere you go someone is dressed up in some sort of costume—everywhere! I walked into a McDonald’s the day before Halloween and here was this woman dressed up like a cat. She had on a black costume and her face all painted and had cat whiskers sticking out. She had glued on the top of her eyebrows some of these little rhinestones, and she had long eyelashes and a cat’s tail hanging down the back. She looked absolutely *stupid!*

I didn’t tell her that and sort of batted their eyelashes and said, ‘Oh, that’s a nice costume!’ Everyone had a costume on. The manger came out and had a pasted on baldhead; it really was stupid-looking! I couldn’t get over how people have just given themselves over to it, and it is San Francisco’s day, and, lo and behold, here came an excerpt on television calling it *the devil’s day*. They know!

So, who does that say that all of these perverts in San Francisco worship? Who is the ‘god’ of San Francisco? *The devil!* It’s very clear! They showed witches and that they’re not bad people.

The only way I would have gone to the Christmas party was to be able to stand up and tell

them what it is. But I would make sure that I was close to a door. I don’t know that I wouldn’t like to have some nice strong bodyguards to at least protect me as I’m running out, and ask God for some angels to strike the attendees blind!

We are not to give ourselves over to those things at all, and “...arm ourselves with the same mind...” as the mind of Christ.

This whole Halloween thing that we were just talking about is a very good example of how people cannot view what appears good as evil. It appears good, and everybody is out having a ‘good’ time. What’s wrong with having a good time? Are you a party-pooper? *A typical self-deceiving statement!* After all, what’s the good of taking the ‘good’ out of everything? They have good intentions on Christmas, even though ‘we know it’s not Christ’s birthday, but look at the *good* we do.’ Can you do good when it’s built on lies?

Let’s just take the example of the United States going out trying to do good in the whole world by giving freedom to everybody and they’re not really teaching and preaching the Word of God. Here is a ‘good’ that is very destructive; witness South Africa.

Israel was originally commissioned by God to be a nations of priests; in other words, to take the Word of God to the world. Now that we’re not taking the Word of God to the world, Satan is using that time that God gave Israel to do it. Now he’s using it to spread his own evil way, just like he did during the time of Solomon, when that was to be an example of a type of:

- the Millennium on earth
- peace on earth
- God ruling
- the blessings of God

What happened? Solomon turned that into the generation of all kinds of wretched religions and wrong government policies and everything. We’re seeing the same thing today. Just as it came to an end with Solomon, it’s going to come to an end for this nation. Yes, it becomes very irritating to see that kind of thing.

Titus 1:7: “In all things you yourself set an example of good works; in doctrine uncorrupted, serious-minded, *and* sincere; *use* sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that the one who opposes *you* may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say about you” (vs 7-8). This is all part of overcoming!

Verse 9: “*Admonish* slaves to submit themselves to their own masters, *to be* well pleasing in everything, not answering back; not misappropriating *anything*, but showing all good

faithfulness; so that they may do credit to the doctrine of our Savior God in everything. For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared; teaching us that..." (vs 9-12).

Here's part of overcoming mentally: "...having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts..." (v 12). Get away from them; don't allow them. Just put the iron curtain down that you just don't allow certain things to happen. Then on the other hand, you don't have to stand on a soapbox and broadcast it abroad and condemn others either. Just get away from it.

"...we should **live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world...** [that's how we're to do it] ...looking for **the blessed hope...** [all a part of our mental attitude] ...and **the appearing of the glory** of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ" (vs 12-13).

Just one thought here: "...the blessed hope..." is called by Protestants *the rapture*. And 'the glorious appearing' is the second coming of Christ. "...the blessed hope..." is the near second coming of Christ when He comes close to the earth and all those will hear His voice and be raptured away. Then the appearing is almost His third coming.

What is "...the blessed hope..." that we look for? *That we shall see Him as He is* (1-John 3). And he that has this hope in him purifies himself as Christ has.

Verse 14: "Who gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works." That's how we overcome sin and lust. It becomes a *way of living*, which begins in our mind:

- using God's Spirit
- growing
- overcoming
- not allowing temptations to get a hold of you and take root

If you sin, go to God and repent! Confess your sins! He'll blot them out and forgive them. Have God keep your life under His very grace. If you do those things it's going to be a whole lot easier being able to cope with this present evil world.

You're never going to be able to get 'the law of sin and death' out of you entirely, because that won't happen until the resurrection. That's how we can overcome human nature! It really does begin in the mind! I think really focusing in on the way you overcome is to start in the mind. When a thought starts to generate, then you grab control and hold of it.

In the midst of all of this, this shows that we have to keep at it all the time. It's a lifelong battle in overcoming.

Luke 9:18: "Now, it came to pass as He was praying alone, and the twelve disciples were with Him, *that* He questioned them, saying, 'Who do the multitudes declare Me to be?' And they answered *and* said, 'Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and others, that some prophet from ancient times has risen *from the dead*.' Then He said to them, 'But Who do you declare Me to be?' And Peter answered *and* said, 'The Christ of God.' And He charged them, strictly forbidding *them* to tell this to anyone, saying, 'It is necessary for the Son of man to suffer many things, and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and to be raised the third day.' Then He said to all, '**If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross daily, and let him follow Me**'" (vs 18-23).

You could say that's the whole formula for overcoming. How do you deny yourself? *By bringing every thought into captivity to Christ!* But that also means you are to 'love yourself as your neighbor.' Isn't that what we are to do? *We are to love ourselves enough that we keep ourselves from sinning!* That's all part of it.

- we deny the self
- we deny the carnal mind
- we deny the opportunity for these things to take place in us
 - ✓ *by overcoming*
 - ✓ *by bringing all these thoughts into captivity to Christ*
 - ✓ *to cast down these imaginations*

We do it daily and follow Christ! That's how we're to overcome human nature!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 1:27
- 2) Genesis 3:3-5, 22
- 3) Genesis 1:31
- 4) Genesis 3:5, 22
- 5) 2 Corinthians 3:13-14
- 6) 2 Corinthians 11:3
- 7) 2 Corinthians 4:1-4
- 8) Colossians 1:13, 12
- 9) Acts 26:18
- 10) Romans 8:5-9
- 11) Genesis 3:7-8
- 12) Romans 5:12
- 13) Romans 7:18-25
- 14) Romans 8:1-2
- 15) 2 Corinthians 10:3-12
- 16) 1 Peter 2:1-2
- 17) 1 Peter 1:14
- 18) 1 Peter 2:9-11
- 19) 1 Peter 4:1-4
- 20) Titus 7-14
- 21) Luke 9:18-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 7
- Genesis 4
- 2 Corinthians 11:14
- 1 John 3

Also referenced: Sermons: *Evil Works* #s 1-2

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2/16/16

Forgiveness

Fred R. Coulter

I have tried to cover the subjects that will help us prepare for the Passover and bring us up so that when we do partake of the Passover we're going to have a greater Passover than we've ever had before.

There's an aspect of the Passover which is very important for us, which bears upon what we are doing, and bears upon what God is wanting from every one of us in relationship to the times in which we are living, in relationship to the difficulties and problems we have been experiencing—unfortunately, or fortunately, however you want to look at it, is this:

Forgiveness as a Group:

Many people are coming from so many different backgrounds, and even different Churches of God, and people coming from churches just straight out of the world now. We had two people come down in Opp, Alabama, that they've gone from the Baptist Church to the Mormon Church to the Methodist Church gradually, step-by-step. How did they come in contact with us? Well, one of the brethren said, when they were asked 'What do you believe?' They said, 'Well, here's a beliefs booklet.' That's exactly what they needed! Exactly what they wanted!

Not only do you find the problem of difficulties within the Churches of God, but you find the same identical problems within the churches of the world. There are a lot of people sitting there in those churches that God can also call, too. One of the things that were really moving was that you can tell when God opens their mind. There's a certain point when God opens the mind of an individual, and they know it, and you know it. That is a miracle that God does.

One of the things that we need to realize is that we are dealing with all of the problems of all the Churches of God being thrown in with what we have to do to help them. That compounds it and makes it even more difficult. But one of the things that has been problematic in the past is that everything has been shoved to the ministry to solve. When that comes about, and they bring up things to me or to others, we say, 'Okay, here are the Scriptural tools, you have to solve your problems by going to Christ.' And that's what's so important. ***You have to go to Jesus Christ and let Him work your problems out!***

If you need some help and counsel, we'd be glad to do that, but the Christian Biblical Church of God is not a hierarchical church. It is not a mother/father church to solve all your problems. It's

not a babysitter church. We'll do handholding when handholding needs to be done. We will pray for each other, we will encourage each other; we will help and strengthen each other. But God expects us all, in the maturity of growing up in to Christ, to use the spiritual tools that we need to come to that maturity.

Luke 4:16: "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and according to His custom, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day and stood up to read. And there was given Him *the* book of the prophet Isaiah; and when He had unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written, '*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; for this reason, He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal those who are brokenhearted...*'" (vs 16-18).

One of the hardest hearts to heal are those that have been broken two or three times. There is a great resistance and a great mistrust of anything and anyone, and this becomes a greater problem. That's why it's so very important, brethren, that in whatever help you can give to anyone, you help them stand on their own two feet. You help them look to the Scriptures to understand what they need to do out of it. ***You point them toward God the Father and Jesus Christ.***

- no organization can save
- no church can save
- no minister can save
- ***only Christ can save***

We all need to keep that in perspective. "...to proclaim pardon to *the* captives..." (v 18). There are those who are:

- captivated by churches
- captivated by ideas
- captivated by demons and Satan the devil

They need to be brought out from underneath this when God calls them, and at that point of their minds being opened, and there's something there to help them with.

"...and recovery of sight to *the* blind..." (v 18). I would have to say that is the greatest thing that we're able to do here in being able to point out the Scriptures. Christ is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' and ***only He*** can open the mind, which then is recovering the sight of the blind. Too many people have come to the point that they have put down the spiritual shutters. I know one man who was asked—he being an evangelist—'How can you put up with all this political nonsense and corruption that's going on?' He said, 'Very simple, I just have steel blinders and I pull them right down over my eyes. I see

nothing and hear nothing.’ And obviously, then, he ended up *doing nothing*. Well, Christ is removing that.

“...to send forth in deliverance those who have been crushed, to proclaim *the* acceptable year of the Lord” (vs 18-19). If we’re going to do any of the ministry of Christ, that is all part of it. Where does it begin?

- It begins by knowledge and understanding of what is right and wrong!
- It begins by learning from the experiences that we have gone through, to help them understand what they are going through!
- It begins with one of the most important things we need to realize, which is this:

It’s like a man I was talking to said, ‘If I leave this church, will I lose my salvation?’ And I asked him:

- Can the church save you? *No!*
- Did the church call you? *No!*
- Did the church give you the Holy Spirit? *No!*
- Who did? *Jesus Christ!*
- If you leave a physical organization, have you left Christ? *No!*

‘What I want you to do, I want you to take your time and *prove everything*. I don’t want you to just up and leave, and then find out that you weren’t prepared. So, you prove everything. You need to understand that *God alone* can help, and *God alone* can heal. You need to realize that God is not going to take salvation from you.’

Salvation in these things begins with the *knowledge of forgiveness*; and forgiveness is so important. How many people are going around with a guilty conscience, worried about this, worried about that, worried about the other thing? Guilty conscience! Why do you have a guilty conscience? Are you afraid God won’t forgive? God doesn’t want you to have a guilty conscience. That’s important to really understand and realize.

- What has a guilty conscience ever solved?
- Have you ever changed anything because you felt guilty for however long you felt guilty?
- Did that change anything?
- Did it make it right?
- Did it correct it?
- *No!*

You have to do exactly as Jesus did. Luke 23 is very profound because:

- it has to do with the Passover
- It has to do with the attitude of Christ

- it has to do with the attitude of those who were doing things that they knew better, that they should not do them, but did them
- it also has to do with one of the most important things:

Remember that Jesus said He was preaching ‘the acceptable year of the Lord,’ which He is telling you, ‘*you are accepted of Me.*’ What is the greatest acceptance that a person can receive when they know they have done wrong? ***Forgiveness!***

I don’t know whether these people repented, but right after they had crucified Jesus and stuck up the stake, there He was hanging on it; and Jesus could look down on them parting His garment and so forth.

Luke 23:34: “Then Jesus said, ‘Father, **forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.**’....” That, brethren, is one of the most profound statements of Jesus Christ in the entirety of the New Testament. We need to view this from many different points of view. This tells us that regardless of the physical things, which happens to us or what people do to us, we should be ready to forgive them. That needs to be upon repentance; this is not forgiveness in advance. In other words, *standing in the grace of God is not forgiveness in advance!* But ***it is forgiveness when you come to repentance!*** That’s important to understand.

But here there was no repentance at all. There was not even any knowledge that they were doing wrong. As a matter of fact, they probably thought they were doing the right thing at that particular point. They were so wrapped up in what they were doing in looking at the loot of the man they had crucified, that they parted His garment and were casting lots upon it. And yet, Jesus said, “...‘Father, **forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.**’....”

I think this is also important for us to understand in our relationship with each other, because we have this unique phenomena, too. People knowing each other in one church together at one time, then split off and separate, and one group goes to one church, and another group goes to another church. Then out of that, they split out of that, and maybe go to another one, then another one. And finally, they get in contact with us. And that has happened when I was down in Opp, AL, people met each other for the first time in thirty years and didn’t know where the other one was.

It’s very important at that juncture not to remember the things that are in the past. Not to hold the same feelings and grudges and things that were held in the past. Not to use the same judgment that was in the past. These are the things which divided and separated brethren and turned them one against

the other. That's why it's so important to ***all be turned to Christ!*** And we still see this as a difficulty with some people coming to fellowship with the Christian Biblical Church of God. God has called us to leave all the baggage of the past behind, regardless of what the past is, and regardless of what the baggage is.

We're also going to see, as we get into this, that there are certain things that only God can forgive. There are certain things that we must forgive. But the things that only God can forgive, ***He alone can forgive.*** Let's see what Jesus did in His ministry. Let's see how He handled it; one of the very reasons that He came.

Mark 2:1: "And after *some* days, He again entered into Capernaum, and it was reported that He was in *the* house. And immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer any room, not even at the door..." (vs 1-2). So, we have a near riot going on here. Sometimes people just get carried away and just crush each other. That's about what it was like here. There was no room to receive them.

"...and He preached the Word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paraplegic borne by four *men*. And since they were not able to come near to Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was..." (vs 2-4). In other words, they just had roof tile laid up there, so they came in and they were uncovering the roof. That would be interesting to see—wouldn't it? You talk about zeal!

"...and after breaking *it* open they let down the stretcher on which the paraplegic was lying" (v 4). Here you are, right in the middle, and here he's coming right down, four men each having a rope, letting it down right in front of Jesus.

Verse 5: "Now, when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paraplegic, 'Child, **your sins have been forgiven you.**'" It was probably the man sick of palsy saying, 'I've got to be healed by Him.' *We can't get in there.* 'I don't care how you get there, you get there!' *Well the only way we can get there is get up on the roof.* 'Take me up! Get some rope! Let me down!' ***It was his faith!***

Verse 6: "But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts." Here's where the lack of forgiveness and lack of understanding comes in, which still brings friction to the people of God today.

All of those who fellowship with us today, I'm asking: please, leave all the points of friction behind. Repent of them! Make up with your brother. Don't have the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, because it's going to cause you problems sooner or later down the road. Besides, why would you really want this kind of attitude?

Verse 7: "Why does this *man* speak such blasphemies? Who has the power to forgive sins, except one, *and that is God?*"

It was a true statement! Part of the thing where the trouble lies is that *you think* you're right, and you generally have something to look to, to prove you're right. But does that mean you're spiritually right? That's a whole different question!

Verse 8: "And Jesus immediately knew in His spirit what they were reasoning within themselves, *and* said to them, 'Why are you reasoning these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paraplegic, "*Your sins have been forgiven you*"? or to say, "Arise, and take up your stretcher and walk"? But in order that you may understand that the Son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins,' He said to the paraplegic, 'I say to you, arise and pick up your stretcher, and go to your house.' And immediately he arose and, after picking up his stretcher, went out in the presence of them all..." (vs 8-12). I wonder how he felt? *That must have been something!*

I think the day is going to come when those things will happen again; they've got to. I think they will when we all come to the point of really yielding to God and having the love of God that God wants us to have, and also when God decides to give out miracles. That's God's prerogative to do. We can't earn it in any way by doing—by keeping—any *works of law*:

- by keeping the Sabbath better
- by keeping the Holy Days better
- by tithing better
- by praying longer

We're not going to force God to do something. But if we love God and serve God and desire *His way*, then when it's God's time for miracles to pour forth, they will. But can you imagine the notoriety today that would happen in those events? Could you imagine what would happen with this? Immediately He would have how many television crews right at your door? Going where? *All around the world instantly, just like that!* Could we handle that? *I don't know! I don't think so!* So, I think God is merciful in keeping it the way that He has.

"...so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen the like!'" (vs 12). And then He went forth on the other side, and so forth.

Verse 15: "And it came to pass that, when He sat down to eat in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat down with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. But when the scribes and the Pharisees saw Him eating with tax collectors and sinners, *they* said to His

disciples, “Why *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?” (vs 15-16).

Again, judging people by their outward circumstances, judging them from your ‘religious’ behavior to their lack of behavior, whatever it may be, notice what this does. That’s why there has been so very little forgiveness within the Churches of God, because of this attitude prevailing and still prevailing among us. We’ll talk about those who have greater sins and so forth; that some sins, even though God may forgive, disqualifies people from doing certain things. And that is also part of the forgiveness, that they no longer continue in certain activities.

Verse 17: “And after hearing *this*, Jesus said to them, “Those who are strong do not need a physician...” In other words, if you think you’re perfectly spiritually fit and healthy and whole, you don’t need anyone to help you. That’s what He’s saying.

“...but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners **to repentance**” (vs 17). There is the whole key. ***There is no forgiveness without repentance!*** There must be repentance! That’s what He was doing there with the publicans and sinners. He—by His example, love, understanding and healing—was calling them to repentance.

Let’s see that there are *some sins that only God can forgive*. We can pray that God would forgive them, but God is the only One Who can. Let’s understand that you can go through the book of Jeremiah, and you can see that the sins of the people at that time were so grave that God instructed Jeremiah, ‘Don’t pray for this people. Don’t lift up your voice for them. Don’t ask Me to do anything for them. I will not forgive them.’ So, there are certain things that ***only God has the prerogative to forgive!***

Exodus 32:30: “And it came to pass on the next day, Moses said to the people, ‘You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD. Perhaps I shall make an atonement for your sin.’” What atonement could Moses make for their sin? *He couldn’t*—could he? But he’s saying, ‘Maybe I can do something.’ This is a desperate situation.

Verse 31: “And Moses returned to the LORD, and said, ‘Oh, these people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold! And now if You would only forgive their sin!...’” (vs 31-32). It doesn’t complete the sentence there. We don’t know what else is said, and Moses deliberately left it out when he wrote it.

“...And if not, I pray You, blot me out of Your book [of Life] which You have written.” (v 32).

Moses could not even be a substitute sacrifice for all of those people’s sins. He couldn’t say, ‘Lord, blot me out.’ *No!* Notice what the Lord answered him:

Verse 33: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.’” In other words, there are certain prerogatives, which are for God alone to do.

Now, we may be ready in our own minds to forgive people of sin, who have sinned against us, but, on the other hand, *it’s only God’s prerogative to forgive certain sins*. For example: How many remember Billy Graham? He said, ‘My friend Bill Clinton, I forgive for whatever he’s done.’

- Did Bill Clinton sin against Billy Graham?
No!
- How could he forgive him for anything?
- Is Billy Graham God?
- What did Clinton do?
- *I don’t know, but I forgive him!*
- Can you have that kind of blanket forgiveness?
✓ That’s ludicrous!
✓ That’s completely against the operation of the will of God!
✓ *No!* Never happen!

God says, ‘Certain things are Mine, and Mine alone.’ We have certain things with each other that we need to take care of, which is ours alone. We’ll see that a little bit later.

Verse 34: “And now go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My angel shall go before you. And in the day of My visitation I will visit their sin upon them.’ And the LORD plagued the people because they made the calf, which Aaron made” (vs 34-35). Let’s just keep that in mind. There are certain things that *God alone* can do.

Let’s see that when there is repentance, when there is *forgiveness* requested, then there’re things that need to be done. *Forgiveness* implies not just absolution of something that has been done, which is true, but it means that there must be some action, which must be taken by the one to whom the forgiveness has been granted. Remember what Jesus told the man who was healed when he came and he worshiped Him and found it was He who healed him. He said, ‘**Go and sin no more, lest a worst thing come upon you**’ (John 5). So we have that, too. This fits right in with the days of Unleavened Bread.

Isa. 1:1-15 is the whole corrupted nation, the whole corrupted religious system. Isaiah 1:16 “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean...” You have to

take some action. There has to be some purifying. Purifying comes how?

Ephesians 5:26: “So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it with the washing of the water by the Word.*” Also, washing has to do with repentance and baptism.

Isaiah 1:16: “...put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes...” So, not only in the repentance is there forgiveness given, but in the repentance there must be a putting away of the evil. Whatever difficulties there may be, they have to be put away. Don’t necessarily wait for the other person to put theirs away first, because they may be waiting for you to put yours away first. You’re in a game of ‘spiritual chicken’—right? Who’s going to be first? Let your heart be tender so that when you find out whatever it is, that you repent, and you’re not in a game counting thing; who’s first?

“...put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good...” (vs 16-17). There’s a whole re-education process that must take place. Isn’t that what we’ve been going through? Isn’t that what we’ve been doing in learning the Word of God? *A whole re-education process!*

“...seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan; plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together’... [you can reason with God in a right way] ...says the LORD. ‘Though your sins are as scarlet...’” (vs 17-18). Don’t carry that *guilt complex*. Put it all under the blood of Christ.

Yet, “...they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land” (vs 18-19).

Let’s understand that even though this was extended to the people back there in the time of the Old Covenant that their sins were *only forgiven to the temple*. We’re going to see that ***our sins and our forgiveness is much greater!*** This is important for us to understand, brethren. Whatever forgiveness there is, *we also have to forgive from the heart!* It has to be genuine. And when there is repentance, for those repenting that also has to be genuine. ***You can’t fool God!*** We may be able to fool each other, but we can’t fool God.

Hebrews 9:13: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.” That’s all it did. It forgave them in the flesh, in the letter, because they didn’t have the Spirit of God, it was a conscience cleansing thing, temporarily at that point. “...sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.”

Verse 14: “To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ...”

- ‘This is My body which is broken for you’
- ‘This is the blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of many’

Now the blood of Jesus Christ, “...Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God?” (v 14).

So, we have this greater sacrifice, which comes from Christ. Let’s see what happens. Let’s see how God deals with our sins and our iniquities. And this is important for us to understand. One of the most self-condemning, guilt perpetuating type of attitudes is this: ‘Oh, I don’t think God can forgive me!’ We have many examples in the Old Testament, which we’ve covered many times, like Manasseh and Ahab who sinned great sins, yet, they repented and God forgave them. Have any of you sinned as any of those kings have done? *No!* Then what makes you think that God can’t forgive your sins?

And that’s very important for a hierarchical ‘religious’ controlling church to do; to control by fear; to not allow you to believe that God will completely forgive your sins, because that keeps the reins of control and intimidation and fear perpetually in their hands. That’s why the Catholics have purgatory, where you go to the priest and confess your sins. You have to do the ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our fathers,’ and all of this sort of thing. Then you have to go to so many Masses; then you have to have prayers for the dead: ‘You need to be careful that you don’t go into hell. Maybe you’ll go into purgatory. Maybe God will forgive you this a little bit.’

Well, God doesn’t forgive a little bit. *He forgives it all or none!* This is something for us to realize. We live in a society that is riddled with this kind of fear. With that, do you have freedom in Christ? *No!* You’re still enslaved to the idea of guilt and fear.

Hebrews 10:12: “But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins forever...”—which was the body of Christ (v 10).

He once for all “...sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified” (vs 12-14).

When you’re sanctified you are under grace. That means that being under grace, *upon repentance, you will receive forgiveness!* But if you are under grace and you are sinning, and you do not repent, then God is going to let the difficulties continue till you do.

Verse 14: “For by one offering He has

obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after **those days**’...” (vs 14-16)—the resurrection of Christ.

This is the covenant that He is going to make, “...says *the* Lord...” (v 16).

- If the Lord says it, **will it happen?**
- If the Lord says it, **is it true?**
- If the Lord says it, **do we also have our part to do it?**
- *Yes!*

We just read that, ‘...I will put My laws into their hearts...’ (Isa. 1). That’s why you have the burning desire to know the Word of God, because God wants to put it in you.

“...and I will inscribe them in their minds” (v 16). Just literally inscribe it. This is the *learning to do well* part. You’ve already had your sins forgiven. You cease the evil. Now you’re learning to do the ‘well’ part.

Verse 17: “And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.” This is not to give us a cavalier attitude toward repentance, ‘Oh well, God will forgive this, and I’m under grace, and He’ll forget it. So therefore, God is already under obligation; He’s committed Himself to do this, therefore, I’ll just do whatever I want, and when I’m ready I’ll repent.’ What’s going to happen with that kind of attitude? *Never, never happen!* The repentance has got to be from the heart. If it’s from the heart “...Their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.”

Now brethren, let’s also understand this, and this is true: When you have a guilt complex, and you’re guilty of things that you have done in the past, and you’ve repented over, and repented over, and you’ve cried, and you’ve boo-hoed, and you’ve worn out boxes of Kleenex, just throw them out, and the garbage man has a hard time picking them all up, or, handkerchiefs, or whatever. You go along, and you get up off your knees, and you’re, ‘Oh, I wonder if God forgave me?’ ***You just perpetuate this guilt!***

Then what you’re doing, *you’re not believing what God says* here. What you need to do, if you have that kind of guilt complex, ask God to help you to really believe what He says, and to lift this guilt complex that you have, because *He will!* God can do that! God *will* do that! That’s the true freedom, which comes in Christ.

Verse 18: “Now, where remission of these *is, it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifices for sin.*” You can’t have a greater offering for sin than this kind of offering. I mean, this is some covenant! You think

on that! That is some covenant, that God will forgive and forget, remember no more. You have to ask God to give you the forgetfulness of it, too.

Verse 19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus...” Giving us direct access into God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 20: By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart” (vs 20-22). Notice the qualifications. ***A true heart!***

- not a double-minded heart
- not a half-heart
- not a lying heart
- not a cheating heart
- *but a true heart*

“...with full conviction of faith...” (v 22).

- No wavering!
- No questioning!
- No doubting!
- No guilt!

“...our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water.... [the water of baptism] ... Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is faithful*” (vs 22-23). This kind of thing should encourage us to do something to each other, and for each other.

Verse 24: “...and let us be concerned about one another, and *be stirring up one another...* [or to encourage, to exhort] ...unto love and good works.” What does this do? *This helps you want to fellowship with the brethren!* This helps you want to pray, to study, to do all the things, because now you are inspired from an inner motivation, by the Spirit of God from within. That’s how all these things are accomplished.

Verse 25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do...”

(go to the next track)

Forgiveness for the Individual:

Acts 3:19: “Therefore, **repent and be converted...**” Part of the converting is getting rid of the guilt complex. Not only having the laws and commandments of God written in your heart and mind, but having the carnality and the human ways put out. God’s way is much like the human body. The body that you have today is not the one you had a year ago. I believe it is every seven years every cell in your whole body has been changed, and you’re not the same person.

How did that happen? *By growth!* You have to eat, you have to sleep, all the processes that go on. So, there is also, *through the process of conversion*, this change. That's why we have the Sabbath every week. Just like we need to eat food regularly, we need *spiritual food* regularly so that we can be changed. So, our spiritual cells are renewed day-by-day. Then as we go down in time we are not the same person that we were last year or the year before, or 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago, *spiritually speaking*; that is not just referring just to the physical change that takes place. ***We must be renewed!***

"...in order that your sins may be blotted out..." (v 19). That's what God wants, the sins blotted out. ***He came to forgive sins!***

Let's see how this whole process now works together. That's another reason why we have the Passover every year, so that we can:

- be renewed in the baptism through foot-washing.
- we can be renewed in our commitment to Christ through the broken body.
- we can be renewed in our understanding of the forgiveness of the sins through the shed blood of Jesus Christ

so that we attain this state right here:

Psalm 32:1: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.... [yours have been] ...Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity..." (vs 1-2). What does God impute to us because we believe? ***He imputes righteousness!***

"...and in whose spirit there is no guile" (v 2). And that means, the removal of all the subterfuge of human nature, plus the removal of a guilty conscience. "...in whose spirit there is no guile." So, when you have this guilt feeling, and you just can't seem to get rid of it, though you repent of it, ***God has already forgiven it!*** God has already removed it, as far as He's concerned. ***You need to let it go!*** You need to take it to God and say, 'God, here, take it. It's more than I can bear.' ***Christ already bore it for you!***

Verse 3: "When I kept silent, my bones wore away through my groaning all the day long." Sometimes through sickness and sometimes through problems we are drawn close to God because we begin to see how weak we are.

Verse 4: "For by day and by night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden...." (vs 4-5). That's what we need to do.

I know whenever there's a time of sickness and difficulty, that's the time when you confess to God. That's the time when you ask God for help and strength. That is a great benefit that comes when there is sickness and difficulty and pain.

"...I said, 'I will confess my transgression to the LORD,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah" (v 5). We have *Selah* just one verse after the other, meaning: *stop, think and meditate* on what was just said that was profound.

Notice this promise, v 6: "For this *reason* let every godly one pray to You in a time when You may be found... [now it is a time when God may be found] ...surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come near him. You are my hiding place..." (vs 6-7).

Notice the complete change of attitude once everything is shifted to God, v 7: "You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall encircle me with songs of deliverance. Selah." Again: Stop! Think! Meditate on this! This is profound.

Then God speaks back, v 8: "*You said*, 'I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you, My eye shall be upon you.'" And that's how we want God to be with us and deal with us.

Verse 9: "'Be not like the horse, or like the mule, which have no understanding—which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you.' The wicked has many sorrows, but His steadfast love surrounds him who trusts in the LORD" (vs 9-10). How? ***When he repents!***

Verse 11: "Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart." This is what that kind of repentance is to do for us.

Sometimes you get really, really low. Psa. 51 is the repentance of David after his long sordid encounter with Bathsheba. In this kind of deep repentance you understand where sin comes from, ***from deep within you!*** And again, it's just like as we drew the analogy that every cell of the physical body changed, so then ***everything spiritually must change, grow, be rejuvenated and be reinvigorated!*** In doing this you discover things that you never discovered before.

Why is that? ***That is because you did not have the spiritual strength to begin to grasp it until a particular point!*** God will lay upon us no more than we're able to bear. Just think of what it would be if, when God first called us, He laid out the whole sum total of the whole character of carnality that each one of us had. It would be overwhelming! God

reveals it bit-by-bit-by-bit. That's all a part of the growing and overcoming that God gives to us.

Psalm 51:1. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness..." There's no going to God and dicking with Him as to 'How good I am; therefore, God, You do this for me.' None at all!

"...according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash me **thoroughly** from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (vs 1-2). Why? *Because no human can cleanse himself from his own sins!* It has to be from God.

Here's the cleansing part that we can do. We have to acknowledge this, v 3: "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me"—because he didn't repent. His sin was right there. You go back and read that whole account. That was really quite premeditated in what he did. He just thought for a while, 'Well, I'll just put God on hold and I'll work this out my way.' What happens when you do that? *It never works out—does it? No!* So, that whole sin was "...ever before me."

Now he's also talking about the punishment that he received, though his sins were forgiven. And what was that punishment that David received the rest of his life? God said, 'Because you have done this before the world, you have done this before the enemies, My enemies, and cause them to blaspheme, therefore, I am doing this before the world, and your household will be divided from this day hence. And the child that is born will die.' That He could never remove.

Verse 4: "Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (vs 4-5). He wasn't born of an adulterous affair by any means. But this just merely means that *the law of sin and death* is given by inheritance to every human being.

Verse 6: "Behold, You desire Truth in the inward parts..." That's the whole goal of all of it, brethren; the whole goal of the Passover; the whole goal of Unleavened Bread. How are we to keep Unleavened Bread? *In sincerity and Truth! Where? In the hidden parts! The inward parts!*

"...and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop... [a strong cleansing agent] ...and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities" (vs 6-9). If we want forgiveness from God, this is how we need to come

to God.

