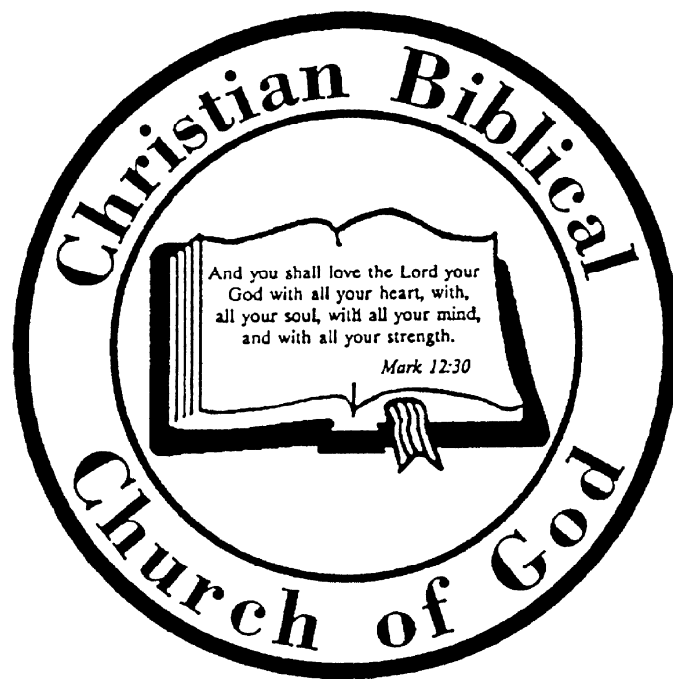


Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians



Transcript Book

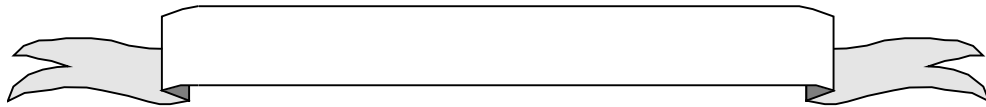
By Fred R. Coulter

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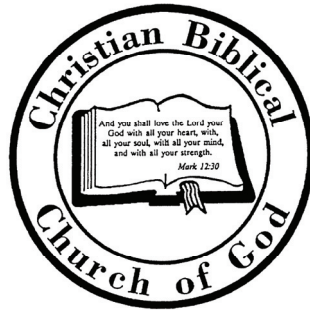
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HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Ephesians

Series of 6 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

Date

- Epistle to the Ephesians I
- Epistle to the Ephesians II
- Epistle to the Ephesians III
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Ephesians

Foreword

This series on Ephesians is a compilation of six sermons by Fred Coulter that will help you to gain a better understanding of this epistle written by the apostle Paul.

The Epistle to the Ephesians relates to the Feast of Tabernacles and living with God, the plan of God and how we get there, so this series was recorded during the Feast of Tabernacles. Study this transcript book that "...the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and relation in *the* knowledge of Him. And may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:17-18).

Ephesians I - Chapter One

Some of the main points of the teachings of the Apostle Paul found in chapter one are:

- God's Way is a way of life.
- The Holy Spirit can be within a person, which makes that person a member of the Body of Christ.
- The Holy Spirit can be with a person, which means that God is offering understanding to the person about Him and His Will.
- Anointed cloths, when and by who were cloths used to convey healing to a believer.
- Explained is the clash that occurred between the Apostle Paul and the idol business in Ephesus.
- Noted is how the Ephesian Church had to deal with many liars who claimed that they were Apostles sent by Jesus Christ.
- Predestination is explained, what it means is clearly explained.
- This chapter shows that the Apostle Paul had a deep desire that the Church at Ephesus would come to a full understanding of God's plan of redemption.

Ephesians II – Chapter Two

Other teachings of the Apostle Paul that was taught the brethren in chapter two are:

- The greatness of the Power of God.
- The resurrection of the Saints shows the Power of God.
- God's Saints are His temple on earth today.

Ephesians III – Chapter Four

Main points of chapter four, that the Apostle Paul noted for brethren to strive to do, are:

- Be at peace with one another and thereby be unified.
- Especially to each other strive to show kindness and meekness.

- Recognize that you all have one God, one Savior, one baptism, and are of one faith.
- Be careful, each one of you, to not be carried about with every wind of doctrine.
- Evil must be put away, especially lying, anger, theft, corrupt conversation, grieving the Holy Spirit, bitterness, evil-speaking and malice.
- In conversing with one another all are to manifest in their conversation a spirit of kindness and forgiveness.
- Remember that not all have the same gifts of the Spirit as Christ has given different gifts to different members of His body.

Ephesians IV – Chapter Five

Chapter five is a continuation of the Apostle Paul exhortations of Chapter four. The main points given by the Apostle Paul to the brethren in chapter five are:

- Follow God, taking care to walk in love.
- Have the mind of Christ in all things, rejecting the vices that were present in your former living before coming to Christ which were indulged in.
- Wives are to be subject to their husbands.
- Husbands are to love their wives.

Ephesians V – Chapter Six

Chapter six gives more instructions from the Apostle Paul on things for the brethren to be conscious of doing. Some of the instructions are:

- Relations between children and parents.
- Relations that are to be between employees and employers, especially if both are brethren.
- All brethren are to pray for each other.
- Brethren are to put on the entire armor of God.

Ephesians VI – Chapter Three

Chapter three speaks of Paul wishing that the Ephesians to be able to comprehend the glory of God's plan of salvation. Some of the main points of the chapter are:

- There is a mystery religion in the world that is composed of a teaching of license to do evil.
- Discussed is the mystery of lawlessness.
- The mystery of Christ which was concealed until Christ came and afterwards was made known to God's Church is covered.

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

Epistle to the Ephesians I

Chapter One

Fred R. Coulter

Let me explain about this translation I am doing, and am adhering very strictly, in particular to, the use of the verbs—the meaning of the verbs in the present tense, and to participles, which are those expressions which give us an ongoing meaning of the Word of God, and puts it more in a present tense for us.

That gives the Word of God more of a living, more of an up-to-date effect from the point of view that:

- the Word of God is *living*
- the Word of God is *true*
- the Word of God is *Spirit and Life*

Therefore, it should have meaning to us in depth. In the translation of *The Seven General Epistles*, this is what I have endeavored to do. As many of you know I have translated an amplified paraphrased version of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John which I compiled in *A Harmony of the Gospels* in modern English. That one was not quite as strict a translation as the one that I did for *The Seven General Epistles*.

Ephesians relates to the Feast of Tabernacles and living with God, the plan of God and how we get there. An amplified translation does not adhere strictly to the verbs and the participles, although it is not avoided. An amplified version takes a word and expands it with two or three other words or phrases, which then magnifies or amplifies the translation. That's what I have done with the translation in Ephesians.

Ephesians is, in particular, so important for us, because this was one of the 'prison epistles' of the Apostle Paul. Let's go back to the book of Acts and let's see how this whole situation developed in Ephesus. Ephesus was the great city of the goddess Diana. I'm sure all of you are well aware of the mother-goddess type of thing. The whole pagan world is still involved in it. Let's go through and get a little background about the city itself. Let's understand the tremendous impact that the Apostle Paul had when he came and preached the Gospel in Ephesus.

Acts 19:1: "Now it came to pass *that* while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper parts *and* came to Ephesus..." Ephesus became the major center for Christianity; in particular after the death of Paul and Peter. The Apostle John took up residence there in Ephesus,

and that became the center and headquarters for the very work of God, and the compiling of the New Testament as finished by the Apostle John.

Here's how it started out. Paul was the first one to go there "...and when he found certain disciples, he said to them, 'Did you receive *the* Holy Spirit after you believed?'..." (vs 1-2). That's a very important thing. There are a lot of people who believe that have not received the Holy Spirit. I think a lot of Protestants fit into this category, from the point of view that God's Spirit may be *with* them, but not *in* them. There is a distinct difference! One is *a calling*; the other is *conversion*! There is a distinct difference in calling and conversion.

Conversion is that you have the *Spirit of God IN you*. We will see in the first chapter of the book of Ephesians that the Apostle Paul talks about the Holy Spirit of God in relationship to eternal salvation. It's a very important thing. This also tells us that they were to know if they had the Spirit of God or not. They were to understand that they had the Holy Spirit to lead them.

Let's notice their answer, "...And they said to him, 'We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit.' Then he said to them, 'Unto what, then, were you baptized?' And they said, 'Unto the baptism of John'" (vs 2-3). If John's baptism was not as close to a valid baptism as you could get:

- Would you not say that that was a valid baptism?
- Was not John's baptism sent from God?
- Didn't God tell him to go baptize the people?
- Tell them to believe on the One Who was to come, Jesus Christ?
- That they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit?

If they weren't baptized with the Holy Spirit, John said they would be baptized with fire. So, with the baptism of John the Holy Spirit was not given as an impregnation in the spirit of the mind of the individual who believed. But the Holy Spirit apparently came and was dwelling *with them* so they could believe, so that they could understand certain things.

Verse 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... [in other words, re-baptized] ...into the name of the Lord Jesus. Now, when Paul laid *his* hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with *other* languages and prophesied” (vs 4-6). This was a sign to Paul that he was to do *a great work* in Ephesus; that he was to build *a great church* in Ephesus; however, not without a lot of trouble.

Verse 7: “And all the men were about twelve.” Twelve is a foundational number in the Bible. Here’s the foundation of the Church in Ephesus. Where did he start this Church? *At this time the Church of God was part of the believers at the synagogue!* So then, the synagogue was the Church. Of course, later, with all the problems that they had with the Jews who didn’t believe, then they had to have their meeting outside of the synagogue.

Verse 8: “Then he entered into the synagogue *and* spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and refused to believe, speaking evil of **the way...**” (vs 8-9). That shows that *God’s way is a way of life*; it’s not just a ‘religion’ that you believe. It is not just a standard to make your life better. It is *a way of life!*

When they spoke evil of that way, “...before the multitude, he departed from them *and* separated the disciples; *and* he disputed *these things* daily in the school of a certain Tyrannus. And this took place for two years...” (vs 9-10). They did all of this without telephones, without video cameras, without news reports for two years.

“...so that all those who inhabited Asia heard the message of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.... [this was a phenomenal ministry at Ephesus] ...And God worked special works of power by the hands of Paul, so that even when handkerchiefs or cloths were brought from his body *to* those who were sick, the diseases departed from them and the wicked spirits went out from them” (vs 10-12). This is where we get the Bible principle of the anointed cloth.

Let me just mention here that the anointed cloth is sent when the minister cannot come and anoint you personally. I personally feel that every minister should anoint a particular cloth for that individual, for their particular sickness, and send it to them as a special prayer.

I remember years ago when they had a lot of letters coming in and people asking for an anointed cloth. What they would do is have a huge stack of cloths and they would pour the oil on it and then pray a general prayer over it. That was the only way they could do it with so many asking. Many people were healed with the use of an anointed cloth. But

there is one thing about the anointed cloth: ***Never use it as an idol! or a good luck charm!*** When you are through with an anointed cloth, burn it, because God doesn’t want people to take it—as the Protestants say—and put it under your pillow and it will bring you good luck and good health. That is making an idol out of an anointed cloth, and we don’t see that they did that here.

There was competition from the Jews, v 13: “Then certain vagabond Jews, exorcists... [Ones who would cast out demons—vagabonds—gypsy Jews, traveling here and there doing the exorcisms, taking people’s money and so forth.] ...took it upon themselves to pronounce over those who had wicked spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, ‘We adjure you *by* Jesus, whom Paul proclaims.’”

Notice the spiritual confrontation here; maybe this will help you understand about Eph. 6 where it says that you put on the ‘whole armor of God, for we are not fighting and warring against flesh and blood, but against wicked spirits in high places.

Just to show you what went on, v 14: “Now, there were certain *men*, seven sons of a Jew *named* Sceva, a high priest, who were doing this. But the wicked spirit answered *and* said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I have knowledge of; but you, who are you?’ And the man in whom was the wicked spirit attacked them, overpowered them and prevailed against them, so that they escaped out of that house naked and wounded” (vs 14-16). This was a bloody mess! That gives us a good example of what you should not do if you don’t have the proper authority and commission from God to do it.

Of course, this was known all around, v 17: “Now this became known to everyone inhabiting Ephesus... [this was in the *Ephesus Daily Chronicle* if you please] ...both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Then many of those who believed came *forward* to confess and declare their deeds” (vs 17-18)—repented, were baptized, had hands laid on and received the Holy Spirit.

Verse 19: “And many of those who practiced the occult arts brought their books *and* burned *them* before all... [They had a nice big town square book burning of the writings of the goddess Diana and Zeus, and Thor, and all of the gods.] ...and they calculated the cost of them and found *it to be* fifty thousand pieces of silver.” We’re going to see that this created a tremendous economic depression.

Verse 20: “And so the Word of the Lord spread and prevailed mightily. Now, when all these things had taken place, Paul determined in *his* spirit *that* when he had passed through Macedonia and

Achaia, he must go to Jerusalem, saying, ‘After going there, I must also see Rome.’ And when he had sent to Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he remained in Asia *for a time*” (vs 20-22). He stayed in Ephesus.

Verse 23: “And at that time it came to pass *that there was* no small tumult about the way.... [going back to that way of life as we covered before] ...For *there was* a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver temples for Diana, *which* brought the artificers no small gain” (vs 23-24). They were making money on this!

Verse 25: “After gathering together the workmen *who worked* in such things, he said, ‘Men, you know that from this *craft* we gain our wealth... [economic well-being] ...and you see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but almost all of Asia, this **Paul has persuaded a great multitude to turn away, saying that they are not gods which are made by hands.** Now not only is our business in danger of coming into disrepute... [‘we’re all going to go bankrupt’] ...but also the temple of the great goddess Diana, whom **all Asia and the world** worship, is in danger of being regarded as nothing, and her majesty also is about to be destroyed” (vs 25-27). I want you to get a glimmering of how absolutely important the religion of Diana was to the known world.

Verse 28: “And after hearing *this*, they were filled with rage; *and* they cried out, saying, ‘Great is Diana of *the* Ephesians!’ And the whole city was filled with confusion; and they seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians *and* fellow travelers of Paul, *and* rushed with one accord to the theater” (vs 28-29). You’ve probably seen pictures of the ruins of the theater in Ephesus. They had a big town meeting, everyone was there.

Verse 30: “Now Paul was determined to go in to the people, *but the disciples prevented* him.... [they knew that they were out to kill Paul] ...And some of the chiefs of Asia, who also were his friends, sent to him, urging *him* not to venture into the theater” (vs 30-31). Just like mobs today, they don’t know why they’re there. They all get together.

Verse 32: “Now, some were crying out one thing and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the majority *of them* did not know for what reason they had come together. Then they selected Alexander from among the multitude, the Jews pushing him forward... [They are the ones who hate Christ; they’re still doing the same thing today, putting up front people to destroy Christianity.] ...and Alexander made a sign with his hand, wishing to make a defense to the people. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, there was a unified shout from all for about *the space of* two hours...

[here was a riot going on] ...*as* they cried out, ‘**Great is Diana of the Ephesians!**’” (vs 32-35). Greek: ‘tes megales theas artemidos!’ You can just hear this chanting going on for hours—two solid hours!

Verse 35: “Now after the recorder had calmed the multitude, he said, ‘Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the inhabitants of the city of Ephesus are keepers of the temple of the **great goddess Diana**... [you can almost see the great politicians standing up there in their togas] ...and of the *image* that fell down from Jupiter? Since these things are undeniable, it is imperative that you be calm and do nothing recklessly. For you brought these men *forcibly*, *who are* neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. On the one hand, if Demetrius and the artificers with him have a matter against anyone, *the* courts are open, and there are proconsuls... [judges] ...let them accuse one another... [give their case] ...But on the other hand, if you have questions about any other matter, it shall be resolved in a lawful assembly. And moreover, we are in danger of being accused of insurrection because of this day since there is not one reason that we can give to justify this gathering.’ And after saying these things, he dismissed the assembly” (vs 35-41).

So, Paul narrowly escaped—didn’t he? You know he wasn’t whimpering off in a corner. He preached for two years and just escaped with his life!

Let’s look at the Church at Ephesus and what they had to go through. This gives us a prophecy of what they had to go through; this gives us an indication of their experience as Christians, and then we’ll go from here into the book of Ephesians.

Revelation 2:1: “To the angel of the Ephesian church, write: These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand...” The seven stars are the seven churches, so Christ is upheld in the book of Ephesus as being the Head of the Church, walking in the midst of the Church, over all to the Church. He’s starting out here by saying, ‘Look, this is to show that Christ is connected with all of the churches.’

Verse 2: “I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars” They had to go through a lot of people coming along and saying, ‘We’re apostles, we saw Christ,’ and all this sort of thing and called them *liars!* And they had to stand up to it, just like they did when the situation came because of the economic collapse of getting rid of all of these idols,

books and things that they had with their ‘religion.’

Just think where the Catholic Church would be today if all of the Catholics started getting rid of their idols, crucifixes, statues of Mary and starting knocking off all of the saints that are engraved into the side of their churches. Or go to St. Peter’s Basilica—the only thing you can do to St. Peter’s Basilica is just destroy it; there’s no hope in saving it, it is so full of idols you can’t believe it. Of course, they have Mary-worship there, which then is a ‘Christianized’ Diana-worship.

They had to buy all these pagan things, buy all these Jewish things and combine them. They had a tough time of it. I want you to understand what a difficult situation they were in and then why the book of Ephesians is so inspiring and why it is so important for us. It gives us a glimpse into one of the most profound and meaningful books that Paul wrote showing the plan of God.

Verse 3: “And *that* you have borne *much*... [worked, labored, had patience] ...and have endured, and for My name’s sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love” (vs 3-4). They started leaving off loving God with all their heart, mind, soul and being, and started becoming more involved in taking care of people and the relationship with people instead of their relationship with God first.

It makes you wonder about the whole setting of this, because how far this goes into the development of Sunday-worship in reflection to the first love. If the first commandment is to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being, and the first four commandments are hanging on that first commandment, then you have no other gods before you, no graven images, taking God’s name in vain and remembering the Sabbath to keep it Holy—just abbreviated form of those commandments.

If they were losing their first love, there was probably a lot of pressure to begin keeping Sunday as well as the Sabbath—that’s how they started. Of course this is way after the death of Paul and the death of the Apostle John. Obviously then, they started saying, ‘Look, we can convert these pagans a little more if we say that Diana was not really not the one you ought to be worshipping, but it’s the virgin Mary, because after all it says in Scripture that ‘all generations will call you [Mary] blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.’

Now in begins to slip the worship of Mary as the substitute for the worship of Diana. The only thing that has changed is the name. So, this gives you great wonder as to how far the Church at Ephesus went in losing its first love.

Verse 5: “Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.” That’s exactly what happened to the city of Ephesus—gone, a dead city; was removed!