When that is done, notice again, the same process: cease to do evil, learn to do well. Here we have the process here, v 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God..." That's learning to do well—isn't it? 'I will put My laws into their hearts and in their minds I will write them.' Same thing right here.

Verse 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." It is true, when you go along and have sins hanging, or problems hanging, what happens? How's your attitude? *Yuck!* You've experienced that—haven't you? *I've experienced it!* How do you feel? *Miserable!* God has got to renew it. God has got to straighten it out. He will!

Verse 11: "Cast me not away from Your presence..." How far away was David from God in this instance? *A long way away!*

"...and take not Your Holy Spirit from me" (v 11)—which meant that he was really concerned that he was ready to lose salvation because of it.

- How great a sin was that? *A great sin!*
- Did God forgive it? *Yes, He did!*
- Why? *Because God led David to repentance, and David received and accepted that repentance, and repented with his whole heart!*

Verse 12: "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and let *Your* free spirit uphold me." Then all the things will be right, is the sum of the rest of Psa. 51.

In Dan. 9 we find a different kind of prayer. In Psa. 51 we have a personal, individual prayer for one's own faults and mistakes. But in Dan. 9 we have a representative prayer, similar to the one that Moses gave, but in this case the one that Daniel gave. He prays not for himself, but he prays for all of God's people. The prayer is really quite long and quite moving. He confesses and admits all the sins.

One thing that is interesting, which I wrote in *The Christian Passover* book, and I put in this whole prayer of Daniel, because it's so powerful and so moving, that this prayer was given in the first year of the reign of Darius. That very year the first group of Jews going back to Jerusalem took place. Six years later the temple was finished. So, this was a very moving and profound prayer.

We get the sum and the feeling of it. This kind of repentance and prayer is when one is praying for all of the sinful ones that have sinned. Brethren, this ought to be our prayer for all the Church of God. God is not done with it, yet, and God is going to bring back those that He wants. So, let's see if we can apply this:

Daniel 9:16: “O LORD, I pray You, according to all Your righteousness...” Notice, again, how this is just like the Psalms. Not according to his, or how great he was.

“...let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your Holy mountain. Because of our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those who are around us. And now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that *is* desolate for the LORD’S sake. O my God, incline Your ear and hear. Open Your eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name. For we do not present our supplications before You on account of our righteousnesses, but because of Your great mercies” (vs 16-18).

That’s how we need to approach God in repenting—individually and collectively—then there will be *forgiveness*. Then there will be, as Jesus said, ‘Lord, *forgive them*, for they know not what they do.’

Verse 19: “O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, hearken and do. Do not delay, for Your own sake, O my God; for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

Let’s see how that applies in the New Testament. We can take all of these and we apply them collectively and individually. Let’s come to the Epistle of 1-John; very important in relationship to the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. The Passover represents *the forgiveness*. Unleavened Bread represents *the learning to do well*, ceasing to do evil. That’s why you have the Passover first and then you have the Days of Unleavened Bread. Isn’t it interesting, you don’t have the Days of Unleavened Bread and then the Passover? What would happen if you had that sequence? *You would work out your salvation so that you would be good enough to take the Passover!*

No, it’s the other way around. The way that you are worthy of the Passover is *you acknowledge you are a sinner*, and you need God, and you need God’s Spirit; that’s where you begin. Then you learn to do well and cease to do evil, because then it’s **God in you** motivating the works, and not your own.

This is something we really need to learn and understand and realize. This is how you get rid of that guilt complex, that you don’t carry it around as a burden; that you don’t carry it around one for the other.

1-John 1:7: “However, if we walk in the Light...” And the Light is the Truth of God. And Christ is the Light Who gives us the way to go.

If we walk in the Light “...as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin” (v 7). How many times does it tell us He forgives our sins, *all of them*? We’ll see how far, how thorough, how complete.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins...” (vs 8-9). Who do we confess our *sins* to? *To God!* We’re going to see a little bit later on, that we confess our *faults* one to another so that we may be healed. **You confess your sins to God!** Now there is a difference.

Verse 9: “If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us... [‘give us a clean heart, O God’] ...from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs. 9-10).

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin...”—which you’re going to, because you have *the law of sin and death* within you.

“...we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the Righteous*.” (v 1)—advocating for you. Who is the accuser? *Satan!* He’s the one who’s trying to put you down. **Christ is advocating for you!**

Verse 2: “And He is the propitiation for our sins...” Propitiation means *the continual source of mercy through grace*. It is there all the time; never runs out. This is part of the fullness of Christ.

“...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (v 2). And we know through the plan of the Holy Days, in God’s time it’s going to apply to everyone. Now then, it talks right after that about keeping the commandments, and so forth; that’s true. Whenever there is repentance then there is learning to do well.

Now let’s see how far God removes these from us. We will see how all of this ties together. Psa. 103 is a wonderful Psalm. If you ever get really discouraged and really down, and you have doubts, you have guilt and you have fear. What you do is get out Psa. 103 and see how you can overcome all of this.

Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me... [His whole being] ...bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities... [just like in 1-John 1] ...Who heals all your diseases” (vs 1-3). It’s important to understand.

How is God going to heal every single

disease? *The resurrection!* Won't that be the greatest healing possible? That's better than just a temporary physical thing in this life— isn't it? Isn't it better to be raised to be a spirit being, totally healed of everything physical? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 4: “Who redeems your life from destruction... [He called you to eternal life] ...Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies” God has done that tremendously—hasn't He? *Yes!* In giving the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, did He not do that? *Yes!*

Verse 8. “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He [the Lord] has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (vs 8-10). That's a tremendous promise! That's a wonderful, wonderful thing to contemplate.

Verse 11: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him.... [we know that means the total love to God] ...**As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us**” (vs 11-12).

- if He forgives all your iniquities
- if He forgives all your sins
- if He removes them from you as far as the east is from the west

When have you ever read in a history book that east met west? Other than just a play on words of culture? *Never has!* They're in two opposite directions, never to meet.

Notice that He goes beyond that, v 13: “As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust” (vs 13-14). God isn't going to lay upon you any more than you are able to bear.

Verse 15: “As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children's children, to those who keep His covenant... [that's why we're going to keep the Passover, because that is keeping His covenant] ...and to those who remember His precepts to do them” (vs 15-18).

As I mentioned, being in the grace of God is *not forgiveness in advance*. But what it is, it means that forgiveness is there upon repentance. Here's a good example of it:

Psalm 86:1: “Bow down Your ear, O

LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul, for I am Holy; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good and ready to forgive... [upon repentance] ...and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You” (vs 1-5). You can read the rest of the Psa. because I want to cover something a little bit different here.

We've covered forgiveness for a group, we've covered forgiveness for an individual. Now let's talk about forgiveness *one to another*. Let's come to Matthew 5, and see how important this is.

Forgiveness One to Another:

Matthew 5:23: “For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar...” Or you come to God in prayer. Since there's no altar, we're coming to God and the gifts that we give are the sacrifices of praise, and repentance, and encouragement for others, and so forth.

“...and there remember that your brother has something against you” (v 23). I would like to hope that through the Feast of Unleavened Bread that, especially in many of the fellowship groups that we have now, where there are brethren coming together that have been over in one place but now have been reunited through different courses together, and different problems, that you, if you have anything against one another, that you make a concerted, loving effort to get together and bury the hatchet by love and understanding. That's most important. So important that God says, if you remember that you have anything,

Verse 24: “Leave your gift there before the altar, and go *your way*...” God is saying, ‘Look, I don't even want to hear your prayer until you get this resolved.’ Is that important or what? Have to say so, *yes indeed!*

“...first be reconciled with your brother...” (v 24). Don't we want to be reconciled to God? *Yes!* Then God says be reconciled to your brother. And you have to come to a meeting of minds. Sometimes it may not be possible. But you have to put forth the effort. Maybe putting forth the effort will inspire the other person.

“...and then come and offer your gift” (v 24). So, you do what you can to work it out.

Let's see how this is even on a daily basis. Here's a promise, Matthew 6:14: “For if you forgive men their trespasses...”—*as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us*. That's against you. There can be many

forms of this. It can be serious. Sometimes it can be where only God can really do the forgiving.

[transcriber's note: the following is about a school shooting in 1998]

I don't know what they're going to do back there in Jonesboro, Arkansas, with all that's going on there. But I tell you what, it's going to be a grave and difficult situation indeed. *God alone can forgive!* The most that any of them can do is be understanding and accepting. If there's any forgiveness for those two lads, ***God alone can do it.*** No man can forgive what they did, *only God can!* But in order to get along with each other, or if they desire to do so, then there's going to have to be acceptance and understanding, realizing that only God can forgive them. The only thing you can do is pity those poor boys, that they're pawns in such a wicked society, that this type of thing would happen.

Verse 14: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (vs 14-15). That's very important to understand. You need to realize that.

If you're willing to forgive, but they are not willing to reciprocate, you have done your part—have you not? *Yes!* Then you can pray that God will put it in their minds to do their part. And that's what's important. Let's see how this works.

Matt. 18 is where God tells each one of us that we are to work out the differences between us on this basis. The responsibility becomes ours to do, if we are to be responsible, spiritual Christians. In a corporate hierarchical church, they cannot do this because it takes away their work. It takes away their control. It takes away their fear and intimidation.

First of all, we're told, Matthew 18:15: "*So then, if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault **between you and him alone....***" We're talking about faults. That's important to understand. We confess our sins, and also our faults, before God; no question about that. But when we have difficulties with each other, most of the time it's because of a fault or a perceived fault.

"...If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not listen, take with you **one or two others**, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he fails to listen to them, **tell it to the Church**. But if he also fails to listen to the Church, let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector" (vs 15-17).

What follows is very important. This is what's so important, v 18: "Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven..."—in relationship to

resolving these faults. Had nothing to do with doctrine. Has nothing to do keeping of days. Has nothing to do with any Scriptures whatsoever. Has to do with the fault that you have agreed to solve.

"...and whatever you shall loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven" (v 18). You make the decision, wherever it is. 'Yes, I forgive you.' It's taken care of. It's done in heaven.

Verse 19: "Again I say to you, that if two of you on earth shall agree concerning any matter that they wish to request..." In relationship to what? *Solving the faults!* That's what it is: *overcoming the problem!*

"...it shall be done for them by My Father, Who *is* in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name... [to solve a problem] ...there, I am in *the* midst of them" (vs 19-20). We're talking about *the problem-solving* all along. We can say, 'Well, this does apply if two or three gather together on the Sabbath.' We can take that in principle, that is true. But the main thrust of this all the way through is with the problems.

Notice the response here by Peter, which shows that it's true, v 21: "Then Peter came to Him *and* said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?'" We're talking about sin or transgression with a fault.

Verse 22: "Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.'" There're going to be certain faults and problems that you're going to carry all your life. Is that not true? I know I have some that are still a problem today that I've had for a long time. Some of those things become a difficulty in my relationship with people. I try and do the best I can so I don't let them be problems. But because I'm human, they can become problems. That's what it's talking about.

Now then, He gives this parable here. He talks about the Kingdom of Heaven is like a certain king took into account of his servants, and so forth. You know the story there. He owed him 10,000 talents. He came to his lord:

Verse 27: "And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt." Whenever you're dealing with each other, and there's a problem to be handled and forgiven, remember, God has forgiven you. so that you're going to be very tender and forgiving that individual, though the problem may occur again down the road a little later on. *It's a fault!* How many times? *Seven times seventy!*

However, notice what happened. When the forgiveness was given, that servant went out, found someone who owed him a hundred pence. He took him and just did the same thing to him, 'Pay me all that you owe.' He said, 'Have mercy and patience

and I will pay you.’ And he wouldn’t do it. What he did, he threw him in jail till he would pay his debts. Then what happened? *Be sure, your sins will find out!* The lord found out. So he called the first man:

Verse 32: “Then his lord called him *and* said to him, ‘*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me.’” He said, ‘I didn’t have to do it, but I did it.’

Verse 33: “‘Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?’ And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him. Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each *of* you does not forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart” (vs. 32-35).

Notice how that flows all the way through the chapter about *faults one with another*. Don’t ever again be deceived of what you bind on earth is bound in heaven, having to do with doctrine. If anyone pulls that on you, you know they do not have a single solitary clue as to what’s going on.

Let’s see how we are to confess our faults. We saw how we’re to *confess our sins to God*. Now you confess your *faults one to another*, and in praying one for another. That fits in right there with Matt. 18.

James 5:14 also ties in with healing, which you could also tie it in with overcoming a fault, not that you’re anointed for a fault, but the process here.

James 5:14: “Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him after anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults... [not your sins, your faults] ...to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed...” (vs 14-16). Not only of your sickness, but also overcome your faults. Wouldn’t you assume that that is part of what’s being done here? *Yes!*

“...*The* supplication of a righteous man prevails much, being effective” (v 16). And then he tells the whole story of Elijah.

Genesis 50—this is kind of prophetic as to why out of Joseph came the New Testament, rather than out of the preaching of the Gospel at the end, then out of Joseph.

Genesis 50:15: “And when Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘Joseph will perhaps hate us, and will certainly repay us all the evil which we did to him.’ And they sent a message to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father commanded before he died, saying, “Thus shall you say to Joseph, ‘I

beseech you now, forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin, for they did evil to you.’” And please now forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.’ And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. And his brothers also went and fell down before his face. And they said, ‘Behold, we *are* your servants’” (vs 15-18).

Now notice, he could have said ‘Right! I’ll get out my jackboot and my big thumb, and I’m going to make you guys pay for it!’ *Nope!*

Verse 19: “And Joseph said to them, ‘Do not fear, for *am* I in the place of God? But as for you, you thought evil against me, *but* God meant it for good to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save a great many people alive. And now do not fear. I will nourish you and your little ones.’ And he comforted them and spoke to their hearts” (vs 19-21).

That’s the kind of attitude we need to have in the church today, brethren, the same thing. Many things were done with the thought of evil toward the people of God. But there comes a time when all of that has to be put aside. There comes a time when the *forgiveness and the love of God must reign and have the power*, instead of the fear and the intimidation.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 4:16-19
- 2) Luke 23:34
- 3) Mark 2:1-12, 15-17
- 4) Exodus 32:30-35
- 5) Isaiah 1:16
- 6) Ephesians 5:26
- 7) Isaiah 1:16-19
- 8) Hebrews 9:13-14
- 9) Hebrews 10:12-25
- 10) Acts 3:19
- 11) Psalm 32:1-11
- 12) Psalm 51:1-12
- 13) Daniel 9:16-19
- 14) 1 John 1:7-10
- 15) 1 John 2:1-2
- 16) Psalm 103:1-4, 8-18
- 17) Psalm 86:1-5
- 18) Matthew 5:23-24
- 19) Matthew 6:14-15
- 20) Matthew 18:15-22, 27, 32-35
- 21) James 5:14-16
- 22) Genesis 50:15-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 5
- Isaiah 1:1-15
- Hebrew 10:1-10

Also referenced: Book:

The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 6-5-14

Sin

Fred R. Coulter

Now let's turn to the section *Sin* and let's read that. And I think that you will find that this is quite an accurate definition here. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs as-13).

Sin is the transgression of the Holy laws and commandments of God, whether in the letter or the spirit of the law. Therefore, sin is lawlessness or anti-law. Sin is also a defilement of one's conscience. When a person knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin. The ultimate penalty for sin is eternal death. Upon deep and sincere repentance toward God, one's sins can be forgiven by faith in the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the payment of those sins through the mercy of God the Father. The only unpardonable sin is persistent, knowledgeable and willful transgression of the commandments and laws of God. This sin cannot be forgiven because it is willful rejection of God's salvation, willful rejection of and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God the Father, and despising the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as an unholy thing. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the sin of condemning the works of God the Father, accomplished through the power of His Holy Spirit, and attributing such works to Satan the devil. When a person has committed the unpardonable sin, his or her conscience is seared with a hot iron, and it is impossible to be convicted by the Holy Spirit and be led to repentance. God's judgment for the unpardonable sin is the second death, or eternal death, from which there is no resurrection.

Now in the New Testament, I think you'll find it very interesting. All sin is not necessarily 'a sin unto death.' Now, we'll cover that in the Scripture in 1-John, the fifth chapter, in just a minute. But here are the different words which are used from the New Testament Greek to define sin:

1. hamartia—that means *missing the mark*; and if you had a target, instead of missing the bulls-eye you would hit the outer rim. You have *missed the mark*. When applied to moral things, the idea is similar, it is missing the true end or purpose of life and so it used as a general term for sin. It means both the *act* of sinning and the *result*—the sin itself.
2. hamartema—meaning *only the sin itself*; not the act. It is a particular manifestation as separate deeds of disobedience to a Divine law.
3. asebeia—which is *ungodliness*; which means *a condition of direct opposition to God*.
4. anomia—here is the one used to define *sin*—which is *lawlessness*. A contempt of law; a condition or action not simply without law, as the etymology might indicate, but it means *contrary to law*. This is the word used 'anomia' in 1-John 3:4: "Sin is lawlessness"—contrary to law. The law is usually, by implication, the Mosaic law; but also can mean *the commandments of Christ*, as well.
5. paranomia—that only occurs once and it's equivalent to 'anomia'
6. parabasis—which is *transgression*—the passing beyond some assigned limit. It is the breaking of a distinctly recognized command. It consequently means *more than* 'hamartia'
7. paraptoma—is used in a different sense—a milder sense—usually meaning *an error or fault*, sometimes a *trespass*; it can also mean *a willful sin*.
8. hettema—denotes being worsened, defeated, or it means *a failure in duty or fault*.

Now, the most often ones used are *anomia* or *paranomia*, which then is the non-observance of a law. That's the one used mostly in the New Testament.

Now, let's look at the Scripture which defines sin. Let's go to 1-John 3:4. God is very clear. When God wrote the Ten Commandments, He did not do it by a Gallop CNN poll. He did not ask people what they would like. And the Ten Commandments were not the Ten Suggestions—need to understand that. If you believe in the law of gravity; and the laws of physics; and the physical laws around us which control the universe and things like this; and you believe those to be ongoing, ever-occurring immutable laws, which are continually having its effect upon us—such as the law of gravity, and heat and cold, and all of those different things, then you need to understand that the spiritual laws of God are far more binding, and far more in action, and far more applicable even though you do not have the same visual or intellectual understanding of it. But they are there and they're always working.

Now it says in 1-John 3:4: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.” Now God makes things very simple. And it’s the simplicity, which gets people down; and the reason is, is that it doesn’t give any wiggle room—when you really understand it. For example: ‘You shall have no other gods before Me.’ Now that is simple—isn’t it? And that is the first commandment which everyone breaks. What they do, they just ignore it, or they say, ‘God, I will acknowledge You, but I’m good enough to acknowledge You my way.’ Ahla, brother Cain!

Now here is a better translation of it: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness... [In other words, they are practicing a way of life which is contrary or opposed to the laws of God.] ...for sin is lawlessness.” Which is ‘anomia’ for *lawlessness*—and this is the *sin* ‘hamartema.’ So we have both of those up there.

But isn’t it interesting; it’s *practicing*. It’s not what you would say, though you have a single instance of doing something where you sin. That’s missing the mark. That is falling short. This is, what we’re talking about here, when you are opposed to law in the *practice* of your way of life and your way of thinking. So that is an entirely different proposition. Now, that can go to the point of leading to the unpardonable sin.

Now, let’s come to Romans, the seventh chapter; let’s see what it says about the laws of God. It’s very important to understand. Now, you’ve heard it said that it’s impossible for a human being to keep the commandments of God; because we’re all sinners by nature. Now that is a partially true statement, inasmuch as that those who are not converted cannot keep the commandments of God. Those who are converted can keep the commandments of God, but they will not be committing ‘anomia’—they will not be committing the sin of being contrary to the laws of God. What they will be doing is *missing the mark*. Totally different thing. If you have the Spirit of God within you, you’re going to love God and love His commandments and desire to do them. So, you see, with the Holy Spirit, God has provided the way and the means to keep His commandments—even though we have the tug-of-war with the flesh. So that’s something to really grasp and understand.

Romans 7:12: “Therefore, the law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful” (vs 12-13). ***The purpose of the***

law is to show what sin is. That’s the whole purpose of the law. That’s why law-keeping is required for salvation, but law-keeping cannot save. Let me repeat that: ***law-keeping is required for salvation.***

Revelation 22:12: “And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be.... [So we are to have good works, which are created in Christ Jesus, as we are led by the Holy Spirit of God.] ...I am Alpha and Omega, *the Beginning and the End*, the First and the Last.... [Now notice v 14 in particularly.] ...Blessed are they who keep... [the word ‘do’ (*KJV*) there in the Greek means *practice*—same word we covered when we read 1-John 3:4 about those who *practice* lawlessness. Those who are truly converted—what? *Practice commandment-keeping!*] ...Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to *eat of the tree of life...*” (vs 12-14). And I submit to you, that if you don’t eat of the tree of life, you do not have life—correct?

So commandment-keeping is *essential for* salvation; but commandment-keeping ***does not bring*** salvation. That is a gift of God through Jesus Christ. Now if it is a gift of God, you cannot earn it. Otherwise you do it of yourself. That’s so important for people who are just beginning to understand about the commandments of God. You must keep the commandments of God. Let’s raise it another way: Can you live in sin so that grace may abound? What did Paul say, ‘God forbid!’ or ‘May it never be!’

“...that they may have the right to *eat of the tree of life*, and may enter by the gates into the city” (v 14). Let me repeat it again. ***Commandment-keeping is required, but commandment-keeping does not bring salvation***—because salvation does not come through your works. Salvation comes through Christ. Or to phrase it another way: No one can practice sin and enter into the Kingdom of God. No one can practice sin and receive the Spirit of God—because, as we will see, what must one do when they find themselves a sinner in order to receive the Spirit of God. *They must repent and they must be baptized.* There are people who keep some of the commandments of God in the letter of the law. They may be good and sincere people. But that does not bring salvation. Salvation is a gift of God; commandment-keeping is a requirement of God as a way to live. Now, when you are converted and you have the Spirit of God, then you understand that all the commandments and the prophets of God hang upon the two major commandments of loving God with all your heart, and all your mind, all your soul and all your being, and your neighbor as yourself.

- Then you go from the letter of the law to the spirit of the law, which is loving God.
- Then you go from the love of God into a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

And that's the process of spiritual growth over a period of time. You don't enter into it all at once.

Now, let's carry this a little bit further and let's see how this works. Let's look at the forgiveness of sin, and the operation of it, by going to 1-John 1:5: "And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him.... [Now, this reveals that John was writing against the early forces of Gnosticism, which says there are many gods—the highest one has all light and the lowest one is all darkness; gods and demigods.] ...If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 5-6). Now, let's look at this sentence very carefully. If you are walking in darkness, you are not coming to Christ Who is the light.

Hold your place here and go to the Gospel of John, chapter three; because the light of Christ does something to our lives—which it does not do to those who are not willing to follow God. John 3:18: "The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now, that makes it pretty clear. People out here in the world can argue about religion all they want—go to and fro with words and bring all of their causes, bring all of their philosophies, bring all of their statements all they want, but the Bible simple says that if you do not believe in Jesus Christ, you are condemned already! Now, people don't like those plain statements.

Now here is the condemnation, v 19: "And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world... [being Christ—'I am the light of the world,' He said.] ...but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil." In other words, they did not want their sins exposed. 'Don't bother me with the Truth, let me live my life the way I want to live it.' You're walking in darkness. You're not allowing the light of God's Word to turn you from it.

"For everyone who practices evil hates the light... [Now this means, everyone who is practicing evil, which is what? 'anomia'—contrary to law] ...hates the light, and does not come to the light... [and that's what you do when you want to find God. You seek God, you come to the light, Who is Christ. Now most people don't want to do that—why?] ...so that his works may not be exposed"—or

exposed. Meaning, corrected and exposed for what they are.

Verse 21: "but the one who practices the Truth... [now this broadens things out considerably—doesn't it? Because, what is Truth? *God's Word is truth. His commandments are true. His judgments are true.*] ...but the one who practices the Truth comes to the light... [and this is in a present-tense participle sense in the Greek, meaning it is *an ongoing process.*] ...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God.*" that They are worked in God, not in the self. And this also becomes important when we understand why we need to live God's way and not have a religion of it.

Now, the hardest thing to see is your own self-righteousness. That is the hardest thing to see. And we'll cover that a little bit later. That gets into other things, we want to stay with the basic thing here now.

How do you have your sins forgiven? Let's go to 1-John 1:7—which then we defined already in John 3—"However, if we walk in the light... [And we saw you have to be coming to the light] ...as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin." Now, this tells us something—doesn't it? Tells us something very powerful, that in order to be under the grace of God, to have your sins forgiven, you must be walking in the light. And then you have a special blessing that comes, which is this: The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from *all* sin, which means *literally every sin!* Which means that this does not apply to the world, yet. Why does it not apply to the general society of the world at this time? *Because they're not walking in the light of God*—very simple. Why does it not apply to the world? *Because Satan (Rev. 12:9) is deceiving the whole world.* So you see, when you really begin to understand the true teachings of the Bible and the New Testament, it's just like Jesus said, just like Paul wrote.

Let's come over here to Hebrews, the fourth chapter. And just like people who are sinning—or 'anomia'; contrary to law—do not like to come to the light of God's Word, so they do not like to hear the straight, divisive, sharp, clear, true words of God. It makes them uncomfortable. And people in that category, when they hear things like I'm saying now, they believe that it is a personal attack against them. And they believe it is a personal attack against their religion. Well, it's not! But if it's true, are you willing to accept the Truth of God's Word? Let's phrase this another way: Do you think you can be saved without accepting the Truth of God's Word?

Now, let's notice here—Hebrews 4:12—this is why the carnal mind cannot handle the Word of God: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.... [There's an ad that the Marines have on that they play every football game—don't they? It's the one concerning a sword and to be a Marine; and it shows this young fellow with this very courageous set jaw and his hat and his gloves and he's got this sharp, two-edged sword. And that's supposed to be impressive; to make young men want to go down and join the Marines; to become one of the Marines, one of the elite. Well, the Word of God is sharper than that sword.] ...sharper than any two-edged sword...” that any man could make.

Now, if you make a sword that is razor-sharp and you swing it real quickly, you could actually cut through a person's neck, cut off their head and the head still stay there for a bit. Now that's pretty gruesome, but the Word of God is sharper than that—because here's what it does:

“...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit... [because the Truth of God, without repentance of your sin, makes you very uncomfortable; and you want to find a way out to justify it if you don't want to give it up—isn't that true? When you deceive yourself in your sin, isn't that true? *Yes!* That's why repentance is required.] ...and of both *the joints and the marrow*... [now that's getting right down to the life of your very being—isn't it? Because in the marrow of your bones, blood is produced, and that continual production of blood—from the marrow of your bones—ensures the continuing physical well-being of your physical body. So that's right down to the very smallest thing in life—isn't it?] ...and **is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart**” (v 12).

Now, lest anyone think they can fool God, or that you don't believe the Word of God, or that you don't believe that you have ever sinned, read v 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight.... [and that actually means *neither is there any creature which is not laid bare in His sight.*] ...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.” Notice, because it's so powerful. And the light of God's Word is so affective and penetrating.

God is interested in forgiveness and mercy and saving; so therefore, He follows with v 14: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God... [Now you show me, try and produce a greater high priest on the earth. You cannot do it. The Pope will never suffice because he's a man. The Dalai Lama will never suffice, he's a man. The highest ranking

mullah of Muslimism will not suffice, he's a man. ***The One you need to go to forgiveness for is Jesus Christ!***] ...we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses... [God knows the weaknesses that we all have, because God was manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ had the same flesh so that He could have mercy and compassion upon those who are overcome by sin and have a sinful nature, like all of us do.] ...but ***one Who was tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet He was without sin***” (vs 14-15). That's why you can go to Him for forgiveness. Because in every temptation that He endured, and yea, some of them far greater than any other human being has ever had to endure—when you think of the 40-day temptation that Jesus suffered in the wilderness under the hands and coercion of Satan the devil. To not sin under that!

- so you have a *perfect* High Priest
- you have a *merciful* High Priest
- you have a *forgiving* High Priest

Verse 16: “Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Now let's come back to 1-John 1:8—so this is what it means here, that He cleanses us from all sin. “If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.”

Now that ties right in with v 6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.” Now, ‘the heart's deceitful above all things.’ And the most deceitful thing that it has is that it wants to be thought of as good.

You can see this with the interviews of those who are on death row—correct? You go in and talk to these people and you think, my, how could this person do this deed? Likewise, we don't like to look at ourselves as sinners and have to go to Christ and repent and be forgiven. But you know, that is the only way! There is no other way it can be done. So if you say you have no sin; that is, you do not have a sinful nature or you are not a sinner by nature, ‘are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.’ Meaning also that the Truth cannot enter in.

“If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness... [Now, let me ask you a question: Do you want your sins forgiven? Do you want all of your unrighteousness cleansed from you? Do you want them removed from you as far as the east is from the west? Well then, you have to come

to Jesus Christ. There's no other way.] ...If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (vs 9-10). Now the worst thing in the world you ever want to do is to call God a liar. The champion liar who has done that is Satan the devil.

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—" that we go to in time of need and help, that we may receive grace and mercy and forgiveness; and forgiveness is just as far away as saying, 'Father, forgive me.' That's how close forgiveness is. You do not have to confess your sins to a priest. You do not have to go to a minister. You do not have to do 'hail-Marys' or 'our fathers.' You do not have to do laps around the Buddhist beads, or laps around the Muslims beads. ***You go and say, 'Our Father, forgive my sins in the name of Jesus Christ.'*** Nothing can be more simple than that. But when you do, you have to mean it!

Verse 2: "and He is the propitiation for our sins... ['propitiation' means *a continual source of forgiveness and atoning.*] (now notice the next sentence): **...and not for our sins only**... [lest we become conceited] ...but also for *the sins of the whole world.*" Now, in order to understand that statement, then you need to understand about the Sabbath and Holy Days and the plan of God, and how He's going to do it for the whole world. Today it's not applied to the whole world. That's obvious. All you need to do is just look around to see that.

Now let's go to Acts, the second chapter. There's something that has to happen to you as an individual; and it is a profound act and calling of God for that to really happen. In order to be a true Christian, indeed, it is not a matter of signing a membership role at a local church down the corner or up the street from where you live. It's not a matter of going and visiting various churches to see which church you feel comfortable in. Because if you feel comfortable in that church, and they are not preaching the Word of God the way they should, the reason you feel comfortable is because you're comfortable in your sins and there is no pressure for you to repent. So something has to happen in each person's life—individually.

Now, let's read it right here in Acts 2:36—this is the conclusion of Peter's tremendous sermon that he gave on the day of Pentecost: "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." Now let's ask a question here: If Christ died for the sins of the world, does that include yours? *Of course it does!* Does that include yours personally? *Absolutely, it does!* So

taken to its nth degree, if you were the only person on earth, Christ would have to die for you because you are a sinner; and you need to take the death of Christ in that personal way for the forgiveness of your sins.

And when you do, v 37 will happen: "Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart.... [and that is what has to happen. God's Spirit and power and word and light and Truth must pierce into the inner part of your being and prick your heart unto repentance.] ...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, '**Repent** ... [Turn from your ways; turn from your sins; stop, go in God's direction, not yours; go to the light instead of the darkness; walk to the Truth instead of error] ...and **be baptized** each one of you... [in an individual, particular way (we'll cover baptism when we get to it)] ...in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**' (vs 37-38). So, that's how your sins are forgiven.

Let's see how James defines sin—let's go to James, the second chapter, and this is very basic for us to understand. And this is so important concerning many, many things. James 2:8: "If you are truly keeping *the* Royal Law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well." Now in this, he's talking about the second great commandment of 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The first great commandment is, 'you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, mind, soul and being' is not excluded. He's just not expounding that part of it here. But that is also included in the "royal law." And we know that in Matt. 22, it says on this 'hangs all the law and the prophets.'

Verse 9: "But if you have respect of persons, you are practicing sin.... [that is in loving your neighbor] ...being convicted by the law as transgressors; for *if* anyone keeps the whole law... [that means ALL the law] ...but sins in one *aspect*, he becomes guilty of all." Why? *Because you have sinned*, and 'sin is the transgression of the law.' And if you sin in one point it's no different than you sinning in another point. So you can't say, 'I keep nine of them and therefore, I'm righteous.'