Verse 6: “But this you have: that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. The one who has an ear... [we’re going to see how important this is in relationship to the book of Ephesians] ...let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the tree of life that is in *the* midst of the paradise of God” (vs 6-7).

Using the *amplified translation* of the book of Ephesians I’ve taken the meaning of all the Bible and applied it to each verse as I translated the New Testament. You will see that there are many more words that are given to amplify the meaning of the original Greek. This is not be taken as an authoritative translation whatsoever. This meant to be taken—and I hope inspiring—Bible study aid for Ephesians. It’s very important to relate this in relationship to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Ephesians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle... [What is an apostle?] ...one who has been commissioned and sent by Jesus Christ...” It actually means *one bearing authority to speak for*. That’s why when they tested the false apostles, they found them *liars* because Jesus didn’t send them.

“...through the will, choice and purposeful design of God...” (v 1). All of those words have to do with the *will of God*.

- Does the will of God have choice, if He chooses to do it? *Yes!*
 - ✓ He calls us!
 - ✓ He elects us!
 - ✓ He selects us!
 - ✓ We are called the ‘chosen ones.’
- Does God have a purpose and design in what He’s doing? *Yes, He does!*

The rest of the Bible tells us that. What I’m doing is explaining why I translated this particular way.

“...unto the saints...” (v 1). Who are the **saints**? *We’re the saints!* It comes to from the Greek ‘hagiois’—which means *Holy one*, the ones who are Holy. Why are you Holy? *Because you have the Holy Spirit!*

It also means “...who are the consecrated ones to God...” (v 1).

- set aside
- dedicated
- consecrated

—to God!

“...at Ephesus, the faithful and trusting ones in Christ Jesus” (v 1). This gives a full meaning and greater impact, and I hope, more inspiration and understanding of Ephesians.

Verse 2: “Grace, Divine favor (God’s generous gift) and blessing to you, even the peace... [What sort of peace does God give? *Bringing to bear the rest of the meaning of the Bible*] ...harmony and tranquility from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessing and praise be to the God and the Father of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ...” (vs 2-4).

We need to understand something about our relationship to Jesus Christ. Not only is He our Savior, He is also our King, our Master. He is the One not only do we have *faith in*, but give total *allegiance to*. You see what happened to those at Ephesus later on after Paul wrote this epistle to them. *They lost their first love and they didn’t give that total faith to, and they didn’t give that total allegiance to*. I’m trying to bring this out to make it very clear for you.

“...Who has bestowed upon us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly things through Christ” (v 3). That says an awful lot. What this is going to do is help us understand the tremendous inheritance that God says we are going to receive when we enter into the Kingdom of God, when we rule and reign with Christ, when we live with God and are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly things through Christ. Not yet that we have them, but we will, as we will see.

Verse 4: “In accordance with His very own will, He selected and chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, for the purpose that we are to be presented Holy, consecrated, irrefutably blameless and unblemished in His sight...”

- Does the grace of God cleanse you from every sin? *Yes, it does!*
- Does the righteousness of Jesus Christ—imputed to you—put you in a special standing with God, Irrespective of the fact that you have ‘the law of sin and death’ in you? *Yes, it does!*

It makes you “...Holy, consecrated, irrefutably blameless and unblemished in His sight (that is in God the Father’s sight) in Godly love” (v 4).

Verse 5: “Who before the foundation of the world...” God doesn’t do things haphazardly. God is not impetuous that He goes out and He does something. ‘Oh, I did this, not what am I going to do with it? I created a universe, what am I going to do

with this universe?’ Before He created it, He had a purpose:

Verse 5: “Who before the foundation of the world, designed beforehand and foreordained by His predeterminate will and purpose for us, those who are called and chosen by Him, to be predestinated to enter into sonship by God the Father Himself, through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of God’s very own will and desire.” I don’t know about you, but that makes the hair stand up on the back of my neck, that

- God’s *own will*
- God the Father’s *own choice*
- God the Father’s *own design*
- God the Father’s *own Spirit*

has been given to us, and called us for His purpose! This really becomes magnificent.

Verse 6: “And for this to expand the praise and honor of His glorious and splendorous grace (which is the basis of our relationship that emanates from God the Father), wherein He has made us the recipient objects of His Divine grace and blessing in the Beloved One (Jesus Christ)” —that you are the object of God’s love.

Remember what it says in 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.”

We have become the objects of God’s love! That’s why it was so terrible for them to lose their first love, because God worked in their lives first, and God called them first, and they were the *objects and recipients* of God’s grace and blessing through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:7: “In Whom we have the redemption, the deliverance... [What is redemption mean in light of the rest of the Bible?] ...procured by the payment of a ransom through His (Jesus Christ’s) very own blood, even the remission... [What does that mean?]: ...pardon and cancellation of our transgressions and offenses against God, according to the overflowing riches of His grace!”

This gives us the tremendous wealth and understanding of the glory of the calling of God, that it is called here, “...**according to the riches of His grace.**”

Now maybe you’ll understand why Paul says, ‘So sin abound, grace much more abounds!’ *Yes!* Because grace is greater!

Verse 8: “Which He caused to super-abound toward and into us with all Divine wisdom, sagacity and intelligent right mindedness.” This is telling us what the Holy Spirit of God is to do for us:

To give us “...**wisdom**, sagacity...” *proper reasoning and understanding*] ...intelligent right mindedness.” In other words, *common, logical sense* according to the Word of God. It’s important, brethren, that when—and one of the most important things we can do—we are studying the Bible is to study from the point of view that when we get the words of God in our mind and we begin

- *thinking* with the Scriptures
- *understanding* with the Scriptures

because it’s tremendous and fantastic grace that God has given to us, that He would give of His very own being to implant His Spirit in the very spirit of our mind. To take us—who are sinners by nature—and set us up completely blameless, harmless and clean before God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

In addition to that, v 9: “Having revealed and made known to us **the mystery...**—*God’s plan*; and many people take it for granted. ‘Oh yeah, we go to the Feast of Tabernacles because we know what that means, that it pictures a time when we’re going to be living with God.’ Brethren, we can’t have that attitude or that kind of projection of God’s way at all.

God has “...revealed and made know to us **the mystery...** [which the world cannot understand and does not understand and will not understand] ...of His secret plan, which is hidden from and unobtainable through human rational, of His very own will and desire, according to His goodness and pleasure, which He proposed, designed and planned in Himself.” God’s plan and salvation is not just some happenstance thing, it’s “...proposed, designed and planned in Himself.”

When was it determined that Jesus was to be crucified? *Rev. 13—the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world!* Look out at the great foundation of the vastness of this universe. God had a plan before He even started. God has a plan that He is doing right now, and it’s purposeful, by His design. *It’s for His own pleasure and goodness!*

Verse 10: “That in the administration of this plan, which is brought to completion in the fulfilling of the times, He might bring everything together in Christ, including both the things in heaven and the things upon the earth, in and through Him, in Whom we also have received a share and obtained an inheritance in His plan...” (vs 10-11)—in His plan.

(go to the next track)

- You have a share in God’s plan!
- You have stock in God’s plan!
- You have a share in the inheritance of the universe!

“...we have been predestinated... [God’s predetermined will for us] ...according to His own purpose and predetermine will, Who is working everything (in His plan for humanity) according to the design and resolve of His own will and desire.... [What is the purpose of that?] ...For us to be the praise of His magnificent splendor and glory, we who have before the fulfilling of the time, have first trusted, believed and relied in Christ” (vs 11-12). That says an awful lot!

- Did you know that the angels are going to worship us?
- Did you know that all of those who come into the Kingdom of God—through the Millennium and through the Last Great Day—are going to praised us as part of God’s magnificent and splendorous glory?

Verse 13: “In Whom you also, after hearing the Word and Message of the Truth of God, even the good news of your own salvation, in Whom you also, after having believed that message of Truth, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...”

What does that mean? *The earnest; the down payment!* The receiving of the Holy Spirit seals us as belonging to God. It does more than that: “...(which is the spiritual stamp of identification showing that you belong to God)” (v 13)—as compared to the stamp of identification that the world is going to receive that the Bible calls *the mark of the beast!* We have the seal of God!

Verse 14: “Which Spirit is *the earnest*, the begettal, first installment or down payment in advance of our inheritance, which expands into eternal life, through (the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection when Jesus Christ returns) for you become God’s very own children, for the praise of His magnificent splendor and glory.” *The very children of God!*

‘Behold, what glorious love that the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called *the children of God*. and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall see Him for we shall be like Him!’ (1-John 3). *In glory, in splendor, the very children of God!* God is going to say to all the rest who come into the Family of God, ‘Behold, the firstborn,’ because we are called *the Church of the Firstborn* (Heb. 12). That tells us a tremendous amount—doesn’t it?

Verse 15: “For this very reason, I, also, after having heard of your trusting faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, even the Godly love and affection which is toward the saints (who are the called out consecrated ones in Christ Jesus), I do not cease giving thanks for you continually making mention of

you in my prayers; so that the God of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the Father, who radiates Divine magnificent splendor and glory, may give to you the Spirit of Divine wisdom and the spiritual insight of revelation into the knowledge and understanding of Him (God the Father)” (vs 15-17).

That’s what this whole Feast of Tabernacles is to do. It is to draw us closer to God. We are to spend these seven days together. We are to study God’s Word and grow in that knowledge and understanding and spiritual insight, and let the Spirit of God be impacted in us, to inspire us

- with the Word of God
- with the Spirit of Christ
- with the Spirit of the Father

—to really understand the tremendous and magnificent salvation that God is giving us. I’m almost beyond words to explain it, because it so fantastic.

Verse 19: “And for you to know and comprehend the super-abounding greatness, even the magnitude of His infinite power toward us who are believing, according to the inner workings of the dynamic power and the spiritual might of His strength” (vs 18-19). We are going to be resurrected by the very power and Spirit of God.

Verse 20: “Which He performed and worked in Christ... [here’s the evidence that we will be there with Him in that resurrection] ...having resurrected Him from among the dead and set Him in His place at His right hand in the heavenlies, **high above every principality and ruler, authority and power, lordship and dominion, every name and title**, that can be named, not only in this present age, but also in the age that is coming. And He, God the Father, has put all things (even the vastness of the universe) under His feet, that is, the authority for the rulership and dominion; and He appointed Him as the Head over everyone and over all things in the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who is fulfilling all things in every way” (vs 20-23).

That should give us a beginning incite into the tremendous inheritance that God has for us, and to be showing us, brethren, the tremendous, wonderful and magnificent thing that God has done for us so that we can be in His very kingdom.

I know that this sermon is going to be heard/read by some of you who are nearing the last stages of your physical life. You need to be inspired and uplifted—that even though you may be weak and infirm, and even though your body may be wearing out—that *God is not forgetting you!* That God has this tremendous and fantastic and almost incomprehensible plan for you *to be His very own*

children and live and dwell with Him forever and ever in all eternity!

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 19:1-41
- 2) Revelation 2:1-7
- 3) Ephesians 1:1-6
- 4) John 3:16
- 5) Ephesians 1:7-17, 19-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ephesians 6
- Revelation 13
- 1 John 3
- Hebrews 12

Also referenced: Book:

- *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Epistle to the Ephesians II Chapter Two

Fred R. Coulter

This is a special Bible study that we're going through in the book of Ephesians, which becomes tremendously important for us for spiritual growth and understanding. It fits right into the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, because it tells us

- why we're called
- how we are called
- how God deals with us
- how we need to lead our lives
- how we're eventually going to be in the Kingdom of God and be living with God

That's exactly the whole reason of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Before we begin the second chapter today, let's review just a little bit of the first chapter so that we be sure to have it in mind. Eph. 1 tells us about God's calling, which is His own Divine personal will for us. This is not to make us have the big, swelled vanity head, but this to humble us to realize that the very God:

- the very Creator
- the One Who is in charge of the whole vastness of the universe
- the One Who sent His Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior

personally, individually reached down and called us.

This has been the whole foreordained or preordained plan of God that 'as man as He would call' that He would 'predestine them' to the sonship of God.

Paul, when he did this epistle, for the first time really understood that He was not going to return during his lifetime. That makes it very important for us to understand, because Ephesians becomes the most important and principle epistle or instruction for us so that we can grow in grace and knowledge and come to the resurrection of Jesus Christ that He has for us and to be in the Kingdom of God.

These words—Ephesians 1:17—are so tremendous and the only thing I can say is that the whole book of Ephesians is profound! It is the most important thing for us to know, realize and understand with our relationship with God. To understand how it is that we are going to be in the Kingdom of God. The only way we're going to be in the Kingdom of God—especially during the end-time right now—is for us

- to be inspired
- have the strength
- the courage
- the faith
- the knowledge and understanding

to be able to really continue and be faithful in spite of all of the bombardment of false religions, false doctrines, the whole technological improvements of the world, and the great deceptions that Satan is bringing on the world right now. That's why the book of Ephesians was written.

Ephesians 1:17: "So that the God our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the Father, Who radiates Divine magnificent splendor and glory..." It shows that later on that we are going to have the same spiritual and fantastic blessing of living at this level of existence.

It says in Isaiah that God inhabits—lives in—eternity. Living in eternity, it says He is clothed with majesty; He radiates Divine and magnificent splendor and glory.

When Daniel had the vision of God and he saw the tremendous train and glory of God. In other words, the reflection, the tremendous glory of God as Daniel was given the vision to see God the Father and Jesus Christ coming to him (Dan. 7). Then all of the tens of thousands and millions of angels surrounding the throne and praising God. When we discuss here the Divine magnificent splendor and glory that radiates from God the Father, God is going to give something to us:

"...may give you *the* Spirit of Divine wisdom... [That's what we need. Not the wisdom of this world that leads to death.] ...and the spiritual insight of revelation into the knowledge and understanding of Him (God the Father)."

Not only are we to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but through what God has given here we are to grow in the knowledge of the Father. If there is anything that is most imperative concerning the Feast of Tabernacles that is we will be living with God the Father and all of the saints when the whole entire plan of God is finished.

Verse 18: That the understanding of your mind be continually enlightened..." That's what we're trying to do here.

- to enlighten your mind.

- to inspire you spiritually.
- to give you the hope and the uplifting of God's Spirit

so that we can understand that that is the sole and most important thing that there is in the world. That while at the Feast of tabernacles we are to enjoy all the *physical* things that there are—that is true—but that we see and understand that it is the *spiritual* that counts.

Even as Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life. The flesh profits nothing!' So, we want to be:

- spiritually enlightened
- spiritually illuminated

"...so that you know and comprehend what is the hope of His calling..." (v 18). That if you have that hope and you comprehend that hope, you realize that God has called you and your really fully, completely understand that, then there is nothing in the world that is going to deter you from following God. There is nothing that is going to keep you out of the Kingdom of God and dwelling with God forever.

"...and the luxuriant riches, yes, even the opulent abundance of His Divine magnificent splendor and glory of His inheritance in the saints" (v 18). The whole plan of God focuses in on those of us that God has called.

Verse 19: "And for you to know and comprehend the super-abounding greatness..." If we can somehow can impart with these words—and with God's Spirit and what we are doing here—to give us just an inkling, an understanding any comprehension of this greatness.

"...even the magnitude of His infinite power toward us who are believing according to the inner workings of the dynamic power and the spiritual might of His strength, which He performed and worked in Christ, having resurrected Him from among the dead and set Him in His place at His right hand in the heavenlies" (vs 19-20). Right now at the right hand of God is our High Priest.

Here is something we all need to grasp and understand, and in particularly every minister, every teacher, because we know that what we are doing, though we have been a small little isolated group for quite a while, I am confident and assured that God is not going to keep us small and isolated forever. It has given us peace, harmony, tranquility and time to grow in grace and in knowledge and for us to understand the tremendous thing that God has done through Christ Jesus.

Verse 21: "High above every principality

and ruler... [that is on the earth, physical or spiritual; angelic or demonic] ...authority and power..." There is nothing when we're looking to Christ that is going to deter us, that is going to stop us, even if we are executed, or as Paul was—in the case when he wrote the book of Ephesians—in prison. Nothing is going to deter us!

- there is no power
- there is no authority
- there is no lordship or dominion, title or name

"...that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age that is coming" (v 21)—because Phil. 2 tells us that 'every knee is going to bow to Jesus Christ.'

Verse 22: "For He, God the Father, has put all things (even the vastness of the universe) ...**under His feet**, that is, the authority, rulership and dominion; and He appointed Him as the Head over everyone and over all things in the Church."

So, the whole purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles is that *we will be dwelling with God*, and *we will be looking to Christ*—Who is our Head of the Church now—Who is going to be over us forever through all eternity and, yes, with the marriage of the Lamb and Christ, which is also pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, dwelling together and bringing people into the Kingdom of God through the whole process of the Millennium. He is the Head over everyone and all things in the Church:

Verse 23: "Which is His body, the fullness of Him Who is fulfilling all things in every way."

Ephesians 2—Paul then begins with where we were before God called us, and how we are brought into the Church and what this means. What we need to understand is that at the time that Paul was writing Ephesians he knew that Christ was not going to return. He knew that Jerusalem—according to the words of Jesus—was going to be destroyed. He knew that the temple was going to be demolished and removed.

Let's understand that the Jews who were converted in the Church upheld that the temple was the central place; that the temple in Jerusalem was where God was. That this was important, but Paul in writing Eph. 2 is telling us clearly that *the temple is meaningless*. Obviously then, this is going to infuriate a lot of Jews, because the temple to them was everything. Remember, before Christ came that's all there was.

Remember when Jesus was talking to the woman at the well in Samaria? The woman said, 'Sir, we worship in this mountain, and You say that

in Jerusalem is the place where men ought—ordained, required, obligatory, mandatory—to worship.’ Jesus said, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is and is now coming when you shall neither worship in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem, for the Father seeks those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, for God is Spirit and those that worship Him must worship in Spirit and in Truth!’

This comes as a great shock to the Jews. Let’s understand where we have come from. Let’s see where we are going, and that’s the whole purpose of the book of Ephesians. It teaches us how to worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

Ephesians 2:1: “And you, having been dead in your transgressions and offences, and your sins and iniquities; in which you once moved and walked in the way of life, according to the age (and times) of this world and society, as dictated by the mighty prince and ruler (Satan the devil) that has the authority and power of the air, the spirit that is the source of the diabolical spiritual power who is now doing its inner workings in the sons of disobedience, rebellion and defiance, who are **obstinately opposing God**” (vs 1-2)

This is absolutely reflective of what the world is like today. Let’s remember where we have come from. We have been dead in trespasses, sins, iniquities and violations of God’s way—*dead*—which means that as God looks at the world, the whole world, in fact, is truly *dead* before God! Let’s think about this for a minute. It says, ‘As in Adam we all die.’ What does that mean? What did God tell Adam and warn him about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? He said, ‘In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die!’ That means literally ‘in dying you shall die.’

Spiritually, in Adam when we are born, we are dead in Adam. That’s what Paul was talking about in the whole book of Romans. Why are we dead in Adam though we have physical life? *Because from Adam we have the ‘law of sin and death.’* Therefore, God views the world as *dead!* Maybe that will help us understand why God not only allows, but even causes—and yes, even instigates—very traumatic and horrible things in the world as punishment upon people: famines, starvation, death, suffering—little children who suffer.

I heard a man on the radio who said, ‘I don’t believe in God, I’m an atheist.’ He was asked, ‘Why are you an atheist?’ He said, ‘Because I see all these things going on in the world, how can there be a God Who is a God of love if all these things go on in the world?’ *Because they don’t understand that they are dead now!* Jesus said, ‘Let the dead bury their dead.’ We know with the second resurrection God is

going bring them back to life. That’s what it means, *we are dead in our sins and iniquities!*

Verse 3: “Among whom, also, we all once conducted ourselves in that mode of life, that lifestyle motivated by the lust and designs of our flesh, habitually practicing the things inspired and dictated by the will of the flesh, and the thoughts and imaginations of the mind; and were by nature children of God’s wrath (His fierce anger and indignation), even as others who are continuing to live in this manner.”

The Jews have a practice of during the Feast of Tabernacles reading the entire book of Ecclesiastes. You might wonder why it is that they read the book of Ecclesiastes. If you want a book that is really quite depressing—and it is—read the book of Ecclesiastes. Let’s look at some of it and why at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles—when we should be thinking of the fullness of God’s way; when we should be understanding God’s way—should such a depressing book be read. I think it’s very fitting for the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles that they do read the book of Ecclesiastes. I don’t say that with any cynicism, but I say that as we are *‘dead in Adam.’*

The book of Ecclesiastes shows the futility and the frustration of this purely physical life in which we live. If that is all there is to life then it truly is as Solomon wrote. So, there is a lesson and instruction for us. Just as this physical life is futile, as we learned on the first day of this Feast of Tabernacles, you take the boughs and make a little tabernacle with it.

What happens to those boughs? *They die!* That’s the whole lesson that we are to learn; that this physical life is temporary; unless we come to Christ we are dead in our sins and children of wrath, subject to God’s punishment, subject to the ends of our own works and everything, when you truly understand that in Adam we are dead, showing us the futility in this physical life.

Ecclesiastes 1:1: “The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ‘Vanity of vanities’... [worthlessness of worthlessness] ...says the Preacher, ‘vanity of vanities! All *is* vanity’” (vs 1-2).

That takes away all of the accomplishments that anyone can do; all the great civilizations of the past have been destroyed, because ***they are vanity!*** Yes, even if you have the Word of God without the Spirit of God there can be actually nothing more vain than that, because you hold in your hands the Truth of God, but you will not have the Spirit of God, which is life. There can’t be anything more vain than that. Then he goes on, I’ll let you do a little

reading on your own of the book of Ecclesiastes, we'll just cover a few verses.

Verse 3: "What profit does a man have in all his labor which he labors under the sun?" Everything he does. You build houses, empires, businesses; you make money, you have gold, silver, accomplishments, you write, you sculpture, you produce works of art.

Verse 4: "One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever. The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again. All things *are* full of labor; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which has been *is* that which shall be; and that which has been done *is* that which shall be done; and *there is* nothing new under the sun" (vs 4-9).

Then you go through all of everything that he wrote about, and the most important thing that he says is that ***all is vanity!*** If you go out and have mirth, been a playboy or a playgirl, that's vanity and you can end up in trouble. If you drink and get drunk and take drugs, that's going to end in futility. If you're nice and upright and accumulate wealth and you do 'good' in this world—being sincere, good people in this world—and you come to the end of your life and you die, *that's vanity!*

Who's going to know what you're going to leave what you have. Who's he going to be? Is he going to be a wise man? *or* Is he going to be a fool? Go through all of the book of Ecclesiastes.

Why did I say it was appropriate for the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles that they read that? *Because Judaism does not have the Spirit of God!* That's what Paul was saying to these people with the coming destruction of the temple. Judaism does not have the Spirit of God, neither does any 'religion.' No pagan religion has the Spirit of God, so therefore, we can say very clearly Catholicism today—though it mouths Christ—does not have the Spirit of God.

How do we truly worship God? God has to do something first, because we are in a condition that only God can rescue us from. Here is what Paul is telling us: That the book of Ecclesiastes and all of the futility of the flesh is not what God had in mind.

Ephesians 2:4: "But God, being rich and abundantly generous in tender mercy and kindness, out of His great magnanimous love wherewith He loved us." ***God's love to us! God did it!*** Not that we

ever did anything for God before God calling us. Because God put man in this futile position, Jesus took upon Himself the death of Adam for all of us.

That may be very profound and I want you to think on that! That is tremendous! With God's great love, that's how much God loves us. That's why magnanimous love is so great and important. It is love that is given totally one sided—God to us. We're to respond to God because of that.

Verse 5: "Even when we were dead in our sins and transgressions... [even while the world was in this futile condition as we read of in Ecc.] ... (He) has made us alive with Christ... [He made the means, make it possible for us to be made alive with Christ] ...by (the means of) grace..." That tremendous overall relationship that God puts us into; from which God's grace flows:

- His love to us
- His blessings to us
- His faith
- His Spirit

And we are to respond in the grace by keeping His commandments and walking in His way and growing in grace and knowledge and loving God.

"...(which is God's gracious, Divine favor, blessing and generous gift)... [that's how]: ...you have been saved." That's what it means in the *King James* 'by grace you have been saved.' It is in the past perfect tense: *have been*. There's a point right now to which we *have been saved*.

As you are standing in this grace, this Gospel, 1-Corinthians 15:2^[transcriber's correction]: "By which you are also being saved..." There is a process of being saved right now, which is what we are going through.

Then there is the statement in the Bible that says at the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection we *shall be saved*. There's a threefold step in salvation:

1. ***have been saved*** now
2. ***are being saved*** through the process of growing in grace and knowledge, conversion and Christianity, and walking in God's way
3. ***shall be saved*** at the resurrection when Christ returns so that we will be in the Kingdom of God

We have exactly the three things, and all three are correct. That's why it's so futile to argue with anyone that once saved always saved. We know that isn't true. Let's see what we have been saved from.

Ephesians 2:6: "Even **having been raised**

up together, and has seated us together in the heavenly thing with Christ Jesus.” There are some people who say that we are as good as being in heaven right now. *No!* That’s not true!

Having been raised up together, how are we baptized? *We are conjoined in baptism into His death!* Romans 6:4: “Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life” (vs 4-5).

Ephesians 2:6: “...has seated us together in the heavenly thing with Christ Jesus.” We’ll see there’s a twofold meaning to that:

1. The very fact that *we have the Spirit of God in us* is a heavenly thing.

Is not the Spirit of God heavenly—that is it comes from heaven? Is that then a heavenly thing that God has given us? *Yes!*

2. The *prophecy* of it is found in v 7

When will we be actually sitting on those heavenly thrones? *When Christ returns to the earth!* That’s when we’re going to be literally seated with Christ, without a doubt, no question about it, absolutely no debate.

Revelation 20:5: “...This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (vs 5-6). That’s when we’re going to be sitting in those heavenly things or places.

Ephesians 2:7: “In order that He might make manifest (show and demonstrate) **in the ages that are coming...**” Paul knew that Christ wasn’t coming then, that there were going to be ages or time until Christ returned. Then what is the age that is going to come beyond that? *The Millennium and all of eternity!*

“...in the ages that are coming... [he’s going to show] ...the super-abundant and surpassing riches of His grace...” (v 7). You’re going to know the fullness of the grace of God

- when *you* have that spirit body
- when *you* have that spirit mind
- when *you* have that throne
- when *you* are a priest of God
- when *you* are ruling over your cities—two, three, five or however many

—in the ages that are coming!

“...the surpassing riches of His grace (His

Divine favor, blessing and generous gift) in kindness and generosity toward us in Christ Jesus” (v 7). He wants us to understand that this salvation of God is so tremendously, through His grace, overwhelmingly one-sided *from God to us*.

Let’s stop and think a minute: What were you doing when you were called? *Kind of just going on with your life, however it was, and all of a sudden one day—BING!*—something sprung in your mind. That’s was God’s calling. That was the beginning of God’s gift.

There are certain things we have to do, that’s true; and I’m not minimizing what we have to do. Of course, there are those on the other hand who say there’s nothing you have to do because Christ has done it all. *That is not true!* There are conditions to this gift. But unless God did this through His grace then there is no salvation.

Verse 8: “Because by (means of this) grace you have been saved through faith (from the mighty prince and ruler, that prince of the power of the air, who has authority and diabolical power over this world)...”

- Didn’t Satan tempt Jesus with that?
- Didn’t he take Jesus and show Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and say, ‘All of these are mine to give to You if you just bow down and worship me once’?
- What did Jesus say?
- *You shall not tempt the Lord your God!*

That’s what we have currently *been saved from*. Having been saved by grace from ‘the prince of the power of the air,’ the ruler of the diabolical powers of this earth. That’s what we have currently *been saved from*.

But we have to be *being saved* in the process of salvation by growing in grace and knowledge and understanding so that we attain to the resurrection of the dead like the Apostle Paul said: ‘If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead’ so that you *shall be saved*. I hope that you have that really clear in mind:

- We *have been saved* from the ‘prince of the power of the air’ that now rules this world.
- We *are being saved* through the Spirit of God, His grace and the knowledge of God and growing in grace and knowledge.
- We *shall be saved* at the resurrection when Jesus Christ returns having completely overcome death through the

very power and Spirit of God, which is also His grace and generous, Divine and Holy gift.

“...and this state of grace (Divine favor and blessing) does not originate or emanate from your own strength and ability; **it is the gracious gift of God**” (v 8). I’m sure we all completely understand that now. Let’s see a little bit more about this grace and understand this a little bit more.

Romans 5:1: “Therefore, having been justified... [Been made right with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ wholly and completely acceptable to God as if Christ were standing there in your stead. That righteousness of Christ is imputed to you through grace.] ...by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”—by Whom we have access *by faith into this grace*.

This grace then is a condition of our spiritual standing with God. That we are *standing in this grace*. It doesn’t give us license to sin, but it does mean that God is not going to condemn us because of what we are as physical human beings because we have weaknesses and faults. Even as the Apostle James said, ‘Look, we all are sinning continually.’

I know you are, too. You’re not perfect, I’m not perfect, we haven’t been. Maybe even this morning you got mad at your wife or husband, or something didn’t go right where you were staying, or you got up on the wrong side of the bed and hit the wall instead of the floor—whatever it may be.

God accepts us of that. In Rom. 8 Paul says, ‘There is no condemnation to those who have been called in Christ’ who still have the *law of sin and death* within them. God has accepted you through His grace. This puts a tremendous responsibility on us.

Verse 2: “Through Whom we also have access by faith...” Access to God the Father! I want us to understand that the most profound thing happened in Paul’s teaching in Ephesians—which was unknown, unheard of, absolutely completely not understood until Christ was resurrected and ascended into heaven; that you could, as an individual, wherever you are, whatever your circumstances were—can have access to God the Father through this grace!

Sometimes we get sort of mundane in our prayers. Could even end up doing like the Catholics. NO! We have direct access to God the Father, “...by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God” (v 2).

(go to the next track)

Ephesians 2:9: “Neither is it originating from (human-ordained) works...” Directly against the ‘religions’ of the pagans on the one hand and Judaism on the other hand. Man cannot proscribe a single solitary work that is going to be spiritual, that is going to make God grant you either favor or blessing or salvation.

So, all of our human ordained works, which means that all of these things that you find in *The Two Babylons* about the pagan religions is just so much trash. All of this that is in Judaism and all of the their traditions and all of the things that they have is just so much ‘bunko.’ They are human devised means and regulations to bring about a righteousness in the flesh. And the righteousness in the flesh is still *death!*

That’s why it’s very important, v 9: “Neither is it originating from human-ordained works, so that no one will be able to brag or boast (in the presence of God).”

Just think if Job would have won that battle himself between he and God. If he would have won, who would have been God? We need to think about it and really put it in its proper perspective. If Job would have won that battle against God, which he couldn’t have because Job was human, but he at one time said, ‘This is so painful I just wish that there were an umpire between me and God’; that’s human ordained works!

- Was not Job perfect in those works? *Yes!*
- Was he perfect before God spiritually? *No!*

Only God can make that so through His grace. No one is going to be able to brag or boast in the presence of God.

Let’s see a little bit about the calling that we have, that we understand it in an even more profound way. Now you see how absolutely pompous and vain it is for any of us to get a big, swelled head and start saying, ‘I have done this! I have done that!’ So what! Doesn’t matter—anybody, anything—what they do unless it is motivated by the Spirit of God and that’s fine, build on it and that goes into the future. But that doesn’t give us any reason to brag or boast.

1-Corinthians 1:26: “For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*.” Then you start all of this great wisdom of human beings and stack it up to God, and all of this great mightiness of the power of individuals and how great they are.

And you can think of the array of dictators we’ve had to live through in our generation to see

how absolutely futile that that is. God didn't call them. God says that even if He has any weaknesses it is greater than the strength of man. Even if God had any foolishness, it's wiser than the wisdom of men. There's our calling.

Verse 27: "Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing..." (vs 27-28). The world doesn't care about us; they could care less. But all human beings before God are as nothing, and He's chosen us. We are the weak, the base.

"...—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are; so **that no flesh might glory in His presence**" (vs 28-29). No one is going to say, 'God, I devised a way whereby we can guarantee we're going to get into the Kingdom of God.' Forget it! Never happen!

"...no flesh might glory in His presence. But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, **Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption**" (vs 29-30). Everything comes from God!

- that's why this grace is so important
- that's why it is so profound for us to understand
- that's why it's so absolutely imperative that we realize this

There have been people who, because I give the Jews a good lick every once in a while; I give the Catholics a good lick every once in a while, have said that I'm prejudice against Jews. Well, if you think that I'm prejudice against Jews you've got another thought coming. I'm only reflecting the thoughts of Paul toward Jewish religion and Jewish behavior and toward pagan religions and pagan behavior. I don't want anyone ever again to accuse me of it. But I am not going to be muzzled by anyone because they think I am.

It's really a very depressing thing to get into about the *synagogue of Satan* that is ruling this world. I am not prejudicial, but I don't have to tolerate any of the stupidity and carnality and satanic foolishness of anyone anywhere regardless of their race, color, religion, who they were born to, who their father and mother were and what their genealogy is.

Before God none of that has any standing at all whatsoever—period! If you don't understand that, then maybe you better go back and maybe you

better re-evaluate your own thoughts toward God, and maybe you're having some works that you're counting on that you can boast, brag and glory in before God. No! There isn't one single thing that we can do.

Verse 31: "So that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the* Lord.'"

I'm going to have some pretty tough things to say about Judaism, as well as the religions of the pagans, because none of them have any standing before God—*none of them!*

When you really understand it and look at it, those who are pagans who have never had the Word of God—if you want to use any comparative condition—are not in as bad a condition as the Jews who had the Word of God and rejected Christ, and unto whom Christ came.

Ephesians 2:9: "Neither is it originating from (human-ordained) works, so that no one will be able to brag or boast (in the presence of God), because we are His very own work of Divine creation... [salvation is creation] ...created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of doing good works (deeds and endeavors)... [now while we are living in this life] ...which God has prepared beforehand, appointed and ordained that we should walk in them (as a way of life)" (vs 9-10)

That's what God wants us to do, so it doesn't matter who you are, what you are, what you have done, you need to walk in *God's way*. In that, with God's Spirit, He is going to create in us His whole and tremendous spiritual family that God is going to resurrect at the return of Jesus Christ. If you happen to be living when Christ returns, then you'll be changed instantaneously from flesh into spirit.

We are *His* workmanship. We have good works into which we are to be walking. What are some of those good works?

1-John brings out very clearly what it is that we should be doing with the good works. Here's part of it, because there were a lot of people back then—John was writing just after the death of the Apostle Paul—having the same 'Protestantish' 'Christ has done everything for us and we don't have to anything. We can eat all the slop we want to, it really doesn't matter about anything, as long as we have love in our heart and love toward God.'

This is some of the good works that we have to be doing. I'm not telling you anything new, because you've done this most of your Christian life.

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard*... [Greek: 'en toutoo'—we are to furnish what this

means, *the standard*] ...we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments.” That’s what it means in the Greek, that we be *keeping His commandments* and these are the good works that have been foreordained that we walk in. What are some of the other good works:

- we love the brethren
- we love each other as Christ has loved us

Those are the good works: commandment-keeping in this? *Yes!*

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [Why? *With the Spirit of God, the love of God has been perfected, and is being perfected!*] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 4-6).

Did Christ walk in good works foreordained of God? *Yes, He did! He surely did!* So, we are also to walk in those. That’s what it’s talking about here.

1-John 5:2: “By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.” That is in the ongoing tense of keeping His commandments.

You kept them yesterday, *that’s fine*, but yesterday is gone. Are you keeping them today? *Yes, that’s fine, you need to because today is today.* Are you going to keep them tomorrow? *Yes, because God is requiring that of you tomorrow!*

Verse 3: “For this is the love of God... [How are you going to show back to God that you really love Him? *By proving it, sustaining it with action!*] ...that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.” No, they’re not, there’s nothing burdensome about the commandments of God.

- they are *good*
- they are *Holy*
- they are *spiritual*
- they are *true*
- they are the *good works we are ordained to walk in*

God’s grace covers us for any of our shortcomings and weaknesses and stumbling and falling and sins that we may commit because of our human nature and the *law of sin and death* within us.

Paul starts a whole new topic in Ephesians 2:11: “For this reason (considering what you were, and what God is doing)... [Isn’t that what we’ve

been talking about? What we are? What God is? *Yes!*] ...remember that you were in times past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by those called Circumcision in the flesh, performed by hands.”

This was a tremendous problem, because *Judaism says* that you must be circumcised. The *Pharisees said* ‘you’ve got to be circumcised to be saved.’ *Christ says*, ‘No! Anything that is outward is not going to justify you inwardly, spiritually, to God.’ This is why it becomes very devastating to the Jews. They could say, ‘You didn’t have God; you didn’t have God’s Word; you didn’t have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; you didn’t have the temple; you didn’t have the sacrifices; you didn’t have God’s blessing’—which is all true, but now it’s different. To an Orthodox Jew, the most ugly profane thing that could happen would be to teach—which the Apostle Paul was—uncircumcised Gentiles to partake of the Passover; and not at the temple but in their own homes. That’s why the Jews so mightily hated Paul. That gives you just a little inkling of some of the problems that Paul had.

Verse 12: “Because at that time you were apart from and without Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God (estranged from the knowledge and worship of the true God) in the world.” That is true!

Verse 13: “**But now** in Christ Jesus, you who were once far away and completely removed, have been drawn near by the blood of Christ our Savior.” Very profound! Now he’s going to tell us that everything at the temple is worthless spiritually.