Now, he gives the example here, v 11: "For He Who said, 'You shall not commit adultery,' also said, 'You shall not commit murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder, you have become a transgressor of *the* law." Now, let's just take this example and carry it one step further; because this is true: If you keep nine of the commandments—and mostly those who do it are Sunday-keepers; and yet, when you really

understand it, they really don't keep all nine, do they? So what they are doing, they are breaking all of the Ten Commandments of God while they break the one. So if you don't keep the Sabbath, then you're taking the name of God in vain if you go to church on Sunday and use the name of God and proclaim that to be Holy. And most Sunday-keeping churches have some kind of idol—don't they?

And most people miss the whole point of idols. The Catholics say, 'Well, we don't commit idolatry, we just use these as reminders so that we can venerate those who are honored of God.' But if you go back and read the commandment very carefully, it says, 'you shall not make any image of any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, that's on the earth beneath or that is under the sea on the earth.' So you're not even to make it!

Then He says, 'You shall not bow down to them, to worship them.' So all of those who break the fourth commandment then break the third commandment, then break the second commandment, then they are naturally breaking the first commandment—aren't they? Because they have another god before them, because they are not at the appointed time of the weekly Sabbath where God says that He's going to fellowship with you. So this fits right in there. When people want to understand what sin is, then they need to consult all the Word of God; because if you break one part of the Word of God then you've broken the whole thing.

(go to the next track)

Let's come over here to James, the fourth chapter; and what happens when people do this—and we have a sermon on this one: *To Judge the Law*—that then becomes something, because this is what everyone does. When they pick and choose which part of God's Word they will or will not keep, then what they are in effect doing, they are judging the law of God. So they are determining in their own minds which law they think is a good law, which they will be willing to do. And then they will pick out the good law—which they think in their minds is a good law—which they say, 'We are willing to do.' But then they also pick out and judge and choose the laws that they do not think are good laws, and reject it. So that's what happens here.

James 4:11: "Brethren, do not talk against one another. The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, is speaking against *the* law, and is judging the law.... [Now, I want to focus in on 'speaking evil of the law.'] ...But if you judge *the* law... [that's the important part that I want to make here] ...you are not a doer of *the* law; rather, *you are* a judge." And that constitutes the greatest kind of sin, because then you judge part of God's Word as worthy of your acceptance; but part of

God's Word as not worthy of your acceptance. So therefore, you're sitting in the seat of God, determining which laws of God are good when the Bible says they are ALL good. And they mostly do this so they can keep their Sunday; or they can keep their idols.

Here's the point, v 12: "*But* there is *only* one Lawgiver, Who has power to save and to destroy. Who are you that you presume to judge another?" So, if you judge the law of God and accept one point over another point, then, as James has said, 'you are transgressor of the whole law.' Which means this: That all who are Sunday-keepers are breaking the commandments of God, which they profess they are keeping, every week that they go to church on Sunday. Now, you can put some of it off to ignorance for those who don't know; but you can lay the blame directly on all of the Sunday-keeping ministers who are then teaching people to sin. And you cannot be in right standing with God if you are living in sin. And that's the whole point in defining what sin is. It is the 'transgression of the law' or 'lawlessness.'

So what we are actually doing is exposing that all of this kind of judging the law is in effect, ***lawlessness—because you are rejecting the commandments of God.*** If you believe that the Word of God is true, then you must believe that all of the Word of God is true. You can't believe just part of it and understand all of it. You cannot keep part of the law and yet, transgress in another part of the law and not be a sinner. That's the whole point.

Now, let's come to Galatians, the fifth chapter, and we will see the works of the flesh. And the works of the flesh then are all transgressions of the law of God. Now when you look at the general society around us and all the sin that is around us, you will see that what we are going to read here in Galatians 5 is a perfect description of the society in which we live. A society which is based upon a Christianity of Sunday-keeping. And remember:

- they have rejected God
- they have rejected the second commandment
- they have rejected the third commandment
- they have rejected the fourth commandment

And you cannot worship God by just proclaiming that you're going to follow the last six commandments because you won't know how to keep the last six commandments unless you know how to keep the first four commandments—because the first four commandments, of the ten, give you

the understanding as to *why* you need to keep the last six.

And so, when it is all watered-down, then you end up with a society like we have today. Let's read it right here in Galatians 5:19: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest... [that is, they are revealed; they're open to see] ...which are *these*:"

- **adultery**

We have a President who is adulterer; who goes to church every Sunday; carries his Bible—has in his hand right there 'you shall not commit adultery; has in his hand right there where Jesus said, 'Verily, verily I say to you, you have heard it said in old time that you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you, you shall not look upon a woman to lust after her for you've already committed adultery with her already in your heart.' It doesn't do any good to pretend. That's all that people do who go to Sunday services; they are pretending.

Now, they may be sincere in their pretending, but they are still pretending. They may be convinced that they are doing right, but they are still pretending, because you can be as convinced about a lie, with the exact same fervent feeling, as you can be convinced about the Truth—and be willing to give yourself for a lie. Now you need to think on that one, very carefully. *It's not what you think or what you feel, it's what the Word of God says, and what you believe!* That's the criteria.

- **fornication**—which is all kinds of sexual uncleanness and immorality; including: homosexuality, bestiality, incest and all of the things that God forbids as listed in Lev. 18 & 22.
- **uncleanness**—uncleanness covers all kinds of diseases and unclean behavior; unclean thoughts.
- **licentiousness**—is delighting to do sin in a reveling manner;

which you could throw right in there—if you want a classic example of that: San Francisco is classic of licentiousness; especially on Halloween night. Because they have all of their licentious parties in which they delight in their wickedness and flaunt their sin and sensuality.

- **idolatry**—(v 20)

this is why, when Christ returns, He's going to destroy all idols. That means every church building is going to be destroyed. That includes Catholic Church buildings and cathedrals, St. Peter's Basilica; that includes all of the mosques of the Muslims; that includes all of the temples of the Hindus; all of the temples of the Buddhists; and

wherever there may be an idol, it is going to be destroyed.

Idolatry then is also idols that people have in their minds. Ezek. 14 makes it very clear that you cannot come before God with an idol in your mind because idolatry, where you make it, is only an outward manifestation of what you believe in your mind. So this is why we have to have a clean heart—ask God to clean us up.

- **witchcraft**

Go to Deuteronomy 18:9: "When you are come into the land, which the Lord, your God, gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abominations of the nations.... [Now, all the works of the flesh, that we're reading of in Gal. 5, are abominations before God.] ...There shall not be found among you anyone who makes a son or daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination... [familiar spirits] ...or an observer of times... [that goes into turet cards and ouija boards and all of those things.] ...or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer" (vs 9-11)—and all of these things are prevalent on modern TV today, and accepted and promulgated from Walt Disney all the way through the most horrific kind of MTV music video that you could ever imagine. And they are all glorified.

Now notice, v 12: "For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.... [So now you have gone from idolatry, you're taking other steps down into the depths of Satan and the sin that is abomination.] ...And because of these abominations, the Lord, your God, does drive them out from before you." And that's why this nation is going to be driven out from before the face of God—one of these days.

Now let's come back to Galatians 5, and here is some more of these works of the flesh:

- **hatred**

you hate one another; you have somebody that you hate. All right, the whole society is built on hate. 'Yea, I love my team, but I hate my enemy.' Jesus said, 'You've heard it said of old time you shall love your neighbor as yourself and hate your enemy; but I say unto you, you are to love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you and despitefully use you, that you may be the sons of God.' So there can't be hatred.

- **strifes** [variance (KJV)]—and most people up there are at variance with God; then they're at variance with each other.
- **jealousies** [emulations (KJV)]—Now emulations means *to emulate some kind of behavior*.

Do we not have that today with all the so-called movie stars and people like that, that people want to emulate it; sports stars and emulate that. Emulate the evil that is around you. All emulations—God doesn't want you to emulate anybody. God wants you to be yourself with His Spirit in you so that you are truly a son or daughter of God without having to emulate anybody. Now if there's anyone to imitate, we are told we are to imitate Christ. We are to follow God.

- **indignations, contentions** [wrath (KJV)]

One of the things that they said with those who commit mass murders, that they have no anger control. So now they're going to counsel them for anger control. Well, that's just wrath of evil people.

- **divisions, sects**

Now that's why there are heresies in religion, because they are carnal works of the flesh. And it goes back to judging the law and telling God what you will accept and what you won't accept.

- **envyings, murders' drunkenness, revelings.**

and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the Kingdom of God*" (vs. 19-21).

Now, we'll get into the fruit of the Spirit when we get into the Holy Spirit and the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how we're to live our lives that way, which we'll do in the next section.

Now, let's come to Romans, the sixth chapter. Let's see what all sin will earn you. It will earn you something, and it is a promise from God. You have two promises: The wages of your sins or the gift of God. Romans 6:23—and for those who have heard anything of religion, they have probably heard this time and time again, but it is true: "For the wages of sin *is* death..."

Now sometimes people, because they don't have the Word of God, do not know what sin is, so therefore they do what the proverb says in Proverbs 14:12, which is this: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death." They don't realize, but even without the law and the knowledge of God, they are still going to be punished for their sins; because sin is sin. Now, as Christ said, those who do not know will be beaten with few stripes. So they're still going to receive punishment. But those who do know will be beaten with many stripes. So that's what all this carnality and sin earn you: DEATH!

"...but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). Now

those are the choices laid out before us that we need to take.

Now, let's go to one more place. Let's go to 1-John, the fifth chapter; and this will help us come to the question concerning the unpardonable sin. Everyone wants to know about the unpardonable sin. I hope to explain it to you as clearly as I can so that you will understand.

1-John 5:16: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death.... [Is this a contradiction of what we just read in Rom. 6:23? It appears to be, but it is not because of this: *A sin that is not a sin unto death is a sin which can be repented of*; because you have the conscience of God's Spirit which pricks your heart so that you see you have done wrong and you want to repent and get rid of that. Now, if you don't repent of it, then it would be a 'sin unto death.' But this is a sin which you can repent of.]: ...If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask... [that is: pray for that person that they will come to repentance] ...and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death...."

Even converted Christians, after they're converted and receive the Holy Spirit, still sin—but they are not living in sin—and there's a distinct difference. If you are living in sin, you are perpetually living sin; but if you are living in Christ, and have the Holy Spirit and are obeying God, you sin because you miss the mark; you sin because of the 'law of sin and death' in you. But it is not your determination to live in sin. And that is a distinct difference. Now this is where then the division between the sin which can be repented of, and the sin which cannot be repented of begins to manifest itself.

John writes: "...There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication to God.... [Why? *Because the person cannot be pricked to repentance, that is why.* They sin a sin that is so grievous they have no conscience toward God; they have no remorse for anything that they have done. That is a sin unto eternal death; *that is an unpardonable sin*, which will be punished by being cast into the lake of fire.] ...All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death" (vs 16-17)—because you can repent of it.

Now, let's see about the sin which is unto death. Let's go to Matthew, the twelfth chapter. And it is a sin that is so incorrigible and so calloused and so hard and so unrepentant in attitude—as a matter of fact, it is eager to accuse the good as being sin. So this is quite a deliberate thing that is done. And most people worry about committing the unpardonable

sin. Well, if you worry about committing the unpardonable sin, you have not committed it. Because if you worry about it, that means you have conscience that you don't want to do it—correct? But if you really commit the unpardonable sin; you delight in it; you're eager to carry it out; and you have absolutely no remorse at all of any kind for what you have done.

Matthew 12:22: "Then was brought to Him one who was possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that the one *who had been* blind and dumb both spoke and saw. And the multitudes were all amazed, and said, 'Is this the Son of David?'... [Knowing that it was the Christ.] ...But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, 'This *man* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, prince of the demons.... [When they knew that one of the signs of the Messiah was that He would cause the blind and dumb to see and to hear. And the dumb to speak.] ...But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.... [And of course, Satan's kingdom is divided. What he wants to do is come in and divide the Truth and enter in error.] ...And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then shall his kingdom stand?'" (vs 22-26). And that's precisely what Satan does—does he not? *Yes!* So therefore, we know of assuredly that his kingdom is not going to stand.

"And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? On account of this, they shall be your judges But if I by *the* Spirit of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how is anyone able to enter into the house of a strong *man* and plunder his goods, if he does not first bind the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters. Because of this, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men except the blasphemy against the *Holy Spirit; that shall not be forgiven to men...* [*All manner!* But, of course, it has to be repented of, as we'll see when we come to the section on repentance.] ...**except the blasphemy against the *Holy Spirit; that shall not be forgiven to men***" (vs 27-31). Why? *Because this comes directly from God the Father!* So what they were doing, they were blaspheming God the Father. Not Christ, God the Father, Who was the One Who was empowering Christ to do this.

"...**except the blasphemy against the *Holy Spirit; that shall not be forgiven to men.***" *Because you've rejected the highest Authority.* And just like the Pharisees here, they delighted in doing it. They

were plotting to kill Christ. They were scheming to destroy Him and get rid of Him.

Verse 32: "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming *age.*"

Now, let's come to Hebrews, the sixth chapter, where we have another definition of the unpardonable sin. And we will see that this is absolutely deliberate; that is absolutely malicious; and that those that commit the unpardonable sin have absolutely no remorse whatsoever. They have no conscience, they are delighting in their sin; they are happy to call the good that God does, through His Holy Spirit, evil. And they mock and repudiate Christ; mock and repudiate the Holy Spirit; mock and repudiate God the Father. Now that is such a deliberate and calloused and evil kind of sin, there can be no forgiveness. And what happens then, there is no way to revive them to repentance.

Hebrews 6:4: "For *it is* impossible for those *who were* once enlightened... [So God has to open your mind and give you life in His Holy Spirit and wisdom of God] ...and who personally obtained the heavenly gift... [that means the gift of the imputed righteousness of Christ (which we'll cover a little later here)] ...and became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit... [Actually receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit] ...and who have tasted *the* good Word of God... [and understand how the Word of God works in their life. And almost all of these things the Pharisees did—didn't they?] ...and *the* powers of *the* world to come" (vs 4-5). And they saw it through Christ—didn't they? That is why Christ warned them about blaspheming the Holy Spirit and committing the unpardonable sin.

"if they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance..." (v 6). You can't renew them. You can't convict them. You can't reach into their heart and mind and prick their conscience that they will repent; because once the unpardonable sin has been committed, it is **impossible to renew them.** That's what it says here: **'for it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.'**

Now, this brings into question about those who fall away—and that means to apostatize. And there are those who will apostatize. And you can identify them by this kind of attitude.

If you love God and you are pricked in your heart because of your sins, and if you want to overcome your human nature, then you have not committed the unpardonable sin. You just have not. If you are of the point that Paul was, that he hated

himself, and hated what the sin that he did, then you have your conscience pricked. And it is something that you can repent of, so that we can have our sins cleansed continuously (as we covered earlier). We go to God and He forgives us our sin, cleanses us from all unrighteousness and perfects us. So you see the difference here.

Now he continues in v 6: "...*seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt." And that means that you actually, in committing the unpardonable sin in word and in deed, repudiate the sacrifice of Christ. Now that then is the unpardonable sin, because that came from God the Father.

Now, let's go one step further, let's come to Galatians, the first chapter, and let's apply this to the preaching of the Word of God; because there are many ministers out there who are convinced that they are doing the work of God. But if you pervert the Gospel of Christ, you are in trouble.

Galatians 1:6: "I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *gospel*... [because there's only one true Gospel; Gospel of the Kingdom of God with the grace of God, forgiveness of sin, the receiving of the Holy Spirit—and there's only one way to receive that and that is through Jesus Christ. And there's only one way to exhibit your faith and your love of God and that is by keeping His commandments.] ...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ" (vs 6-7).

Now notice how the true Gospel of Christ is so profound and important—v 8: "But if we... [that means any of the apostles; any of those brethren who were with him—because v 2 says, 'all the brethren with me...'] ...or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!" Which means that they have committed the unpardonable sin.

So any minister who takes upon himself to judge the Word of God (as we covered there in James 4) and to exclude the commandments of God; and to pervert the Gospel of Christ; to change the laws and times which God has given with His Sabbath and Holy Days—***they are under a curse!*** Especially for those who know and have had their eyes opened. There may be some that are blinded and they don't know. But in this case that Paul is talking about, he's talking about those who did know but did pervert it.

Now, we've seen examples in our lifetime where there are ministers and teachers who taught

and believed the Sabbath and Holy Days of God and the commandments of God who have now turned their back on it and have accepted Sunday and Christmas and Easter, and the day of their unrepentance is just around the corner and they are going to find themselves under this curse and will have been committing the unpardonable sin. Because it says, 'Desire not many of you to be teachers, for know you not that we shall have the sterner condemnation or judgment.' So if you begin teaching people contrary to the Word of God... Even Jesus only preached the Word of God what He was commanded to preach. And if any man preaches other than what Christ teaches or what's in the Bible, then he's proclaiming himself by that very act to be greater than Christ and disbelieving in Christ.

So this thing of what sin is covers a broad thing, but when you get into the unpardonable sin, you're getting in to premeditated, predetermined, planned and executed sin, while you call it righteousness—whenever you're a teacher who preaches that.

Now notice, v 9: "As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!... [So there's a double curse. And I tell you what, if a double curse is not bringing out the unpardonable sin I don't know what it is.] ...Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ" (vs 9-10). Because if you seek to please men, then what you do, you do not preach the sharp sword of the Word of God. You preach smooth things; you preach nice things; you preach psychological things—so that you can please people. And all you have to do is watch the Sunday 'religious comedy hour' and you will see that there are those who are doing it. In the final analysis, when they please men then they're sinning against God.

Now, those who do not repent; those who then take the sacrifice of Christ and trample it under foot, let's look at their reward. Let's go to Hebrews 10:26: "For if we willfully go on sinning... [that means *with premeditated malice*. That's not under the duress of temptation and you sin because of the pulls of the flesh. This is premeditated malice.] ...after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*" (vs 26-27). And we know that in Rev. 21 that that is the lake of fire and the second death.

"*Consider this:* anyone who rejects *the* law of Moses dies without mercy under *the* testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse

punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God.... [and that means *trodden under His sacrifice; trodden underfoot*—in other words, counted as an *unholy thing*. Reject it, repudiate it, condemn it as of Satan the devil. Ghastly! To even say that sends shivers up and down my spine. But there are those who did. There are those who have. And we have read some of those things that they have published. Read where one man says, ‘I repudiate Christianity and I repudiate Jesus Christ.’ That is the unpardonable sin.] ...and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, “‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’” says *the Lord*.’ And again, ‘*The Lord* will judge His people.’ *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*” (vs 28-31)—especially if you have committed the unpardonable sin.

So there are more that we could go through on it, but this covers the whole section concerning sin, what is sin, and we’ll come to the section of the Holy Spirit next time; and then we’ll go right on into repentance and baptism and so forth.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 3:4
- 2) Romans 7:12-13
- 3) Revelation 22:12-14
- 4) 1 John 1:5-6
- 5) John 3:18-21
- 6) 1 John 1:7
- 7) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 8) 1 John 1:8, 6, 9-10
- 9) 1 John 2:1-2
- 10) Acts 2:36-38
- 11) James 2:8-11
- 12) James 4:11-12
- 13) Galatians 5:19-21
- 14) Romans 6:23
- 15) Proverbs 14:12
- 16) Romans 6:23
- 17) 1 John 5:16-17
- 18) Matthew 12:22-32
- 19) Hebrews 6:4-6
- 20) Galatians 1:6-10
- 21) Hebrews 10:26-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12:9
- Matthew 22
- Leviticus 18, 22
- Ezekiel 14
- Galatians 1:2
- Revelation 21

Also referenced: Sermon: *To Judge the Law*

The Holy Spirit

Fred R. Coulter

Continuing on through the *Belief's* booklet and we come to the section on the Holy Spirit. Now, the Holy Spirit is one of the central doctrines which separates the truth of the Scriptures from the professing Christian world known as mainstream Christianity, or orthodox Christianity; and is one of the things that separates the *true church* from all the other churches; because nearly every church—which is of the world and in the world and part of the world or has been indoctrinated with some of the doctrines of the religions of the world—believe in a trinity. They believe that the Holy Spirit is a third person. And there are many places in the translation of the New Testament where it is improperly translated from the Greek, where it reads that the Holy Spirit is *he*, instead of *it*. So with this section we will go through, let's turn there and read the statement on it. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 13)

The Holy Spirit is not a person or a third member of a so-called *trinity*.

When you fully understand that, you will see that the trinity goes back to the Babylonian mystery religion. And you need to get the book, *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop. Now you won't be able to buy this book in any ordinary bookstore. You're going to have to search for it, but you can find it—and that will show you how that all of the pagan religious practices were brought into what is called the Roman Catholic Church today, the Orthodox Church and also much of the Protestant world. The Protestant world began to leave Catholicism with the Reformation; they never finished the process. So instead of coming out so they could become part of the true Church of God, they remained and kept Sunday and Easter and Christmas, and they retained the trinitarian belief. So you need to get that book, *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop.

The Holy Spirit is the power by which God the Father and God the Son accomplish Their will. The impregnation of the Holy Spirit from God the Father as a spiritual begetting is granted freely to each believer upon repentance of sins, baptism by immersion... [which then is full water immersion] ...and the laying on of hands. This begetting of the Holy Spirit is the earnest and assurance of the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. It is the power of God which makes each begotten child of God a partaker of the Divine nature and imparts the ability to develop

the love of God. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit imparts the power to each individual to live in accordance with God's will and to overcome the temptations of human nature, the world, and Satan. As the spiritually begotten believer seeks to serve and obey God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will lead him or her into all Truth that is contained in the Word of God and is essential for salvation.

Now, how does one get the Holy Spirit? Let's go to Acts 2:38—we'll also cover that when we come to repentance. This is very fundamental and this is a place where everyone has to begin. Everyone has to start at this point. They have to do as the Apostle Peter said here on the day of Pentecost. And by the way, for an interesting study, if you wanted to study through the Scriptures on your own, you try and find one place in the Bible where it talks about Sunday as a day of worship on a weekly basis, and you won't find it. There is not one word concerning that. Neither will you find it concerning the holidays of this world. You will find that in every place the Bible talks about the holidays of this world, they are condemned by God because they are pagan practices. And God will not give His glory to another. God will not give His glory or His way to pagan, idolatress religions. So there needs to be repentance.

Repentance is right here in Acts 2:37: "Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart... [you have to come to repentance. It has to be something that happens within you.] ...and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, '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' (vs 37-38). So the Holy Spirit is a gift. It is the power of God. And when you are baptized, this is the earnest of the Spirit.

Let's go to Ephesians, the first chapter—and we need to ask the question: If the Holy Spirit were a person, how could you possibly get the earnest of a person? Ephesians 1:11: "...in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance... [and that's why with a spiritual inheritance you have to have an earnest of it.] ...having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will..." We

need to understand that. That's very important. God is not going to work things out according to our will or our purpose or the purpose of any man, because if that were so, then it would not be the purpose of God. That's why when men endeavor to do something for God, *and they do it their way*, then they are not doing what God really wants. They may use the name of God; they may read some Scriptures; they may attach the Bible to it; but it really is not the will of God.

Now here's the will of God: "That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth... [so you have to hear it; you have to understand it; you have to believe it] ...the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing..." (vs 12-13). Now notice what you have to do:

- You have to hear the Word of Truth—the Gospel of your salvation
- You have to believe in Christ—have to believe in what He did; Who He was; how He did it.
- You have to believe in God the Father, Who sent His Son—because it said there that God gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Now then, after that, then you are led to repentance (as we will see when we come to the section on repentance) and are baptized, then "...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise... [That is the gift of the Holy Spirit that God promised.] ...which is *the* earnest... [now 'earnest' means *down payment, the beginning part*, the first that you receive.] ...of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory" (vs 13-14). Now, what does it mean, 'until the redemption of the purchased possession'? *When you repent you have been redeemed*. But you are not wholly redeemed until you are resurrected from the dead; then you are given a body and a mind that is composed of spirit. You then are the sons and daughters of God.

Let's see how the Holy Spirit is to act in our lives. Let's come to Romans, the eighth chapter. This talks about a very important principle in how the Holy Spirit works in our lives and what it does for us. Showing that it is not a person, but it is the power of God by begetting, dwelling in you. And actually what happens is, when a person receives the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit unites with the spirit of their minds—and you then have been begotten by God the Father; and you are counted by God the Father as one of His children. Now, since the Holy Spirit is the earnest, it is leading us, it is guiding us

as we will find here, Romans 8:9. And it puts you in standing with God that is different than the people of the world. That doesn't make you better. That means that God has called you; that means that God is dealing with you; and that now you are responsible to God.

So if you have the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies... [that means *give life to your mortal body*] ...because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (vs 9-13)—because the Holy Spirit is that which gives us the power to overcome.

Verse 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." So the Holy Spirit is going to lead you. Now one thing we need to understand about the Holy Spirit, which is this:

- The Holy Spirit will not push you.
 - The Holy Spirit will not pull you.
 - The Holy Spirit will not compel you.
- But you have to use the Holy Spirit *as it leads you*:
- to love God
 - to follow God
 - to keep His commandments
 - and to serve Him

That's the whole purpose of the Holy Spirit so that it will do that. So it *leads* you.

Now let's notice another thing here; continuing on in v 15: "Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear.... [And that's what we all were before God called us; before God led us; before we were baptized to receive the Holy Spirit—we were in the spirit of bondage unto fear.] ... but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.'"

Now one thing the Holy Spirit does—it's very important to understand—which is this: You are able then to pray directly to God. You do not have to go through a priest. You do not have to go through a minister. You get on your knees and you pray directly to God. That's why Jesus gave the prayer in Matt. 6, which starts out: 'Our Father, Who

is in heaven, Holy is Your name. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' You have direct access to God.

Now, we will see when we come to the section on repentance, likewise you repent to God. You don't repent to a priest. You don't go to a minister. That is between you and God and Christ as your High Priest. And it puts you in this relationship with God that you are one of the children of God.

Now, notice what else it does here to show you how the Holy Spirit works with our spirit. "The Spirit itself... [that is a correct translation here because in the New Testament 'the Spirit' comes from the Greek word 'tau pneuma'—a neuter word. It is not a masculine word. If it were a masculine word, indicating he or a person, it would be 'ho pneumos'—but it is not, it is 'tau pneuma.'] ...The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our spirit... [because it's united with the spirit of our mind] ...*testifying* that we are *the* children of God" (v 16). That's very important for us to understand and realize and to grasp.

Now, let me just mention here that we have a fifty-five page special Holy Spirit series study with eight tapes that goes in-depth into the question concerning the trinity and all the technicalities concerning why it should be 'it' as it is right here in v 16, expressing itself as *itself*. And it should not be *he* or *him*. So, if you want more information on that, then you get that in-depth study and it will take you step-by-step through the aspect of the trinity; through the aspect of what the Holy Spirit is; and all the technical verses that we have in the Gospel.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 2:37-38
- 2) Ephesians 1:11-14
- 3) Romans 8:9-16

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Matthew 6

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Holy Spirit*
- Books: *Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop

The Grace of God

Fred R. Coulter

Let's read that statement concerning the grace of God. What we're going to find out is that the grace of God is so important, the grace of God is so marvelous that it puts you—with the Holy Spirit of God—in a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ that is very special. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs 13-14 throughout).

Grace is the free and undeserved... [and also we can add: *unearnable and unpurchasable*] ...gift of God the Father through Jesus Christ.

There is no work that you can do, which is an exterior work, such as doing: 'Our Fathers'; or 'hail Marys'; or praying to saints; or crawling on your knees; or flagellating your back with whips; or having yourself—as some do in the Philippines, crucified to a cross every Easter. There is no amount of good works to neighbors that you can do; no amount of money that you can give to any church. No amount of any of those things will obtain the grace of God for you. ***It is His gift.*** He does conditions for it: repentance and baptism, which we will get to here in just a bit.

The grace of God is the greatest expression of God the Father's love and all-encompassing mercy. Grace is more than the forgiveness of sins. To be under grace means to continually be receiving God's Divine love, favor, blessing, gracious care, help, goodwill, benefits, gifts and goodness.

So, it is like an umbrella that covers your life. You live under this grace.

God the Father is the source from which grace comes to the believer. The ONLY MEANS by which grace is granted to the believer is through the birth, life, crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice of God the Father. The believer enters the grace of God through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his or her sins.... [that's just the start] ...God the Father grants His grace to each believer upon repentance of sins and baptism by immersion, which is the outward manifestation of repentance. Through grace, the believer's sins are forgiven and the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to him or her.

Now, we'll cover that in more detail when we get to the two righteousnesses—the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith.

Grace establishes a new spiritual relationship between the believer and God the Father and Jesus Christ. Through the unearned and unmerited gift of grace, the believer is not only chosen, called, forgiven and accepted by God the Father through His Beloved, but is also begotten with the Holy Spirit, making him or her a child of God and an heir of eternal life. From this point, the spiritually begotten believer begins a new life under grace. As the Scriptures reveal, living under grace requires the believer to live by every word of God with complete love and devotion to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Grace does not grant one license to practice sin by ignoring or rejecting the commandments of God. Only those who keep His commandments can abide in His love and remain under His grace. Every believer who receives the grace of God has a personal obligation to God the Father and Jesus Christ to forsake his or her old, sinful thoughts and practices and to live a new life, daily growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. For every believer who lives under grace, Jesus Christ acts as Redeemer, High Priest and Advocate. If the believer commits a sin, He intercedes to propitiate the Father and to obtain His mercy and grace. The grace of God which comes through Jesus Christ keeps the repentant believer in a continual state of blamelessness and sinlessness... [and we can add: *before God.*]

So this is a tremendous thing that God gives.

Now, let's see how this works in our lives. Let's go to Ephesians 1:1—so we can get the full flow of the Scriptures. And here's a principle whenever you're studying the Bible. You always—if you have something that is difficult to understand—read the Scriptures before and the Scriptures after. And if it doesn't clear it up then, you read the whole chapter. And if you still have questions about it, then what you do, you get out a concordance and you do a word study and look up all the Scriptures in reference to it. So if you do not have a *Strong's Concordance*, let me recommend—there are several you can get—one is *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, which you can get at any Bible bookstore. Another one is *Crudence Complete*

Concordance, which you can also get at any Bible bookstore.

Ephesians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God... [this is important to understand: Paul was called according to the will of God, and likewise, everything he taught and preached was according to the will of God. So when we read the writings of the New Testament, we are reading the will of God written to us. So always keep that in mind.] ...by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace *be* to you.... [When he says ‘grace be to you’ he means that the grace of God, under which you are living—this whole umbrella of grace.] ...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ” (vs 1-3).

When you receive the Holy Spirit (as we covered in the last section) to receive that then is a spiritual blessing which does come from heaven—the power of the Holy Spirit—to you, to impregnate the spirit of your mind. And then all of the other blessings that come are all part of the spiritual blessings.

Verse 4: “According as He has personally chosen us for Him...” So here’s something that’s very important to understand: If you are seeking God, God promises if you seek you will find; if you knock it will be opened—He promises that. So if you are seeking God and you are understanding the things that you are learning and reading and hearing, then you also need to realize that ***God is choosing you; He is calling you.*** And you have to respond to the call of God. And the responding to the call of God will be through repentance and baptism and loving and serving Him and keeping His commandments. Because the whole plan of God is so fantastic that it is just a marvelous thing for you to realize that God has called you to be a part of it. That when you receive the Holy Spirit, then (as it says here): you have been ‘chosen in Him.’

Now, God has this plan all worked out “...before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love.... [that is the whole purpose and operation of grace. This is something that we, being in the flesh, cannot accomplish ourselves. This can only come by a Divine act of God with His Holy Spirit, which makes us acceptable to Him.] ...Holy and blameless before Him in love; having predestinated us... [that God had a predestined plan] ...for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ... [So, in creating His family, God the Father is calling to Himself. So this is very profound to understand.] ...according to the

good pleasure of His own will” (vs 4-5). Not according to the religions of the world, with fear and intimidation and hierarchy and militancy; but into the Family of God, with the love of God; with the Spirit of God; with the grace of God; with the love of God. It is a whole, complete, different approach than you find in religions of this world. Most religions of this world view grace as license to sin; or grace as something that a priest or a minister dispenses to you. That is not so. Grace is God’s Divine intervention into your own life, personally, as an individual—in His love!