Verse 14: “Because He is our peace...” The only way you make peace with God is through Christ. Doesn’t matter if you’re a Jew on the one hand, or a Gentile on the other hand, you’ve got to make peace with God through Christ.

“...(the peace, harmony and tranquility of God), Who has made and fashioned the both of them into one...” (v 14)—Jews on the one hand, Gentiles on the other hand. Neither one were to bring the remnants of their past religion into it. That’s what Paul is saying here.

- It is a *new body* in Christ!
- It is a *new person* in Christ!
- It is a *new way of life* in Christ!

“...and the barrier, that middle wall of partition...” (v 14). Which there was literally a middle wall of partition at the court and temple where the Gentiles were on one side and the Jews on the other side. There was literally that, so he is saying something

here very profound.

“...previously erected between us, He has torn down and abolished. Even having abolished, annulled and having made invalid, in His very own flesh, the enmity and antagonism contained in the commandments, injunctions and dictates as stipulated in the dogmas and decrees (of men...)” (vs 14-15).

- they’re all invalid; everyone of them
- they’re all worthless
- they’re all made for the trash

“(…that is Judaism’s traditions, injunctions and precepts, and the Gentiles’ idolatrous religions and demonic philosophies), so that in Himself He might be able to create the two into one new man... [body in Christ] ...establishing peace” (v 15).

No longer is the Jew going to say ‘we have the way to God.’ NO! They only had the way to the temple. No longer is the Gentile going to say what a stupid thing it is to circumcise yourselves, and what a stupid thing it is that you have all these washing of pots and pans, and plates for meat and plates for milk, and all of the things that they had in worshipping trees, cows, turtles and men, the gods and goddesses and all of that. All of this stupidity on both sides is completely removed in Christ.

“...so that in Himself He might be able to create the two into one new man, establishing peace; So that He might reconcile to God...” (vs 15-16)—being brought back to God. Don’t we all need reconciliation? Don’t Jews need reconciliation? *Yes!* Paul said we approved and concluded that all have sinned—Jews and Gentiles—and there is none righteous, no not one!

“...both Jews and Gentiles within in body (which is the Church) through the cross, having put to death the enmity and antagonism by this means” (v 16). This becomes very profound, brethren, that through Christ all of these things, the Jewish religion on the one hand and the pagan religions on the other hand, don’t bring it in and intermix it in the Church of God. That’s what he was saying.

They had this tremendous fight within the Church of God. Peter, John and James really didn’t know about Paul. They really thought that Paul was going off the deep end when he was preaching these things until just after the death of James. That’s a whole other subject. I just want you to know that even within the Church of God, at that time back then when Paul was writing this, there was this roaring controversy, not only of Jews against Paul, but also the apostles wondering about Paul.

Only when Paul was in prison and Peter

visiting him was that reconciled; where then Peter^[transcriber’s correction] really understood. Paul wasn’t saying that he was throwing away all the commandments of God, only those physical things pertaining to the physical worship. That’s all! That’s why later on Peter said that Paul ‘even in his epistles wrote things which are difficult to understand’; that those who are unlearned and unstable twist and turn and distort as they do other Scriptures. It’s exactly what he’s talking about here.

There was that problem happening within the Church at that time. Very vicious! Very profound! Plus the whole society was in an absolute uproar and Paul was in prison.

Verse 17: “And also having come... [Christ having come] ...He preached and announced the peace, harmony and tranquility (the good news of the Gospel) to you who were far away (the Gentiles), and to those who were near (the Jews), because it is through Him... [here’s the paramount importance; through Christ and Christ’s way; through God and His Word] ...by one Spirit...” (vs 17-18)—the Spirit of God; nothing else counts, brethren; this really is very profound for us to realize.

I’ve heard a minister of God that almost every time he’s got to get up there and tell us why at two-years-old he began speaking and why he was ‘born to this.’ Who cares! If you’re not doing what God wants, it doesn’t matter. That’s why I’m not going to tell you I’ve done this, that or the other thing, because that doesn’t matter. Whatever I did doesn’t matter—good or bad—it’s over with.

What we need to focus in on is Christ, because anything else other than Christ is just going to put us into a ‘movement’ or a ‘religion’ or an ‘institution’ that has nothing to do with Christ. So, it is in Him!

“...by one Spirit that we both have direct access (that is being allowed to have admission) into the presence of the Father” (v 18). I want you to concentrate on it and think about that in relationship to when you are praying into Whose presence you are coming. We don’t say, ‘Oh, dear Jesus...’ or ‘Hail Mary. Will you pray to the Father for us.’ NO! We say, ‘Father...’

This becomes so very, very important for us to understand and realize; Paul says, Romans 8:13: “Because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if **by the Spirit**... [you have direct access to God the Father through the Spirit and we are to use it to mortify, put to death, murder as it were] ...you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many **as are led by the Spirit of God**...” (vs 13-14). That’s why the Spirit of God won’t make you do a thing; *you must choose*.

- the Spirit of God will lead you
- the Spirit of God will convict your conscience
- the Spirit of God is going to witness to you in your mind

—but it’s not going to make you do anything. God is not going to take away your choice and free will to choose to do His way; or if you choose to go and sin, if that is your desire.

Verse 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).

When you pray, and you are praying to the Father, you are going directly to Him! Remember what Jesus said? ***You can ask in My name. You pray the Father and I say to you that I will not ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself tenderly loves you!*** We have direct access, and that means being allowed to have admission into the presence of the Father.

As a result of all of that is this, Ephesians 2:19: “The result of all of this is that you are not any longer strangers and aliens, neither are you sojourners or wanderers, having no purpose in life, but you are now joint citizens... [of the Kingdom of God] ...with the saints (the Holy consecrated ones in Christ) ...even of the family and household of God; being built up (in spiritual advancement and growth in Christian character) upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the primary foundational stone (in fact, the precious cornerstone showing that He is the crowning glory of the Church and of God’s plan)” (vs 19-20).

I brought to bear (in the Amplified Translation) all the rest of the Bible in here so that we can focus our minds in on the tremendous spiritual lesson that God has given us. That ***we***, brethren, are that building of God. God doesn’t care about a temple. God doesn’t care about a building. ***We*** are the temple in Christ. ***We***, with the Spirit of God have that.

So, in this Feast of Tabernacles, dwelling with God, brethren, what a tremendous thing it is right now that we have that access to God!

Verse 21: “In is in and through Whom that the entire household and building of God is properly and fitly joined and compacted together...” In Paul’s appeal of unity to the division that was wracking the Church, so that they could look to Christ and know that that’s where they have their spiritual belonging.

“...and is increasing and growing into a Holy consecrated temple in the Lord...” (v 21). No

longer a tabernacle, no longer a tent, but literally living with God. That’s what the whole Feast of Tabernacles is about.

Verse 22: “By and through Whom you also are being spiritually edified and built up, even formed and molded into a habitation and dwelling of God through the Spirit of God.”

Brethren, these are tremendous and profound words. The long and short of the lesson for the Feast of Tabernacles is that you and I, all Christians wherever we are, ***are the true dwelling place of God with His Spirit for us today!***

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 1:17-23
- 2) Ephesians 2:1-3
- 3) Ecclesiastes 1:1-9
- 4) Ephesians 2:4-5
- 5) 1 Corinthians 15:2
- 6) Ephesians 2:6
- 7) Romans 6:4-5
- 8) Ephesians 2:6
- 9) Revelation 20:5-6
- 10) Ephesians 2:7-8
- 11) Romans 5:1-2
- 12) Ephesians 2:9
- 13) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 14) Ephesians 2:9-10
- 15) 1 John 2:3-6
- 16) 1 John 5:2-3
- 17) Ephesians 2:11-18
- 18) Romans 8:13-15
- 19) Ephesians 2:19-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 7
- Philippians 2

Also referenced: Book:

The Two Babylons by Alexander Hislop

Epistle to the Ephesians III Chapter Four

Fred R. Coulter

Today we're going to skip ahead in the series we're doing in Ephesians and you will see why, when we get the end of this, we're going skip the third chapter and save that.

After we get the vision of the second chapter that we are all one in Christ and that the body, the temple that God is building now, resides in us through the very power of the Holy Spirit of God and we are to be joined together because of that, Ephesians 4 does something that we will see is very profound inasmuch as it tells us individually what we need to do—not only to the Church members but also to the ministers. It gives us some very important things that we need to keep in mind, because we have to keep living in this world and we have to keep growing and overcoming, and we have to keep increasing in Christian character, knowledge, grace, love and the whole purpose of the Church and so forth.

I want us all to be able to, through the very power of God's Holy Spirit, to realize the tremendous and wonderful blessing that God gives us that actually, with His Holy Spirit, at the present time, *He is tabernacling in our mind*. This means that:

- we are going to be inspired of God
- we are going to be led by God's Holy Spirit
- we are going to go ahead in the way of life that we need to

Here are the encouraging words in Eph. 4 that we need. Again, as you know I did Ephesians in an expanded amplified translation, because I've added more understanding of the meaning of the words, plus I have upgraded substantially the vocabulary to bring to us—through the power of God's Spirit in our mind, coupled with the words—the spiritual meaning and understanding that God gives to us.

Let's again reiterate what Jesus said, 'The words that I am speaking to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.' We have in our hands these words. These words are physical, because they're on physical paper, made with physical ink. We are physical, but what we are doing and accomplishing is spiritual, because language and words have a mental and—in this case with God's Spirit—a spiritual meaning to us. We're going to be able to derive out of this, from these very words—because of the Spirit of Christ:

- spiritual meaning
- spiritual faith
- spiritual hope
- spiritual uplifting

that can only come because we have the Spirit of God and what the Spirit of God is doing and with our mind and language that we have, God is bringing to us:

- His very character
- His very feeling
- His very meaning

—for us out of these words.

Ephesians 4:1: "In the light of all of this... [that is everything that God has done, everything that the Bible tells us, all that Christ has done] ...I, the prisoner of the Lord..." Here is Paul in prison writing this for us. He's trying to save and rescue the Church from internal destruction. He's trying to save and rescue the brethren from fighting, warring and quarrelling—the Jews on the one hand, the Gentiles on the other hand. He's saying, 'Look, I'm a prisoner and I can't be there to see you face-to-face and talk to you.'

So, he says, "[I] am exhorting..." (v 1). He's wanting to encourage; to bring us to the unity of Christ. That's what the whole book of Ephesians is all about when you understand it.

"...admonishing and entreating you to walk worthily... [Paul is not here correcting, beating up, lambasting, bombarding and knocking everyone down in a scathing attack. He says, 'I am pleading with you. I am]: ...entreating you to walk worthily and conduct your life in a manner becoming to the calling wherein **you were called, chosen and selected by God**'" (v 1).

When we focus in on that and take this admonishment, pleading and entreaty of Paul to us personally. Instead of looking down on some physical thing to do or not do, we say, 'Hey, God has chosen us; He has called us; He has selected us. How ought we be living our lives?' Here's how:

Verse 2: "With all humility of mind and lowliness of self-esteem..." We're living in such and age now that the whole world is being built up on 'self-esteem.' The way to have proper self-esteem is to have the Spirit of God and the love of God and then you have the proper self-esteem, because you're going to love God and you're going to love the brethren and you're going to love your neighbor as

yourself. That loving yourself is the proper self-esteem—the lowliness of self-esteem—not having the vanity and the hoop-ta-la and the rah, rah, ‘I can do all of this’ pull yourself up by the bootstraps self-psychology.

“...even meekness, gentleness and benevolence, coupled with patience long-suffering and clemency...” (v 2).

- not everything is going to be done at once
- not everyone is going to be perfect
- not everyone is going to overcome in the same degree

So therefore, we have to be patient and long-suffering with clemency, *being willing to forgive and understand*. “...bearing with and being mutually supportive of each other in Godly love... [Too many times when someone does wrong, I tell you the ‘shotguns’ come out, the barbed tongues are shot forth and go after each other.] (Let’s be): “...mutually supportive of each other in Godly love. in tolerant forbearance....” (v 2). *You don’t have to put up with sin!* I doesn’t mean that. It means just as we are as people, because God has called us.

“...and understanding toward each other” (v 2). That’s what we’ve been able to do in our small little group. We’ve nicknamed ourselves over the years *The No Hassle Church*. I don’t have to exert authority on anyone, and we don’t have to beat up on each other. We’ve been beaten up enough, not only by the world, but by our past experience in the Church. I think we just about now are all totally healed from all of that—hopefully we are. If we’re not, then we’re getting close to it. Let’s have this tremendous attitude and love toward each other and sustain each other in this way.

Verse 3: “Being ever diligent and mindful (by maintaining and practicing Christian love)...” Always being mindful so that we practice it, we use it. What makes the Feast so enjoyable? *Because of doing this very thing right here!* Maintaining this kind of love, forbearance, love, understanding, patience, kindness, and being able to get together and fellowship with brethren and have and enjoy this Feast in that way.

“...to keep the unity of the Spirit... [That’s important because we all have the same Spirit of God. Is Christ divided? *No!*] ...with the peace, harmony and tranquility which binds each of us together, and all to God” (v 3). If we keep that in mind you see what a tremendous inspiring goal and standard that Paul is portraying for us here. That before God he’s going to die and be gone, which he is; and the Church is going to go ahead, how should the Church be able to maintain itself. We have to fight off all these problems over here that we’ve had

on one side and the problems here on another side. But interacting with each other, how are we to maintain ourselves? Here it is right here. Realizing that it is one Spirit that binds each of us together and all of us to God.

Verse 4: “There is one body (which is the Church) and one Spirit (which is the Spirit of Truth) even as you were also called, chosen and selected **in one hope of your calling**”—this is to be in the Kingdom of God, and that’s what the whole Feast of Tabernacles pictures. The *one hope of our calling* is that we are going to be with God the Father and Jesus Christ. We’re going to be with all the saints resurrected at the return of Jesus Christ, and reign and rule with Him as kings and priests on this earth, and have the tremendous, wonderful and magnificent job of bringing the rule and reign of God on this earth through the Millennium. Absolutely profound! We need to keep that in mind. That’s the whole hope of our calling.

Verse 5: “One Lord and Master, one faith and belief, one baptism and burial with Christ.” That’s what baptism is. You’re baptized and buried with Him. There’s only one way.

Verse 6: “One God and Supreme Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in you all.” That’s what to keep in mind. God the Father, through the very power of the Spirit of Christ, is literally in the heavenly things with us, *in us!* I know that that is something to really think upon, meditate on, really get our mind into and our spirit into, to understand that God has literally done this for us. When we have that in mind, when we each understand this:

- how much greater it is than in the Church
- how much more peace
- how much more love
- how much more growth
- how much more understanding

As we have learned, being a small group, numbers don’t matter. You can have a huge number of people—we’ve all gone to the Feast of Tabernacles where there have been thousands of people—what do you eventually have in addition to your power struggle political groups over here—a little group over here, a little group over there—and because you don’t have the love of God—that it ends up that you have party splits and people going against each other. We’ve all gone through that. *If we keep this in mind:*

- how much better our relations are with each other
- how much greater is our peace with God
- how much more enjoyable and satisfying is keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days of God

Verse 7: “But to each of you individually...” Jesus told them, ‘Look, I want you to go out to the flowers of the field, and I want you to observe that, and I want you to understand this lesson’: In all of the glory in his palace, in the temple that he built and everything that was there, even Solomon—who was the wisest man on earth, the wealthiest man on earth—when the Queen of Sheba came to see and hear of his kingdom she was without breath, without spirit. Literally, she was so flabbergasted at what God had done for Solomon that she just literally melted.

Jesus said, ‘This flower of the field has more glory than Solomon ever had; yet, this flower of the field is going to die and perish. Therefore, how much more does God care for you? Oh you of little faith.’

If we grow in faith and grace and knowledge, we realize, v 7: “But to each of you individually, the grace... [and all that that means] ...which is God’s gracious Divine favor blessing and generous gift was given according to the measure and portion of the magnanimous gift of Christ (His own perfect, righteous life for yours).” That is so overwhelming when you really think about it, pray about it and ask God for comprehension on it, that God gave His own life for you, individually. Not only to you, but to every individual Christian that He has called. It’s applied individually, because we have ability through the Holy Spirit to come into the very presence of God the Father through prayer.

Verse 8: “Wherefore, He says, after having ascended up into the heights... [After God had Jesus Christ ascend into heaven, was accepted by God the Father.] ...He captivated captivity... [In other words, there’s nothing else left to do as far as God was going to in relationship to what Christ had done. It was all finished!] (Because of that, for us on the earth He): ...and gave gifts to men.” To us! He gave us His Spirit!

We will see all the purpose of the ministry because we go from what our individual lives are before God, then we expand that into the whole purpose of the ministry, and then Paul breaks it down into what we need to be doing on an individual day-by-day basis in the latter part of Eph. 4.

Then he makes this parenthetical statement, v 9: “But He Who ascended, is it not also He who first descended into the lower parts of the earth?...” [What does that mean? Did He go down into hell and preach to them down there? *No! That just means He*:...was buried in the earth! He Who descended is also the same One Who has ascended above all the heavens that He might fulfill, complete and accomplish everything in God’s plan” (vs 9-10).

What did Jesus say just before He died, the very last thing He said? *Father, into your hands I commend My Spirit—it is finished!* And He died.

Now that He’s resurrected, don’t you think that He’s going to finish all the rest of the plan of God? *Yes, He is!* That’s why we keep the Holy Days, because this keeps us in tune with the plan of God. This keeps us in tune with what God is doing. At the right hand of God the Father, you know Christ is going to complete it. What did Jesus say concerning His words not only that they were Spirit and life? *Heaven and earth can pass away, but My words shall not pass away!* He’s going to finish it. He’s going complete everything in the plan of God, to bring all into New Jerusalem and into the Family of God—which the Feast of Tabernacles pictures.

Verse 11—here is for the purpose of the ministry. This is for me as a minister. This is also for anyone else who is a minister. It’s also for all the brethren that they understand the purpose of the ministry.

Verse 11: “And He truly gave some apostles, and some others prophets; and some others evangelists, and some pastors (that is shepherds and guardians of the Flock of God) and teachers.” These are defining, not necessarily a rank as you would look at it in the military, because Paul—an apostle—said, ‘I’m the least of all the saints’—the least of the apostles.

It shows a function that is being done. Truly, when someone does prophesy and it is a prophecy from God, and it is true, then that person is *a prophet*. I don’t know of any today; I’m not going to try and set myself up as a prophet. We’ve seen in this past year how many false prophets come along. What happened to all of them who *declared* that they were prophets? *They fell right smack on their faces!*

But the pastors are to be the shepherds, that is to guide, help and lead, and guardians of the flock of God because they are *trustees!* All ministers are *trustees* to do God’s way; and teachers so that you can be taught. Everyone who is teaching need never ever be satisfied with any level of learning yourself to teach brethren, because God is going to require of everyone who teaches that they also grow in grace and knowledge. What they teach at one point is fine, well, good, terrific and marvelous—if they’re preaching the Word of God—but that can never fulfill everything that God wants to teach us. Again, what God is teaching us is Spirit and it is Life, so therefore, we must grow in that grace and knowledge as teachers constantly. Then the teachers goal is to have the disciples or learners *become as the teacher* in knowledge and capacity.

I know that everyone of you—because I know you well enough—can do a far greater job in teaching and helping other people than you could before you were ever in our little church together. I know that as a minister I've had to grow in grace and knowledge of the Word of God to be able to impart this to you. But then, on the other hand, we haven't arrived, brethren. So, there's still a whole long way to go. Though we have this—which is all fine, well and good, and I'm inspired with it and I'm sure you are—this is not all that there's going to be to learning and teaching of God's Word. Every teacher needs to keep that in mind.

Verse 12 is the purpose of the ministry, no other purpose. It's not to have a name, not to have a building, not to build a following, not to be looked up to, not to be looked down upon. Here's the purpose of all the ministry:

Verse 12: “For the purpose of **perfecting the saints** (bringing them to full spiritual maturity)...” That's what perfecting is—isn't it? *Yes!* So that you can qualify, so that I can qualify, through the very power of the Spirit of God to be resurrected through the grace and mercy of God when He returns.

“...for **the work and labor of serving and ministering**... [For what purpose?] ...for the **edifying**... [teaching, instructing, up-building; not for the correcting, pounding and punishing] ...and building up... [not the tearing down] ...**of the body** of Christ (which is the Church); until **we all**...” (vs 12-13). Paul is including himself. He's including all of the ministers.

“...everyone of us arrive at and achieve the unity, completeness and oneness of the faith and belief, and obtain the knowledge and understanding of the Son of God...” (v 13). That is a lofty goal—isn't it? *Absolutely!* That is always out there on the horizon for us, and we are always walking toward that, always striving out and reaching for that, and helping each other along the way with it.

“...to develop into a spiritually mature person, into the measure of the spiritual stature of the fullness and completeness of Christ” (v 13). That's a tall, huge order—isn't it? *Yes, it is, and that's what it means*, that we attain to that; that is our goal; that's what we need to constantly be going toward.

If we stumble and fall along the way, get up, let Christ clean you up, dust you off and keep right on going till we reach that spiritual stature of the fullness and completeness of Christ. Then we'll be fulfilled at the resurrection and when we are living in our reward in the tabernacle of God with Jesus Christ, as the Feast of Tabernacles pictures.

Verse 14: “So that we are no longer spiritual babes...” not just beginning.

- you have strength *because of God's Spirit*
- you have stability *because of the Word of God*
- you have understanding *because God has given that to you*

“So that you are no longer spiritual babes...” and are able to ‘eat that strong meat’ (Heb. 5). This is what we're covering; this is powerful, brethren, what we have here. What we are going through is *strong meat*, because you're no longer spiritual babes.

You are not “...being tossed here and there like waves of the sea and being carried about and buffeted helter-skelter by every wind and whisper of doctrine...” (v 14). Haven't we endured some of those storms recently? Wasn't that just depict what's going on in the assault against the Church? *Absolutely!*

“...those teachings of men through their cunning trickery and craftiness, for the purpose of systematizing the erroneous, fraudulent deception—*that perverse religious error!*” (v 14). That's what it means in the Greek: *systemizing the fraud or the falsehood!*

Isn't that what happened right after the apostles died? *Yes, indeed!* Then we have the fathers of the Catholic Church who then develop all this systematized fraud and cunning connivery of men. That's the ‘religion’ that was palmed off as ‘Christianity,’ having nothing to do with Christianity other than being dressed in the clothes of Christianity. Just like Jesus said, ‘There will be false prophets who will come *dressed in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*’

Verse 15: “But on the other hand, be upholding and sincerely and diligently maintaining the Truth in Godly Divine love... [‘agape’—*Godly love*] ...that we may grow up into Him... [there again is the growth] ...in all things... [everything that you do; everything that you think; every fiber of your being] ...in Christ Who is the Head, from Whom the entire body is individually and unitedly fused together and compactly knit as one...” (vs 15-16)—as God looks at the Church though we may be a group here or a group there, or a group over here—whatever it may be.

But I think that God right now, in scattering the Church, is doing several things:

1. He is weeding out all of those who are not sincere in the first place
2. He getting out all those who want to demonstrate to God their own works

He's going to test them whether they're going to love God or go off on their own and do their own thing.

3. He is doing it so that the Church will be in small pockets and there everywhere in the world just like salt, because we're the salt of the earth

Which means then that we're not going to be a high level, high visibility, monolithic target for Satan to go after. Satan will feel comfortable, because he will feel that he will have accomplished his purpose by scattering the Church. Yet, everything that Satan tries to do to destroy the Church and the work of God—wherever it may be—comes to futility.

What's going to happen now is that it's going to multiply. There's going to be this group over here and this group over there; if you don't believe it open up your directory of Sabbath-keeping churches and you're going to be overwhelmed with the number of different churches that are preaching Christ. Maybe not all in sincerity, maybe not all in knowledge, maybe not all as we're doing here, but nevertheless, they are part of the Church of God, and as God looks at the Church it is His Spirit that is doing it and pulling it together, and that's how God views it.

But for us, as our congregation here, v 16: "From Whom the entire body is individually and unitedly fused together and compactly knit as one through the combined support, which every joint and part is able to supply, according to the inner working of each separate part... [the inner working of God's Spirit in our minds as part of the Body of Christ] ...through his individual capacity and ability..."

God called each one of us. We all have that individual capacity and ability, and as God adds the Spirit, that we use that, that we apply ourselves in the way that God wants us to.

"...for the increase and spiritual growth of the body and the spiritual edification of itself in Godly Divine love." There is the perfect picture of the Church. This is Paul's inspired vision of what God wants the Church to be. Howbeit, he knows that in this age and time it's not going to be. But it is in the Word of God so that we can pick it up, read it, study it, know, and let the words of God sink deeply into our heart and mind so that we can strive for this ideal picture and unity of the Church. I think in our small, little church, God has blessed us with it. We pray that God will keep us with that.

Verse 17: "Therefore, I am saying this and testifying in the Lord..." Now we have warning; let's notice how Paul is doing his correcting. He's

exhorting, which is encouraging and uplifting. He is admonishing, which is pleading and asking us to. Now he gives a little more straightforward warning as to what we should not be doing.

Then, on the other hand, Paul does not do like a lot of preachers have done: that is you stand up there and you lambaste everyone and you give every sin in the world a good heavy hard lick and whipping and lashing—tongue lashing and otherwise—and then you make some astounding statement in erroneous bloody words and condemnation, and you walk off the stage as if you have accomplished something. *NO!* Let's notice how Paul does it. He hits it real hard and then he says, 'On the other hand, do this...' Eph. 4 is really telling us how to live our lives to attain to what we've been studying about.

Verse 17: "Therefore, I am saying this and testifying in the Lord that you are to walk no longer in that mode of life, and that you are no longer to be conducting yourselves even as the rest of the Gentiles are..." John said, 'Don't love the world, neither the things in the world, because everything that is in the world—the lust of the eyes, the lust of flesh, and the arrogance and pride of life—is not of the Father but is of this world' (1-John). We're not to live our lives that way!

"...walking in the vanity and superstitions (of false religion with its idolatrous demonic Satan worship)... [Ephesus was the center of Artimus or Diana-worship.] (All of that satanic wrong way): ...concocted in the imaginations of their own minds (as inspired by the 'prince of the power of the air'—Satan himself)!" (v 17).

I brought to bear what not only the Bible says in this particular sense, but also every thought as you find in *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop as it focuses in on the kind of religion that the Gentiles have.

Verse 18: "Having their understanding shrouded in darkness, and clouded in deception, being alienated and estranged from the life of God, on account of the ignorance and sin that is in them, through the adamant insensitivity and hardness of their hearts. Who having cast aside and utterly abandoned every proper feeling and emotion..." (vs 18-19)—which we see now being re-enacted in this world.

If you want to know where you're going to find this in the world today, just turn on your television—there it is! We have now where little kids are going around and shooting people in total utter disregard for life. "...having cast aside and utterly abandoned every proper feeling and emotion, and having become insensitive and calloused in

mind and conscience, have given themselves over to every lewd, unclean deed with ravenous, devouring lust and consuming greed” (v 19). The most fitting description I could give of this society today and what God means with these words.

Verse 20: “But you have not learned this way of life from Christ.” See what Paul does? See how he handles it? He doesn’t come directly down on any individual. He says, ‘Look, you all used to live out here and this is the way it was with all of these emotions, sins, greed, sexual uncleanness and idolatry.’ Notice how he does the correcting:

Verse 20: “But you have not learned this way of life from Christ.” Rather than beating up and leaving on the spot, he picks them up and turns them around and heads them in the right direction.

Verse 21: “If indeed you have heard Him... [which you have] ...and have been taught and instructed in Him, exactly as the Truth is in Jesus (then you are to do this)... [notice how he gets them going in the right direction] ...You are to renounce, forsake, and rid yourself of your former mode of life, even that conduct and behavior of the old, obsolete person.... [which you had before baptism] ...—that old self, which is corrupt, degenerate, depraved, according to the obsessive compulsions, deceptive lusts and avaricious greed” (vs 21-22)—which then rules this world!

Verse 23: “And you are to be renewed and regenerated... [restored, made right] ...in the spirit of your mind (through the power of the Holy Spirit).” That’s what God wants for us! That is going to bring us to this full point of spiritual knowledge and understanding. That’s what the whole Feast of Tabernacles is about: that we put away the old self; that we put down those things that are there and:

- walk in Christ
- walk in His way
- walk in the Truth
- walk in the Spirit
- walk in God’s commandments

All of those altogether are absolutely fantastic!

Let it be the renewing of your mind, and the regeneration of the spirit of your mind through the power of the Holy Spirit of God. That’s what it needs to be.

Now, if you find yourself over here and you sin, and all that sort of thing, get right back into the Word of God. Let it cleanse you. Repent of your sins. Go forward and do the things of God.

Verse 24: “And that you yourselves are to put on...” It’s very interesting in the Greek. There is

what is called ‘the middle voice’ verb, meaning this: you are to do something yourself. In English we could have it this way to make it even more profound, and you could say: *I go into the house*; or making it even more meaningful: *I am going into the house*. Even more dogmatic: *I am myself going into the house*. Whenever you see yourself in anything that I have translated, it is most generally (there are a few exceptions) the middle verb. This is something you yourself are to do. It’s not something you’re going to require of someone else to do so that it will please you and make you happy.

What they do, really in truth and fact, has absolutely no relevance with what you do. It does inasmuch that you have relationships with each other, and your personalities and lives are meshed with each other—husbands and wives are to become one flesh with each other, and one in spirit, heart and mind—but in reality you have to, with the Spirit of God within you, let God be converting you. No human being can truly convert another human being. That’s why it is ‘you yourselves.’

(go to the next track)

Verse 24: “And that you yourselves are to put on are to put on an be clothed with the new person... [and that sometimes is very hard] ...that new Godly character which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth.”

God works with us, to create this in our lives! I can tell you by experience, and I can tell you that it is true—you know by experience, and know that it is true—that there are many ups and down in growing and learning, and changing in spiritual overcoming. That there are certain things that you go through and you can look back on your life and see certain things that happened in your life—which once you have gone through and suffered those things; once you have learned some of those things—what happens? *You reach*:

- a new conviction of spirit and mind
- a new faith and determination and hope in God that you’re going to go forward

Don’t you? *Yes, you do!* That is putting on “...the new person, that new Godly Character which according to God is created... [God is creating in you for the resurrection—obviously] ...the righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (v 24).

Isn’t that fantastic? Now you see how God does the correcting—right? He lambastes the sin, saying, ‘Don’t do that. Get yourselves squared around and get your mind in the right way, and be following God.’ As a matter of fact it says ‘be followers of God’ (Eph. 5:1).

See the difference? See how it is? Then Paul

holds out the glorious thing we need to do, and then he does some correcting and tells us what to do. After we have the *new character*, what are we to do?

Verse 25: “Wherefore, as you yourselves have already been renouncing and casting aside the falsehood and pseudo-sincerity of human nature, let everyone of you be speaking Truth with his neighbor, because we are members of one another. Be angry, but do not sin... [there’s a time for anger] ...neither let the sun set on your wrath or any of your disputes” (vs 25-26).

There are good reasons for this: If you don’t resolve the problem, or clear it up yourself, by time the sun sets, what’s going to happen when you’re trying to sleep? *You aren’t going to sleep!* You’re going to:

- think about it
- brood about it
- bitter about it
- hate about it
- fight about it
- relive it over and over
- multiply this thing in your mind

What is that going to be? *Great gargantuan clouds of leaven, which are cutting off the Spirit of God?* So, don’t let any dispute go beyond sunset. If you can’t resolve it then, put it aside until you can. But don’t let it brood and brood in your life.

Verse 27: “**Do not give opportunity** (or, so much as an opening wedge) **for the devil** (to work in your lives).” I likened it to *an opening wedge* because you don’t want to be like Eve. Here she’s strolling in the garden—BING!—‘Hello, Eve, has God really said that you shouldn’t eat of any tree?’ The woman said, ‘Well, God says we can eat of any tree accept the tree in the midst of the garden.’ What was that? *An opening wedge!* We’re not to give that *opening wedge* for the devil to work in our lives.

They had some Christians there that they were doing things they shouldn’t do, v 28: “Anyone who is stealing, let him never steal again. But rather let him labor hard, working with this hands in whatever is good...” This is a true living principle.

They’re taking convicts and, instead of putting them in a cell and saying ‘you better be good, we’re going punish you because you’re a dirty rotten criminal—which they are, that’s true—and only calluses them. You have to have a willing attitude. You can’t take a hardened criminal and make something new out of him unless he has a change of heart and a willing attitude, which is likened unto repentance. What they’re doing up in the San Jose area, they’ve taken those who want to and they’re teaching them how to cook for

professional cooking as chefs and things like this. It is doing what this verse says; it is giving them an opportunity to work with their hands so that they won’t be crooks anymore, or not to be stealing anymore.

“...in order that he may be able to impart to anyone who has need (rather than taking from him)” (v 28). Perfect solution!

Verse 29 is where all of us fall short; this verse convicts all of us. We all have a long way to go to get out of this: “Never let any vicious word or foul language come out of your mouth, but if there is any need or opportunity for speaking anything, let it be profitable, good and virtuous, with a view toward encouraging edification.... [rather than vilifying denunciations] ...Do this that it may be of benefit to others, thereby imparting grace to those who are listening”—which is what we are endeavoring to do during this Feast of Tabernacles for everyone of us here.

Verse 30: “And do not grieve, frustrate or distress the Holy Spirit of God...” I can tell you, you can almost know when you do that, because God’s Spirit will react in you—sooner or later—and you’re going to be convicted in heart and mind, and you’re going to do some mighty powerful repenting. So, when we have these words here, and when we know this, this really helps us.

Also remembering about the Holy Spirit “...(which is, also, the stamp of identification showing that you belong to God)... [because God knows where we are; God knows where His Spirit is; and according to God that lets even Satan the devil know that we belong to God! ‘Hands off, devil, these don’t belong to you.’] ...by which Spirit you are all sealed until the Day of Redemption” (v 30).

Verse 31 is part of what we need to do:

- part of getting the leaven out of our lives
- part of getting the sin out of our lives
- part of building that Godly character

“Remove and expunge all these evil character habits...” I want you notice strategically where this is placed. After he’s gone through all of what we would call the fourth chapter of Ephesians, now he comes right down to the nitty-gritty of some of the correction that he is bringing.

These are the things that within a congregation start the problems and difficulties, which are so much leaven and can expand and grow and sour people and attitudes. Since we have put this away, brethren, and we are growing in grace and knowledge, we can look back and see how that happened in the churches that we were in. So, remove and expunge all these evil habits:

“...bitterness, indignation, wrath, complaining, criticizing and evil speaking (which tends to blasphemy), and every form of wickedness and depravity. And come to this state of spiritual character...” (vs 31-32).

Notice again, every time there is some kind of correction or denunciation of sin, what does Paul do? *He gives you a goal to shoot for! He gives you a way out of that!* I want you to go back and restudy these verses in chapter four and I want you to see how he holds out the good, lambastes the evil all the way through. It's just like A/B—A: show the good; B: lambaste the evil. So, he does here in the very last verse:

Verse 32: “And come to the state of spiritual character, that you be of a kind and gracious disposition to one another, even tenderhearted and compassionate; be forgiving each other, exactly as God forgave you in Christ.”

Isn't that so important to do? *Yes, it is!* Remember the parable that Jesus gave? Remember the parable of the man that owed him so much money? This very, very important; because the greatest gift that God has given us is *forgiveness*. The greatest gift that we can give to each other is this very kind of thing; that kind of *forgiveness*.

Matthew 18:23: “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants.” That's what we are before God. We're servants and He's going to take account of us. Too many times in our interrelations with people, we want God to forgive us our sins, but we're sure not forgive anybody their sins. So, He's got a parable here to teach us.

Verse 24: “And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents.” That's an awful lot; great, huge notorious debt; or a great, huge notorious disastrous, abominable, wretched life that has gone through every sin under the sun. Brethren, when God brings new people into our church—which He will—there are going to be people out there who have gone through drug addiction, homosexuality, whoredoms, stealing, lying, cheating—all of these things. This is the 10,000 talents that was due.

Verse 25: “But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.” What is the wages of sin? *Death!* Do you want that payment to be made by yourself, or by Christ? If you want it to be made by Christ, what are you going to allow the other person?

Verse 26: “Because of this, the servant fell

down *and* worshiped him, saying, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’.... [I'll take care of the whole thing] ...And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt” (vs 26-27)—every bit of it.

Now he's in the Church of God. We will use this analogy. Now he's overcoming and growing. Now he's reached a certain level of attainment, understanding in the Spirit and power of God. Now he is righteous. Not yet converted, but too many times this is how we have dealt with each other. Not recently, but could be, and we'll just have it here to finish the whole lesson.

Verse 28: “Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins... [a little, teeny, eeny, bitty nothing; for women, that's how you feel when you get accosted for alleged short skirts or alleged too much makeup] ...and after seizing him, he choked *him*, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe.’ As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed” (vs 28-30).

Verse 31: “Now when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, ‘*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?’” (vs 31-33).

That's the whole lesson that Paul is teaching us here in Ephesians. We're to be tenderhearted, forgiving, kind; but on the other hand, the one who is forgiven should not then use that as a cloak and guise to go ahead and perpetrate their continued evil anymore than this man who was forgiven should go ahead and reach out and grab his fellow servant by the throat and go after every ounce of blood from him.

Here's what will happen if it isn't done the way God wants it, v 34: “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 34-35).