“...according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace... [And that’s what you receive] ...wherein... [that is *in this grace* or *through this grace*] ...He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*” (vs 5-6). And the ‘Beloved’ is Christ. As it said in the Gospel, when the voice came from heaven: ‘This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.’ So you are made ***accepted*** in Christ.

Now, this is profound and important for us to understand; because in the world, many of us are rejected by people. Many of us are rejected by friends, by family, by community. Many of us feel alone and cut off and not knowing where we should go and what we should do and how we should live our lives. And in that, God has

- led you that way so that He can call you and have mercy upon you to realize that His grace is greater than anything in the world
- that His love is going to fill you
- that His love is going lead you and guide you in the way that He wants

So this means that all of the sorrow, all of the pain, all of the difficulty in the world that you have experienced is now going to be relieved through the power of God and His Holy Spirit to understand that those things can lead to a deeper and more profound spiritual conversion, through the grace of God. Because when God loves you there is no greater love that you can receive. When Christ, Who also loves you, died for you when you were still the enemy of God, that is to lead you to a great and profound and deep repentance and acceptance of God’s will.

“...He’s “He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (vs 6-7). Great overflowing, overabounding riches of God. Now, when you look out into the universe and see the stars in the heavens and all that God has created, just realize, in terms of money, how much all of that would be. Why, there’s no way to calculate it. But

God's plan is greater than all of His physical creation, which He has made. So the riches of His grace is worth more than all the universe, which then He is sharing with you and all of those that He calls to receive the Holy Spirit and become part of His family.

That's why you need the grace of God. That's why it is so all encompassing in your life and your relationship with God. That you're now going to establish through prayer and through study, through love and obedience to God and Christ.

Verse 8: "Which He has made to abound toward us... [given us an overflowing amount] ...in all wisdom and intelligence.... [Now, that is *Godly* wisdom and *Godly* prudence—taken from the Word of God, inspired and led by the Holy Spirit of God.] ...Having made known unto us... [this is what you will come to see and know and grow in understanding as you continue in God's way, to grow in grace and knowledge.] ...Having made known unto us the mystery of His own will" (vs 8-9). The 'mystery of His will'—or the secret of His will—the world cannot know. You cannot go to any organized religion in this world and find out about the whole will of God. As a matter of fact, the religions of this world condemn the will of God as blaspheme! Because God shows that we are to become the very sons and daughters of God and to have an existence and body like Jesus Christ so we can dwell in the Family of God. And every other religion in the world calls that *blasphemous!*

Well, let's look at the Scriptures and see that that is not blasphemous—that is the Truth of God. And you might as well begin to understand the real will of God—the mystery of His plan, of His purpose, for you and all mankind. Let's go to 1-John, the third chapter. This is important to understand. We'll come back to Ephesians 1, so just hold your place there. And the reason that the world calls God's plan blasphemous, and the religions of the world call it blasphemous, is because ***the religions of the world are not of God.*** And if they are not of God then they are of Satan the devil, and Satan the devil does not want God—since he's an adversary of God—to increase His family by bringing you into the grace of God, so that at the resurrection you can become a full spirit son or daughter of God. He does not want that. So therefore, He labels it as *blasphemy!*

Now what are you going to do with this Scripture here in 1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him." Now, I want you to think about this for a minute. If the world didn't know Christ—

which they don't today—they profess, as Jesus said: 'Many will come in My name saying I am the Christ.' They will profess, but they will be of the world. Therefore, they will *use* the name of Christ, but they don't know Him. That's why

- they don't know His will
- they don't know His plan
- they don't understand what God is doing

And when you get right down to the bottom line—and you ask any priest or minister: What is God's plan? *Well, it's to be in heaven and view the face of God forever*—which is a beatific vision. Now, that is what is blasphemous! They don't know God, so how can they know His will; how can they know His plan. But you see, God, in calling you and revealing this knowledge to you, is letting you know part of His plan. So that if you answer the call that God is giving to you, that you can become a part of it to be the children of God.

Now, let's continue on here, v 2: "Beloved, now are we the children of God... [and from the Greek *children of God* is 'teknon'—meaning *His own begotten offspring*; not adoption. You are the children OF God, not somebody else's child.] ...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" Now, that is a profound statement of the purpose of God.

What is this to do for us? *This is to inspire us and give us hope of our calling—to be the very sons and daughters of God.* So that's why v 3 reads: "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure." That is, through the grace of God; through the love of God.

Now, let's go to Revelation, the first chapter, and let's take a glimpse as to what Jesus Christ looks like in His full, glorified form. And remember it says that 'we shall see Him as He is; for we shall be like Him'—that is, spiritually speaking. So, you're learning some of the will of God, the mystery or the plan of God, that He is doing—that no other people know. Only those who are called of God and have the Spirit of God know this. If you don't believe me, go to your local priest, or go to your local minister, and ask him: What is the plan of God? What is the purpose of God? What will I be like after the resurrection? And then you will find that they don't know the Scriptures. They don't know the Bible. And therefore, they are not sent of God. And you need to understand that.

In what God is doing, in bringing this information to you, is bringing a dividing line between the world—and it's religion—and God the Father and Jesus Christ and Their way of life, which

you are to live. That's what is happening here. And the choice is laid out there before you.

Revelation 1:13—the Apostle John, in vision—in the future Day of the Lord; that is all the events leading up to the return of Jesus Christ—saw the glorified Jesus Christ. “and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in a *garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire; and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword [Word of God] went out of His mouth, and His countenance... [this is what we need to come to]: ...His countenance [visage] *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power” (vs 13-16).

Now to show you that we are to become part of that, in that way, let's go to Matthew 13. I want you to grasp very importantly the great and dynamic and overall plan of God. Just a bit of it so that you will be inspired to go forward. To show that all of those who will be in the resurrection will have glory and be like the stars of heaven in their glory.

Matthew 13:43: “Then shall the righteous... [those who are resurrected] ...shine forth as the sun... [Didn't we just read that the countenance of Jesus was as the sun in its full strength? This is part of the *mystery of God!* The plan of God!] ...shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.” And that also reveals that it is a mystery.

Now, let's come back to Ephesians, the first chapter, please. Now when the Apostle Paul was writing to the church at Ephesus, he was reiterating that God had made known (what we just covered now) in a brief way, made known this mystery to them. Ephesians 1:9: “Having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself.” So God has His purpose in Himself.

Now, let's come to Ephesians 2, to show that salvation is by grace, not by works. And please understand that any commandment-keeping, any law-keeping, is not earning salvation. All commandment-keeping is required by God of all believers. Because if you are not keeping the commandment of God (as we covered in the section on *Sin*) then you are a sinner. So we're going to see that the grace of God does not give us license to sin. The grace of God is that which saves us.

Ephesians 2:1—to show how God begins dealing in our lives; begins dealing in your life. “Now you... [speaking to the Ephesians there]

...were dead in trespasses and sins... [Because while you're living in the world and living in sin, you're as good as dead. 'The wages of sin is death.' Death does not happen instantly, but the 'wages of sin is death; the gift of God is eternal life.' So God counts all those who are living in sin as though they are dead.] ...in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world... [Living in the world; living in this society—by its standards; by its morals; by its way; by its religions.] ...according to the prince of the power of the air... [That is Satan the devil—and Satan the devil operates by being able to transmit thoughts; by being able to influence the minds of people.] ...the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also **we all** once had our conduct...” (vs 1-3)—as it should read. It says *conversation* in the *King James*, but it's *conduct*.

Now let's look at that statement again: *We all*. Paul was including himself—was he not? And Paul was Saul before he was called; and he was a destroyer of the Church of God. So He's including himself in that.

- Did he repent? *Yes!*
- Did he receive the Spirit of God? *Yes!*
- Was he used of God? *Yes!*
- Did he always remember what he did to the Church in persecuting it? *Yes!*

“...we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind...” (3). And all of those things are greatly manifest in what you would call *the self-improvement philosophy* of this world, as espoused by many, many teachers—to improve in business; to improve in personality; to make yourself better and stronger; to have a better mind; to have more success in business; and all of those things are all the desires and the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. So because you have a thought in your mind, which appears good to you, does not necessarily mean that it's right with God. Now it may benefit you in the flesh. It may increase your income. It may give you a better *carnal* personality, but that doesn't change your standing before God. Many devoted, sincere, law-abiding people in the world are of this ilk right here, and follow it and practice it, but they are fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

“...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world. But... [so here's the 'but'—God intervenes in your life.] ...But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love... [because what God is doing with His grace, in dealing with you, is motivated by His love.] ...with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (**For you have been saved by grace.**)” (vs 3-4).

Salvation is *only by grace!* Please understand that.

We're going to see that we have a way to walk in, which has to do with the commandments of God (as we've already covered); but we are *saved by grace*. No human being can save you. No work can save you. No amount of money can save you. No amount of self-discipline can save you. It is the grace of God, by the Spirit of God, that you are saved.

Now, let's come down here to v 8—he repeats it again: “For **by grace you have been saved** through faith... [because you have faith in God; and you grow in that faith to come to have the very faith of Jesus Christ.] ...and this *especially* is not of your own selves... [now this is important to understand: This grace and this faith is not something you can generate from within yourself, apart from the Spirit of God. Cannot be done! Because it means in the Greek *to come forth from you*. In other words: *of your own initiative*.] ...not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God.” The faith, the grace, the salvation, the Holy Spirit are all gifts of God through His grace.

Verse 9: “Not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship... [God is working with us.] ...created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works.... [And those ‘good works’ are

- keeping the commandments of God
- the laws of God
- loving God
- loving our neighbor
- loving the brethren
- even loving our enemies

Those are all the works that God has given us to do.] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (vs 9-10). So that shows that God's way, through Christ, is a way of life—and we walk in that way of life. We live by Christ—that's why it's by grace.

Now, let's come to the book of Romans, please, chapter three. The Apostle Paul has written here some very deep things concerning law and grace, the nature of man—and if you want an in-depth study of this, you can write in and request our entire series on Romans. It's quite lengthy. This will ground you in the basic fundamentals of true Christianity. This is something that we need to really understand and realize, and so if you want that be sure and write for it.

Now, Romans 3:20—remember how we read there, it's not by works: “Therefore by works of law... [I'm going to read it the way it should be translated] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him... [And this is the hardest thing for people to

understand. We are to keep the commandments of God—that is required; but please understand this: *Justification* to God the Father in heaven above is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ **ONLY**. **There is no other means!** Now, that's fundamental to understand.] ...for through *the law is the* knowledge of sin.... [That tells us what not to do, because that is sin.] ...But now, *the* righteousness of God... [that is the grace, the justification of God] ...*that* is separate from law...” (vs 20-21).

That doesn't mean without law—and that's where most people get off the track. Most Protestant's religions now refer to that as *without law*. That is, you don't need any law; once you have grace you do not need to keep the commandments of God, you do not need to keep the laws of God; because it says ‘without law’ in the *King James*. Now, it really means *separate from*; because there are two different functions:

1. Laws and commandments tell you what sin is.
2. Justification is being put in right standing with God.

Two different functions. You need to be put in the right standing with God because you have been a sinner and were not in right standing with God; and all of the law-keeping in the world—**unless you repent and turn to God**—is not going to benefit you one bit to make you right with God.

Let me give you an example: Suppose there was a man who murdered someone, and he got away with it; and he said to himself, ‘I'm going to live an upright life from now on. I'm going to go and move into another town and I'm going to be a good, obedient citizen.’ Then twenty years later he is recognized, and he is arrested for this murder. And he says, ‘Well, ever since then I've been a good, upstanding citizen. I haven't murdered anybody, and I've kept all the law.’ And the judge says, ‘You still have to pay for the murder that you committed twenty years ago. All your good living that you had in your life from that time until now does not count anything. The only way you're going to be made right with this community is to have the penalty of the law enforced upon you; because you took another human being's life.’ *But, Judge, I've been good.*

It's the same way with us. We cannot, by our good works, undo our past sins. Now, that's what this is talking about here. “...*the* righteousness of God *that is* separate from law has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ.... [You must **believe** in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; that His sacrifice is what has done it. And then the grace of God comes

to you. That's most important to understand.] ...through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely by His grace... [means to be *put in right standing with God.*] ...through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (vs 21-26).

Now, let's ask and answer the same question that the Apostle Paul did. Right here, let's come to v 31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law." So now, you begin keeping the laws of God according to the spirit of God's law. Why is it then that we establish law? We establish law in its true spiritual significance.

Now let's understand something more concerning grace. Turn to Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [and the Greek here means: *may it never be!*] ...We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?" (vs 1-2). Now we'll see when we come to *Baptism* that when you're baptized—which is a burial of the old self—you die to sin. So this is what he's talking about. So we establish law; we establish God's way through grace; we don't do away with it.

Now then, let me also mention to you here that we have a full, thorough, complete study on the grace of God—six tapes—so you can write for that. So what you're going to find in these things is this: As we go through the *Beliefs*, what we're doing is laying a foundation; and then that foundation has to be built with the Word of God, on that foundation, to get the whole picture, or to build the whole house as it were; or to fill out the full doctrine and teaching of the New Testament. We have a sermon series on the *Grace of God*, you can write for that and that will give an in-depth, detailed study going through all of the Scriptures, all of the technicalities of it, and likewise with the series on the book of Romans.

So this is for the serious; and if you're serious and really want to learn God's Word then this will be one way which we can help you do it, so you can really know the plan of God, the grace of God and His love.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 1:1-9
- 2) 1 John 3:1-3
- 3) Revelation 1:13-16
- 4) Matthew 13:43
- 5) Ephesians 1:9
- 6) Ephesians 2:1-4, 8-10
- 7) Romans 3:20-26, 31
- 8) Romans 6:1-2

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Romans*
- *The Grace of God*

Books:

- *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*
- *Crudence Complete Concordance*

Repentance

Fred R. Coulter

Now let's come to the next section, which is *repentance*. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs 14-15):

Repentance is complete remorse and sorrow for one's sins, which are the transgressions of the laws and commandments of God. Repentance is the first step in the sinner's reconciliation with God the Father and Jesus Christ. True repentance begins when God the Father opens a person's mind to understand that he or she is a sinner against God the Father, and that his or her own sins had a part in killing Jesus Christ. The graciousness of God the Father leads each sinner to repentance. Repentance moves each one to confess his or her sins to God the Father and to ask forgiveness, remission and pardon for those sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. True, deep, godly repentance will produce a profound change in a person's mind and attitude, called conversion, which will result in a continuous desire to live by every word of God. The truly repentant person will turn from evil thoughts and ungodly practices and will seek to conform his or her life to the will of God as revealed in the Holy Bible and as led by the Holy Spirit. Repentance and confession of sins is an ongoing process in a Christian's spiritual growth toward the perfection of Jesus Christ.

Let's go back to Romans, the second chapter, and this is important to understand. What happened in one day in your life or in my life that you began to think about God; that you began to see that your sins were really sins? Part of it probably occurred that you were either lonely or cutoff; or that you did some great horrible thing to someone; or that your life was just promiscuous and corrupt; or in today's world, people get involved in drugs and all kinds of satanic things in this world, and your life is miserable and rotten and you come to the very bottom. If you're at the very bottom and you're beginning to understand God's Word, well then, God is leading you to repentance, because God knows that you can't do it of yourself; because there's a sorrow of the world—and the sorrow of the world does not work the righteousness of God. There are many people who are sorry for things they have done, but that is not true in deep repentance. Nor is it a repentance that has been led of God.

So let's begin here in Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness... [and that can read *graciousness*] ...and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?" Now, in leading you to repentance, it is going to do a very profound thing.

Let's go back to Acts, the second chapter, that we briefly touched on before (in the section concerning the Holy Spirit). Let's understand concerning the sacrifice of Christ. That you look at your life and you look at your sins, and you look at all of your failures, and all of your mistakes, and all the rottenness, and all the selfishness, and all the vanity, and all the greed; and you look at your life and you pretty well consider it worthless. Well, *that's God leading you to repentance*.

Then you have to also understand in your repentance that since Christ died for your sins, your sins also helped kill Christ—important to realize. Acts 2:36—Peter said: "Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance... [so this is a statement to all the house of Israel. And of course, all of them could not be there at the temple on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit was given. So this is inspired of God to make us all realize that this goes out to ALL Israel, then ALL the world, because they were to preach repentance of sin beginning at Jerusalem and into ALL the world. But God, in His greatness, is able to apply the sacrifice of Christ to each one of us *individually*.] ...let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Now, if you understand that

- when Jesus was beaten, *you were beating Him*
- that when He was scourged, *you were scourging Him*
- that when He was crucified and had the nails put in His hands and His feet, *you put the nails in Him*
- that when the spear was thrust in His side and He died, *you thrust the spear in His side*

Because He died for ALL mankind—as a whole and individually.

So what this has to do to you then is with the Spirit of God leading you to real remorse and real repentance, which then will bring tears, and yes, it will bring great remorse. Yes, it will bring great sorrow that you did this.

Verse 37: "Now after hearing *this*, they were

cut to the heart... [So repentance has to come from the heart; has to come from within you. It can't be feigned; it can't be like little children who get caught in something and say they're sorry and turn around and go and do the same thing again. No, not that!] ... cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent!.... [That means stop, turn, go the other way; because your life has to change. Your life now has to be conformed to Christ, and the beginning of that conformity is baptism.] ...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!'" (vs 37-38).

Acts 3:19: "Therefore, repent and be converted... [There's that great and profound change that will take place; because now, with the Spirit of God, your mind will be changed. You will be converted; and conversion is a life long process as we walk in those good works, which we're ordained to walk in.] ...be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out!...." Be completely removed.

Now let's see how far away God removes sin from us. Let's go back to Psalm 103. When your sins are forgiven, ***they are forgiven! All of them!*** God does not just forgive some sin and then hold other sin over your head to make you pay and pray and do 'our fathers' and 'hail Marys' and other works of penance. NO! When you confess your sins, you confess them to God. When you repent, you repent to God.

Now, Psalm 103:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.... [you'll see why in just a minute.] ...Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not **all** His benefits.... [And the greatest benefit we're going to see He enumerates right after that.] ...Who forgives **all** your iniquities, Who heals **all** your diseases.... [*Profound! Profound!* So when you repent, **He forgives them all!**] ...Who redeems your life from destruction... [Weren't we all headed for destruction, living in the world and going our way? *Without a doubt!*] ...Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies" (vs 1-3).

Verse 8: "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger... [That's why you're still living, even though you may be miserable living in your sins—He's merciful, slow to anger!] ...and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins... [He hasn't, because the 'wages of sin is death.'] ...nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him.... [And this 'fear' means *reverential*

awe, based upon love.] ...As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (vs 8-12). Now think about that! ***When you repent, your sins are forgiven***, and you repent directly to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

- you don't go through a priest
- you don't go through a minister
- you don't go to 'confession'

You go to your own private, quite place or closet, and you get on your knees and you cry out to God and you ask for His forgiveness; and you have a repentant heart. ***And He forgives!***

Then that's why baptism must follow. And when we get to the section on baptism, we're going to see many people have been 'dunked' in what is called *baptism*, but since they really did not repent and receive the Holy Spirit, that baptism was no more than just a ceremony of men—had nothing to do with the true righteousness of God.

Verse 13: "As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, For the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children's children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them" (vs 13-18). So, once you repent of your sins, you have to live and 'walk in newness of life'—as we have seen.

Now, let's come back to the book of Romans. Let's understand something that's very profound that you need to realize in relationship with the crucifixion of Christ and why He did it and when He did it.

Romans 5:6: "For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time... [that means *at the set time, the appointed time of God.*] ... Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man.... [So ask yourself the question: Would you die for your worst enemy? Would you die for your best friend?] ...But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (vs 6-7). And even before we were conceived—correct? ***Yes!*** Because God loves us! And He wants you to understand that love so that you in turn can also love God, love Jesus Christ; and you, when you understand that God did this for you when you were an enemy of God, when you were a

sinner, that you likewise can grow in love that you can likewise love your neighbor; love your brethren; love your enemy.

Verse 9 [transcriber's correction]: “Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood... [That means *put in right standing with God through His blood.*] ...we shall be saved from wrath through Him.... [‘shall be saved’ means *at the resurrection when Christ returns.*] ...For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (vs 9-10).

So this is to really bring us to the point of understanding of how great and marvelous that God is, so that we can repent. One of the things that really helps us to repent is to understand the goodness and the graciousness of God.

Let’s go to the Epistle of 1-John 1, please; and let’s read how this whole operation works. Now, what you need to do—you see sin in your life: you want your life to be changed, to be turned, to come to Christ, then here’s what you need to do:

- You need to go to God and confess your sins.
- You need to go to God and ask for forgiveness.
- Then you need to be baptized. And to be baptized, it needs to be a right baptism

—and we will cover that on the next section in the *Beliefs* booklet so you can fully understand about baptism.

Now, here’s what you need to do in repentance: 1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him... [and that’s the ultimate that God wants in the relationship between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ. That your relationship is such that it is a fellowship and you will come to understand that after you’ve been baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God.] ...but we are walking in the darkness... [that is if you say you have fellowship with God, or even know Him (as we covered concerning the commandments) then you’re a liar.] ...we are walking in the darkness... [and ‘darkness’ is Satan’s way.] ...If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.” You must live by the Truth, which is light!

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light... [and the light of the world, by the way] ...*then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.... [Now this means from EVERY sin. So when you repent, you are forgiven

all of your sins.] ...If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (vs 8-9). Notice, you do not go to a priest to confess. You do not go to a confessional booth. You ***go directly to God, privately***, and confess your sins to Him!

- God hears
- God will answer
- God will forgive

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (v 10).

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [So once you confess your sins, you’re to walk in the truth and righteousness and commandments of God, and not to be sinning.] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin... [and that means *yet, if anyone sin*, because we’re human, because we still have human nature to overcome. ***We will sin!*** And we will cover that as we continue with that. What do you do in that case?] ...we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world” (vs 1-2).

Let me just mention also, the reason we have the *Beliefs* booklet is because if someone says, ‘What do you believe?’ We can say, ‘Well, if you’d like to read it, here it is.’ Now, we can say, ‘If you’d like to have some sermons with it, you can receive them.’

Now let’s look at some Scriptures concerning this. Let’s first of all let’s come to Hebrews, the fourth chapter, and let’s see what the Word of God does. Now, for some people it’s very difficult to see their sins. And part of the reason is that the goodness that they have which they see does not come from God but comes from the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil.’ There are a lot of ‘do-gooders’ out there. All that goodness comes from the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil.’ True goodness from God comes through His Holy Spirit and His Word.

Now, let’s pick it up here in Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword... [Now, I remember a movie—and I don’t know how they did it, but however they did it, it was something! This soldier had a sword that was so sharp that he whacked the neck of this other soldier and all it did was just show the blood-line where it had cut. You could hardly tell that it went through, it was so sharp. Then his head fell off. And every time I read this I think of it.] ...piercing even to the dividing

asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart. And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account” (vs 12-13). That also means *laid bear*.

So that’s what the Word of God does. Then, this brings us the **conviction of sin**. Now what do we do when we do that? *We have to go to Christ*, as he finishes here in v 15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses... [In other words, He is there to help us. He does feel it. And Wayne gave a sermon on *Does God Have Feelings?* He’s going to send it to me. Yes, God grieves. Yes, God has joy. Yes, God has feelings. So He is touched with our feelings. Now, very important point: the next phrase.] ...**but one Who was tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet He was without sin...**” [So there’s every temptation every man has gone through; every woman has gone through. God knows!] ...Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 15-16). So that’s the way out of the dilemma of human nature.

Now let’s come back to Jeremiah 17—and as we’re turning back there, remember the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. The Pharisee couldn’t understand his own nature. Because he came to God and he said, ‘God,’ (as he prayed to himself, you know, he wasn’t praying to God) he said, ‘I thank you I’m not like other men. I’m not an adulterer, an extortioner,’ add anything you want in there. Oh, of course none of those things God wants you to be, right? I mean, He expects you not to do those things—correct? And then he went on to say: ‘I tithe of everything I possess.’ And then he went on to say: ‘Thank you that I’m not like this publican down here.’ The publican was a tax-collector. Today they work for ‘Uncle Iris’ [IRS]. And the publican down there, beating on his chest, crying out to God, saying, ‘Be merciful to me, a sinner.’ And Jesus said, ‘I tell you, that man went down to his house justified rather than the other.’ So he couldn’t see that the goodness he was doing was required of God. But in the attitude that he had, it was really a sinful attitude. Because John wrote that if you ‘hate your brother whom you can see how can you love God Whom you cannot see.’ And that’s exactly what he was doing. And where was he doing it? *Right in the temple of God!* It’s amazing what human beings do—isn’t it?

Now, let’s come here to Jeremiah 17:5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose

heart departs from the LORD.... [That’s why Christ is the Head of the Church. We’re to follow no man. God provides teachers and elders, but He also wants all the disciples—that is all the brethren—to become as the teacher. And the ultimate Teacher is Christ—isn’t it? So we have a long way to go.] ...For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited.... [on the other hand, notice v 7:] ...Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD” (vs 5-7). Now, lo and behold, that’s New Testament doctrine—isn’t it? Now what do suppose New Testament doctrine is doing in the Old Testament? *It’s all the Word of God, that’s what it is.*

“For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters; *it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit.” Always growing, always bearing fruit.

Here’s the way every human heart is. And this is the point we all have to come to in repentance. And it’s a progressive thing. After we’re baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God, then we progressively see how despicable our own human nature truly is. And I say ‘ours,’ because I’m including mine. My human nature is no different than your human nature. And I have to war and struggle to overcome like you have to war and struggle and overcome. And Christ knows that. But His grace is sufficient to help us, to teach us, to lead us, to forgive us. And all of that’s part of the process of repentance.

“The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings” (vs 9-10). And so God is there.

So that’s all a part of repentance. And this you do to God personally. It’s not a public thing that you do. You do this personally. As Jesus said, you ‘go into your closet.’ That means a quiet, private place. I know when I first read that I went into my closet and about suffocated. I soon figured out that if I was in a quiet, private place I could kneel down and pray to God. This is between you and God. You’re not to confess your sins to any man. And besides, God knows this. That’s why He doesn’t require you to confess sins to a priest; that I doubt that there is anyone who confesses sins to the priest that really tells all the truth! They want to admit only as much as they need to admit so they will feel good and then they can do their laps on the beads. But, when you come before God alone in repentance, it’s

between you and God. You can bear your soul to God. You can be truthful to Him. After all He knows—doesn't He? If He knows all the hair on your head then He knows every thought that you have. So that's why we need repentance.

Now, let's look and see what we are to do after—when we come to this point of repentance. Let's see who is responsible for that. Let's come to John, the sixth chapter. And this is what's so important. John 6:44: "No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.... [So God the Father has to deal in your life to draw you. Now you stop and think about it for a minute: what a fantastic, absolute blessing that is, that God the Father, **Who is the Sovereign of heaven and earth** sends His Spirit to be with you to deal in your life, to draw Him to you. Now you have to be willing! And He brings you to Christ.] ... It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'.... [And that's what God is doing by leading you to repentance, He is teaching you. That's what God is doing when you study His Word, He's teaching you. And if you're reading the Bible now with **different** eyes than you had in the past, because God is opening your mind to understanding, it is God the Father Who is doing it.] ...Therefore, everyone who has heard... [and that also implies *responds*] ...from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me" (vs 44-45).

Now, John 14—Jesus makes another statement. Because now is not the time that God is saving the world. God is not using George W. Bush to save the world. He's going to use Christ. He is using Christ now for the firstfruits. John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the Truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.'" So both of Them agree. But what do They look for? *They look for someone who is willing to repent!* Now, you can seek after God. But you have to seek Him in 'spirit and in truth.' Which means: if you don't seek God in truth, you're not going to find the true God. That's why there are so many varieties of religions which God never originated.

Now, let's come to Romans, the second chapter, and let's see what else God does for us, So God the Father is the One Who intervenes in your life. He's intervened in all of our lives. I can look back and I can remember the time, you know, 'hindsight is better than foresight.' It's always 20/20. And I can remember when God began dealing with me and it had nothing to do with religion, but it had to do with a challenge of the professor who said, 'If you believe the Bible and believe in God there's the door you can get out of this classroom.' And that just really upset me. Not that I was a church-goer or believer. I wasn't a non-believer, I wasn't a believer, but that really set me off and I can look back at that

time. I also remember when God did lead me to repentance and I was driving down to Pasadena to be baptized. And I remember the exact place on Highway 99 that I was crying and weeping and repenting as I was driving. And so all of you can look back and see and remember that point.

Since it's God the Father that is dealing in your life—now this will help you understand here Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?" So that's how we come to repentance. We see ourselves for what we are. We realize we're helpless. We realize that we need God's help. And of course, the truth is, we remain helpless, even after that, because now we are going to depend upon God.

Let's come to 1-John 1:7, and let's see the **process of repentance**. "However, if we walk in the light... [and Christ is the light, and He gives us that light] ...as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.... [Now this is talking about those who have already repented and have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God—they need ongoing cleansing of sin every day. That's why the model prayer is: 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who trespass against us.' And that's a daily prayer.] ...If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins... [Now notice, we confess them to Christ] ...**He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (vs 8-9). Now, that's the operation of grace continually in our lives. That's how we confess our sins in repentance.

Now there are other Scriptures that you can read in the *Beliefs* booklet that are there, but let's come to Acts 2:38 and we'll end this review of repentance and then we'll get into baptism because they go together just like a hand-in-glove and nut and bolt. That is why it is so deceitful of the religionists who say: 'Put your hand on the radio or television and receive the Lord.' Now, there are many sincere people who do that. Especially if they're convicted of sin, they do that. But you **must** be baptized, **by full water immersion** because it is a burial into the death of Christ.

Let's come here to Acts 2:36—here's the conclusion of the sermon: "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.'.... [This is the Scripture which tells us that **we** have had our part in crucifying Christ.] ...Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart... [Who led them to that repentance? *God*

the Father did! On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was sent. And the Holy Spirit being the power of God worked in their lives.] ... and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘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’” (vs 36-38). Now when we get to the section on *justification* you will understand even a little more about that.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 2:4
- 2) Acts 2: 36-38
- 3) Acts 3:19
- 4) Psalm 103:1-3, 8-18
- 5) Romans 5:6-7, 9-10
- 6) 1 John 1:6-10
- 7) 1 John 2:1-2
- 8) Hebrews 4:12-13, 15-16
- 9) Jeremiah 17:5-10
- 10) John 6:44-45
- 11) John 14:6
- 12) Romans 2:4
- 13) 1 John 1:7-9
- 14) Acts 2:36-38

Water Baptism

Fred R. Coulter

Now let me read the section on *Water Baptism: (Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God, pgs 15-16 throughout)*

Upon genuine, Godly repentance...

There is a sorrow of the world. And the sorrow of the world is not repentance to God. So that's why it's upon true, Godly repentance

...and acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior, the believer must be baptized by complete immersion in water for the remission of his or her sins. Water baptism symbolizes the death and burial of each repentant believer—[which is] a spiritual conjoining into the death of Jesus Christ.....

And remember, the death of Jesus Christ was a covenant death. And when you are baptized and put into that watery grave, you have joined in the covenant death with Christ.

...Through this baptismal death, the believer becomes a partaker of the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, and His blood is applied as full payment for his or her sins....

And then from that time forward is available through grace as a propitiation for our sins.

...Rising up out of the water is symbolic of being conjoined into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the believer comes up out of the watery grave of baptism, he or she rises to [walk in] newness of life [which is the way of the Lord]. In order to become a new person, each baptized believer must be begotten with the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. The believer is then led by the Holy Spirit to walk in loving obedience to God the Father and faith in Jesus Christ

Now let's look at the meaning of baptism. Let's come to Colossians 2. This baptism does something for us, which is very powerful, which nothing else can do. Now it doesn't remove entirely the carnal nature that we have, but it does something to our minds. And this is by the operation of baptism.

Let's pick it up beginning in Colossians 2:10: "and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [and the

circumcision of Christ is the receiving of the Holy Spirit. And the receiving of the Holy Spirit is the *earnest or God's pledge* or down-payment until the time of the purchase of the redemption which then is at the resurrection. So that is the circumcision of the heart.] ...Having been **buried with him in baptism**... [that's how it's accomplished] ...**by which you have also been raised with Him through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead For you, who were once dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has now made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses"** (vs 10-13).

Now, we have other sermons to get into the detail things of the technicalities of Colossians, the second chapter, which we won't get into today, because we're talking about "water baptism."