Tremendous lesson for us! Even though we come to these things which are very mature, very profound, uplifting and loving, it still goes back to the very foundation of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Let's use this fourth chapter of Ephesians *as a guide, as a means for individual growing and for the goal for each of us*, not only for the ministry, but of all of the brethren together *so that we can attain to that spiritual tabernacle of God and dwell with Christ forever!*

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 4:1-32
- 2) Matthew 18:23-35

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 5
- 1 John
- Ephesians 5:1

Also referenced: Book:

The Two Babylons by Alexander Hislop

Epistle to the Ephesians IV Chapter Five

Fred R. Coulter

As you know I've done this in an Expanded Amplified Translation, which I did based on the Greek. I don't want to any of us to by any means assume that because I've done this expanded amplified translation that it is in anyway to be construed as now a more authoritative translation of the Word of God. It's not that at all. It's just that so that with these epistles that we can bring to bear the entire Bible to this particular study, so that we can have a better understanding of God's Word and appreciation of it. By doing this I'm not trying to set myself up as some great authority, greater than anybody else. I'm just trying to impart to you what I felt God has inspired to me in going into God's Word, to be able to do for you.

Remember, again, if you go back and review Eph. 1, 2, 4, go ahead and study it from the point of view of surveying it to see the whole flow of what Paul is teaching us, and to see again that he is pointing us toward the goal and bringing us correction and again pointing us toward the goal, and then bringing us some correction. He does the same thing in Eph. 5, because it continues right on and then it gets into the more profound relationship between Christ and the Church. Again, he does it the same way. God inspired Paul to bring us the encouragement and uplifting part of God's Word, and then bring us the correction, howbeit not in harsh terms here. The whole book of Ephesians is to be that very inspiring, uplifting real teaching tool to endure in the Church from the time of the Apostle Paul down to the return of Jesus Christ.

So, there are a lot of lessons here for us. There are a lot of things that we can learn. I encourage you not only to just take this and go back and re-read and re-study and apply all of these things. We can really gain a lot from it, from the point of view that an individual by himself—without a minister, a teacher—without someone around can go through and use this as a detailed study to learn more about salvation, learn more about God and be able to draw closer to God in prayer, study and all of the things an individual needs to do.

I think one of the most important things we need to have is when we're alone by ourselves and the door is shut and there we are before God—and before God we all stand naked and open; there's not a thought, not a word, nothing that God doesn't know. But then we can come to God and use something like this to really inspire us.

As I mentioned in the booklet (with this series) in the *All About this Expanded Amplified*

Translation section how that the book of Ephesians has helped me tremendously in times of trial, stress and difficulty, because what I have learned to do is that when there are difficulties I always get my mind into the Word of God. I want you to use this as tool and help in your difficult times, too, so that it will help you get your mind on God's Word, to bring you back to God.

Let's go to Ephesians 5:1: "Accordingly then... [after all he's been writing] ...you are become imitators and followers of God!..." Of course, this is so true: How are you to follow a man? *You are to follow him as he follows Christ!* We are altogether to follow God.

We can't imitate God inasmuch as we are not spirit beings, but we can use the standard of behavior that Jesus had—in the physical life when He was here on earth—as a means and as a guide whereby we can also imitate and walk in the same steps that He did. We're to be followers of God!

"...He is your example... [always remember that He is our example] ...as dearly beloved children, be emulating His character" (v 1). When we are with each other in this way, with this in mind:

- Why are we to do it?
- Are we to do it because God says 'Do this'? *No!*
- Why are we to do anything that we are to do as Christians?

Verse 2: "Even walking in Divine, Godly love, exactly as Christ also loved us and gave up Himself to God..."

Right here would be a good point to go to Philip. 2 where it says 'let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; that Who being in the form of God—actually existing as God—emptied Himself and gave up Himself' because He didn't think that being as God was anything to be grasped at or to be greedily holding onto. But divested Himself of all of His privilege as God and took upon Him the form of a man, as a man in the flesh, to become that Holy sacrifice and humbled Himself to the death, yes, even the death of the cross.

He "...gave up Himself to God as a sacrifice and offering for us (on our behalf, in our stead) for a sweet-smelling savor, a pleasant fragrance (the beautiful righteousness of His perfect sacrifice)" (v 2).

With this great exalted understanding in mind, now then Paul says, 'I want you to look at the behavior of the world.' In the light of all of this, in the light of understanding what Christ did and why Christ did it for us, Paul is saying:

Verse 3: "But fornication and sexual depravity, and lewd, impure motives and conduct..." You see the contrast in life then—don't you? What he's doing is inspiring us to that Godly kind of character so that we're uplifted and looking to that, and, at the same time, look at this filth, this garbage, this rottenness, this dung and this stupidity. 'Oh, we don't want any of that.' That's exactly how God wants us to be corrected.

Really, when you understand it, there are two ways—probably more than two ways; there are several—to be corrected:

- let the circumstances correct you, because you've sinned and paid the penalty
- let someone else correct you by telling you directly, 'Don't do this.'
- go to God's Word and let God's Word tell you; look to God and don't do this

When you're focusing in on God and the high inspirational, lofty thoughts of God, then all of these things are just going to be putrid to you. That's the whole inspiration and means that God inspired Paul to write this in. Let's take these as the words of God to us, the inspiration of the words.

Verse 3: "But fornication and sexual depravity, and lewd impure motives and conduct, or grasping greediness and covetousness, never let these things be mentioned as being in any of you; rather, let it be only that which is proper, becoming and decorous for the Holy consecrated saints of God."

He saying that he wants you to remember *the calling*—that God the Father has *called you*; that God the Father has *provided this for you*—and don't even let it be mentioned once. We can look back and see what has happened when the Church did not conduct itself this way, when ministers did not conduct themselves this way. What happens every time you find out that a minister has committed fornication or adultery, or homosexuality? All of these things have been a viable thing that have happened to ministers down through the time in history, in the Church, and yes, even with our own experience within the Church lifetime of us—right? What does it do?

- It destroys everything!
- It destroys faith!
- It destroys hope!

Paul is saying here, 'Look, this is the way out of all of this nonsense.'

Verse 4: "Neither indecency and filthiness, nor foolish buffoonery or jesting..." I've heard ministers tell some of the most awful dirty sex jokes you can even imagine. When it comes from the ministry it does something to your mind, because it shouldn't be. The Bible says 'don't let this be.'

"...these are the things which are not harmonious, uplifting or fitting, but rather... [let everything be with] ...thanksgiving and praises of gratitude" (v 4). Again, I want you to see the: A: inspirational; B: correcting.

We have coming right on with this to give us a warning, v 5: "Because of this, you should be realizing and comprehending that a fornicator and sex monger, or a lewd and obscene person, or a greedy and covetous individual, who in actuality is an idolater, does not have any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. And do not allow anyone to deceive, delude, beguile or cheat you out of your inheritance by telling you that these evil things are right..." (vs 5-6).

Isn't that exactly what happened? People come along and they say, 'Well, a little leaven is okay. You can do this; God understands that.' You may even tell yourself that. You may say, 'This is not that bad.' Then a 'little leaven leavens the whole lump' and it comes in and then you start down the trail of doing these different things and what happens? *Pretty soon you're entrapped and ensnared in it!* He's saying, 'You're not going to be in the Kingdom of God.'

What he's trying to do is say, 'Look! Focus in on the Kingdom of God. Focus in on the inheritance of God, which is the whole purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles. It pictures when we are living with Christ in the inheritance that He has for us. Paul is saying, 'Focus in on this, because if you do these things over here, you're not going to be in the Kingdom of God. That's what he's saying in so many words.

He's saying to be on guard, and v 6: "Do not ever allow anyone to deceive, delude, beguile or cheat you out to your inheritance, by telling you that these evil things are right; for because of these very things, the wrath, punishment and vengeance of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience—those who are obstinate and unbelieving."

Boy! That sure is true in the world! I saw a magazine, which is called *The Omni Magazine*. They've got a special section in there: *In the Search of God*. If there is anything that is so absolutely true, these scientists are saying, 'Even if we could prove God, we don't know whether it's right.' This kind of thing is what leads to this kind of behavior that we just read about.

Let's see what this world is, and those are the kinds of things that in this world has led the world to what it is. Because of the lust of the flesh that we still have as human beings, 'Well, that's not so bad; God will understand.' *or* 'Christ has done everything for us so we don't have to do it.'

God is saying here in Romans, the first chapter, concerning the knowledge of God and why the wrath of God is going to come: Romans 1:18: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..."

That's what all these things are, and you're going to see that your television is going to become more lewd, more indecent, more filled with sex, murder and lust and repine than ever before. The wrath of God is going to come because of that, and because these people now are not punished right on the spot, does not mean that there isn't going to be punishment coming. You know that and I know that—right?

Verse 19: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them." They know that; they understand it. It is there, it is revealed, it is part. This world shows the glory of God for God showed it to them.

Verse 20: "For the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made..." That's how the scientists could, can and ought to understand that there is a God and can prove it.

All of these things show "...—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse" (v 20). Believe me, Christ is not going to return until this world is without excuse before God.

That may be one of those sliding factors in trying to understand when Christ will return, that we need to give God credit for. God is going to give a witness. God is going to make sure that they are totally without excuse!

Verse 21: "Because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened. While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools" (vs 21-22). Then they said all of these evil things—which we're reading here in Eph. 5—that now they're all right to do.

What happens? *They constitutionally kick God out of their lives*, like we have in the United States and every depravity and evil sin and rottenness is listed here in the rest of Rom. 1, befalls this society. We need to be careful that we don't let

these things be pouring through into our homes and into our minds and into our lives just because we happen to have television. We have to control it in the proper way.

God is not going to be mocked under any circumstances! We know in Gal. 6 it says that 'God is not mocked. Whatever a person sows that he shall reap.'

- If he sows to the Spirit, he's going to reap eternal life.
- If he sows to the flesh, he's going to reap corruption and death.

Ephesians 5:7: "For this reason... [because of this, what we've just covered here] ...do not become one of them, by casting your lot with them, or jointly participating in their activities, because you were once... [there's only one opportunity for salvation] ...the victims and instruments of spiritual and moral darkness, but now you are lights of spiritual illumination... [because you have God's Spirit and God's Word] ...and examples of righteous character in the Lord. Therefore, **be walking in God's way of life as children of light**" (vs 7-8). That's why we keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

As God's children we need to be walking in light. Does not the Feast of Tabernacles bring us light, truth and understanding of God's Word? *Yes, indeed!* Just like the Sabbath. Just like the rest of God's Word. This is what God wants us to walk in. That's why with the Feast of Tabernacles He wants us to get away from the world, get out from the midst of it, get our mind on God's Word. That way we can have our perspectives and everything the way they need to be.

Verse 9: "For the fruit and result of the Spirit produces actions and conduct in all goodness and virtue, righteousness and generosity, Truth and sincerity." These are things that need to be the guiding and motivating things in our lives.

Verse 10: "Always be choosing, proving and practicing what is well pleasing an acceptable to the Lord (those beautiful things of love and righteousness, in which He delights and takes pleasure)."

I'm going to say right now: I know that because of the Feast of Tabernacles and what we're going through here—and you're studying this and reading it and talking about it and understanding it more—that I hope and pray—and I know that you will probably have one of the best Feast of Tabernacles that you have ever had, because your minds are being focused right in on this so that you can truly grow close to God and be tabernacling with God during this time.

Verse 10: “Always be choosing, proving and practicing what is pleasing and acceptable to the Lord (those beautiful things of love and righteousness in which He delights and takes pleasure). Never have any fellowship or agreement with the unfruitful, unproductive, depraved works, practices and deeds of spiritual darkness; but rather, be rebuking and reproofing (those works of spiritual darkness)” (vs 10-11).

That is so true! Don’t let the ‘light of darkness’ be shining into any part of your life. Let, rather, the bright light of God’s Word be shining into your life. Men love darkness because their deeds are evil, but here Paul is saying, ‘Don’t have any part to do with that.’

Verse 12: “Because it is shameful indecent and vile to even mention the things that are being brought into the existence and practiced by them.” That’s the way it is in the world.

It says in Rom. 1 that they are ‘inventors of evil things.’ Yes, they are! They are bringing these things into existence. If you lived in the first century when the Apostle Paul was, or even before television, you didn’t have your mind invaded by all of this nonsense and garbage where you have to run up and turn it off, or whatever you need to do. Or you become just so absolutely overwhelmed and kind of smothered with the things of the world that you just kind of give up and let things happen. This is even more meaningful for us today, that we don’t let these things happen.

Verse 13: “But all of the things, which are being reproofed and exposed are being made manifest and revealed for what they really are... [the works of the devil] ...because that which is exposing and revealing everything is the Light.”

Then Paul gives a warning, so you can understand the condition of the Church. This is the warning before the storm. Of course, growing spiritually asleep happens to every one of us from time-to-time.

Verse 14: “Wherefore, He is saying, ‘Those of you who are sleeping, **WAKE UP! STIR YOURSELVES UP!**....” Just like he told Timothy, ‘Stir up the Spirit that is in you by the laying on my hands; for God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, love and of a sound mind.’ (2-Tim. 1). That’s what we need to do: *stir ourselves up with the Spirit of God!*

“...Even rise up from the dead (the spiritually lethargic sleep, which leads to spiritual death), and God shall shine upon you and give you light” (v 14). Notice again, regardless of what your circumstances are, or what they may have been,

what does God do? *He shows us the way*

- out of that *darkness*
- out of that *sleep*
- out of that *lethargy*
- out of that *spiritual doldrums and deadness* in which we find ourselves

Verse 15: “Therefore, take heed to yourselves... [Everyone has to; we’re all responsible; we need to watch out what we are doing. We can be entrapped in things; we can be enslaved into things.] ...be alert and watch how accurately you are walking and conducting your lives; and not as those who are foolish and destitute of wisdom, but as those who are wise, with understanding and comprehension.” Obviously then, that is of God’s way.

Verse 16: “Redeeming the time...” Just remember that whenever you find yourself falling short, or whenever you find yourself in a habit pattern or you’re doing things that aren’t right, and all of a sudden you kind of take notice of it. *Redeem the time!* God is there to help you!

“...(that is buying back and rescuing yourselves from the lost time)... [if you do God will help you] ...because the days are EVIL and wicked” (v 16). Even more so right now than ever before.

I’ll tell you one thing, if there’s one thing that is absolutely true, *we are living in the age of the Laodicean Church!* Can be absolutely no doubt whatsoever that that is true. Who then become lukewarm, talk back to God, are naked and blind, and they are not clothed, can’t see. This ties right in with that (Rev. 3:14-21). That refers to the Laodiceans. They need to wake up before they’re spit out and destroyed. This is here for us.

Every one of us comes to those times—don’t we? Where we don’t do what we should and we know we should be doing what we ought to be doing, but we’re not. We’re doing something else. Come back to these Scriptures and let it, with God’s Spirit, help you *redeem the time*—redeem the days, redeem the things that you have lost—*because the days are evil.*

Verse 17: “Considering your situation, do not be foolish, empty-headed and void of wisdom... I look back and I see all the stupid things that I have ever done and this labels every one of them—being “...foolish, empty-headed and void of wisdom...”

Sometimes we go along and we just get so impetuous and it’s kind like a big chain that’s hanging in our nose and we’re being dragged along. I saw something where some people did some things that were very stupid and foolish. It was the animal-

rightists. They went into some place where there was a bullfight—and obviously, bullfighting is something that shouldn't be done—and they went in and sat down in the bullring where the bulls were that they were fighting to protest the fighting of bulls—they didn't want it to happen.

They're sitting there all pious in their stupidity, empty-headedness and vanity and guess what happens? The bull lowers his head and charges and gouges about four or five of them right in full view of the television camera taking the news picture of that instance. That is the most profound example that I can think of, of being foolish and empty-headed and void of wisdom, to sit yourself down right in the middle of a bullring and then let the bull attack you.

Spiritually, we can look back and see that there are times when we have literally done the same thing in our lives—right? *Yes!* So, he says, 'Don't be that way!'

"...but be wise and understanding what the will and desire of the Lord is... [Always be keeping that in mind.] ...Do not be drunk and intoxicated with wine..." (vs 17-18). In the Church of God I think there have been too many instances where there has been too much drinking and alcoholism and things. I'm just talking about in general, but it can happen, and there have been ministers who have had to be treated for alcoholism, going to Alcoholics Anonymous and even one of the Churches of God they had one minister, whom I know personally, was drinking 2-1/2 to 3 quarts of vodka a day!

You say, 'Ohhh! How could that possibly happen to a minister?' Step-by-step, little-by-little, over a period of time. Then he was the one, after he came to his senses, who went around and helped raise up similar things to Alcoholics Anonymous in the different congregations of that Church. Therefore, that's why Paul says: "Do not be drunk and intoxicated with wine..." This also tells us that they didn't drink grape juice back then. That's for all the grape juice and water people. Why must we control that? I know that during the Feast we do have alcoholic beverages and we exercise it in moderation and in due care. That is fine and good, and well pleasing to God. But with drunkenness and intoxication, what does that lead to?

"...which leads to reckless abandon of character and dissipating debauchery..." (v 18). It dissipates the body. It dissipates the health. It dissipates the mind, and then you abandon character and you start doing those things you know you shouldn't do. But because you've clouded everything with the toxicity of all of this alcoholism—as in the case I just explained of this minister—then all of these things happen. That's

how people get cirrhosis of the liver and on and on. He's saying here, 'Don't let that become a thing within the Church.'

"...but be filled with the Spirit and let it pervade everything you do" (v 18). This is why the Epistle to the Ephesians is so tremendous. It is so involving everyone of us in letting the Spirit of God work in our lives and pervade everything we do—guiding us and leading us and uplifting us in every way.

Verse 19: "Speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs... [that's what we're doing right now with what I'm going through right here in Ephesians] ...and from your hearts and innermost being, be singing to and praising the Lord; giving thanks, being filled with gratitude and praise for everything in your life, at all times, in every circumstance (irrespective of whether you are being tried, or being blessed)..." (vs 19-20).

Too many times we like to thank God when we're being blessed, and we don't thank God when we're being tried. Why? *Because we don't like being tried!* I don't! You don't! But nevertheless, these things are to bring us up in the nurture and admonition of Christ. If Christ suffered for what He suffered, then we're going to suffer, too. That's all part of it. Let's also be blessing God and thanking Him and having gratitude even in times of trial as well blessings:

"...always be thanking our God and Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (v 20). This gives us, again, a lofty goal—doesn't it? Showing the debauchery of the world is nothing and that we should not be in that. But lifting our hearts and minds up to looking to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 21 ends this section: "Submitting yourselves to one another in the reverential fear and awe of God."

If we keep these things in mind, how much fewer problems are we going to have among ourselves and between ourselves. It's going to minimize them. I don't think we can ever come to wholly—as human beings—a time when there isn't any difficulty or misunderstandings or stress or problems between brethren.

But what we can do by focusing in on God the Father and Jesus Christ constantly, we can minimize that. We can bring it down to a level that it isn't going to destroy us. That's the whole purpose of Paul writing this. Remember, he was in prison and he knew this long before he was in prison. He knew what was going to happen in the Church. He knew it, and he knew he couldn't stop it. He knew

he wouldn't stop it. But he had to leave something for the Church, and the people, brethren and ministers who are faithful to be inspired with. So, that in spite of all of the problems and the absolute turmoil and the retching and tearing apart of the Church that was going to come, that everyone of us would have something to really hold onto, to really sink our teeth into, to really stay right and faithful with God.

Acts 20—remember that Paul had this in mind when he wrote this, because he gave this prophecy long before he was arrested and put in prison. Acts 20:28—he says to the ministers: “Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock...” This is to the elders at Ephesus. Remember, he came by and stopped by at Miletus and called for the elders, and this is what he was saying to them. So, he knew. Remember when Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians, this was what was on his mind so that he could hold the Church together as long as it would, to inspire and encourage the brethren to act in the love of God so that when these things took place it would accomplish two things:

1. Hopefully to minimize the effects of it

—which you can't do; you can't do by remote control. God did not desire to do that, because He's going to let everything be tried and fall where it would.

2. Individually to us in our lives, hearts and minds, minimize the effect of it so that when the trials come we will know how to recover ourselves out of it.

That's what the book of Ephesians has done and awful lot for me in my life, and I hope in your life.

Verse 28: “Take heed, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.” That's a powerful price for the Church. Every minister needs to go back and read this every once in a while and remind himself who the Church belongs to, and the price that it cost God.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.” They're going to tear it asunder! That's why Paul is writing here and saying, ‘I've got this in my thoughts. God, inspire me what I need to write to inspire these people to help them as much as I can.

Verse 30: “And from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things... [That's what he's saying here: Don't let anyone deceive, beguile, or cheat you out of your reward of God.] (For what purpose?): ...to draw away

disciples after themselves.”

Remember, Paul had this in mind when he was writing Ephesians. When he's talking about wives and husbands, he's talking about the Church and Christ. Also, it gives us an example that when the Church goes bad, the relationship with Christ suffers, just as every marriage where there are women who are not doing this—as it says here in Eph. 5—and there are men who are not being the kind of husbands they ought to, everything falls apart.

There isn't one of us that has not gone through ups and downs in our marriage, that we know for sure that this is true. I want you to look at the world and understand why this society in the world is as bad as it is:

- *women* are not being the wives and women they ought to be
- *men* are not being the husbands and men that they ought to be

Therefore, the society is going down the tubes, and we are being led astray by all kinds of fornication, sexual uncleanness and destruction of the family. And it lies right within the husband and wife to do the best that they can and follow God's way.

Ephesians 5:22: “Wives, subordinate, subject and submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” That doesn't mean that the wife becomes the ‘punching bag’ of the husband. But how many problems and difficulties are solved because of this? *Many!* Women need to understand and realize—and I'll just state it categorically here—no woman at any time, though you're married to him, you do not know what is in your husband's mind. Most of the mistakes that women make are because by nature they *think they know* what's in the mind of a man. You don't!

Also, the women's movement wants to remain women, but become as men. You can't have it all! Men, because of that, are fragile, you need to understand that. They may not let you know it, but they are fragile. They need the help and support of a wife. That's why God created women. That's why they are to be subordinate and in subjection and submissive “...to their own husbands as unto the Lord.”

Verse 23: “Because the husband is the head and leader of the wife, even as Christ is the Head and Leader of the Church, which is His body; and He Himself is the Savior, Deliverer, Provider and Preserver of the Body, which is the Church. In exactly the same manner, as the Church is subordinate, submissive and subject to Christ, even so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything in the marriage estate” (vs 23-24).

Now, Paul doesn't leave it there. He doesn't go along and say, 'Women are all the cause of all the evil in the world'—which is the same thing that Adam said—remember when God came and said, 'Why did you do this?' Adam said, 'The woman!' The woman said, 'The serpent!' Same thing! So, Paul doesn't leave it there. He says, 'Okay, you husbands, don't you get so absolutely just filled with so much barbarianism in you that you beat up your wives and you treat them like slobs, and you make them less than nothing and put them under your thumb.'

He says, v 25: "Husbands, be loving your wives with Godly Divine love, in exactly the same manner as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her." That's a tall order—right? *Yes, it is!*

Again, we have the same thing. Paul is teaching the ideal that we need to keep in mind, realizing that we need to strive for that. In the one case for the husbands; in the other case for the wives. But together, if we strive for this and realize that we need to come together in Christ...

(go to the next track)

...we're going to have much better marriages.

Why did he do it this way? Verse 26: "In order that He might sanctify her (that is make her Holy, pure and righteous), having cleansed and purified her from sin and error by the washing and cleansing of the water through the Word, through the grace, command and mandate of God."

So, it all has to be out of the Word of God that these things are coming from, for us. This is the goal. I just have to admit that I've fallen way short of these things many times. A lot of people think a minister and his wife ought to have an absolutely perfect relationship: 'He's a minister. He's been ordained. She's a minister's wife, she ought to be nearly perfect.'

No, that's not so! I can tell you that. I can tell you that there have been some very difficult times in my married life. That's not to reveal any confidential thing about anything. I am not an easy person to live with—period! That's just the way it is. With that caveat, I'm preaching to myself while I'm preaching to you. And hopefully, in all of it, we can all grow in grace and knowledge, and love and understanding. Paul said, 'Until *we all* come into the unity of the faith.'

Verse 27: "That He might place her beside Himself... [in the kingdom as spirit beings] ...as the glorious, gorgeous, untarnished Church, not having a single spot or stain, wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing; but that she might be consecrated, Holy and

completely blameless. **In exactly the same manner...** [that's what it means in the Greek] ...the husbands are duty-bound..." (vs 27-28). You see where the correction comes? God is not partial to men. God is not partial to women. Therefore, the instructions and corrections come to both. But notice again how Paul does this:

- he does this to inspire
- he does this uplift
- he does this inspire us to be motivated to make the corrections and changes ourselves

Because in the final analysis *you* have to do any changing and correcting; each individual by choice and determination and by free will and desirous willingness to do so. It's the old story, 'you lead a horse to water—you can even take him in the water and drown him—but if doesn't want to drink, he ain't going to drink.' It's the same way with us. Paul is trying to inspire us to make us change our lives:

- by seeing what we need to do
- by looking at what we have been doing
- by seeing what God wants us to do

Verse 28: "In exactly the same manner, the husbands are duty-bound and under obligation to God, to love their wives as their own bodies... [and much more than that] ...anyone who is loving his wife in this manner, loves himself, because no one at any time has really and truly hated his own flesh..." (vs 28-30).

There have been some demon-possessed and inspired persons who destroy the flesh, cut on themselves and all that sort of thing. That's not talking about that kind of thing, because that is not the person, in reality, doing it, but the demon in him. We're talking about those of us today, because no one as a Christian "...at any time has really and truly hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, exactly as the Lord does the Church, for we are members of very own body..." (vs 29-30).

How do you think you got to where you are in the Church, being called, and all of that. It's through the Body of Christ! Therefore, I put "...of His very own flesh..." Let's read it in the *King James* so that we get a contrast here.

I know for years, when I first came into the Church, I could not understand this, because how could it be that, as it says in the *King James*, v 30: "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

- Christ was resurrected—isn't that true?
- Christ is now spirit—isn't that true?
- *Yes!*

How then can we become members of His body, *of His flesh* when it is now a spirit body? *Of His bones*, when it is now a spirit body? One day it dawned on me why it said that. That's why I put it in this translation.

Verse 30: "For we are members of His very own body, of His very own flesh (through the crucifixion...)..." That's what it is *because Christ became flesh!* 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' The Word became flesh for what purpose?

- For the suffering of death!
- For the forgiveness of our sins!
- That we can be married to Christ!

That's what it means that "...we are members of His body, of His very own flesh (through the crucifixion and all that means)..." (v 30).

Then I couldn't figure out "...and of His bones..." What on earth do bones have to do with the spiritual reality of being in the Church of God. It finally dawned on me one day.

In the bones, in the very heart and core of the bones is *bone marrow*. In that bone marrow is the very physical substance and life of our physical being—correct? *Yes!* Your bone marrow is reproducing blood cells, so the bone marrow is the generating factories of your very body, the innermost part of your very being that keeps your physical body going. That is why when people are so wracked with cancer, they say 'let's have a bone marrow transplant.' The doctors know that that gives physical life.

When it's talking about the bones, it's taking about another very important thing that is true: Where did women come from in the first place? *God took one of Adam's ribs and from it He fashioned a woman!*

So, combining these two thoughts together, Adam was the first man—right? Jesus Christ is the second Adam—right? The analogy is this: "...(...and of His bones as Adam's wife Eve was created from his own rib, so also as a counterpart for Christ, the Church, as a spiritual creation, is created from his innermost Being)" (v 30).

- Is Christ involved in our lives? *Yes!*
- How? *From His innermost being to us, through God the Father!*

Doesn't that give us a more profound and meaningful understanding that we are *of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. From the innermost part of His Being!*

Verse 31: "And in correlation (to this spiritual analogy, which is a type)... [now he comes back down to the earthly things for us] ...a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to and cleave to his own wife, and the two of them shall become... [over the period of their lifetime] ...one flesh and blend their lives into one"—that the two now are no longer two, but one. That is the great challenge and the great goal in a married life that we need to have. That is the great goal of God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Church.

Verse 32: "This mystery..." And it is a mystery! A tremendous mystery of God that this could be so, and that we—as the saints of God—can become the bride of Christ.

"This mystery is great, immense and supreme.... [The greatest and most fantastic thing we could ever understand as human beings. And the greatness and glory of God and all that He has for us.] ...I am speaking concerning the relationship between Christ and the Church (and their eternal destiny). However, let everyone of you also be loving his own wife exactly as himself; and the wife would see that she is revering her husband" (vs 32-33).

The whole standard is so high and the goal is so lofty to shoot for, we're going to find ourselves just kind of like the guy with the pea-shooter trying to hit the mark a hundred feet away; it's going to fall short. We can see ourselves falling short of this, but this is the goal that we need to look to.

Let's tie this in with the Feast of Tabernacles. Let's go back here to Rev. 19. First thing that is going to happen after we're resurrected before we come back down to the earth is that the Church is going to be married to Christ.

When we understand that the resurrection is on Pentecost, and when we understand that the book of Ruth was to be read on the Day of Pentecost—and you've often wondered about the book of Ruth, haven't you? *Yes!* Ruth was a Gentile woman; Boaz was an old Jewish man. Boaz represented the ancient qualities of Christ living forever. The woman represented that which was not accepted by God, being a Gentile.

They were married and they had a child, and the offspring was Jesse. Jesse was the one who became the father of David, from whom the root, the branch, led to Christ.

That's why the book of Ruth is read on Pentecost, and expand that toward the New Testament in the light of what I just read here. Let's read Rev. 19 that talks about the whole meaning of

the Feast of Tabernacles and the marriage of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:1: “And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying... [that’s us resurrected] ...‘Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power *belong* to the Lord our God. For true and righteous *are* His judgments; for He has judged the great whore... [that great counterfeit; that evil adulterous woman that runs this world and destroys human beings and brings them into poverty and degradation] ...who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand.’ And they said a second time, ‘Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’” (vs 1-4)—‘So be it, praise God’ is another way of saying the same thing.

Verse 5. And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great.’ And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude... [that’s us, brethren and the angels with us] ...and like *the* sound of many waters, and *the* sound of mighty thunders, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For *the* Lord God Almighty has reigned’” (vs 5-6). That’s the whole meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 7: “**Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.**” That’s us, brethren! That’s why we need the Word of God. We need to take it and

- wash us
- scrub us
- clean us
- uplift us
- inspire us
- motivate us
- make ourselves ready

Verse 8: “And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright... [not any spot, wrinkle, stain or blemish or any such thing] ...for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said to me, ‘Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true words of God’” (vs 8-9).

Let’s keep that in mind, that we are going to reign forever and ever in the close marriage estate relationship with Jesus Christ into all eternity!

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 5:1-5
- 2) Romans 1:18-22
- 3) Ephesians 5:7-21
- 4) Acts 20:28-30
- 5) Ephesians 5:22-29, 31-33
- 6) Revelation 19:1-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Philippians 2
- Galatians 6
- 2 Timothy 1
- Revelation 3:14-21

Epistle to the Ephesians V Chapter Six

Fred R. Coulter

I think it's very appropriate that we have been going through this series in the book of Ephesians. We're going to go back to do the third chapter; you'll see why when get to the third chapter, because I feel that the third chapter is very inspiring and uplifting.

Here in Ephesians 6, Paul continues with his day-to-day instruction on how to live our lives. You notice all the way through there is no statement saying 'the day of the Lord is at hand.' The reason is because Paul is writing this so that he can solidify the Church in preparation for the fact that Christ was not coming really soon, and they needed to know how to conduct their lives and how to live their lives so that they then could fulfill and accomplish the plan of God in their lives so the brethren and the elders could continue after his death, in spite of all the things we mentioned in part five concerning what Paul knew what was going to happen to the Church and to the ministry and to the brethren.

Paul then deals with the situation continuing with the family relations. In Eph. 5 we have husband/wife relations, and in Eph. 6 he covers a little bit about child relations, a little bit about employer relations, and in this case servants and slave relations. Then he comes down to how we need to be fighting Satan the devil and what our spiritual warfare, in fact, really is.

Ephesians 6:1: "Children, obey your own parents and be in compliance with them in the Lord, because this is fair and equitable." In other words, there's nothing that God is asking of children to do that is not right. We've got the world out there telling all of the children in school—and every place else—'your mother and dad are old fogies and this nonsense about God has no standing in this school, and your parents are only going to hinder you from expressing yourself in your life because they don't want you to have sex, they don't want you go out and experiment with drugs, they don't want you to be rebellious to them.' So, that's what's happening in the world today.

As a matter of fact, that's what they're teaching in the schools. All of you who have children going to public school, it's a tremendous job to keep on top of all of those things, because that's just the way the world is, and that's just the way that it is with their friends, too.

So many times the things that I hear and you have heard is, 'Well, that's not fair!' when it comes to one of your children wanting to do something. As

I've explained to my children, there's nothing fair in this world and we're not living in a communist society here at home. What is right is what we need to do. Still, that becomes almost insurmountable for some of them. It becomes most difficult rearing and training and teaching children in this world.

There are so many factors beyond our control, especially when you consider that they go to school all day, when you consider that they spend time with their friends all the time, when you consider the activities before school and after school and all this sort of thing. When you get right down to it, the parents have virtually no time with their children at all to help them, teach them and do different things with them. So, it really makes it very, very difficult. It's a tremendous task and burden on every parent

- to fight the world
- to fight Satan
- to live in the Church
- to teach their children
- to rear them up
- to have good relations—husband and wife

All of these things become a tremendous job for us!

Paul says here that that is the fair, the equitable thing, or it is right. Then he quotes a Scripture, v 2: "Honor (and always hold in esteem)... [that's what honor mean] ...your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, in order that it may be well with you, and that you may be long-lived on the earth" (vs 2-3).

Today because that commandment is being broken, what do we have as the #1 reason for death among teenagers?

1. car wrecks
2. murder
3. suicide

Then all of the degrees of death, or the degrees of the lack of long life, which then is the result of taking drugs, fornication, abortion—which then is a result of all of these things that are crushing in on the children.

What all children need to understand and know is that you need to honor your parents and God will bless you. God is not against you and your parents are not against you. The biggest problem and difficulty is that you are against yourselves, because you don't really have enough wisdom and

understanding, or length of time in life, to know what's going on. And you have believed that because at age 16-21 you know every single thing in the world there is to know. The other thing that is against you is all of these that say they are your friends who want you to drink, to fornicate, to take drugs and rebel against your parents.

With that in mind, v 4: "And father..." It becomes most difficult for fathers because living in this world, if you have any children that have enough get-up-and-go to do things, then they're going to have a lot of direction and personality and strength on their own way. So, you end up sometimes with a lot of knockdown, drag-out, shout-'em-down, who's-in-charge type of thing, especially with the boys.

I talked to a woman once and I said, 'You know, boys are harder to raise than girls; that's been my experience.' She said, 'No, my experience has been that it's harder to raise girls.' So, I give up my hands and say, 'Whatever the circumstances are—boys or girls.' This makes it difficult for all of us, because living in the world the way it is today, it's awfully hard for you to do the things that are right and teach your children the things that are right, and still keep verse 4 in mind and not do this:

Verse 4: "And fathers do not provoke, frustrate or exasperate your children..." That's very difficult to not do that today, because the world is pulling so hard

- to rip them out of the family
- rip them out of your control
- rip their mind out of their cranium
- tear their emotions out of their heart

and all of that sort of thing. You have handle it however you can and be as firm and strong and tough as you need to be, and loving and kind as you need to be. All those things you have to gage and determine in your own family.

"...but nurture and care for them and bring them up in the discipline, instruction and admonition of the Lord" (v 4). I want you to notice one thing here though that Paul does not spend a lot of time delving into a lot of family relations. The reason being is that they didn't have the kind of society then that we have, and they didn't have all of the distractions that we have.

Can you imagine what Paul would have written had he lived in today's society with all the television, the movies, the rock music, and all the nonsense that's coming in; to where if you as an individual—let alone being a parent—do not abhor and cannot stand any of that stupidity, nonsense and demonic aberrations, *you're nuts!*

- Can you imagine what he would have written?
- Can you imagine the kind of writing and power that would have been there?

I think we all fall short of being able to put up with and keep up with that as it would have been with ministers.

Then he gets into another situation here, which talks about and gives us the guidelines and what we need to be doing as workers.

Verse 5: "Servants and slaves..."—'doulos'—which means *slave, bought and paid for salves*; that you were owned by someone else. Today we don't have slavery, but I'll tell you one thing, we are enslaved to a system that proclaims freedom— isn't that right? *Yes, we are!*

- try doing without electricity
- try doing without paying your bills
- try doing without any money

So, we can abhor all we want the things of slavery, and the way it is depicted in modern day is only showing one side of what it may have been like at the worst end for slaves, because there were a lot of slaves who were treated decently and in a Christian manner. Paul is dealing with that here.

We need to understand that. We need to face reality. We need to face what it was and that's the way it is. Just to make all things sort of equal for all human beings, God has allowed every nation to be in slavery of form or another to another nation, so no one can say, 'Oh, God, you made us slaves!' Let's understand that.

Verse 5: "Servants and slaves be obeying and be in compliance with those who are your masters in this physical life, with respectful deference, veneration and reverence, and do so in genuine sincerity and straightforward simplicity from your heart, just as you would to Christ."