Now, let's come to Romans, the second chapter, please; and let's see what this circumcision is. Now, under the Old Covenant only the males were circumcised. In the New Covenant the circumcision of Christ, with the heart and the mind, is for both men and women. Now Paul explains that it has to be "in the Spirit."

Romans 2:28: "For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which is external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly ... [And of course, this refers to Jesus. Not that you become a Jew, as Jews are today. Because Christ is to dwell in you and Christ was a Jew, and so this has to refer to Christ in you.] ...and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God" (vs 28-29). And so this is what baptism does for you.

Now let's come to Romans 6:1, and we'll see the whole operation put together here. This is what becomes very important "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound?" Now remember the quote that I put in *The Harmony of the Gospels* in the section on the Sermon on the Mount from Martin Luther? Who said, 'Though your sins be strong, let the grace be stronger. Though you murder a thousand times a day, or commit adultery a thousand times, God's grace is stronger.' That's a *false* grace, brethren. And unfortunately, that's one of the foundations of Protestantism. Paul says: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?.... [Because when you are baptized, you die to sin.] ...Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into

Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him... [and the Greek means: *co-buried*; we are co-buried with Him] ...through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.... [Meaning we don't walk as the world walks. We don't talk as the world talks.] ...For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness of His* resurrection..." (vs 1-5).

Now in reading that, how could anyone believe that people go to heaven when they die? And yet, you can go to funerals and hear ministers say, 'Well, you know, Aunt Mary's looking down on us right now from heaven.' And I remember the two Protestant ministers that were on Larry King Live after the 9/11 event, and Larry King said, 'Well, what about the young children that died in that?' The Protestant said, 'Instant heaven, instant heaven!' Well we know the Truth of what is called and shown in the book of Revelation, which is the second resurrection. ***It is the resurrection.*** Christ made it very clear: 'No one has ascended unto heaven except the Son of man who came down from heaven.' But when they reject the resurrection, they have to substitute going to heaven, which is a lie, in order to justify what they're teaching.

"...be *in the likeness of His* resurrection... [That's a promise! That's our hope!] ...Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin ***might be destroyed***... [showing that it's a process] ...so that we might no ***longer be enslaved to sin***... [that means *to be the slave* of sin.] ...because the one who has died to *sin*... [through baptism] ...has been ***justified from sin***" (vs 5-7). You are justified from sin. Being *freed* from sin gives the connotation that you shall never sin again after that—which is not true. You're *justified* from sins, being past sins.

"Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also... [which means: exactly in the same manner] ...you should indeed reckon... [this means: figure, calculate, base your life on this] ...yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body... [it's going to be there to pull you down. It's going to be there to tempt you because you still have human nature. But don't let it rule. Don't let it reign.] ...by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as

instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead... [again, showing a process; showing time; showing overcoming; showing growing in grace and knowledge.] ...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you..." (vs 8-14). That is if you have the Spirit of God, 'sin will not have dominion over you.'

Now, you can just give yourself over to it, that is true. And if you reject God and sin willfully, then you have allowed it to have dominion over you. But it will not have dominion over you if you continually yield to God. That's what it's talking about here. If you are yielding to God and striving for the righteousness; if you're going to God and drinking in of His Spirit, of His love, of His grace and all of those things, which build spiritual character, then sin will not have dominion over you. "...because you are not under law... [now, we'll talk about that a little bit later when we get to justification.] ...but under grace" (v 14). And that is true. You receive the Spirit of God, you are under His grace.

And as we saw, as we started out the chapter, what did it say? "What, shall we sin so that grace may abound?" ***NO!*** He explains the process here. We are under grace. Grace does not give license to sin.

- Grace gives us access to God.
- Grace gives us the Spirit of God as a gift.
- Grace gives salvation to us as a gift.
- Grace gives us repentance, which comes from God—which is a gift.
- And grace means *gift*.

So there we have it. We are under grace. Now, under the Old Covenant, when they sinned what did they have to do? *They had to offer an offering*—correct? They were under law. ***We are not under law.*** Though we don't reject the commandments and laws of God. Now that's the hardest ones for the Protestants to figure out.

"What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? ***MAY IT NEVER BE!***... [He answers the question again. Then he explains it very clearly, and this is the whole process of growing and overcoming:] ...Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey" (vs 15-16). Now, the Greek there is 'doulos' which means *slave*. Ever have a bad habit you've had to overcoming. How about smoking? Chewing? Drinking? Gambling? Lottos? They can get a hold of people and just make them "slaves." They're slaves to it. Well, ***we're not be slaves to sin that we should obey it!***

Notice this: “...**you are servants of the one you obey**... [very interesting, isn't it?] ...whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?... [Now, if you obey sin unto death, who are you following? *Satan the devil!*] ...or of obedience unto righteousness?... [Whom are you serving? *God the Father and Jesus Christ.*] ...But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin... [or that is having been *justified* from sin] ...you became *the* servants of righteousness” (vs 16-18). And becoming the “servants of righteousness, your whole life then becomes one of:

- loving God
- serving God
- growing in grace and knowledge
- understanding His Word
- and living His way

That's why we are peculiar people on this earth. Those who don't like what God has, calls us “the followers of a cult.” But the real truth is: *a cult is any substitution for God's way*. So what they label us, or others who keep the Sabbath, that's exactly what they are because they don't believe God! Now maybe you've never thought of it that way, but that's just the way it works out.

Now continuing, v 19: “I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh... [Sounds like it's a sickness, but it's really weakness of your flesh. You know, ‘the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.’] ...for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification. For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 19-23).

And that's the whole process. There it gives the whole meaning of repentance and baptism and the operation of the Holy Spirit of God in your life after baptism. And so, it's a completely different understanding than most people who profess Christianity in the world. When you truly understand the Scriptures, for what the Scriptures say, it gives you a far different story than picking and choosing different Scriptures and giving personal interpretations upon it, and then claiming that Christ

has done away with the law so you have liberty and grace to do anything you want to. So that's the meaning of baptism.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 2:10-13
- 2) Romans 2:28-29
- 3) Romans 6:1-23

Also referenced: Book:

- *The Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Justification

Fred R. Coulter

Now we've come to the section in the *Beliefs*' booklet on justification. Now, right next to the word 'justification' put an equal sign (=)—equals 'right standing with God through Jesus Christ.' Now, as the Bible defines it—now we need to understand this: 'Everyway of a man is right in his own eyes'—or *just* in his own eyes. Even some of the most despicable crimes committed, even the 9/11 crimes, were justified by what? *In the name of Allah*. Human beings cannot operate unless they "justify." And that's what the deceptiveness of human nature does. God also has a *justification* which is profound and very important, because it puts you in right standing with God. And notice the sequence of how these have come: you have *repentance*, *water baptism* and *justification*. Because those are the steps of the operation that God has. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 16).

Justification is freely granted to the called and repentant believer by God the Father through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Justification takes place when the believer's sins are removed by the blood of Jesus Christ and he or she is put into right standing with God the Father. In order to receive God's gift of justification, a person must repent toward God, believe in the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and be baptized by [water] immersion. The believer is then cleansed from sin and is without condemnation, placing him or her in right standing with God the Father. This state of justification is called the 'gift of righteousness' because God the Father freely imputes the righteousness of Jesus Christ to the believer.

Now why is this so confusing in religious circles in the world?—*because it is!* They like to be justified for their past sins so they can continue in their sins. They don't exactly put it that way, but that's the sum of it. Let's look at a couple of Scriptures here and see if we can untangle it. And most of these will be in the book of Romans.

Romans 2:13: "Because the hearers of the law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Showing that upon repentance you have to keep the laws and commandments of God. In other words, if a person is not willing to obey God, he is not going to be *justified*. It's that simple. Cannot be put in right standing with God. So *the doers of the law*.

Now, let's look at another Scripture which has thrown Protestantism into a complete utter disaster—and that's why it's going to die. You know Protestantism is dying, you know that don't you? Now, let's come to Romans, the ninth chapter. Then we will come to a very tricky verse, and I think we can unlock the trickiness of this verse.

Now, in one of my travels I turned on the TV and I saw Copeland's son preaching—first time I ever saw him preach. And he started right out there, Romans 10:4^[transcriber's correction]: "For Christ *is the end of works* of law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Bam! all the law of God is done away. Christ ended the law, there's nothing more to be kept. You think it's possible to take that one verse and throw out all the rest of the Bible. You think it's possible to *end* law. Try ending the law of gravity. Can't do it. Would Christ, Who is the Lawgiver, be the end of all law? That's what they assume. Now let's find out what it's talking about because this has great deal to do with *justification*.

Let's come back to Romans 9:30, because remember, men made the chapter breaks. It flows right through otherwise. "What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the* righteousness that *is* by faith."

- By believing in God
- By being baptized
- By receiving the Holy Spirit
- By walking in newness of life
- So forth.

"But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why?... [How did that happen? You know, just like the Pharisee and the publican.] ...Because *they did not seek it* by faith, **by works of law**.... [In every case in the book of Romans, with the exception of Rom. 2:14, '**the works of the law**' should read: 'works of law.' Because in the Greek the definite article is not there, and with the definite article not being there it has a different meaning altogether. By works of law.] ...for they stumbled at the Stone of stumbling, exactly as it is written: 'Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed'" (vs 30-33).

Romans 10:1: "Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God... [There are a lot of people that have zeal for God—a lot of people.] ...but **not according to**

knowledge.... [And that's why I recommended that you read the book, *The Code of Jewish Law*. If you haven't read *The Code of Jewish Law* you do not understand what he's talking about. The Jews have laws for everything to justify them to Judaism. **That does not justify them to God.** And they are all 'works of law.' So they have a 'zeal, but not according to knowledge.'] ...For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (vs 1-3).

Now then, how do people today establish their own righteousness if you're not a Jew? Well, the Catholics have established theirs haven't they—eliminated the Sabbath and proclaimed Sunday as the day of worship. Confess your sins to the priest, partake of the seven sacraments, obey the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. That's their own righteousness. **It's not the righteousness of God.** Protestants, likewise following in their footsteps, do the same thing. They're not submitting to the righteousness of God. They have a zeal for God, but "not according to knowledge" And being ignorant of God's way they go about to establish their own righteousness. And whenever you find any time anyone does away with any of the laws and commandments of God, **which we are to keep**, they always come up with their own devices—which is their own righteousness. It always happens. Some people don't like the Sabbath so they keep Sunday. They don't like the Holy Days, so they have Christmas, Easter, New Years, etc. *That's their own righteousness.* Some people don't believe in tithes and offerings so they have pledges. Well, that's a substitute system. *That's their own righteousness.* God has the best way through tithes and offerings. Whatever it may be. Same way with clean and unclean foods. "Oh, well, that's not for us today." Listen, don't you think they could cook pork well done, way back when? *Yes!* The truth is you can cook pork well done and you look under a microscope and you still see the trichinosis in it. God had a reason for that. Now's not the time. When I get to the section *clean and unclean meats* I'll explain that the New Testament Church taught to eat clean foods.

Verse 3: "...have not submitted to the righteousness of God.... [What were they seeking? *Their own righteousness!* How were they doing it? *By works of law!* Now we can understand v 4 very clearly, because v 4 cannot be taken out of context with what is there.] ...For Christ *is the end of works of law for righteousness to everyone who believes*" (vs 3-4). Because it's talking about 'works' of law. It's not talking about **all** the laws of God. As Paul said, 'God forbid.' Shall you murder and say 'God, I

have license.' So you bow down to an idol and say, 'This is my god, like the Dalai Lama. I like to call him the 'deli-lama.' He points to this little statue in an interview and says, 'That's my boss.' No! Christ is 'the end of the works of law for righteousness to everyone that believes'—and that's the context. So that's what it means.

"For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the law, 'The man who has practiced those things shall live by them'" (v 5). That is true, but there's another profound thing which you can read in the *Passover* book, that under Moses **they were justified in the flesh**, to the temple, because they did not have the Holy Spirit of God. God does not give salvation to some people one way and salvation to other people another way. **He gives it to all people the same way.** And that's why when you understand about the second resurrection those who have not been called now will have the second physical life for a first opportunity **because they never had it while they lived, because God didn't call them.** So, God is (how shall we say the modern word today) God is fair. You got to have fairness—God is fair. Better way of putting it: **God is righteous and God is just.**

Now, let's look at some other Scriptures concerning this. So, Rom. 10:4 has absolutely nothing to do with the termination of the laws and commandments of God. **It terminates the works of law of sacrifices and rituals**—that's what it terminates.

Now, let's come back to Romans 3 and let's look at another difficult verse—and this really blew me away when I first read it. And I couldn't understand it. This is where they get all confused. Let's see if we can eliminate some of that confusion today. Romans 3:20: "Therefore, by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him.... [When I first read that I said, 'What am I doing keeping the commandments of God?' That was a stumper for me. Then I went on.] ...for through *the law is the knowledge of sin*.... [I understood that. 'Sin is the transgression of the law.' I understood that. This next verse I didn't understand either:] ...But now, *the righteousness of God that is separate from law*... [And I thought, 'How can you have righteousness without the law?' Because you read that and you think that is the absence of law. Does it mean the absence of law? Or does the Greek mean something else? We'll answer the question here.] ...being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets" (vs 20-21).

Now, those two verses seem, in the *King James*, very contradictory and reasoning in a circle and hard to understand. Now however, if you understand concerning 'works of law'—now let me

read it to you the way it should be translated and the way that it will be translated in the coming New Testament, here—and this is directly from the Greek: “Therefore by works of law... [Ah-ha, that is the sacrifices and rituals] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him... [Why? *Because there’s no repentance, there is no baptism.*] ...for through the law is the knowledge of sin.... [all the laws and commandments of God tell us what is righteous, and breaking that is sin. All of the rituals and animal sacrifices was a reminder of sin, year-by-year, as the Apostle Paul says.] ...But now, *the righteousness of God...* [which is right standing with God in heaven above—separate, not ‘without’; not the absence of] ...**that is separate** from the law has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets” (vs 20-21). Now, how did the sacrifice of Christ come? By law or by grace? *By grace!* Is that separate from the law and the prophets? *Yes*, even though they witness to it. It is a separate operation. It is a special, separate, spiritual operation that God does.

For example: If a person commits murder and then escapes. You can probably see some of these documentaries on television. There was an account of one man, he escaped, wasn’t arrested. He went to Colorado and he lived an exemplary life. And lo and behold, twenty years later when they had the *Most Wanted* on television; had his picture, someone recognized him and turned him in. Now then, just suppose he came before the judge and said, “Judge, look, I want you to overlook this murder, because after all I’ve lived a good life for twenty years.” Did his living a good life for twenty years make right the murder that he committed? *NO!* The truth is, ***no law justifies you***, period. And in keeping the laws and commandments of God ***you are not seeking justification***. You are living in obedience. And that is a different operation.

Now that’s why it says, Romans 2:13: “Because the hearers of the law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Because you can’t be living in a state of sin when you’re justified, ***you must repent and change your ways***, then you are not living in a state of sin. ***Then*** the blood of Christ is applied to your life and you are justified. Law cannot justify you.

Let’s use another example: Suppose you didn’t keep any day Holy or suppose you are a Sunday-keeper for years and years, and all of a sudden you find out about the Sabbath. So you start keeping the Sabbath. That’s a good step. Now suppose you never go any further, you never repent, you’re never baptized, you never follow through on it and it comes time of the resurrection and God says you’re still a sinner. But he says, ‘Well, I’ve been keeping the Sabbath. When I found out about it, I kept it.’ And God says, ‘All your Sabbath-keeping previous when you were breaking it was required

and all your Sabbath-keeping that you’ve been doing since then does not undo the sin which happened previously.’ So when people say that we are seeking to be justified by Sabbath-keeping, they are incorrect; because we are only justified by the sacrifice of Christ. ***And nothing, nothing, brethren, can replace the sacrifice of Christ to forgive your sins, period!*** No law! No person! No sacrifice! can do that whatsoever. And I mean ‘animal sacrifice.’

Now let’s read on, how is it done? Romans 3:22: “Even the righteousness... [which then is ‘justification’—*being put in right standing with God*] ...of God *that is* through the faith of Jesus Christ... [you believe what God has said. You believe in the sacrifice of Christ and you believe in the blood of Christ, and that justifies you. ***Nothing else does!***] ...toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference.” Because even to this day, the Jews say they have the corner on the God-market. ‘We’re the chosen people,’ they say. Well, if you’re the chosen people, thank you, I don’t want any of that because I don’t think you’re too chosen being over there in Israel, called today. Unless, you just think about it, all they’ve gone through, through the years, they are not the chosen people, because they rejected Christ, then God rejected them, and that’s just the long and the short of it—and they have to repent like everybody else; and they have to accept Jesus Christ.

Now notice verse 23: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God... [everyone has] ...*but* are being justified freely by His grace... [Not through law-keeping. Commandment and law-keeping is required. That’s why the ‘doers of the law’ shall be justified. The *hearers* won’t. But they do not have the blood of Jesus Christ applied to them because they’re not willing to quit sinning.] ...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus...[‘For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God’] ...Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation... [which is continually atoning, cleansing sacrifice] ...through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God...” (vs 23-26).

Now, let me just clarify one thing here—we’re almost done—let me just clarify one thing: ***All sin is past sin!*** Now, what do I mean by that? Today, sitting here today, have you sinned tomorrow? No, because tomorrow hasn’t come, has it? How could you sin tomorrow, here today? It’s an incongruous statement. When you sin in a moment of time, as soon as you have sinned, it is past, is it not? *Yes!* So that’s why it is says ‘of past sins’—so that you cannot have something like the Catholic Church has of selling indulgence for future sin. And

that's in the very Bible they have, you know—which they read out of occasionally.

“...of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus. Therefore, where *is* boasting? It is excluded. Through what law? *The law* of works? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a **law of faith**.... [Now, how about that. There's law and faith put together. The 'law of faith,' which means: *this is the rule of belief in God and the law by which now through faith you have your sins forgiven through Christ, rather than works of law of ritual and sacrifices.*] ...Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified by faith, separate from works of law.... [It's a separate operation. The way you can always remember it is this: **Nothing can forgive your sins but the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ, period!**] ... *Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the God* of the Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the* Gentiles, since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith. Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law” (vs 25-31).

And how is that established? So that you may love God with all your heart and mind and soul and being, and that you do it from the heart and not do it exteriorly just because it is there in the letter. And that is how you are justified to God—put in right standing with Him, which is a great blessing and privilege that God has done because He's called you by grace. And the Great Sovereign of the universe has made you then—upon baptism and receipt of the Holy Spirit—one of His begotten children, and you await the resurrection and the return of Jesus Christ. That's how you're justified.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scripture References:

- 1) Romans 2:13
- 2) Romans 10:4
- 3) Romans 9:30-33
- 4) Romans 10:1-5
- 5) Romans 3:20-31

Also referenced:

- Books: *The Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried, Hyman Goldin

Righteousness Righteousness of Law

Fred R. Coulter

Let's turn to the section righteousness and we will begin *The Righteousness of the Law*. And as we have in each section, when we come to it, what we will do we will read the belief: (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs 16-17).

God is both Creator and Lawgiver. When God created mankind, He also established righteous laws which govern man's relationship with Him and with his fellowman. The laws of God draw a clear line between actions that are good and righteous in God's eyes as opposed to acts that are evil and sinful. Without God's laws, there would be no sin. The Scriptures declare that "where there is no law there is no sin....for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The Biblical record of the sins of Adam and Eve, and the nations which descended from them, makes it clear that God's laws have been obligatory upon mankind from the beginning.

In Old Testament times, a man or woman who kept the commandments of God, fulfilling His requirements in the letter of the law, was counted as righteous before God. This type of righteousness, which was earned by doing the works of the law, brought many physical and material blessings from God—health and prosperity, deliverance from enemies, peace and long life. When God covenanted with Israel, He proclaimed through Moses that those who kept His laws and commandments "shall live in them" because they would be spared the punishment and curses that were appointed for lawbreakers—including death by capital punishment.

Although the righteousness of the law resulted in many blessings to the obedient, fulfilling the letter of the law did not and could not earn eternal salvation. The promise of salvation and eternal life is God's free and undeserved gift and is offered only through the righteousness of faith. It cannot be earned by fulfilling the letter of the law. The required righteousness of the letter of the law was a "schoolmaster" or tutor to reveal the sinfulness and weakness of human nature

and to point to the need for a better righteousness—the righteousness of faith.

Let's just begin with some of the Scriptural references right there—Genesis 3. Now remember, whatever God commands, going against that command is sin. And if we keep that in mind then we will understand even though we have the general summary of things here, concerning the creation and the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil (which we have covered here in the recent past), there is still sin.

Genesis 3:11—after Adam said that he hid himself because he was naked: "And He [God] said, 'Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you that you should not eat.'" So, any command of God when broken or gone against is sin. Now we know from the things we covered before, that by one man sin entered into the world—now that is Adam—and by sin, death, and death passed to all. So this is sin.

Whenever there is sin, everyone looks for a way to blame someone else; and this is basic in human nature down to this day. "And the man said, 'The woman whom You gave *to be* with me.... [It's God's fault. It's God's fault because 'You gave me a woman.'] ...she gave me of the tree, and I ate.' And the LORD God said to the woman, 'What *is* this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate'" (vs 12-13). And so God does not take to palming the sin off to someone else. You're still held responsible for it.

Now, we won't go into all about Adam and Eve and everything that happened; but to show you that there is sin, let's come to Genesis 4:3 and the occasion of the giving the offering by Abel and Cain. "It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground." It's not wrong to bring an offering of the fruit of the ground, according to the commandments of God as He gave instruction. There are firstfruits which are to be brought. There is tithe which is to be brought. So apparently he did something other than what God commanded. Now, a fruit of the ground offering was never given to forgive sin; was never given as a special offering, like a burnt offering—it never had the weight of that kind of offering. So apparently Cain, in bringing this offering, was trying to put that kind of weight upon it, which was contrary to the way of God.

“And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock... [Now, just as aside here: Firstlings tell us that there was a law of the firstborn. And you can read that when we get into the book of Moses—we won’t during this series. But the firstborn were to be redeemed. And the firstborn was then, with the offering here, was to be brought where then it was to be offered to God.] (So he): “...brought the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering, but He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering. And Cain was extremely angry!... [and as Tyndale translates it: *glowered*] ... and his countenance fell. And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well... [according to the letter of the law] ...shall you not be accepted? But if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. Its desire *is* for you, but you must rule over it!’” (vs 4-7)—that’s the way it should read—it is in the masculine tense there in the Hebrew, but it should read ‘it.’

So it shows that even God expects those without His Holy Spirit to do what is right according to the letter of the law. And in that he [Cain] would have been accepted for what he did. This is way before salvation being offered. So we’ll cover that a little bit later.

Now, let’s see what happens when sin grows. And as we’re living in the world today, and as Jesus said, ‘As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the coming of [the] Son of man.’

Let’s turn to Genesis, the sixth chapter, please, and let’s see the account here. When the world ignores God and rejects God, or creates its own gods; and as we know from history and in the New Testament, that Cain’s way was called *the way of Cain*. So Cain invented his own religion, but because he killed Abel, he was exiled even further and cut off from God. So in creating his own religion, then he created something which was not related to God but it had all the trappings of things which were supposed to relate to God.

Now, if you’ve never heard of the book, or if you’ve never read the book, *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, let me recommend that you get it. And if you’re on the net, you can surf the net and there are several areas where you can get *The Two Babylons*—and that will show you the antiquity of all of the pagan religions going clear back to the time of Cain and coming up to the time of Noah before the Flood, and then the time of Noah right after the Flood. So it’s very significant when Jesus said that in the days of the coming of the Son of man, that it will be the same as it was in the days of Noah.

Now let’s read it here, Genesis 6:5—and this is where we are headed in the world today: “And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Now, what you may want to do, you may want to look at the Ten Commandments of God; just make a listing of those, and when you sit down in front of your television, just run some little accounting tick marks, and just go right through wherever you see a commandment of God broken, just take your little sheet and tick right alongside there. You can start out with ‘no other gods before the true God.’ You’ll fill up the whole page. You might have to have a separate page for each one.

- you shall not make any graven image or bow down to it
- shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
- remember the Sabbath, to keep it Holy
- honor your father and mother
- shall not commit murder
- shall not commit adultery

and all the rest, all the way down to the tenth one on coveting. And every time you see an ad, you can put one by the tenth commandment of coveting; because all of those are based upon covetousness.

But what you’re going to see is that today we have more forces coming in upon our minds to bring us to evil even in a greater way than it was here. We’ve got television; we have music; we have video games; we have literature; we have art; we have all of these things. So when you look at it, when God says that He shut the whole world up under sin—He literally has. And it’s going to multiply, and it’s going to increase just like this.

Now God was so sad at this point, “And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.’ But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (vs 6-8). Now here is a great lesson for us. There are very few who really want to follow God. There are millions which say, ‘Oh yes, we want God—our way!’ **But you can’t have God your way!** You must have God His way, because He is God and you are not.

“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. And these are the generations of Noah. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (vs 8-9)... (v 11): “And the earth was corrupt before God and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth and behold

it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth” (vs 11-12). Now, that’s why Christ must come the second time! And He’s going to let this build up in the greatest crescendo that has ever been. We’ll save that for another time. We’re looking at the righteousness of the law.

Now, let’s come to Leviticus 18:15. God gave all the laws and commandments and statutes to Israel. And of course, most religions today reject the laws and commandments and statutes of God by saying, ‘Well, they all were done away in Christ.’ We’ll cover that a little bit later; we’ll see that, no, it was never done away in Christ. So you can count that as one of the lies of the evil imaginations of religious people.

Now let’s just begin, Leviticus 18:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, “I *am* the LORD your God. As they do in the land of Egypt where you dwelt, you shall not do. And you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Neither shall you walk in their ordinances.... [That is, all of their false religious gods and their system of religion that they had; because they did not worship God. All of their righteousness was, in fact, sin!]: ...You shall do My judgments and keep My ordinances, and walk in them. I *am* the LORD your God.”’” (vs 1-4).

Now, if you want a very interesting Bible study, do this: you might get a concordance. If you don’t have a concordance, you can get a *Strong’s Concordance* at any Bible bookstore, and you look up the phrase: ‘I am the Lord’ and see how many times, through the Bible, God says He is the Lord. And I think that will be very instructive for you to understand that God’s Word is Truth; God’s Word is righteous; and what God says He backs it up with His very being—‘I am the Lord your God.’

Now, v 5: “And you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live in them. I *am* the LORD.” So they were to do them. They were to live in them.

Now, let’s come to Deuteronomy 28 for just a minute. We’ll just touch on it here; just summarize it. Now you can write in for two more detailed sermons on *The Righteousness of the Law* and *The Righteousness of Faith*. Let’s go to Deuteronomy 28—showing the righteousness of the law. The blessings that would come for doing these physically; keeping them in the letter of the law.

Deuteronomy 28:1: “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, the

LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth.” Now we’re going to see how God deals with nations in just a bit. So this has to do with physical nations, physical people, keeping the commandments of God in the letter of the law—the righteousness of the law—which if a man do even he shall live in them.

“And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God.... [Now, that’s another interesting study. Look up all the places where it talks about the ‘voice of the Lord, your God.’ And I think you’ll find out that what God says, He means.] ...Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the field. Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed *shall be* your basket and your store.... [And this is what everyone wants—isn’t it? Doesn’t every nation want this? *Yes!*] ...Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The LORD shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be stricken before your face. They shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon you in your storehouses, and all that you set your hand to. And He shall bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you” (vs 2-8).

“...establish you as a Holy people (v 9). You’ll “...abound in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you” (v 11). Now then, He says, v 15: “And it shall come to pass, if you will not hearken to the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.” And as I read some of these, notice that they are upon us as a nation now. Notice that they are upon the world today.

- “Cursed *shall you be* in the city,
- and cursed *shall you be* in the field
- Cursed *shall be* your basket and your store.
- Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body,
- and the fruit of your land,
- the increase of your livestock,
- and the flocks of your sheep
- Cursed *shall you be* when you come in,
- and cursed *shall you be* when you go out

The LORD shall send on you cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do until you are destroyed, and until you perish quickly because of the wickedness of your doings *by* which you have forsaken Me” (vs 16-20).

Then you read the rest of Deut. 28. And you need to know that that is coming upon this nation; and it's also coming upon the world. That's why God is calling you out of it, to repent of these things and come to Him.

Now, let's come to Ezekiel, the twentieth chapter—and this becomes very important. Now, we've already covered concerning the Sabbath and Holy Days in this series, but let's just re-emphasize it here in Ezek. 20. And this is showing where God corrected the children of Israel because they didn't keep His Sabbaths; because they didn't keep His Holy Days—and that's very important. What we also need to understand is this: There is not one word in all of the Bible—Old Testament or New Testament—that shows God ever approved of, or sanctified Sunday as the day of worship—NOWHERE! So, if you're a Protestant and you believe that you are correct, and you believe that you should keep Sunday, then you need to challenge yourself to prove, from the Scriptures, whether you should keep Sunday or the Sabbath as the day that God created and gave.

Now let's pick it up here in Ezekiel 20:11—God said, “And I gave them My statutes and showed them My ordinances, which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them.... [the letter of the law; righteousness of the law.] ...And also I gave them My Sabbaths [plural] to be a sign between Me and them, that *they* might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them” (vs 11-12). You can just take the opposite reasoning here, which is important to also consider. If you don't keep the Sabbath, how can you know the Lord? And if you do keep Sunday—which is not the Sabbath—then the Lord that you know is not the Lord of the Bible. So you need to understand that.

Now notice, v 13: “But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes, and they despised My ordinances, which *if* a man does, he shall even live in them. And they greatly polluted My Sabbaths....” Well, you can read the rest of the account, what God did there in Ezek. 20.

Let's come to Jeremiah 18, because this becomes very important. This tells us that God judges all nations. All wars, all famines, all floods, disasters do not come by accident or caprice. They come by the judgment of God. Notice what He says here:

Jeremiah 18:1—so we can get whole story flow: “The Word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ‘Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.’ Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was working at his wheel. And the vessel that he

made of clay was ruined in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. Then the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you *even* as this potter?’ says the LORD. ‘Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hands, *so are* you in My hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy *it*’” (vs 1-7).

We're going to see some examples here. Let's go back to Genesis 15, for just a minute. When God gave the covenant to Abraham, He also told him why it was not going to come immediately; because there was something that had yet to happen, and it had to do with the behavior of the Canaanites.

Genesis 15:13: “And He said to Abram, ‘You must surely know that your seed shall be sojourners in a land *that is* not theirs, (and shall serve them and afflict them) four hundred years. And also I will judge that nation whom they shall serve. And afterward they shall come out with great substance. And you shall go to your fathers in peace. You shall be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full’” (vs 13-16). So God let's the iniquity come to the full before He brings the final judgment.

Now back here to Jeremiah 18:8—and He did pull them down, He did pluck them down. Now, He's talking to Israel, He's talking to Judah—and let's understand something here very clearly: ***The ten tribes of Israel were sent off into captivity because they didn't repent. And the tribe of Judah—the Levites and the Benjamites with them—were sent off into captivity to Babylon because they didn't repent.*** Jeremiah 18:8: “If that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them.”

Go to the book of Jonah and let's see an example. The book of Jonah, in the Minor Prophets (as they are called), is very instructive for us. Now, Jonah was a prophet that didn't want to do what God wanted him to do. So he decided that he was going to get on a vessel and sail away. God caused a storm, also raised up a big, huge fish or whale or whatever it was, caused a tempest. Finally, the crew, understanding that this storm was from God, they confronted Jonah and he said, ‘Yes, I'm the reason. I'm running from God.’ So they said, ‘Throw him overboard.’ So they threw him overboard and the fish swallowed him up and he was in there three days and three nights. And I've often wondered, I wonder what he was thinking when he was in there.

It also shows another lesson, too: It doesn't pay to argue with God. You may not land in the

mouth of a big fish and be spared. So anyway, God told him ‘prophesy to Nineveh.’ Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria. Now the Assyrians were Gentiles; they were not of Israel and Judah. And this is important to understand: that God judges all nations—Israel and Judah and also all the rest of the nations.

Now he says here, Jonah 3:4: “And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried and said, ‘Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown!’ And the people of Nineveh believed God. And they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them, for word came to the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne. And he laid aside his robe from him, and covered himself *with* sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his great ones, saying, ‘Do not let man or beast, herd or flock taste anything; do not let them feed, nor drink water. But let man and animal be covered *with* sackcloth, and cry mightily to God. And let them each one turn from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands. Who knows? God may repent, and He may have pity and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we do not perish.’ And God saw their works... [in the letter of the law] ...that they turned from their evil way. And God repented of the evil that He had said He would do to them, and He did not do *it*” (vs 4-10).

And then Jonah was displeased with God. And the moral of the story is: ‘Jonah, I will have you do what I want in spite of you; and I *will do* what I want also in spite of you.’ So it was done. And it fulfills what He said here in Jeremiah.

Now, let’s come back to Jeremiah 18:7-8: “If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy *it*; if that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them.” Now, that’s exactly what happened.

You can go back and see how it happened with the kings of Judah. When there was a righteous king who repented, then God restored the land, restored the people. When there was an evil king that came along, then they had wars and sickness and disease and all of those things.

Verse 9: “And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight, that it not obey My voice, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good” (vs 9-10). Then He says to the house of Judah there: ‘Couldn’t I do this with you?’

But the point I want to make is that *God judges all nations*. The things that happen in the world, it’s all in the part of the scheme of God, *based upon the righteousness of the letter of the law*.

Now, let’s understand why God did not require them to keep the *spirit of the law*. The reason is that God had not given the Holy Spirit to them. Let’s see how the people of Israel did. Moses is reiterating what happened when the Ten Commandments were given, and here’s what the people said to Moses:

Deuteronomy 5:27: “[Moses], You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.’.... [All people are well intentioned. They intend to do good, but they don’t have the spiritual heart to truly do good.] ...And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, “I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken. Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” (vs 27-29).

So the key is: Until Jesus Christ came to reveal the righteousness of faith, there was not the Holy Spirit given to the people in general in order to keep the commandments of God beyond just the letter. So that’s why He required the letter of the law. BUT, they didn’t even have the heart to keep the *letter of the law*; because they would get involved in other religions and they would modify it and adjust it to their liking.

Now, to show you that keeping in the letter of the law cannot earn salvation, let’s come to the book of Job, please. Let’s come to Job 34. You can read the first part, that Job was perfect and upright; sincere in the letter of the law. Job did all the law-keeping and all the good things that God required. There was nothing wrong with the things that he did. However, human nature in Job exalted itself and he thought that he was as good as God, or better than God.

Job 34:5: “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous; but God has denied me justice.’.... [So that was quite a thing that he said there.] (v 35): ...‘Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.’ My desire *is that* Job may be tried unto the end... [which he was] ...because *his* answers *are* like those of wicked men. For he adds rebellion to his sin; he claps *his* hands among us, and multiplies his words against God” (vs 5, 35-37).

Job 35:1: “And Elihu answered and said, ‘Do you think this to *be* right, you *that* say, “My righteousness *is* more than God’s”? For you say, “What advantage will it be to You? What profit shall I have, more than *if* I had sinned?” I will answer your words, and your companions with you. Look to the heavens...” (vs 1-5). Then he gave quite a long dissertation and finally, Job got his wish. Elihu quit speaking, and Job 38:1: “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind...”

Now let’s come to Job 40, because this is the most instructive that we need here, because this shows us that, even though in the letter of the law you do what is well, you are blessed of God, you receive the physical blessings—that you cannot earn salvation. That’s important before we get into the *Righteousness of Faith*. **No man, by any work, anywhere, can earn salvation.** This is what God teaches here in Job 40. Let’s read it. Let’s see what you have to be able to do in order for you to earn salvation for yourself. And this is the thing that has stumped theologians and people alike, because they cannot understand the difference between the *righteousness of the law* and the *righteousness of faith*; the requirement of the *letter of the law*, for the physical blessings *vs* the requirement of the *spirit of the law and the Holy Spirit* to have righteousness of faith. And too many religions mix the two. And too many of them end up with a lot of dos and don’ts and things that you have to do—like penance and ‘hail Marys’ and ‘our Fathers’ and kinds of good works—so that you can earn forgiveness; so that you can earn salvation. All of that is contrary to God—not in the Bible, by the way, anywhere.

Job 40:1: “And the LORD answered Job and said, ‘Shall he who contends with the Almighty instruct *Him*? He who reproves God, let him answer it.’.... [He’s saying to Job, *Come on, tell Me, answer it, Job.*] ...And Job answered the LORD and said, ‘Behold, I am vile! What shall I answer You? I will lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.’.... [then he shut his mouth] ...And the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind...” (vs 1-6).

Now notice God’s mercy. He didn’t exterminate Job. He could have destroyed him right on the spot, but He didn’t do it. “...answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, ‘Gird up your loins now like a man. I will demand you, and you declare unto Me. Will you even annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous?’” (vs 6-8).

Now this is the whole thing that every single religion does: when they come along and they say the commandments of God you don’t have to keep;

the judgments of God you don’t have to keep. And what they do with that, they cut themselves off further from God.

“Will you even annul My judgment?... [God is righteous in everything He does.] ...Will you condemn Me so that you may be righteous? And *have* you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?... [Here’s what you need to do in order to save yourself by your own works]: ...Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency...” (vs 8-10). Okay, Job, let’s see you turn on your glory.

- Can you shine and have glory as the sun, ‘like I am’? *No!*
- Can you? *No!*
- Can any man or woman? *No!*
- Can you save yourself? *No!*
- Can any work save you? *No!*

But you’re required to keep the letter of the law.

“Deck yourself now with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath; and behold everyone who is proud, and abase him. Look on everyone *who is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in darkness. Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you.” (vs 10-14)—or that is, your own righteousness can save you.

So Job repented. Then when Job repented he entered into the realm of the righteousness of faith; because he trusted God. I’ll let you study the rest of the Scriptures there. One we need to come to, Romans, the third chapter, and this is one Scripture which has thrown religious people, theologians, students down through the ages because they did not understand what it really means.

Romans 3:20: “Therefore, by works of law... [Let’s understand something from the Greek. There is no definite article in the Greek for *the law*. If there were the definite article, it would be ‘ho nomos.’ In this case it’s just ‘nomos’—meaning *works of law*. Not referring to the Ten Commandments necessarily, but any work of any law.] ...there shall no flesh be justified before Him... [WHY? *Because law does not serve to justify.*]: ...for through *the law is the knowledge of sin.*”

That’s what the law does. There was never ever any law created, which if you did it, you could earn eternal life. Not one single law! For example, let’s just use the example: You do something a thousand times—whatever it may be. Keep the Sabbath a thousand times in a row. That you always love your wife, ten years in a row without failing.

That you always submit to your husband and never speak one word against him, ten years in a row. At the end of ten years you've got it made. So, lo and behold, you perform that 998 times, and you die. Then you're resurrected and brought up before the throne of God; you expect to be given eternal life. You know the old story, there's St. Peter standing there and he's got your list and the account of good deeds and bad deeds. And he looks at it and says, 'Lord, this person did pretty good. Got 998. But you decreed it must be a thousand, so therefore, You're word is true, so therefore, you must go into the hell-fire of ever-burning hell. You cannot come into the Kingdom of God because you were short two.' Now that would be total mercilessness, wouldn't it? Just an example. ***You cannot earn it, bit must be given.***

So the key is: "...for through *the law is the* knowledge of sin.... [As we've seen, law cannot save.] : ...But now, *the righteousness of God...* [which we will cover here, the righteousness of faith] ...*that is* separate from law..." (vs 20-21). And this is another world which has just thrown people for a loop, because they say you don't need any law, all you need is Christ. But the word here 'without' does not mean *the absence of*. It means *separate from*. And there's a distinct difference between the *absence of* and *separate from*.

"But now, *the righteousness of God that is* separate from law has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even *the righteousness of God that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus" (vs 20-24).

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural references:

- 1) Genesis 3:11-13
- 2) Genesis 4:3-7
- 3) Genesis 6:5-9, 11-12
- 4) Leviticus 18:1-5
- 5) Deuteronomy 28:1-9, 11, 15-20
- 6) Ezekiel 20:11-13
- 7) Jeremiah 18:1-7
- 8) Genesis 15:13-16
- 9) Jeremiah 18:8
- 10) Jonah 3:4-10
- 11) Jeremiah 18:7-10
- 12) Deuteronomy 5:27-29
- 13) Job 34:5, 35-37
- 14) Job 35:1-5
- 15) Job 38:1
- 16) Job 40:1-14
- 17) Romans 3:20-24

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
- *Strong's Concordance*

Sermons:

- *The Righteousness of the Law*
- *The Righteousness of Faith.*

Righteousness Righteousness of Faith

Fred R. Coulter

Now, we will cover the *Righteousness of Faith*. So let's take the *Beliefs* booklet and let's follow along with the statement on *The Righteousness of Faith*. And the righteousness of faith is something you cannot earn. It is the gift of God. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs 17-18).

The righteousness of faith is the gift of righteousness which the believer receives through the abundance of the Father's grace. It is called "the righteousness of faith" because only through faith in Jesus Christ is it possible to partake of this righteousness. When a believer is justified by faith in Jesus Christ and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit as a begettal from God the Father, then the Father imputes to the believer the very righteousness of Jesus Christ, that "grace might reign through righteousness into eternal life, through Jesus Christ." This imputed righteousness is the gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by doing works of law. The righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to the believer by God the Father, far exceeds the righteousness required by the letter of the law. In His perfect righteousness, Jesus Christ not only observed the letter of the law but fulfilled every one of His Father's commandments in the full spirit of the law. His spiritual obedience was so perfect, pure and wholehearted that He always did those things which pleased God the Father. This perfect righteousness was accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit, which He received without measure from the Father.

By His personal example and His teachings, Jesus magnified the laws and commandments of God and revealed the fullness of their intent and meaning. He showed that the spirit of the law does not nullify the letter of the law but requires a fuller, spiritual obedience. This spiritual obedience is beyond the capability of the natural mind and human will and can only be accomplished through Jesus Christ. The Scriptures reveal that when the believer is begotten with the Holy Spirit of God the Father, he or she begins to receive the very mind of Christ. With Christ's mind, the

believer is strengthened to live by every word of God in the full spirit of the law, not just in the letter. With "Christ in you, the hope of glory," the believer begins to have the laws and commandments of God written upon his or her mind. Thus the laws and commandments of God are established with their full, true spiritual meaning through grace and the gift of the righteousness of faith. This gift of spiritual righteousness which God grants to the believer gives him or her the power to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit unto eternal life. Through the righteousness of faith, the believer is truly fulfilling the Scripture, "The just shall live by faith."

Now let's look at some Scriptures here to understand this even more fully. Romans, the fifth chapter. This is where we find the righteousness of faith. Romans 5:17: "For if by the offense of one man... [Adam's offense] ...death reigned by the one... [And it has. All die. As in Adam, we all die.] ...how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness... [That is imputed. That is given, because you believe.] ...reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ. So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto all men, in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto all men. For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, so that transgression might abound; but where sin abounded, the grace *of God* did super-abound; so that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace *of God* reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (vs 17-21). So this is something that has to be given to you.

Now, let's look at the example of Abraham in Romans 4, because this is where he talks about Abraham and what he did, and so forth. Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God.... [Because as we saw in the book of Job, there is no way that all the good works of man can do to earn salvation.] ...For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness'" (vs 1-3). Now, what does it mean *to believe*? That's the important thing. Believing is profound!

Let's come to John, the sixth chapter—and this is quite an instructive lesson here, because before anything can be done, the human mind must first believe. Everything that you do is based upon some kind of belief. Let's take the simple act of mailing a letter. You put a stamp on it and you drop it in the mailbox. You put it there because you believe that it is going to arrive to the addressee that you have on the front. And nearly 99.9-percent of time, it does. Once in a while it doesn't. They have a new machine that every once in a while malfunctions and it gobbles up the letters and then they put it in a plastic envelope and they mail it back to you, showing 'we made a mistake.' But there again, your belief is still rewarded because they send it back so you can redo it.

So everything you do is based upon some kind of belief. You turn the heat on when you're cold because your body says, 'I need to be warm,' and you move the thermostat because you believe—meaning also, you know—that the heat will come on. You get in your car and you pick up a map and you're going to drive somewhere and you follow the map because you believe that the map is correct and is going to lead you where you need to go.

So it's the same way with what we do. You *must believe* Christ and everything about Him. Not just believe He was a good man. Not just believe that He existed. Not just believe that He's the Son of God. But believe about everything that He was and stood for and preached and said. That's what you must believe.

Now here in John, the sixth chapter, it's quite an interesting account. Jesus fed the five thousand with the fishes and the loaves. And all of those who saw it, they said, 'Man, this is it! Free food!' John 6:13: "Then they gathered *them* together, filling twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten." Now just think of the money that you could make on this. I mean, just put this on Wall Street, to where you had ever-growing bread, to feed an ever-growing number of people and you ended up with more crumbs than what you started out with. And if we could just get our hands on this so we could make money. Man, we could sell stock to no end. All physical!

Verse 14: "Now when the men saw the miracle that Jesus had done, they said, 'Of a truth, this is the Prophet Who was to come into the world.' Because Jesus perceived that they were about to come and seize Him, so that they might make Him king... [kind of like a political convention. 'We're going to nominate this man for president; we're going to draft him. Everybody agree. Yea, unanimous vote. Let's get him!'] ...He withdrew

again to a mountain by Himself alone" (vs 14-15). Then He went across on the other side of the lake. They went looking for Him and couldn't find Him. They got in their boats and went on the other side of the lake. They said, 'Master, how'd you get here?'

Verse 26: "Jesus answered them and said, 'Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied.... [And how many people have that kind of religion that it's for their own personal gain.] ...Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, but *for* the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.' Therefore, they said to Him, 'What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?' [In other words, they want to do a work of law. 'Tell us, Lord, give us the word.' That's what a lot of people want to know—right?] ...Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent'" (vs 26-29).

So it's not an exterior work that you can do, but it's an interior belief—from within—that begins the whole process of the righteousness by faith. *You must believe!* That is your part. Then repent and be baptized, as we have seen, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then God imputes to you the righteousness of faith.

Now, come back to Romans 4:3: "For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.... [the righteousness of faith] ...Now to the one who works, the reward is not reckoned according to grace; rather, *it is reckoned* as a debt.... [You work for a man, agree for so much an hour. At the end of the period of time, pay-period, he owes you money—right? He is indebted to you and he has a debt to you to pay—correct? *Yes!* That's what it's talking about.] ...But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (vs 3-5). That's why belief is so important; because if you truly believe in Jesus Christ and everything that He stand for, and everything that He said, and your whole life is based upon that—*then you're starting to live the righteousness of faith.*

Verse 6: "Even as David also declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness separate from works.... [Now, we're going to see that good works will flow from this righteousness—we'll see what that is.] ...'Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed *is the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin.'" (vs 6-7). Now, let's understand something profound: There is a great struggle that takes place in the converted mind

in overcoming sin; because the converted mind desires not to sin, and the Holy Spirit reveals sin in the mind and in action of the believer so that they may repent. And as long as you yield to the Spirit of God and repent, then God does not impute sin to you. Now that is hard for some people to grasp, because they say, 'Let's go sin the more then, so 'grace may abound' so we will not have sin imputed to us. And that's not the purpose of it. The righteousness of faith is not to do that! Then he shows that this comes upon those who are blessed with Christ, and those who are circumcised or uncircumcised.

Now, let's add a few things to this so we can see how this comes. Let's come to Galatians, the second chapter; because something has to happen to the inner ego—the self. And that is totally opposite of what is in the world today. And the world today, the greatest thing that they have is self-esteem. And self-esteem is *love yourself first*. Do everything you can to improve yourself and make yourself better. But that's starting with the wrong end. The Bible says you're to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your being'; because you believe. Then 'your neighbor as yourself'; because what happens when you have this self-love and this self-ego? *You love yourself, you are good to yourself*, but you end up hating and despising other people. Sooner or later it comes around to that. And that's why with this kind of teaching in the schools, we have the reaction of young people that we have today. It's all a part of that.

Now, let's come to Galatians 2:19: Paul says, "For I, through law... [law defines sin] ...died to law... [that means 'the wages of sin is death' and he died in baptism.] ..in order that I might live unto God.... [How is he going to 'live unto God'? *We'll see.*] ...I have been crucified with Christ... [the old self—ego—is crucified with Christ] ...yet, I live.... [same way with us, we're still living in the flesh] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me.... [In other words, Christ has to be in you; the Spirit of God has to be in you; the Spirit of God has to lead you; and ego—self, I—must not be the motivating factor, even though you're still living in the flesh.] ...Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith... [which is through the belief] ...that *very faith* of the Son of God..." (vs 19-20).

Now then, this is very interesting, because in the Greek it means that *you live by Christ's own faith in you*. So, it's not just your faith alone. Your faith alone may be weak. Like the father who brought the demon-possessed son to the disciples and they couldn't cast them out. And when Christ came, He asked the father, 'Do you believe.' He

says, 'Yes, I believe, but help my unbelief.' So it has to be Christ's faith in you. Belief, just carnally, is not enough to do it. Being convinced of it is not enough to do it. It has to be the faith of Christ in you.

“...Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain” (vs 20-21). That means if the righteousness of faith came by law then Christ died in vain.

Now, let's see how we are to live with the law. Let's go back to Matthew 4:4, to show how we are to live in loving God with all our heart, and mind, and soul and being. And this is not a religion. This then is a relationship. Matthew 4:3: "And when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But He answered *and* said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God"'” (vs 3-4). That is how we are to live. And you can't live that just by the righteousness of the law. You must live that by the righteousness of faith because Christ gives you the strength and power to do that—and imputes to you the righteousness.

Now, let's come here to Matthew 5:17: "Do not think... [that means, *don't let it enter into your mind.*] ...that I am come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." And most religionists and ministers when they say that, means that 'fulfill' means *to do away with*. But fulfill means to bring to its full. It's like this: You have a glass of water that is half full and you're going to fill it to the full. So that's exactly what Christ did. He came to fulfill and accomplish everything pertaining to Him—but to fill the law full with spiritual meaning and understanding on how it should be kept and observed. We'll see that in just minute.

"For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled" (v 18). Now, let's ask a question: Is heaven and earth still here? *Yes!* Has everything been fulfilled? *No!* Is everyone fulfilling the commandments of God? *No!*

Now then, v 19—pay special attention to this: "Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (vs 19-20). Now, the righteousness of the

scribes and Pharisees was very punctilious, according to the letter of the law. Not only God's law, but all of their laws, which they added to it—hundreds and hundreds and thousands of their laws.

Now what you need to do: You need to find a source, and you can get it from the Hebrew Publishing in New York City—they're probably online, you can look it up on the net if you desire—and order the book: *The Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin. This will give you an understanding of law-keeping in the letter. This will also show you why those laws can never save. So Christ, in saying here that “your righteousness has to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” So it's going to take the **righteousness of faith** to do that.

Now then, He begins to explain about the **righteousness of faith** and the keeping of the commandments according to the spirit of the **righteousness of faith**. Let's pick it up here in v 27. He expounds, He fulfills, He fills full this law. “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (vs 27-28). So now the **righteousness of faith** has to do with the changing of your heart and mind—not just the outward exterior point of it.

Now the righteousness of the law gets to the heart and core of where sin comes from. Let's continue on and pick it up here in v 31: “It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’ But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause of sexual immorality... [which is, in the Greek: ‘porneia’ or *sexual immorality*.] ...causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery” (vs 31-32).

So in the world today, what do we have? In the letter of the law we have all kinds of law why people can divorce—for almost any reason they choose. And even if they have no reason to choose, they have no fault—no fault, default divorce. And all that is according to the letter of the law of the land; they think they're doing right. But according to the letter of the law of God, they are sinning. But according to the spirit of the law, they are making absolutely no effort whatsoever to make the marriage work! All marriages are going to have troubles and difficulties, and ups and downs; and when they do, you have to stick to it and ask God to help you repair it. That's the only way it can be.

Now, let's look at another one here—v 33:

“Again, you have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not forswear yourself, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is *the city of the great King*. Neither shall you swear by your head, because you do not have the power to make one hair white or black. But let your word be *good*, your ‘Yes’ be yes and your ‘No’ be no; for anything that *is* added to these is from the evil one” (vs 33-37). In other words, He wants us, through the **righteousness of faith** and the Holy Spirit of God, to where that our ‘yes’ is true; our ‘no’ is true; and that we are not playing politics with language (as you know one President is very famous of doing that, depending on what ‘is’ is). That is not very righteous at all.

Moreover, let's come over here and see what else we must do. And this is more difficult. Verse 43: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.... [and did not Christ do that during His ministry? *Absolutely!* That is hard to do. That is so contrary to human nature. But Christ did, didn't He? Did not Christ die for us while we were still enemies? *Yes! And yea, us, before we were conceived!*] ...so that you yourselves may be *the children of your Father Who is in heaven*; for He causes His sun to rise on *the evil and on the good*, and sends rain on *the just and on the unjust*. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?” (vs 43-46). *Yes!* If you belong to a club and you love everyone in your club, and everyone that is not in your club or your gang you hate. That's the whole basis of gangs in the cities today—right? *Yea!* And you shoot them down.

“And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is extraordinary*? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is in heaven is perfect*” (vs 47-48). Now, how can that be done? That is answered by the **righteousness of faith**. Now, take this verse, “...be perfect, even as your Father in heaven above is perfect” and compare this with v 20: “For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.” v 48: “...be perfect, even as your Father Who *is in heaven is perfect*.” Now, how can you do that if you're a human being with the ‘law of sin and death’ in you and ‘all have sinned and come short of the glory of

God'? You can do that because God imputes the righteousness of Christ to you, if you believe and repent and are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God, and are led of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let's see how all of this works together. Let's see what happens here. Let's go to Colossians, the first chapter. First of all, it has to be Christ in you by the power of the Holy Spirit. Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light.... [In other words, God is the one Who qualifies us. He made it possible for us.] ...Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness... [which He has, if you believe and repent and are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God] ... and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins" (vs 12-14). And that's the first step of the **righteousness of faith**—the forgiveness of sin.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. By Him were all things created... [So now you're in a relationship with your Creator.] ...the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead... [that's what it means *firstborn of all creation, from the dead.*] ...so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven. For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled *you* in the body of His flesh through death, to present you Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him; if indeed you continue in the faith... [believing] ...grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which you have heard..." (vs 15-23).

Now then, that's all necessary so that you can understand v 27: "To whom God did will to make known... [by this process] ...what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Christ in you! How does Christ come in you, and what does it do to you? Well, Christ *in you* is by the Holy Spirit.

Let's go to Romans 8:9—Now, if you've repented, been baptized, received the Holy Spirit of God: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit... [as God views you. That's something very

important to understand.] ...if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you.... [Must be in you, Christ in you.] ...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.... [So there is an absolute demarcation, which is profound. You either have the Holy Spirit of God in you, or you don't. And if it is in you, then you have the **righteousness of faith** imputed to you.]; ...But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness" (vs 9-10)—the imputed righteousness of faith]

"Now if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God" (vs 11-14). So you have to be led by the Spirit of God.

Now, what will the Spirit of God lead you to do? With the **righteousness of faith**? Let's go to Hebrews, the tenth chapter. God will do something for you that is most profound. And this does not come by the righteousness of law. This comes by the **righteousness of faith**. And the **righteousness of faith** is by the covenant of belief.

Hebrews 10:16: "'And this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days,' says the Lord. 'I will put My laws into their hearts and in their minds I will write them.'" And they know that the human mind is capable of having things registered in it, much like it's being inscribed or encrypted on the mind. So God will put His laws into your heart and mind. You have to study them. You have to know them. You have to seek God and all of these things; but that's how the **righteousness of faith** will come. Then it will, last of all, give you the mind of Christ.

Let's go to Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus.... [That means the mind, the attitude, the thoughts, the laws, all of that, spiritually.] ...Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (vs 5-8).

Now here's what this is to motivate us to do, v 12: "So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed... [So with the **righteousness of faith**

there is obedience, as we saw—*in the spirit.*] ... not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God Who works in you... [Now God is working IN you by the *righteousness of faith*, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, by His Word and His truth and His laws and His commandments.] ...both to will... [that means *giving you the desire to*] ...and to do according to *His* good pleasure” (vs 12-13).

And so, that’s the whole operation of the *righteousness of faith*; and that is the difference between the righteousness of the law and righteousness of faith. Now there’s more that can be covered, so if you want those, you can write in for the sermon series on *The Two Righteousnesses*.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural references:

- 1) Romans 5:17-21
- 2) Romans 4:1-3
- 3) John 6:13-15, 26-29
- 4) Romans 4:3-8
- 5) Galatians 2:19-21
- 6) Matthew 4:3-4
- 7) Matthew 5:17-20, 27-28, 31-37. 43-48, 20, 48
- 8) Colossians 1:12-23, 27
- 9) Romans 8:9-14
- 10) Hebrews 10:16
- 11) Philippians 2:5-8, 12-13

Also referenced:

- Books: *The Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman E. Goldin
- Sermon Series: *The Two Righteousnesses*.

Sanctification

Fred R. Coulter

This is the series of the Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God. And let me just state here that what we have tried to do in all of these is not state a belief that ‘we believe’ as people, because we originate the thought in our minds. The reason being is that it’s of no consequence whatsoever what a person believes if they do not agree with the Word of God. So these are really the doctrines and beliefs, which you would find in the Holy Scriptures, which no church has a corner on. In other words, God is the one Who has all Truth. God is the one Who gives us the truth of His Scriptures, so therefore, if we put the Scriptures together and understand them in the sense that God wants us to understand them—which is the literal sense—what we will find, we’ll find that there can be unity and agreement on doctrinal beliefs because if you believe God and you believe the Bible, and put it together properly, then you will believe what is correct and what God wants you to believe.

Now, we’ve come so far. We just finished up the last one on the two righteousnesses—the *Righteousness of the Law* and the *Righteousness of Faith*. Now, let’s come to the next section here on sanctification. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 18)

Sanctification is the act of setting apart someone or something for a holy purpose and use. Christians are in a continuing state of sanctification after repentance, baptism by immersion, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father. In the Scriptures, Christians are referred to as saints, meaning those who have been made Holy by the sanctification of God the Father..

And that is because they have received the Holy Spirit.

Now let’s look at several Scriptures here. This one here is pretty much self-explanatory, so we’re not going to spend a lot of time going through a lot of in-depth Scriptural study on this. Let’s come to 1-Corinthians, the first chapter.

1-Corinthians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ... [or a *called apostle*. Now it says, ‘to be’ in the *King James*, but you’ll notice the ‘to be’—those two words—are printed in italic print. And always remember that *italic print* was added by the translators in hopes of clarifying something. But in some cases, it does not clarify it, but it gives a different sense to it if it’s not the correct insertion of words. Paul was not called *to be* an apostle, in the

sense that when he wrote this, he was a *called apostle*—already an apostle of Jesus Christ.] ...called by *the* will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, to the Church of God that is in Corinth, *the* called saints who have been sanctified... [Now notice, *sanctified, set apart*] ...in Christ... [That’s how you’re set apart and sanctified or made Holy.] ...in Christ Jesus, together with all those in every place who are calling on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours” (vs 1-2).

That reflects a little bit of Catholic thinking, because ‘saints’ in the Catholic Church are those ‘good people’ who have done ‘good works’ and they have proved that they are worthy to go to heaven and make intercession for people on earth. But if you take out the two words ‘to be’—because ‘to be’ means a future sense—doesn’t it? You are ‘to be,’ according to the Catholics, in heaven and you are ‘to be’ a saint if you are beatified by the pope, to make intercession for people on earth. But this does not have that meaning in the original at all. The Greek means: *called saints*—currently, today. Anyone who has the Spirit of God *is a saint of God*. Why? *Because they have been sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God*, and ‘saint’ just refers back to one who has been sanctified.

So it has nothing to do with any of the religious connotations of Catholicism or Orthodoxy, where then, people go to heaven and become saints after they have been proclaimed so by the Pope. *Anyone who has the Holy Spirit now has been sanctified and is a saint!*

Now let’s come to the next Scripture reference here: Ephesians 5:25. This shows a continuing state of being sanctified; or in a continuous state of sanctification. “Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it*... [So also, sanctifying is part of the action that God does in cleansing] ...with the washing of water by *the* Word” (vs 25-26). That means the inner-action of God’s Holy Spirit. As you read and study the Word of God and come to understanding it, that that will, with the Word of God in you, increase your sanctification to God. But also, it will be used by you to cleanse you. It is the Word which Christ has spoken which cleanses you (John 15). He said to His apostles on the Passover night: ‘You are clean through the Word which I have spoken to you.’

So God’s Word is to constantly cleanse us; it is to constantly sanctify us; and that’s the operation

that God has chosen. For the purpose, v 27: “that He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame.” And that is the end result of sanctification, to be Holy and without blemish.

Let’s come to 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter, please. Let’s see the difference here. This is quite interesting if we look at the difference here; because we know this is coming very shortly. We know that this is coming, that the Beast will be here on earth. That he is going to come with all signs and lying wonders. 2-Thessalonians 2:8: “And then the lawless one... [wicked one] ...will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming); *even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved” (vs 8-10).

Now here’s a very important lesson for us to realize and understand: As we mentioned in the section concerning the love of God, you have to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being—and if you love God that way, ***then you will love the Truth***. If you don’t love the Truth, then you are going to be deceived. It’s that simple. Those that do not love the Truth—how do you know whether you love the Truth or not? The Truth being the Word of God? The way that you know that you love the Truth is that you agree and accept and believe and live by every Word of God. If you argue with God and say, ‘God, I like this and I don’t like that. God, I really think that You were really too hard with this law, I really think that no criminal should ever be put to death’—then you’re disagreeing with God. Whenever you disagree with God, then you are taking a step away from loving the Truth. If you don’t love the Truth, you won’t understand the Truth. And if you don’t understand the Truth, then you are obviously not God’s; you’re obviously not sanctified. So I’m showing the difference here between those who are sanctified and those who are not.

Verse 11: “And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie.” So if you don’t love the Truth, then God will send you a delusion, which then you will think is a great new revelation; but it’s really a lie. So living in these end-times, as we see these things, we need to understand; we need to realize that the Word of God is a sharp sword that cuts and divides asunder. So if you don’t love the Truth then you’ll be given over to believe a lie. And you might ask yourself, just often ask yourself this: How many

lies have I believed in my lifetime? Starting with Santa Claus; and the Easter Bunny; and the wrong histories that you have read; the doctrines of the church that you have gone to—many of them are just out and out lies. You believe them. How many lies do you believe in your life? Well then, that means you don’t love the Truth and you’re not letting the Word of God cleanse you. That’s why sanctification has to be a continuous process—***to cleanse you of those things; to cleanse you of your hidden faults and mistakes***.

“So that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness” (v 12). And anything that is not the Truth of God is unrighteousness—in God’s view—regardless of how righteous and Holy it may appear in man’s view.

Verse 13—now here’s the difference: “Now we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation through sanctification of *the* Spirit and belief of *the* Truth.” So it’s impossible to be sanctified in God the Father and Jesus Christ if you do not believe and love the Truth. So you need to ask yourself that question. You need to examine what people traditionally call ‘your religious beliefs.’ Do they conform with the Word of God? And if they don’t conform with the Word of God, ***all the Word of God***, then you are believing that much unrighteousness. Because, you see, it is not just the exterior of a person being good and sincere. That’s how Satan deceives everyone, by saying, ‘Well, he’s a good and sincere person.’ That doesn’t mean they love the Truth. There are many good and sincere people in the world, but they’re not called to salvation. They are not sanctified.

Now, notice: “...through sanctification of *the* Spirit and belief of *the* Truth unto which He called you by our Gospel to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 13-14). So that shows how the operation of sanctification works.

Now, let’s come to Ephesians, the first chapter And we will see here again, the operation of being a saint and sanctified and what that means. Let’s also understand something here very, very important: ***Only God can make something Holy***. Why? ***Because only God is Holy!*** A man cannot make something Holy. No man can make anything Holy. The pope can’t. A minister can’t. No one can! ***Only God!*** And if God does not make it Holy, then it’s not Holy. It doesn’t matter what men think.

Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ... [now this could read *heavenly things*].

The literal of the Greek is: *has blessed us in the heavenlies*—meaning gifts or things.] ...according as He has personally chosen us for Himself before the foundation of the world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love” (vs 3-4). So sanctification means *to be made Holy*. And the ultimate of the sanctification is, *is to be make Holy with a glorious immortal life and body living forever, like Jesus Christ*.

Now let's come to John, the seventeenth chapter, and we will see how Jesus described this. John 17 is a wonderful summary of the whole plan of God, if you want to look at it that way, because Jesus talks about all of the major elements of the plan of God in this prayer—which was really the final prayer that Jesus gave before He was arrested. And also, if you want to find out which one is the Lord's prayer, then you read all of John 17, because that is the Lord's prayer. What is called the Lord's Prayer, from Matthew, the sixth chapter, is not the Lord's prayer, but a prayer outline on how we should pray.

John 17:15: “I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [and yet, there's some people that think God is going to take us away in UFOs (unidentified flying objects) and take us on up to Mars as a place of safety. Well, that's out of the world. God is not going to do that.] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one.... [keep you from Satan the devil.] ...They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world... [that is, make them Holy] ...Sanctify them in Your Truth.... [Now notice how all this ties in: *Truth, sanctification, Holiness*.] ...Your Word is the Truth” (vs 16-17). And in the Greek it is: *Your Word is THE Truth*. Because today we have a lot of people going around and saying, ‘Well, what's true to you may not necessarily be true to me. So you have *your* truth and I have *my* truth. And you live by *your* truth and you're okay. And I'll live by *my* truth and I'm okay.’ Well, *that's not what Jesus taught*.

Let's go to John 14—this is a very basic Scripture to remember. There is no such thing, in God's eyes, as more than one Truth. When it come to the words of eternal life, they come from Jesus Christ only. And when it comes to salvation, it comes only from God the Father, through Jesus Christ. ***There is no other way! There is no other truth!*** You can be sanctified in no other way, but by God's Spirit and His Truth.

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, **‘I am the way, and the Truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me!’**” That's very important to understand, with all the ecumenical movement, the united religion movement that's coming in today. In order to do that, they must reject

Christ the way that the Bible teaches Him. And if you except a Christ outside of what the Bible teaches, you have accepted a false Christ and you are on the broad road, which leads to destruction—because

- there is only one way, *that is Christ*
- there is only one Truth, *and that is the Word of God*
- there is only one eternal life, *and that is which God gives*

And that no one, NO ONE—regardless of how good intentioned you may be or sincere you may be—can come to the Father unless you go through Christ. And that is not the traditional message you will hear in various churches, because they are *using* the Bible; they are not teaching the Bible. They are trying to sanctify themselves with their own means, and not with the means and truth of God.

Now, let's come back here to John 17:17 and finish the section that we've been reading. “Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself... [Now how can He sanctify Himself? *He sanctified Himself* by going through the crucifixion and then the resurrection and then receiving the glory that He had with the Father before He came as a human being.] ...so that they also may be sanctified in *Your Truth*” (vs 17-19). He says it twice.

Please understand and remember this: Whenever God says something *once*, He means it and that's quite sufficient. If He says it twice, it becomes most important. If, like in the cases (as we have studied on the weekly Sabbath and Holy Days) if He repeats it over and over and over and over again, then it is a central, main thing, which is absolutely important and essential for salvation. ***So we're sanctified through the Truth.***

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 1:1-2
- 2) Ephesians 5:25-27
- 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:8-14
- 4) Ephesians 1:3-4
- 5) John 17:15-17
- 6) John 14:6
- 7) John 17:17-19

Scripture referenced, not quoted: John 15

Baptism of the Spirit

Fred R. Coulter

Now let's continue on to the next section here: *The Baptism of the Spirit*. Now there are many people who believe that baptism of the Spirit is what is called 'a Pentecostal experience.' Where then, if you are baptized by the Spirit, you are baptized by fire! And we'll cover that later when we come to the 'unpardonable sin.' Please understand this: The baptism of the spirit has nothing whatsoever to do with any Pentecostal church or movement or speaking in tongues. (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pgs 18-19).

The baptism of the Spirit is the act of receiving the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father. This spiritual begetting is granted to each believer through the laying on of hands after baptism by full immersion in water. Upon receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, the believer becomes a begotten child of God the Father. The baptism of the Holy Spirit places the believer into the spiritual church of God, the body of Jesus Christ, of which all begotten children of God are members.

So this is clearly saying, and as the Scriptures show, if you do not have the Spirit of Christ 'you are none of His.' Let's go to Romans 8:9, let's see that first, because there are a lot of people who have spirits, and in some cases, even demonic spirits—and those are spirits of the devil. Yet, they profess to be Christ's, and they are not. That kind of demonism, that kind of baptism of the spirit, is not from God—but from Satan the devil.

Here it defines it very clearly, Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you.... [Now if you haven't gone through the section concerning the Spirit of God—that it is not a person, but it is the power of God—then you go back and go through that; we have that available on another tape. And if you want a real, in-depth study on the Holy Spirit, what you can do is see the instructions on how to receive that. You can write into us, or you can send an e-mail to us and we will send it to you.] ...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

Now, that is a profound Scripture, which also ties in with what we just covered on sanctification. If you don't have the Holy Spirit of God, you're not sanctified of God—it's that simple. So you need to ask yourself the question, and you need to check out the Word of God, and you need to understand that perhaps maybe you need to repent of all the things that you thought in your own religious

life were true and beneficial, but are not when you really begin comparing it with the Word of God.

Now, just to make the point clear let's go back to Matthew, the seventh chapter, because there are many, many people—many religious people—many who have done many things in the name of Christ, who think they belong to Christ, who think they are doing a work of God. But they're going to get a surprise at the resurrection. This is after talking about false prophets:

Matthew 7:13—so we get the full picture coming up to it. And you need to ask yourself the question: Am I entering in at the broad gate or the narrow gate? Am I trying to follow Christ, or am I trying to follow that which is pleasing and soft? "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; for narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it" (vs 13-14).

So it's not the majority of people, and you need to understand that. If you believe the way the majority of the people of the world believe—I'm not talking about in an atheistic sense; I'm talking about in a religious sense, where you believe that you are Christ's; because you may not be where you think you're going to be, or you're not going where you think you may really end up.

Verse 15: "But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves.... [Now they can speak the Word of God; they can mouth the Word of God; they can appear very righteous—but how do you know whether they're from God or not? John 3:34 says that whom God sends 'speaks the words of God.' So you compare it by the words of God—ALL the words of God.] ...for within *they* are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they?.... [So it is the tree that has to be good, not what the fruit may appear to you on the outside.] ...In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit.... [WHY? Because it's planted in the good ground and Christ is the one Who's behind it. So it's from the inside, from the roots.] ...nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire.... [the Lake of Fire] ...Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits" (vs 17-20). Then He explains it here very clearly.

- you need to examine your life
- you need to examine your church
- you need to examine those who teach you
- prove, by the Word of God, by everything that you do—just like the Bereans did
- check the Scriptures whether it is so

Because notice: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing... [King James says ‘doeth’ and that means *practicing*] ...the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven.... [So you have to begin to understand the will of God, the purpose of God, what God is doing; and you have to practice His will, not your will. What is the model prayer in Matt. 6 say? It says ‘Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’ And ‘on earth’ means *in your life on the earth*. It doesn’t mean on the whole earth at the present time, because that won’t happen until Jesus returns.] ...Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?....’” (vs 21-22).

So you can watch a religious channel and see how many are preaching in the name of Jesus Christ—

- Did He send them?
- Do they keep the laws and commandments of God?
- Do they obey the Truth of God?
- Do they have the Spirit of God?

Just prophesying or speaking in His name is not going to mean that you’re a Christian.

“...‘And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?.... [Now, that’s quite a notable thing— isn’t it—to cast out a demon; commonly called *exorcism* in the world today. And people will view someone who does that as ‘Oh boy, they’ve got to be from God.’] ...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?.... [Haven’t we built colleges and cathedrals and sent missionaries around the world? Have we not done all of these things?] (Notice Jesus answer): And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’” (vs 22-23). Rather than practice the Truth.

So if you do not have the Spirit of God dwelling in you—let’s come back to Romans 8:9—it does not matter all of the exterior trappings that look sanctified or Holy; all the religious-sounding words that a person can preach; all of the blessings which a person may give—being a religious leader, etc.— **they are not from God!** Romans 8:9: “...he does not

belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin.... [Because you repented, you’ve been baptized, and now you’re ready for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.] ...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness” (vs 9-10).

Now let’s come to Matthew, the third chapter, and we will see where John the Baptist talked about the baptism. Here we have the baptism of water, which we have already covered. He shows the coming baptism of the Holy Spirit—which occurred on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)—and then he also talks about the baptism of fire. So we’ll briefly touch on that.

Now notice, Matthew 3:7—very important for us to realize. I want you to understand some of the backdrop, which is in the Gospels here, to show how John the Baptist was operating. “But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism...” Now the Pharisees and Sadducees were the religious leaders of Jesus’ day. They were also the hypocrites (Matt. 23); they were also following their father, the devil (John 8); so when they came to the baptism of John, John was not there welcoming them in an ecumenical movement saying, ‘Oh, I’m so glad to see all of you wonderful people here.’ Oh, just think, all the religious people have come so that they can become better.

“He said to them, ‘*You* brood of vipers, who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance.... [This means *answerable to an amendment of life*; or that is *answerable to repentance*. And that’s what we all need to do—repent!] ...and do not think to say within yourselves, ‘We have Abraham *for our father*’....’” (vs 7-9). So he’s saying here: ‘Look, because Abraham was righteous, we have it guaranteed.’ Don’t say to yourself, ‘Because my mother or father was a good this or that religious person—which ever denomination that they went to—therefore, I’m going to be just fine.’ Or don’t say to yourself, ‘Because I’ve been baptized in this church or that church or the other church that everything’s going to be fine.’ NO!

“...for I tell you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (v 9). So what is he saying here? Unless there’s a change of heart and repentance, unless you’re willing to obey God and love Him and keep His commandments, then all of your religious trappings—even though you may be the world’s leading religious person on earth—**mean nothing!**

Verse 10: “‘But already the axe is striking at the roots of the trees...’”—which we covered already—didn’t we? *The corrupt trees!* And you need to understand that that is a reference to

Jerusalem. And Jerusalem and the religion of that time, from Jesus' day until the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the sending of the Jews into captivity, has got to be the prime, most important education for all of those who want to believe in God. That unless you believe in God's Truth and have the Spirit of God in you, everything else will be destroyed! And the world today needs to think of that in relationship to the coming tribulation, which is not too many years down the road—in which nearly everything in the world will be destroyed, not just the city of Jerusalem and the temple. So IF—here's another lesson—where God puts His name, where the temple is in Jerusalem, which He chose, IF there is not righteousness, God will destroy it. And that's exactly what John is talking about here.

“...striking at the roots of the trees; therefore, every tree that is not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into *the* fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the one Who *is* coming after me is mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to carry His sandals; He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire” (vs 10-11). Now, being baptized of the Holy Spirit means *to receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit* from God the Father. And, as we will see, with the laying on of. Baptized with fire is this: That means *to be cast into the Lake of Fire*. Because baptism means *to be fully immersed into*. So if you are cast into the Lake of Fire, the baptism of fire is like being thrown into the Kilo Wah volcano in Hawaii. You will be burned up! So you don't want the baptism of fire.

Now notice: “Whose winnowing shovel *is* in His hand... [because Christ is the One Who's doing the judging and that's what that refers to] ...and He will thoroughly purge His floor... [that is the earth] ...and will gather His wheat into the granary... [that is all of those who are of Christ] ...but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire” (v 12). And that means once it starts, no one's going to put it out. It's going to consume all. But the baptism of the Spirit is what you want.

Now let's come to 1-Peter, the first chapter, and let's see that is a begetting. Right now we are given the earnest of the Spirit. When we are resurrected, we will be fully immersed into the Spirit, as it were—because we will receive a body that is glorified; a mind that is glorified. Let's see how Peter wrote it:

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit... [Now notice how these tie right in together with the section that we just previously

covered on sanctification.] ...unto obedience... [not disobedience] ...and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has **begotten us again** unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead” (vs 1-3).

Now notice, it says, ‘begotten again.’ You were begotten once in the womb of your mother, and born into this world and have grown into an adult. Now then, you are ‘begotten again’ by the Holy Spirit of the Father. So to be baptized by the Holy Spirit means:

1. To receive the Holy Spirit from God right now as an earnest.
2. Just as you came out of the watery grave, to walk in newness of life, so **at the resurrection** you will be fully immersed—that is baptized of the Spirit; and you will be a spirit being as well as having the Spirit of God within you as an immortal and glorified son or daughter of God.

Now, let's come to 1-John 3:1, concerning the ultimate goal of being the sons or daughters of God, because then that comes right down into the understanding of the rest of 1-John 3. The *King James Version* of the Bible, when we get down into the areas where it says, ‘and he who is born again cannot sin.’ And there are many people who claim they are *born again* when they receive the Holy Spirit. But that is not true. When you are born again is when you are literally born again from the dead at the resurrection—or changed from flesh to spirit when Christ returns. If you want something on *What Do You Mean, ‘Born Again’?*; go ahead and write for it, because we'll go through that in a very detailed study and show you what it actually means. But **no one now is ‘born again.’** They **have been begotten** again, as we saw in 1-Peter, the first chapter—that you ‘have been begotten again unto a lively hope’—which means this: that your first begetting was when you were begotten as a human being. And then you were born of your mother, and that's what it means *to be born of the flesh or the water*. Because when anyone is born, you are born of the water. Now to be ‘born of the spirit’ means *to be born as a spirit being*; not just to receive the Holy Spirit. To receive the Holy Spirit is a begetting—it is not a birth. And that's something that really needs to be understood. So if you're going to read through the *King James Version* there, and see ‘he who has been born again cannot sin’—that is not the correct translation.

First of all, we are going start out in v 1 and we're going to see the goal of every Christian, and what every Christian should have as the goal for

their being a Christian; because God has called them.

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him.” Now, you need to stop and think here for a minute. If there are hundreds of millions of Christians who say they know Christ, then that is contrary to the Word of God. Jesus said that *‘broad* is the way that leads to destruction and *many* go therein there at. But straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and *few* be that find it.’ That’s why God has to call you. So if you’re in some sort of professing-Christian church, and especially if you are keeping Sunday, you better start re-thinking all of your priorities. You’d better start getting back into the Word of God and to know and understand what it really is.

Now, I’ve written a book called *The Seven General Epistles*—which covers James, 1-2 Peter, 1-2-3 John and Jude. And it’s a very in-depth study. So you can write in for that and we will send it to you. And then when you get it, you write back and we can begin sending you the sermons that we did—series-by-series—because we do things differently than any other church. We actually study the Bible. We actually go through it verse-by-verse, so that we can understand it. And in this book, I have my translation [*Faithful Version*] and the *King James* translation, side-by-side; and we also put in there the *Interlinear* by George Ricker Berry, so you can take a look at all three and do the comparing.

So ‘the world does not know us because it did not know Him.’ That’s why if you’re a Sabbath-keeper, when you talk to Sunday-keepers they say ‘Huh?’ Are you a Jew? *No! I’m a true Christian.* ‘Well, only Jews keep the Sabbath.’ *No! Christ kept the Sabbath. The Apostles kept the Sabbath. The New Testament Gentile Churches kept the Sabbath and the Passover and the Holy Days.* So you need to understand that maybe your version or knowledge of Christianity is not a true one. And your understanding has been distorted and twisted by ministers who don’t know God; who don’t know the Word of God.

Verse 2: “Beloved, now are we the children of God... [if you have the Spirit of God, as we will see] ...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested.... [And no human being can look upon the glorified Son of God and live. So this means]: ...we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is...” (v 2). This means that those who are resurrected from the dead, truly born again will actually have a spirit body, a spirit mind and will be

a spirit being. And that’s the whole purpose that God made us, after the image of God, male and female. And too many people are going around trying to make God in their own image. When they do, and if you’ve done that you just need to understand that’s idolatry—you have an idol in your mind if you believe in a long-haired Jesus who looks like a half a woman, you believe in a false Christ and you have an idol in your mind. That’s why when we covered repentance here...*you need to repent of that.* And if God is calling you, that’s what you need to understand.

Verse 3: “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure.” And that’s the whole motivating factor for all of those who are true Christians.

- that they stay loyal
- they stay faithful
- they stay loving
- they love the Word of God
- they study the Word of God
- they live by the Word of God
- they let the Word of God purify them

Verse 4—now here’s the contrast; and as we’re going to see, there is a contrast all the way through the verses that we are going to cover. “Everyone who is practicing sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.” Now, the *King James* says: “Whosoever transgresses the law, sins; for sin is the transgression of the law.” Either translation is correct, but the *FV* one is more correct because lawlessness covers many things. Lawlessness means *those who act as if there is no law at all; completely anti-law.* That’s why *lawlessness* in the Greek is ‘*anomia*’—which means *against law*—specifically the laws of God. Lawlessness also means *taking human tradition and substituting that for the laws of God.* So again, you come right back to idolatry.

“...for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.... [in Christ.] ...Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin ... [now that’s what it should read because v 4 clearly shows that whosoever is sinning, practicing sin, is practicing lawlessness. So that *practicing* comes all the way down through the rest of the verses. So it should be properly translated]: ...Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin”—because all men are sinners. But we don’t live in sin and we don’t practice sin. And when we sin, we repent.

“anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him” (v 6). Now let’s just take a case here: Suppose that you are a Sunday-keeper. Suppose that you are a Christmas-keeper. Suppose that you are an Easter-keeper. You are *practicing*

sin, because those things are condemned in the Word of God. And if you are practicing sin, **you don't know Him**; because 1-John 2:4 says: 'Anyone who says "I know Him" and is not keeping His commandments, is a liar; and the Truth is not in him.' And anyone who is keeping His commandments 'in him verily is the love of God' being perfected. So if you have swallowed the notion that you can create your own laws, and call them God's laws—such as Sunday-keeping, Easter, Christmas, and a host of other laws and traditions that orthodox and fundamental Christianity has erected—you're going down the *broad* path; you're going down the *wrong* path. And the coming united world-religion is going to come and you're going to get sucked up in it and you're going to be found fighting Christ. So we need to understand that these things are very profound.

Verse 7: "Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you.... [And if you believe any of those things, you just have to say, 'Hey, I have been deceived.' And that's your first start of coming out of sin.] ...the one who is practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous... [because God imputes the righteousness of Christ to those who have the Holy Spirit.] ...The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil" (vs 7-8).

Now, here's the key verse we want to get to—the begettal of the Holy Spirit. Verse 9—this is the correct translation: "Everyone who has been begotten of God does not practice sin.... [that means *living in sin*] ...because His seed of *begettal* is dwelling within him... [that is the seed of begettal from the Father—and the Greek is 'sperma' which means *the seed of eternal life from God the Father*.] ...and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God." In other words, if you have the Spirit of God in you by begettal, the Spirit of God is going to prick your heart and conscience to reveal whatever sin that you may be doing, so that you won't be practicing it; so that you can repent of it and be restored to God. That's why anyone who truly has the Spirit of God **cannot practice sin!**

Now the *King James* says: "Whosoever is born of God cannot sin...." Now that is an incorrect translation. Especially in the way that most fundamentalist believe that if you receive the Holy Spirit you have been 'born again.'

I know a woman who was talking to a Baptist and arguing back and forth about this being 'born again'; and the woman who was a Baptist and claimed that she was 'born again,' she says, *I cannot sin*. So the woman said, 'Well, what do you mean,

you cannot sin?' She said, *Nothing that I do can be sin. And when the rapture comes and Christ calls, I'll be spirited away, because I have been 'born again.'* So the woman said, 'Well, what if you're committing adultery and the rapture occurs? Will you be raptured away?' *But of course!*

So you see, that is **practicing sin**. But if you truly have the begettal of God's Spirit, God's Spirit is going to prick your conscience; and you will not be practicing sin "...because **His seed of begettal** is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God" (v 9). So that is the baptism of the Spirit; which is the earnest.

Verse 10: "By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother." So you have to take all ten verses to get the full picture. You can't go in and just take out v 9 and say 'I've been born again and I cannot sin'; because that is not true—because 'sin is the transgression of the law; sin is lawlessness.' And you can't be *practicing* sin.

So, let's go to Ephesians, the first chapter, and we'll end this section here; showing that the begettal of the Holy Spirit now is not the full portion of your blessing and inheritance that you get beginning with the begettal; because

- there is the coming return of Jesus Christ
- there is the resurrection from the dead
- there is the glorification of your body to be a spirit being—at the resurrection

And then, *at that point* you will not sin; because you will be a true, full-fledged spirit being; the son or daughter of God. But now in this age, that's not possible.

Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom [Christ] you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth...." So here it shows, Paul is showing, you have to act upon the Word of Truth, which is the Word of God. And please understand this: When you read the Bible, there are no real contradictions in it at all. Most of the contradictions come because of a faulty translation or a misinterpretation. The Word of God is true. The Word of God in the Greek and the original Hebrew is true and God has preserved it and God has brought it down here to us, to this day it is the Word of Truth, and in it there is no lie. And when God inspired the prophets, and God inspired the apostles—be it the Old Testament or New Testament—and they wrote the words of God, it was the Spirit of Truth, and they wrote the Word of Truth. So you need to understand that. If people come along and tell you, 'Well, we don't know how we got this translation of the Bible. Well, we don't

know whether God's Word is true or not.' NO! *It is the* Word of Truth.

"...the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise..." (v 13)—which is the begettal. Just exactly like when there is a human begettal, we know today that when the sperm from the father unites with the egg, penetrates the egg of the mother, the egg is sealed. This is exactly what he's talking about. ***Those who have the Spirit of God have been sealed***, so that nothing else can penetrate in there.

Now notice: "...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, **which is the earnest of our inheritance...**" (vs 13-14). Now an earnest is likened unto a down payment. In other words, God gives you the Holy Spirit by begettal as an earnest so that that you know that the final payment is coming at the resurrection. Just like if you buy a house, you have to put down earnest money, and that earnest money is a pledge, which you will forfeit if you don't come up with the rest of the money. Well, you see, God will come up with the rest of it at the resurrection. Now if you don't fulfill your part, then you will forfeit back to God the earnest that He's given to you.

"...which is the earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession.... [which then is *you*—and the redemption of the purchased possession takes place at the resurrection when all the saints of God will be resurrected at the return of Christ.] ...to *the* praise of His glory" (v 14).

So that's what it means the *Baptism of the Spirit*. And the ultimate baptism of the Spirit is to be resurrected from the dead and become a spirit being. Every cell of your being will now be composed of spirit, rather than flesh. So that's what it means: *Baptism of the Spirit*.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 8:9
- 2) Matthew 7:13-23
- 3) Romans 8:9-10
- 4) Matthew 3:7-12
- 5) 1 Peter 1:1-3
- 6) 1 John 3:1-10
- 7) Ephesians 1:13-14

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 3:34
- Matthew 6
- Acts 2
- Matthew 23
- John 8
- 1 John 2:4

Also referenced: Books

- *What Do You Mean, 'Born Again'?* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

Faith

Fred R. Coulter

Now let's come to the next section: *Faith*. Let's understand something concerning faith. You can never base faith strictly on feelings, because that's how people are deceived. You must base faith, first of all, upon fact. Because what you believe that differs from the Word of God is a false belief and a false faith—and there are a lot of people who have false faith and false belief. And many of us are all going to learn that when the financial system eventually does collapse, because collapse it will. And they will have put all their faith in men; and all the faith in dollars; and all their faith in banks; and all their faith in whatever. And the book of Isaiah shows that even at the end-time, those who put their faith in gold and silver are going to cast it to the moles and to the bats; because that won't save them.

So the kind of faith we're talking about here is the faith that is generated

1. by the Word of God
2. by God calling you—sending His Spirit to be with you, to lead you
3. the kind of faith that you *believe* God, and you *believe* His Word

To believe is also to *faithize*—have faith toward, into. And that is *into Christ*. So let's read the section of faith here in the *Beliefs* booklet: (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 19 throughout).

Faith is the knowledge of and active belief in the existence and power of the living God and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ.

Not enough just to believe that there is a God. Not enough to believe that there was a Christ. ***Faith is the knowledge and the active belief in the existence of God and the power of the living God and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.***

Faith is a gift from God and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father, true believers are granted the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ and the very faith of Jesus Christ. This faith is the actual spiritual substance of God's Holy Spirit... [Now, we'll talk about that when we get to it in Heb. 11] ...which gives the believer the assurance and the confidence that what God has promised, He will perform.

So remember that. ***Every promise of God is sure and is true—and He will perform it.*** You need

to also understand this about the promises of God: Most people believe that the promises of God are just to fulfill your 'wish list' of good things—'God, give me this' which will be a blessing; 'God, give me that.' NO! You read the Bible and a lot of the promises of God promise

- curses for disobedience;
- punishment for sin;
- correction for wrong-doing.

So ALL His promises are good. That is, they will come to pass, they will not fail, whether they be the promises to bring blessings to you or to bring curses to you.

Maybe in your life, you've experienced a lot of curses and not too many blessings. Well, maybe God is trying to tell you a lesson with that, so that you can learn. That's why there's repentance, you see. Now let's continue here:

The true faith of Jesus Christ, that is imparted by God to each believer, will continually be manifested by the fruits of righteousness in the believer's life. Faith is made perfect by doing the good works that God the Father has ordained through Jesus Christ. This active and living faith is absolutely essential for salvation through grace. Without good works, faith is dead. Without faith, good works are of no value in God's sight.

You need to understand that. A lot of people can do good works, but unless it's based on the Spirit and faith of God, it does you absolutely no good. Now, you may temporarily feel good about it, but that gives you no standing with God the Father in heaven above; because God has created the good works. Those are the ones you are to walk in, in faith. These will produce good works. Why? ***Because the cleansing of the Holy Spirit and the leading of the Holy Spirit will lead you to do the good works which God has ordained.*** So that's why, without good works, faith is dead; without faith good works are of no value in God's sight.

Good works alone cannot bring salvation and eternal life. While true faith will produce good works in the believer's life, these good works do not earn salvation. The good works that are done through faith are not the cause but the result of God's gift of salvation to the believer.

Now let's go to Hebrews, the eleventh chapter. This is something that is very, very

important. And it's so profound because it shows you the impossibility of pleasing God without faith. And I'm afraid that there's just hundreds of millions of people who claim that they believe. But when it comes down to really believing God, really believing Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent, then that's another entirely different story altogether.

Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is *the* substance... [and that really means *substance*, because it comes from God's Spirit. It's part of the substance of God's Spirit.] ...Now faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for... [should you believe God's Word, you hope in Christ—that's where your hope is.

- the hope of the *resurrection*
- the hope of *eternal life*—which is in Christ
- the *blessings* that God can give you when you pray
- the *correction* that God will give you when you need it

Those are the things hoped for. We all hope to be in the Kingdom of God. But, we also desire the correction and guidance from God. So even that is a thing hoped for, when you come to understand it.

"...For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* Word of God... [and you go back and read that in Genesis, where God spoke and it was created. Where God said, 'Let there be light'—there was light. All of that.] ...the worlds were created by *the* Word of God, so that the things that are seen... [everything that we can see; whether it be down through a microscope to the finest, smallest, little, itty-bitty things] ...were made from *things* that are invisible" (vs 1-2).

And, even man in his own scientific greatness today still do not understand what matter really is, and where it really came from. They thought they had it when they had the atoms and protons and neutrons. Now they find out that there are things smaller than that. And now they have found out that these smaller, little things—smaller than atoms, which they can barely, barely see with the greatest electronic microscope—that they do not adhere to the same laws which take place in the universe according to the law that Einstein supposedly discovered—the Law of Relativity. They do not act in accordance with that. So science, in their great discoveries, still do not know. Why is that? *Because God is greater than science.* And you're not going to find God in a test tube. And you're not going to find God in a microscope. You're going to find God on your knees, as you repent and accept Christ as your personal Savior, and let the blood of Christ cover you, and then be

baptized. Then you will begin to understand true faith.

Verse 4: "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he* is yet speaking. By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death..." (vs 4-5). Later on he died, because it says over here in v 13: "...these all died..." We don't know the full story back there in Gen. 5 where that occurred with Enoch, but Enoch was taken away because there were apparently gangs of evil men chasing him down, ready to kill him. So God just took him to another place. Later he lived out his life; because it says back there, 'and all the years of Enoch were so many years. So that shows that he died. "...and was not found because God had transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God" (v 5).

Now v 6 is the key, and this is a profound verse I want you to learn and know and understand; because this is so fundamental. This is so lifelong lasting that you need to grasp it in its fullest intent. "Now without faith... [If you don't believe God, you don't believe in God, you don't believe Christ, you don't believe in His sacrifice.] ...***it is impossible to please God...*** [even though yea, you may be the most perfect person in the world.] ...***For it is mandatory for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists....*** [That means this: In order for you to have faith, you are obligated by God to believe that He exists! Meaning that's the very, very first step. So you have to believe that He is. You have to believe that His Word is true.] ...and ***that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.***" So this is the key verse. Absolutely the key verse in it.

Now, let's come to Galatians, and let's see what the Apostle Paul said concerning faith. And it's quite a profound way that it's expressed in the Greek; because here in Galatians 2:20, what he's doing, he is showing here what happens after the operation of baptism. So since we just covered baptism, this fits right in with it.

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ... [that is through the operation of baptism; because we're to crucify the old self.] ...yet I live... [because he was raised out of the watery grave just like everyone else who's been baptized. They live. That is living in the flesh.] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I... [he's not living to serve himself; he's not living his life to please himself. He's not living his life the way that seems right to him; but, he's following God.] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me.... [That's where you begin getting the real faith

of Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is living in him, and is living in everyone who has the Spirit of God. This is going to lead you to do righteousness, as we read in the previous section in 1-John 3.] ...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God..." And that means by Christ's very own faith; because He gives it as a gift, He imputes it to you.

Now, let's come to Galatians 5:22, and let's see where that it is part of the fruits of the Holy Spirit—because the Holy Spirit is to impart to us many things. Faith being one of them; love; and we'll see all of it here—the very characteristics of God. Now all of these things that we find in Galatians 5:22 show you the character of God, and what God is doing with His Spirit, in those who receive it and those who have it, is that they are having Christ built into them by the very Word of God. That's why Paul says, 'The life that I now live' it is 'Christ **IN** me.' Therefore, then you can have the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is **love...**"

- love God
- love your neighbor
- love the brethren
- love, yea, even your enemies as Christ has said—right? *Yes!*

"...**joy...**"

- You have the joy from God because He gives you peace of mind.
- Joy because you're happy that God has called you.
- Joy that you understand the Word of God.
- Joy that you realize that you have such a fantastic future to be born again into the Kingdom of God, by the power of the resurrection.

"...**peace...**"

- You have peace with God, first of all, because you're no longer an enemy of God. Because when God begins dealing with you first, you're still an enemy of God. And Christ died while we were still enemies of God. So in that sense, Christ prayed for His enemies, too—didn't He? And didn't He say, when He was on the cross, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.' That was *an act of faith*. That was an *act of love*. That was an *act of peace*.

"...**long-suffering...**"

- Now long-suffering means *to suffer things long*; or for *a great duration* if

necessary—regardless of what the situation may be.

"...**kindness...**"

- That's self explanatory.

"...**goodness...**"

- Means you're only going to be seeking good.

"...**faith...**"

- Now notice where faith is here. We find in another part—in 1-Cor. 13—it says that these three abide: 'faith, hope and love.' In this case, faith then is going to be there, but all of these things combined.

"...**meekness...**" (v 23)

- Meekness is that you don't exalt yourself—how great you are and what you have done; because you realize that everything that you have has come from God; and everything you do is because God has given you the ability one way or the other to do it—whether physically or spiritually or mentally—all these things come from God. So you don't get all carried away with yourself—the big 'I' is no longer there. That's meekness and humility.

"...**self-control...**"

- That is self-control. But then, through the Spirit of God, you have the self-control that you are not going to go out and sin.
- You're not going to go out and deliberately do those things that are wrong.
- You control you emotions.
- You control your temper.
- You control your appetites—because you realize that your body is the 'temple of the Holy Spirit.' So you will have that self-control.

Now notice he says: ...against such things there is no law." Why? *Because all of these things are encompassed in keeping the commandments of God and loving Him.* That's why!

Verse 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh... [through baptism] ...with its passions and lusts.... [That's all part of growing and overcoming] ...If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit.... [notice the contrast, v 26]: ...We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 24-26). So you see the contrast: When you have the true faith of God, by the Holy Spirit—which is the gift of God which He imparts to you.

Now, let's come here to Ephesians, the second chapter, and let's see something concerning the faith; showing also God's calling and God's

mercy and God's grace; and what it leads to by faith, and what kind of faith God wants us to have, which He gives to us.

Ephesians 2:1—and you has He *made alive* through baptism: ...Now you were dead in trespasses and sins." The truth is this: If you are just out there in the world, and you have not repented and have been baptized and quickened with the Holy Spirit of God, you are as good as dead, because you're living in sin and trespasses. And the New Testament teaches that the 'wages of sin is death.' If you are practicing sin, are you not as good as a dead man? *Yes, you are!* No doubt about it.

Verse 2: "In which you walked in times past... [and this is what you need to decide: will you repent; will you change; will you come to God; will your sins be in the time past. But notice, if it's current, notice who's leading your life]: ...according to the course of this world... [the way that the world goes; the way that this society is; the way that the majority of people go] ... according to the prince of the power of the air [Satan the devil], the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience." And it means that is *inner working*.

How can the devil inner-work in you? *There are some people who are demon possessed, directly.* There are other people who worship Satan openly. How can he work in just the average person?

- By getting you to break the commandments of God.
- By getting you to be all encompassed in your own life and your own self.
- He does it through radio, television, video, Internet—all of these things can be used as tools by Satan the devil, as well as be used as tools to preach righteousness.

So that's how he gets an entrance into your mind. So stop and ask yourself: Why do I believe what I believe? And where did I come to believe it? And how did I come to believe it? And maybe you're going to see that a lot of these things are just fulfilling your own sinful desires.

"...that is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also... [so Paul included himself in this—didn't he?] ...we all... [all human beings in the world are under the power and sway of Satan the devil. Rev. 12:9 says that he's 'deceiving the whole world.' That's how he's deceiving it.] ...once had our conduct... [as it should read. *King James* reads 'conversation.'] ...in the lusts of our flesh... [so whatever appeals to the lust of the flesh. To feel good. To coddle yourself. To go against God to satisfy your fleshly lusts.] ...doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind" (1-3). And all of these things of the mind and esteem of the

self and to succeed in the world. They can take certain things and even some of the things that are done in the world to fulfill the lust of the mind become greater—the greatest manipulator in all of this, are all of Satan the devil—though they are couched in doing good; though they are couched in making you an improved person. You need to understand that. Unless you have the Spirit of God you can never really change the status of your life. You may make yourself more rich. You may be more successful in business. You may be a better person to other people in some ways. But you cannot change your sinful nature. So therefore, you are still a child of the devil.

"...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest *of the world*. But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us... [Because if God is calling you to know and to understand His Word, you need to understand He loves you. He's trying to help you understand the Word of God. And that's why Christ came: 'For God so loved the world, He have His only begotten Son, that whosoever shall believe on Him shall not perish by have everlasting life.' So it's a great love He had for us.] ...even when we were dead in *our* trespasses... [That's why I was saying that if you're living in sin, you're as good as dead.] ...has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.)" (vs 3-5). So it's by God's mercy; by God's grace; by God's love—all combined together, you see.

"And He has raised *us* up together... [that is through the operation of baptism] ...and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places*... [now that should read 'things'] ...in Christ Jesus.... [And having the Holy Spirit now that you have a heavenly thing that came from God the Father in heaven above; the begetting of God's Holy Spirit, the seed which is in you.] ...so that in the ages that *are* coming... [now that's when the saints will sit on thrones and rule the world with Jesus Christ—in the coming age when Jesus returns.] ...He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith... [and therefore, that's why the Apostle Paul wrote there in Heb. 11:6: 'Without faith it's impossible to please God.' and without faith it's impossible to really understand the grace of God.] ...and this *especially* is not of your own selves..." (vs 6-8).

And this is very interesting. The Greek means *not from within your being*. Doesn't come out from within you. So if you have the idea that your good thoughts; and your good works; and you'll just be a good person; you'll be sincere; you'll be honest; you'll be kind; and all of those things without Christ is meaningless. Though those may be good works in

the letter of the law; though those may be good works in the world; they are not salvational works, because the works that we are to do have been ordained of God that we should walk in them.

Now notice: "...For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God.... [And if it is the gift of God *you cannot earn it!* The grace, the faith and the salvation are all gifts of God.] ...not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [and we read those good works back in Gal. 5:22-23—those are the good works of God that He wants you to do. In other words, now that if you do something good, it's because first of all you love God; and you love Christ; and you love the Truth; and you want to do those things that please God. So you do it, not thinking of the self or any reward to the self. You keep the laws of God. You keep the commandments of God, because those are good. Those are the good works that He gave us to walk in.] ...workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (vs 8-10).

Which then is the whole way of life; the whole Christian way of living as defined in the Bible—both the Old Testament and New Testament.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 11:1-6
- 2) Galatians 2:20
- 3) Galatians 5:22-26
- 4) Ephesians 2:1-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 11:13
- Genesis 5
- 1 Corinthians 13
- Revelation 12:9
- Hebrews 11:6

Salvation

Fred R. Coulter

We just finished the section concerning faith, so let's come here to the section concerning salvation; and I think you will see as we have gone through this study, how important that it is concerning everything that we have laid out in a step-by-step way. And in defining these things, we are not defining beliefs which are found outside of the Scriptures. And the reason is this: A person can believe anything he or she wants to, but unless it conforms to the Truth of the Bible, that belief has no validity whatsoever. And as a matter of fact, anything that a person believes that is contrary to Scripture is an idol in their mind. And most people don't look at it that way, but that's very profound to understand; because beliefs, out of the Scriptures, really are not a matter of personal opinion or conjecture as related to things in politics, or arguments of theologians. What it is, it is a stating of the things which are in the Bible and which God wants us to believe from His Word so that we understand the Truth. So, let's come to the section on *salvation: (Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God, pg. 20).*

Salvation is the gift of God the Father by His grace and is granted to the believer through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation cannot be earned by [any] works of law...

And you might put in there: *any* law—any works of any law will not give you merit for salvation.

...but there are conditions which must be met in order to receive the gift of salvation. God requires that one repent of sin, which is the transgression of His laws and commandments, and believe on His Son Jesus Christ, Whose blood paid the penalty for the sins of all mankind. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Author and Finisher of eternal salvation for all who believe on Him. Through the blood of Jesus Christ and the acceptance of His sacrifice, the believer is reconciled to God the Father, having his or her sins completely forgiven and forgotten. By the grace of God, the believer is saved from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death, and is granted the gift of eternal life through the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father.

Salvation begins when God the Father opens a person's mind to spiritual understanding, which leads to repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. After being baptized by full immersion in water, the believer is

granted the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. The believer then begins a new life of obedience to God through faith, working out his or her own salvation by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit and in harmony with God's Word. It is a lifelong process of spiritual growth. The Scriptures reveal that there are three distinct stages in the process of salvation:

1. The believer has been saved from past sins and from Satan the devil (Eph. 2:1-10).
2. The believer is now being saved as he or she continues in the Word of God—the gospel—in loving obedience by faith (1 Cor. 1:18; 15:2).
3. The believer will ultimately be saved at the resurrection (Rom. 7:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:12-57; 1 Tim. 3:14-16).

The believer's salvation will not be completed until he or she is resurrected from the dead through the power of God and is born again as a spirit being into the Family of God. In God's time and plan, everyone will have an opportunity for salvation.

Now let's look at these three steps, first. This is the first part that we will go through.

I. The believer has been saved from past sins and from Satan the devil.

Let's go to Ephesians 2, because human beings are powerless to bring themselves out from sin. Now they may be able to reform their behavior, and modify it; but in many cases, they are changing one form of behavior for another form of behavior, which may or may not be in conformity with the truth of God's Word. For example:

Down in the building where we have our office, they have the AA meet on certain nights of the week—Alcoholics Anonymous. Now alcoholism is a very terrible situation in which to find yourselves locked into that kind of thing. They call it a disease in the world; but it is really not a disease per se, as a sickness or illness, it can be a weakness of the body or a weakness of character—either one. Later on then, it turns into other diseases, because of the deterioration of the body from alcoholism. But we noticed this: Nearly all of those who have given up alcohol just changed from one addiction to another. They change from alcohol to cigarettes, or

they change from alcohol to sugar, which creates alcohol in their system in the process of digesting.

So you see, there is no conversion. That's why, *first, you must be saved from your sins by God*—that's the first step. God has to intervene in your life; and as we saw concerning being called, God the Father is the one Who has to draw the one who's going to be the believer, so that they begin to see themselves for what they are. That is the first step.

Ephesians 2:1: "Now you were dead in trespasses and sins... [Now everyone who does not have the Holy Spirit of God is as good as dead; because 'the wages of sin is death.' And if you are living in your sins, you are dead in sins and trespasses.] ...in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world..." (vs 1-2). Now, everyone walks a certain way of life; and that's why God's way is a way of life in which you are to walk. The world has a **broad** way which Christ said, 'broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads to destruction; and many be that go in there at. But straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leads to life; and FEW be that find it.' Why? *Because they are unwilling to come to God when He begins exposing their sins to them.* That's why the Scriptures say, 'many are called, but few are chosen'; because the ones who are chosen are those who repent.

Now, He's talking to those who have been chosen here, reminding them of what they were in past time. "...you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (v 2). Now, Satan is able to influence people today in many, many ways: Through all the means of technological media; through things like we have cassettes; we have CD's; we have movies; we have videos; we have the internet—in all of those things he's able to influence. Those things in and of themselves are not wrong, because God is letting everyone use them; so we do a lot of good by using exactly the same thing by preaching the Truth. But nevertheless, there is that control.

"...is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind..." (vs 2-3). All of these seem quite natural; all of these seem quite good; and all of these are based upon how a person feels—and that's how Satan is able to control people by their feelings; by their emotions. So when God begins to call someone, He brings the first,

number one fact:

1. You are a sinner
2. He is God
3. Christ is your Savior

He brings that knowledge to you. So your calling is quite a marvelous thing because God has done this in such a way that it is an individual calling—and God has the power to do it.

And He says, continuing here: "...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world.... [v 4 shows how salvation comes]: ...But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us" (vs 3-4). We need to understand how great this is. And if you don't have the series on *The Love of God*, you can write for the series going through the Bible, showing the love of God. And growing in the love of God is the most important thing that you can do once you have been called—and that is the whole, important thing. First of all, before getting involved emotionally with God, what He does, He establishes the fact the He IS God, *first*. Then, you can have relationship with God by fellowshiping with Him and loving Him—which we'll discuss at a later time.

"Even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.)" (v 5). Grace means that *it is a gift of God* (as we will see). God reaches down, calls the believer, leads them to repentance, forgives their sins—all of this is an operation of grace—**grace vs works**. In other words, there is no work that the person did.

- No confession to a priest
- No 'hail Marys' or 'our fathers'
- No rosaries
- No bowing down to idols
- No doing 'good works' toward other people

None of those lead to salvation; though in and of themselves some of them may not be wrong, while others of them may be very idolatrous; nevertheless, works cut you off from the grace of God if you believe that a work is going to save you.

"even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.) And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus... [so the fullness (as we covered here) of the salvation of God will not be complete until the age, which is coming when Christ returns and the resurrection takes place.] ...He might show the

exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith..." (vs 5-7). And the Greek there in both cases—in vs 4 & 8—means *you have been saved*. Now that does not mean *once saved always saved*; because we will see it is a process, because it is possible for people to fall away once they have been saved from their sins and Satan the devil. And that's what this section of Scripture is talking about, in the sense that you have been saved—meaning that

- you have been saved from Satan the devil as the prince of the power of the air;
- and you have been saved from your past sins.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves... [There is nothing internally or inherent that any human being can do just of himself alone to bring about salvation whatsoever; it must come from God.] ...*it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast.... [Now let's finish right here in v 10, and then we'll go look at some others. Here's what happens to us once God has called us—and once God has given us the gift of salvation.] ...For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus..." (vs 8-10).

God made us in such a way that we are to be recreated spiritually, mentally and spiritually in the very image of Christ. That's why some of the Scriptures we have covered, such as: 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' And God is actually recreating our character; because His Spirit unites with the spirit that we have and then we are to become converted—changed—by this salvation.

"...we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works..." (v 10). So then after the salvation has been granted—by the forgiveness of your past sins and saving from Satan the devil; and you have been baptized, received the laying on of hands, and have had the Holy Spirit given to you—then you have good works based upon love and obedience to God. And those good works then come from the heart, because your heart has been changed. They come from the heart because you believe God and you love God.

"...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10). And walking in that means *to be keeping His commandments*—to be keeping His Sabbath and Holy Days, as we have seen. And all of those are the good works:

- To love the brethren as Christ loved us
- To love our neighbors as our self

- And to love God with all our heart and mind and soul and being
- Those are the *good works*.

II. The believer is now *being* saved as he or she continues in the Word of God—the Gospel—in loving obedience by faith.

Let's come to 1-Corinthians, the first chapter. And so, it is a continuous process. It is something that is constantly ongoing. And that is called in the Scriptures, 'growing in grace and knowledge.' And you can put in there also: growing in faith, growing in love, growing in understanding, growing in wisdom, growing in the mind of Christ. And God gave us the kind of mind that once we have the Holy Spirit we can continually grow in these things.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians 1:17—where Paul writes: "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel—not with *the* wisdom of words... [That's why the true Gospel should not be intertwined with human philosophy. It should not be intertwined with Aristotle and Socrates or Plato or any other philosophy. You see, the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ is the Truth! And God doesn't want anything added to it in the way of philosophy; anything added to it in the way of man's ideas—because God is the greatest Being that there is; and so, His way is the best. What can man do to add to the perfection of God? *Nothing!*] ...did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel—not with *the* wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made void." And what he's saying here is this: If you do that, by adding human philosophy you will sooner or later make the Word of God of none effect. And I just draw your attention to all the religions of the world which have made the Word of God of none effect.

Verse 18: "For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is... [that is the wise ones of the Greeks] ...foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." Now, what it means here, the Greek means; it is the present tense passive, meaning: *but unto us who are being saved*—showing that it is a process. If you have a Spanish Bible, that's what it says. We have a man who has a parallel English & Spanish Bible and confirms that's what the translation is in the Spanish—'are being saved.' This shows that it is a process. *Not* 'once saved always saved.'

And we'll prove this now by going to 1-Corinthians 15:1, and here we have the same translation as we have in the first chapter—but really means: *are being saved*. "Now I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* Gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, *and* in which you are

now standing... [In other words, every bit of the Gospel is like standing under the umbrella of God. You're standing in the Gospel under that umbrella of God.] ...by which you are also being saved... [and should read *are being saved*.] (Now, notice the condition here. The salvation continues): ...if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain" (vs 1-2). And there are a lot of people who believe in vain; because they, for a temporary while, have a guilty conscience, and they feel sorry. But they are not willing to truly repent and come to God the way God wants them to, and to grow in grace and knowledge.

Now let's see that. Let's go to Matthew 13 here, for just a minute. And then we'll get to the third part of it. This is continuing on in the second part: *you are being saved*—and it takes time; and that if you do not continue in the Gospel, in the Word of God, then you are going to lose it. And if you lose it, then you will not have salvation; because *salvation is a one-time opportunity* that God gives.

Matthew 13:18—which gives the explanation of the Parable of the Sower: "Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart.... [So there are a lot of people, that they come along and they hear; 'Oh, joyful, that's wonderful.' But the first time they have to begin repenting, or the first time they have to start obeying God, then whoop! Satan comes along and says, 'Boy, well there's something over here more important for you to do.' And they just throw it away! Satan has taken it out.] ...This is the one who was sown by the way. Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy; but *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure.... [So there will be those who will fall away. Here's what happens]: ...for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended" (vs 18-21).

Because, you see, by way of the Truth of God will offend people in the world. And what Christ preached and taught was so offensive that they crucified Him. And you read the way that Jesus answered a lot of them, you will see that He was very offensive to the religious leaders of His time. And if you read Matt. 23, you will find out how He was really exposing all their sins and all their duplicities and all of their corruption and all of their hypocrisies. So if you're offended when the going gets tough, then you may not be one who's going to endure until the final salvation.

Verse 22: "And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but

the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful." Looking at the physical things around. Not trusting in God to provide.

Now just like one man here, who recently lost a lot of money in the stock market and went out and killed nine people and wounded thirteen others; so upset about it, rather than saying, 'Thank you, God. You let me learn a lesson from this. I'm sorry that everything is gone, but give us the strength and endurance to survive.' God would have heard him. It would have been done. Because one of the things in salvation that is important, that you need to understand, is that you have to forsake everything in this life. That's how important God is. You can't let anything interfere with how important God is.

"...choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands... [and as we saw from 1-Cor. 15, 'is standing in the Gospel and is being saved by it—if you continue in the faith.'] ...who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold" (v 22-23).

Now, let's go to Luke 14 and then we'll get back to the last section there. Here's what the commitment is, that we make to God. This is a commitment of salvation. It's more than just a commitment. It is a pledge of your life; because when you are baptized, you enter into a covenant relationship with God that is unto your death. You have two choices with baptism:

1. The death of baptism and to walk in newness of life.
 - Live by every Word of God
 - Stand in the Gospel of God
 - Continue faithfully in that
 - Then you receive eternal life and the death is the burial in the watery grave of baptism
2. If you are baptized and you reject the way of God and you reject salvation, then you have pledged your life to death in the lake of fire.

That's what a covenant pledge really is. That's why there are so few that find it; because they have not really understood; because

- baptism becomes a ritual for the church
- baptism is expected by [age] twelve
- baptism is a social thing because you want to marry a husband or wife
- baptism is done to please someone in the family

- baptism is done because everybody does it

Those baptisms are as worthless as standing in a shower—they do absolutely no good, because God is talking about eternal salvation and calling you to live forever in glory and with a spirit body and a spirit mind. So all of these things of the flesh you have to put aside, they do not count.

Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them... [Because they all wanted something from Christ. And Christ was not here to play social pity-patty with people; or religious patty-patty with people.] ... and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother... [and it literally means that. That’s not to hate them with hatred; but that means that you *love God more* so that in some cases they may even accuse you of hating them—and I’ve known that to happen. But that’s not the case. **You love God more.** And to those people who are carnal then, it can be thought of as hate.] ...hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (vs 25-26). Meaning it’s an impossibility, it cannot be done.

So this is why this section of Scripture is called *counting the cost*. And anyone who is called to salvation has to **count the cost**. Whatever it takes to obey God, you count the cost and you do it. Now, v 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross... [meaning whatever difficulty or trial or trouble may come because of it. And you see, today we live in an age where they want to forget the Inquisition. Where they want to forget that there were people who counted the cost and were killed because they believed in Christ. Were killed for the witness of Christ. Burned at the stake; boiled in oil; impaled on stakes; heads chopped off; cooked slowly over a fire; thrown into boiling cauldrons of water. Now, if that makes you upset and makes your stomach a little squeamish, then ask yourself the question: What is that I put in front of God? Be it whatever it may be? Because we have to **count the cost.**] ...does not carry his cross and come after Me... [because we’re to follow Him in His footsteps] ...cannot be My disciple.” And that means the *impossibility* of it.

And then He says, “for which one of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost....whether he has *sufficient* for its completion; lest perhaps, after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish? Or what king, when he goes out to engage another king in war, does not first sit down *and* take counsel, whether he will be able with ten thousand to meet him who is

coming against him with twenty thousand?. But if not, while his *enemy* is still far off, he sends ambassadors and desires the *terms* for peace” (vs 28-32).

Now, v 33: “In the same way also... [in the same manner] ...each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple...”—meaning in the Greek: ‘*endunamai*’—meaning *the impossibility of being His disciple*. So that’s why that in a lot of the literature that we write you see that we write about those who are ‘professing Christians’ of this world; because the truth is, they are not Christians in deed, according to the Word of God. So, that’s very important and profound to know.]

Now, let’s come back to number three, the third part of salvation, which is a process.

III. The believer will ultimately be saved at the resurrection

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength... [That means *spiritual strength*; because no human being has the power to overcome Satan the devil of and by himself. Only God can give you that strength.] ...at the appointed time... [at the set time] ...Christ died for *the* ungodly... [That’s how great the sacrifice of Christ is.] ...For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man.... [and there have been examples of that] ...But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (vs 6-8). Since we are helpless and can’t save ourselves; and since we can’t come out of the bondage of sin ourselves—as Paul said when we first started, that you were ‘dead in sins and trespasses.’

Therefore, God, He had to do it first by sending Christ, first. He had to prepare the way with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to open the way of salvation. So that’s why He came first. And it’s all based upon His love.

Verse 9: “Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we **shall be** saved... [and that ‘shall be saved’ is the resurrection.] ...from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we **shall be saved by His life**” (vs 9-10).

So, salvation has those three parts:

- I. You’re saved from your past sins and Satan the devil.
- II. You are not being saved as you continue to live in the Word of God and the

Gospel of God, and loving obedience by faith.

- III. You will ultimately be saved at the resurrection when Christ returns.

Now let's see that, let's come to the book of Revelation 11, here. Now, as we have covered concerning 'born again'—***no one is born again until the resurrection. That is the true 'born again.'*** The misnomer of professing worldly Christianity of being *born again now* is a misnomer, as we have already covered.

Revelation 11:15—Here is when the salvation will be complete: “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...” (vs 15-18). So there is the resurrection. That resurrection takes place when Christ returns.

And when that happens—let's come to 1-Corinthians 15—we will see the completion of the whole salvation process. Now, I encourage you to go ahead and study all the Scriptures we have there concerning it, which are listed below [in the *Beliefs* booklet]. Some of those we have already covered here—so that you have a full and complete understanding of salvation. This will give you a foundational start in it.

This shows you that we must be changed. This shows you that this body of flesh and our life in the flesh is temporary. And that's why, as He said earlier, ‘As in Adam we all die.’ 1-Corinthians 15:47: “The first man [Adam] *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... [that is, those called to salvation and have the Spirit of God] ...have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*.... [which is telling us that God is guaranteeing that we will be like Him.] ...Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep... [that is, be dead in the grave] ...**but we shall all be**

changed.... [***That is the resurrection.***] ...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.... [That's the finality of salvation.] ...For this corruptible must put on 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 47-54).

Now, let's go back to Revelation, the twenty-first chapter, and we'll finish this section with this one—to show the ultimate of God's work that He is doing. Revelation 21:6: “And He said to me, ‘It is done.... [So there's coming a time in the future when the work of God is going to be done. The plan of salvation will be complete.] ...I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.... [Christ is the Beginner and Finisher of our faith.] ...To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son” (vs 6-7). So that will be the finality of salvation.

So the three steps are:

1. ***have been saved*** from your sins and Satan the devil
2. ***are being saved***, as you continue in the Gospel and are faithful
3. ***shall be saved*** at the resurrection when Christ returns

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 2:1-10
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:17-18
- 3) 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 4) Matthew 13:18-23
- 5) Luke 14:25-33
- 6) Romans 5:6-10
- 7) Revelation 11:15-18
- 8) 1-Corinthians 15:47-54
- 9) Revelation 21:6-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 15:12-57
- Romans 7:24-25
- 1 Timothy 3:14-16
- Matthew 23

Also Referenced: Sermon series: *The Love of God*

Laying on of Hands

Fred R. Coulter

Let's come to the next section *The Laying on of Hands*. Let's go ahead and read the definition here: (*Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*, pg 21).

The laying on of hands is a special act performed by ordained elders in the churches of God while asking God the Father in prayer to confer a spiritual gift or blessing upon someone. The laying on of hands is required for the receiving of God's Holy Spirit following water baptism, for anointing the sick with oil for healing, for ordination of those selected for spiritual or physical service to the church, for blessing little children, for a special blessing during a marriage ceremony, and for other special blessings.

Now, I might mention that we have another full sermon on *The Laying on of Hands*, which covers this very thoroughly, covering all aspects of it. So if you want a more thorough study on it, you can be sure and send in for it, and we'll be sure and send it to you.

Let's look at some of the Scriptural references now, for *Laying on of Hands*. Let's come to Acts, the eighth chapter, showing that the laying on of hands is necessary for receiving of the Holy Spirit after baptism. Acts 8:15: "Who [Peter & John], after coming down to *Samaria*... [to those who had been baptized] ...prayed for them, that they might receive *the Holy Spirit*; for as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the Holy Spirit*" (vs 15-17). So that's necessary for baptism.

If you've been baptized in a church, and in particularly into a church which has not kept the commandments of God—meaning most importantly: the Sabbath and, in particularly, the Holy Days of God—then you probably need to be baptized again; because your baptism was only an entrance into that church organization. Because, as we covered 'by baptism' (when we covered that section) you are to be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit *in* the name of Jesus Christ. So you see, God is not going to give His Spirit to those who disobey Him.

And there was a recent survey in some of the Protestant churches, which forty-three percent of those attending Protestant churches do not believe that there is any such thing as the Holy Spirit. That's why there has to be another baptism; because first,

you have to repent, then you have to be baptized, and then you have to have hands laid on you for the receipt of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:1: "Now it came to pass *that* while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper parts *and* came to Ephesus; and when he found certain disciples." Disciple means *a learner* or *a student*. And a lot of people have been learners. They've learned something of Christ. Maybe you've attended a church. Maybe you have even been baptized. But unless you have the Holy Spirit your baptism really doesn't make any difference to God—because if you don't have His Holy Spirit, you are none of His (as we studied when we covered the section on the Holy Spirit). So Paul found these disciples.

"He said to them, 'Did you receive *the Holy Spirit* after you believed?' And they said to him, 'We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit'" (vs 1-2). Now, in the *King James* it's 'Holy Ghost'; but it should really be *Holy Spirit*.

It's much the same thing with Protestants; Protestants today—43% of Protestants—do not believe that there is such a thing as the Holy Spirit; which shows then that they didn't receive the Holy Spirit. Chances are they weren't baptized properly. Catholics baptize infants by sprinkling and daubing. That is not a baptism. Baptism is for adults. Baptism is for those who

- know how to repent
- understand what sin is
- being called of God

Then they're baptized and receive the laying on of hands.

Verse 3: "Then he said to them, 'Unto what, then, were you baptized?' And they said, 'Unto the baptism of John.'" Well now, let me tell you something here: John's baptism was as close to the real thing as you could get—right? Wasn't he told to go baptize unto repentance; but to believe on Him Who was coming? Well, John's baptism was certainly much better than a Catholic baptism or an Orthodox baptism or a Hindu baptism, or whatever other brand of baptism there may be among the Protestants. Whether you're fully immersed or sprinkled or daubed, it doesn't make any difference if you haven't repented and you haven't been baptized and you haven't had the hand laid on you and prayed for the Holy Spirit, then you have not received the Holy Spirit. And that's exactly why 43% of Protestants don't believe in any such thing as

the Holy Spirit—which just tells you how far the Protestant religion has slipped down the tubes; that they're letting go of God and letting go of Christ, and they don't believe. In your own life, it's something you need to analyze and ask yourself the question: Do you have the Holy Spirit of God?

So let's see what Paul said, v 4: "And Paul said, 'John truly baptized *with* a baptism unto repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in Him Who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus, the Christ.' And after hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus" (vs 4-5). In other words, how many times were they baptized? *Twice here*. Well, the truth of the matter is, there is only *one* valid baptism. So if your baptism is not valid—maybe you've been baptized into three or four different churches—it's still not valid unless you received the Holy Spirit. When you receive the Holy Spirit, not in every case will there be speaking in tongues, as we have here in the account in Acts 19.

Verse 6: "Now when Paul laid *his* hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with *other* languages and prophesied.... [Now, that was a special sign to Paul that he was to stay there at Ephesus—which he did for three years. He continued two years in one place, but he was there practically a total of three years altogether.] ...And all the men were about twelve. Then he entered into the synagogue *and* spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God" (vs 6-8). And then it shows down in v 10 that he stayed there another two years beyond that. So it was at least approximately two and a half years.

Now let's continue on and let's see that laying on of hands is needed for anointing. Let's come to James, the fifth chapter. We have to put this together with two Scriptures, because the one says 'laying on of hands'; the other is anointing with oil. And of course, anointing implies the laying on of hands.

James 5:14: "Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him after anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.... [and we'll cover that on healing when we get to it—yes, God does heal today; yes, God does intervene and so forth. And this is one way: through anointing with oil and the laying on of hands, as we will see.] ...And the prayer of faith shall save the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (vs 14-15).

Now, let's come back here to Mark 16, and we'll see where it talks about the laying on of hands.

When you go through and you read the Gospel accounts, you will see that Jesus laid hands on them and healed them. And here in Mark 16, we find that the laying on of hands for healing; and then you put the two Scriptures together. Now this is something you need to understand concerning studying the Bible, which is this: Scriptures do not conflict one with another. And in too many churches today, what happens, the minister or the teacher will study the Bible by what I call 'the theory of subtraction'; where there is a Scripture which appears to contradict another Scripture, they do away with the Scripture. What you do is you study them and you put them together the way that the Bible has it, and that's what I call 'the theory of addition.'

So now we're taking the Scripture back in James 5—where it shows anointing with oil—and now we're coming here to Mark 16:17 and we will see how to put the Scriptures together. "And these signs shall follow those who believe: in My name they shall cast out demons; they shall speak with new languages... [speaking in tongues is another whole subject. We'll have one of those you can draw down on the web here in a short while. But speaking in tongues, as commonly known as Pentecostalism, has nothing to do with the speaking of tongues in the Bible; rather it is a satanic counterfeit, which is not of God.] ...they shall remove serpents..." (vs 17-18). That doesn't mean pick them up and hold them in your hands—that is another misnomer. It means they shall cast down serpents as in the case of the Apostle Paul when he was getting wood to throw on the fire, a serpent bit his hand and he just threw it down—it was a viper—and his hand didn't even swell and he didn't suffer any ill affects from it. That's what it means. It doesn't mean pick them up in your hands and have all kinds of gyrating music and Pentecostalism to go with it; and as some people do, kiss the heads of the snakes. God has nothing to do with that! This Scripture does not mean that at all.

"...and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them in any way; they shall **lay hands on the sick**, and they shall recover" (v 18). So here's the verse here, v 18: "...they shall lay hands on the sick..." Now, James 5: "...anointing them with oil..." Mark 16:18: "...and they shall recover" So you put the two together and that's how you have the laying on of hands for the healing of sickness.

Now, let's see that this also has to do with ordination—laying on of hands with ordination and the things that take place there. Let's come to Acts, the sixth chapter, where the apostles ordained deacons. Now deacons are those who are ordained to serve and help and minister the physical necessities of the Church or the fellowship group or the congregation when it reaches the size that certain

things need to be done. Then it's all to be done in decency and in order. So in Acts, the sixth chapter, we have the laying on of hands for ordination. Now, the first part of it shows that what they did, they selected out seven men of good report—and of course, we'll look at some of the qualifications of elders here in a little bit when we get to the section concerning elders.

Acts 6:6: “*And* they set them before the apostles; and after praying, they laid *their* hands on them.... [That's where you get the term 'ordination'—laying on of hands. Notice, it is not like a ceremony that so many churches have, where they have them shave their head, that they prostrate themselves before idols in their cathedrals, and take vows of celibacy and things like that. That has nothing to do with God. Those are just traditions of men who want to be religious. That is not of God! You can be guaranteed of that. God does things in decency and in order. And so, here it is, the laying on of hands.] ...And the Word of God spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was multiplied exceedingly, and a great multitude of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

Now, let's come to Acts 13 and let's see where we have the laying on of hands again for ordination—and in this case, we're dealing with the Apostle Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:2—(v 1 lists all the ones who were there: the teachers and prophets, Barnabas and Simeon and so forth.) “And as they were ministering and fasting to the Lord... [notice, in case of ordination there's always fasting as well as laying on of hands.] ...the Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate both Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them.’ And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them *and* sent *them* out” (vs 2-3). So laying on of hands is required for ordination.

So, it is necessary for:

- Receiving the Holy Spirit
- For anointing when sick
- And for ordinations

That's when laying on of hands is required of the Bible. You can write in for the sermon where I go into it in much more detail, showing where that actually began in the Old Testament, and it was carried on into the New Testament.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 8:15-17
- 2) Acts 19:1-8
- 3) James 5:14-15
- 4) Mark 16:17-18
- 5) Acts 6:6-7
- 6) Acts 13:2-3

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Acts 19:10

Also referenced: Sermon: *Laying on of Hands*

Christian Biblical Church of God Offices:

United States

Post Office Box 1442
Hollister, California 95024-1442

Canada

Post Office Box 125
Brockville, Ontario
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Frankfort 9830
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