That shows the whole attitude. When we have in our working relations with people this kind of attitude—not that we are to be politically climbing and you can turn that coin on the other side and have all the vanity and all the stupidity and power grabbing that goes on today in our society. People on the lowest level are even trying to crawl over on the ones next to them. It just becomes a 'mad dash' as it were.

But all of that aside, if we have this kind of attitude here with genuine sincerity and with straightforward simplicity; just from the heart as we would to Christ. If we do that to each other, let alone to our bosses or employers (if you're not working for yourself); but then if you are self-employed, you

have to be that way to your clients—don't you? Do you think that if you're self-employed you can go out and beat up your clients and be mean and nasty with them and still have a business? No way possible! This applies to everything, every circumstance, to have this kind of attitude.

Verse 6: "Never with eye-service..." Isn't that the way it always is? When the boss is away the workers will play. When the boss comes around, everyone hurries up and scurries up and does everything.

So, I put this parenthetical statement: "... (only while you are under scrutiny or inspection), aiming to please men..." (v 6). Then you'll find out in the long run is what you need to do is do the best you can do and let everything go from there. If you don't do the best you can do, then you're going to be falling short. If you only do what you're supposed to do when others are around, then it's going to create other difficulties for you. This is just straightforward and good and Christian advice for all of us.

"...but rather, be as the servants and slaves of Christ..." (v 6). It's awfully hard, especially if you have a harsh taskmaster for a boss. Keep in mind, you are to serve him as you would Christ, and to say, "This man I need to respect as Christ." Now, that's awfully hard to do—isn't it?

"...performing and accomplishing the will and desire of God from your innermost being and soul" (v 6)—from your heart. That's what we need to do. If we do these things for each other; if we do these things for the people we're working for.... On the other hand, Jesus said, 'Be wise as serpents, harmless as doves.' Don't lay your whole life out there to be tromped on, ruined, run over, trampled down and destroyed. In doing this you lose such simplicity that you become stupid. God says, 'Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.' Do that which is right, because that's what God wants you to do.

Verse 7: "Coupled with goodwill and heartiness... [be zealous; do it with enthusiasm] ...and doing your service as to the Lord, and not to men." I guarantee you that if you do that, you won't have worry about you're going to get fired when it comes time to trim down/cut the workforce, because you're going to be able to have the accomplishment that will help make you a valuable and loyal employee, or whatever it may be.

Verse 8: "All the while knowing... [always keep all of this in mind] ...and realizing that whatever good and right things each one may perform and accomplish, he shall receive back to himself (his recompense) from the Lord, and it doesn't make any difference whether he is a servant and slave or a free man."

Again, as the Apostle Paul does, he tries to cover all the bases here. So, not only did they have slaves who attended church, but they also had masters who attended church.

Here were the instructions for those masters on how to handle their slaves. Or, if we could do it today, if you are in charge of people then here are some good things that you need to realize and always keep in mind, and to be practicing in your relationship with your employees that either work for you, or that you as a foreman or supervisor may be in charge of:

Verse 9: "And you masters, also be doing and practicing the same toward them, omitting and refraining from threatening and harsh language..." Of course, you know how that goes over—like a lead balloon—and every time you get angry, it's happened with me, there's always something you say and there's always hurt feelings, and there are things that happen that are awfully hard to go back and undo. Isn't that right? *Yes, that's right!*

When you work in a situation where your boss is always threatening you—if you don't do this you're going to be fired—and you live under tension, you live under harshness—it creates problems.

What if you were a slave to a master and you couldn't get away? You couldn't say to this guy, 'I quit!' Couldn't do it because you were *owned* by him. It really put everyone in a difficult situation. Keep that in mind when we're reading this, also.

"...always knowing and remembering that your own Master is in heaven..." (v 9). Remember what it says: 'Give and it shall be given back to you.' It's the same way, if you are difficult and harsh and hard-hearted, then you know it's going to come back to you one way or the other. What Paul is saying to those who were slave masters is, 'Look, treat them with love, kindness, fairness, and I want you to remember this, whatever you're doing with them, remember that your Master is in heaven.'

"...and there is never respect of persons or partiality toward anyone, with Him" (v 9). There is no person that God is going to respect, because that person is that person.

Let's go to John 8 and we'll see a good example of this of what Jesus did during the Feast of Tabernacles when there came those to him—while he was preaching at the Feast of Tabernacles—and they were reminding Him of *who they were!* Remember, this was during the Feast of Tabernacles and Jesus was performing miracles, and all of this sort of thing. This is actually on what we know as and we call *The Last Great Day*—the last day of the Feast.

John 8:31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him... [How deep was their belief? *Not very deep!*] (He told them): ...‘If you continue in My Word... [in My message; what I’ve told you] ...you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free” (vs 31-32).

One little insight into this: ***Truth is never understood unless you do it!*** You won’t know about God’s Word unless you do it. You won’t understand about God’s Word unless you follow it. Just a very simple thing, and Jesus was trying to teach them: “...the Truth shall set you free.”

Notice their answer; these are the ones who said they believed in Jesus, v 33: “They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, “You shall become free”?’” The truth was, all of Judea and Jerusalem were in fact under the Roman boot and heel of captivity! They were in bondage to them even though they didn’t have the chains and shackles on their wrists and ankles of being slaves being sent off to a galley to row one of these boats (as you might remember from *Judah Ben Hur!* How he went out there and he was shackled as a slave and chained to the oar.

Jesus brings it out very clearly. He says, ‘It really doesn’t matter whether you’re free or whether you’re bond in this particular case, because, v 34: “Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.’” In the final analysis in everything that there is, we’re a slave one way or the other—either to God as a servant of God, or to sin as a servant of sin.

Paul said, ‘We be thanked that you *were* the servant of sin, but *are now* the servant of righteousness (Rom. 6_[transcriber’s correction]). That’s what he’s saying here. If you’re going to be sinning, you’re the servant, you’re the slave, you’re held into that sin by that sin, and to whom a person is brought into bondage, he is that person’s slave.

Verse 35: “And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free. I know that you are Abraham’s seed...” (vs 35-37).

God doesn’t respect people. It doesn’t matter who you are. As a Christian before God that is what is important. Who your father was, your mother was, and what your ancestry and genealogy is has no standing before God. God isn’t going to be any respecter of persons. And to prove that whole very thing, the summation of what happened here was that God sent that whole nation off into captivity because they didn’t believe and they rejected Christ.

Did God respect them because of who they were and hold back the captivity from them? *No! Not at all; not in any way!*

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

What did Abraham do? Genesis 26:5—the promise came to Isaac, “Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

- What else did Abraham do?
- *Abraham believed God!*
- Did these people believe Christ?
- *Well, it says they believe on Him!*
- How much did they believe on Him?
- *Just long enough to go through this conversation and try and stone Him!*

John 8:40: “But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this. You are doing the works of your father.’ Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication....” (vs 40-41). Doesn’t this tell us an awful lot? Doesn’t that one statement tell us an awful lot? That tells us that

- they *knew* Who Jesus was.
- they *knew* the circumstances of His birth
- they *knew* when He was born

Also, the false rumor went around that He was born of illicit sex. Is that story still spread around to this very day? *Yes!* So, they threw it back in His face.

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

Why could they not hear His word? Verse 44: “You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

You can read the rest of the account there, but that just leads into the next section in Eph. 6,

because there is always going to be that encounter that we are going to have. Not only with the forces of evil, but also with the things that are in the world. Right then, Jesus was right up against it with the people there, and later on concerning the whole thing concerning the crucifixion of Christ and how that Satan was behind that 100%.

Ephesians 6:10: “Finally, my brethren, for whatever else remains, **be strengthened in the Lord...**” That’s where our strength needs to come from; everything.

- Let this Feast of Tabernacles strengthen you in the Lord!
- Let the Word of God strengthen you in the Lord!
- Let the Spirit of God strengthen you in the Lord!

“...and in the might of His very own dynamic power and energy” (v 10). Brethren, that means using God’s Spirit to grow, change, overcome, to put away sin, to grow in righteousness and all of this.

Verse 11 becomes profoundly and absolutely important: “Be clothing yourselves, putting on the complete armor...” The whole armor of God, the complete armor. Don’t just have part of it. Don’t just use a little bit of it. Don’t get bogged down in such a way that you really don’t know how to use it.

You can go clear back to the time when David went out to fight Goliath. He came out and everyone said ‘We can’t get out there and fight because this Goliath is out there and all of the armies of Israel can’t fight.’ David came in bringing food to his brothers, and he said, ‘Why aren’t you fighting. This Goliath out here, he’s just holding the armies at bay.’ So, David went up to Saul and said, ‘Look, I’ve killed a lion, I’ve killed a bear, I’ve done this and that, now let me go fight him.’

What happen was that Saul took him in put his helmet on him, put the armor on him, gave a sword, and David stood there and looked at all of this and he could hardly move and use it; took off all that because he couldn’t fight with that. So, he took the five smooth stones and he used a slingshot and killed Goliath and took Goliath’s own sword and cut off Goliath’s head.

There’s a good lesson for us in that. We’re to put on the whole armor of God, but **we have to make sure it’s the right armor:**

- not the wrong armor
- not that which doesn’t fit
- not that which doesn’t work
- not that which we cannot use

It’s the whole armor **of God!**

“...(that is, the entire array of spiritual weapons—both offensive and defensive), that you may be able, being inwardly fortified, to stand against and resist the crafty scheming and deceptive methods of the devil” (v 11). That’s so true for us. The devil is right there all of the time.

Let’s get our bearings and understand a little bit more about that. Let me read to you from James 4 concerning the devil and what he has done. This is exactly what is happening to the whole world and what the Church has been subjected to.

James 4:1: “*What is the cause of quarrels and fightings among you? Is it not mainly from your own lusts that are warring within your members?*” Lusts then become a field of activity for Satan to work against us, because he is there with all of the greed, with all of the lust, with all of the things pulling forward against us. which “...are warring within your members.”

Verse 2: “You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask. *Then* you ask, and you do not receive, because you ask with evil motives, that you may consume *it* on your own lusts. *You* adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know that the friendship of the world is enmity *with God?*....” (vs 2-4).

Why? *Because the world is Satan’s territory! The world is Satan’s playground!* If you want to be a friend with the world you’re going to be an enemy with God. We have to choose what we want.

“...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy?’” (vs 4-5). Do you think that Bible says in vain how evil and horrible and rotten that human nature is? *or* Is there for just some sort of spiritual antidote for us? *or* Some sort of spiritual explanation for our sin? NO! Human nature is evil, wicked, deprived, avarice, greedy, lustful and murderous (Mark 7:21—from within come all of these things out of the heart of men).

Verse 6: “But He gives greater grace.... [to Christians who are really asking] ...This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.’ Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (vs 6-7). That’s one of the greatest things you need to do: Resist the devil! Resist those temptations! And he will have to flee from you.

Verse 8: “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you....” There’s the way to do it: resist the devil, draw close to God and God will draw

close to you. We have to seek God. God says we will find Him.

“...Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 8-10). This is what James is telling us how to avoid the fight, difficulty and becoming a victim of Satan the devil.

Let’s go to 1-Peter 5, and there are some really good instructions for us here in what we need to do considering our relationship with Christ and how to fight the devil. One of the things the devil can work on is pride and vanity, then comes jealousy, lust and greed—all of these are the avenues and approaches that Satan can use to get a wedge in the door to start going against your life.

1-Peter 5:2—talking about the ministers: “Feed the flock of God *that is* among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude.*” So, the same attitude that Paul is telling the servants and slaves to have toward their masters, those who are serving and feeding the flock need to have that same kind of attitude.

Verse 3: “Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions; but *by* being examples to the flock of God. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested... [that is coming] ...you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory. In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all of *you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility...” (vs 3-5).

Sounds like they were having a problem with vanity among the ministry—right? Stop and think! All the problems that there has ever been in the ministry have been from vanity and self-exaltation. What has happened to every one of them?

- Is God able to abase them?
- Is God able to take care of them?
- Is God able to correct them?
- *Yes!*

But how much easier it would have been for the ministers and all the brethren involved in this if they would have followed what he said here.

He said to humble yourself and be “...clothed with humility, because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; **casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you**” (vs 5-7).

One of the wedges, the openings, or the

fiery darts, or the missiles of passion that Satan is going to throw at any one of us is when we have a lot of worry, a lot of anxiety, and we have all of these things that we’re holding and bundling up in ourselves, then this gives an open door and opportunity for Satan.

Verse 8: “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...” (vs 8-9). That’s how we are to resist the devil! This is how then we clothe ourselves with the whole armor of God!

“...knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world” (v 9). That is a tremendous thing for us to know and to understand in relationship to all of these things that we’re doing.

Let’s go back to the book of Ephesians and let’s finish this section as we’re going along here; there’s quite a bit here for us. We need to be really aware of the activities and the motives and the movements of Satan the devil. We covered a lot of that when we did the series: *Satan’s Ten Most Believable Lies!*

Ephesians 6:11: “Be clothing yourselves... [that is a command; that’s in the imperative tense, something you should be doing] ...putting on the complete armor (that is, the entire array of spiritual weapons—both offensive and defensive) that you may be able, being inwardly fortified, to stand against and resist the crafty scheming and deceptive methods of the devil. Because for us... [as Christians] ...the struggle, conflict and fight is not against, or directed toward flesh and blood, but rather, against the principalities and rulers, against the authorities and powers, against the world rulers and paramount powers of this age of spiritual darkness...” (vs 11-12).

It’s going to appear as light, it’s going to appear as great, it’s going to appear as marvelous, because Satan the devil was the one who was Lucifer, to be the *light bringer*, and the light that he is going to bring is *darkness* on all of this world. Those of us who are living in the end of the age—at the end of the time—we need to be especially and particularly aware of this.

- We know that *the mark of the beast* is going to come.
- We know that being Christians sooner or later is going to expose us to the world for what we are—and they aren’t going to like us.
- We know that Satan would like to derail everyone of us at any time to cause us to give up on salvation; to cause us to give up on the grace of God.

This is why Paul is saying, ‘Look, our struggle is not just against human beings, but against these spiritual powers of darkness.

“...(which holding sway and exercising control over the unbelieving and ungodly, constantly enslaving them to their own avarice lusts)...” (v 12). Nothing could be any more descriptive than what happens with all of those who enslave people to the terrible condemnation of drugs: cocaine, heroin and all of this sort of thing. Guess who the power is behind that. Guess who? *Satan the devil!* Who gets the wealth and riches from it? Who said, ‘I will give you all the wealth and the riches in the world if you would but bow down and worship me’? *Satan the devil!* That’s what he told Jesus.

“...yes, our struggle is actually against the demonic spirits of wickedness, who are influencing and controlling those in high places” (v 12). That’s the way it is in the world today. That’s what we have to fight against constantly, not only in our own lives, but also in everything around us, because we are bombarded like no other generation ever has been.

Verse 13: “Because of this, take up the entire array of God’s armor so that you may have the power and capacity to withstand and resist the onslaught in the evil day, and having done everything... [that is in the name of Christ whatever we do in word or deed do in the name of Christ] ... (that is, being always spiritually prepared) to stand.” We have to stand for the Truth every day, but there’s a time when we are going to have to absolutely stand and resist the evil, the world, the lusts and everything that there is. In our lives on a daily basis, we have to be able to take that stand.

Verse 14: “Stand, therefore... [here’s how to do it] ...having **your loins girded, protected and encased with Truth...**” Because the easiest place to get you is just thrust a sword, spear or knife right into your inward parts and BAMO, you’re dead!

(go to the next track)

They can get a knife and slip it between the fifth rib and get the heart and you’re a goner! Spiritually speaking it’s the same way. We have to have our loins—our midriff, our whole body—“...encased in Truth...” as it were.

“...and having **put on the armored breastplate of righteousness...** [that means the strength and power of the righteousness of Christ] ... (which is your right standing with God, by His grace, through Christ)...” (v 14). That’s the only way you’re going to fight; it’s got to be a spiritual battle; it is a spiritual thing that we are against.

- when we have this *right standing*
- when we know that Christ is there

- when we have *the faith* that God will do it

God will help us! It doesn’t matter what anyone can do to us; it doesn’t matter one wit!

This is “...to protect and safeguard your hearts and minds; and having your feet shod with the preparation and basic foundation of the Gospel of Peace (that is, the peace, harmony and tranquility of God); in addition to everything else, having taken up the shield of the faith and belief, with which you will be able to extinguish and totally suppress the burning, fiery darts and missiles of passion, temptation and lust from the Wicked One (thereby preventing an entrance into the door of your mind, so that he cannot exploit an opportunity to cause you to sin)” (vs 14-16).

Let’s understand something that happens to Christians: You go along nicely minding your own business, nicely doing what you want to do and your mind is not anywhere on any kind of sin at all whatsoever, and all of a sudden here comes a thought in your mind. Where did that come from? Did you want that thought? *No!* You didn’t want that thought. That’s one of those *fiery darts* that Satan is throwing trying to get you to think *his* way.

That’s why then you have to be able to fight off those things. What do you do? *Just pray right then and ask God to give you the strength to get rid of it and put it away from you!* Get it away. If you don’t, then sin is going to be there and lust is going to take place, and it’s going to work and brood and ferment and manifest it’s own way. Then it’s going to bring forth sin. And James says, ‘Then sin, when it is done, brings forth death!’ That’s why it’s so very important with this spiritual fight.

- that we grow
- that we change
- that we overcome
- that we use the spiritual things that God has given us

Verse 17: “Also, **putting on the helmet of salvation...**” He saves it for last, not that any of the ones before this are of any less importance, but this is the most important. This is the most important. You can be wounded in the arm and still live. You can be wounded in the side and still live. You can be wounded in the legs and still live. You can even have your feet cut off and still live. But if you have your mind blown out there’s no way you’re going to live. That’s why he put it here concerning the “...helmet of salvation...”

“...(for the protection of your mind and your inward, Godly character—which is Christ in you by the Spirit of God the Father)... [That’s why we have on this symbolic *helmet of salvation*:

- to guide us
- to protect us
- to keep our mind
- to bring us to the day of salvation

—which the whole Feast of Tabernacles is picturing—

- to live with Christ
- to be in the Kingdom of God

This is what we need to do to get there, because it is a spiritual fight, which is Christ in you by the Spirit of God the Father.

“...take up and always be using the Sword of the Spirit, **which is the Word of God**” (v 17). That’s why it’s so important that we know and understand the Word of God and be able to use it, be able to live by it, be able to have it in our heart and mind and inward parts, and let it always be there. Let that Word of God be that thing, which is going to give the tool of the Spirit of God within our minds to work.

- How are you going to cut out and exorcise those thoughts? *By the Spirit of God that is in you!*
- How is the Spirit of God going to work? *Through the Word of God!*

That’s why

- You know why study is important!
- You know why praying is important!
- You know why using the Word of God is important!

This then is the sword that cuts out those things of lust, passions and the missiles that come from Satan the devil to disturb you and upset you. Always be using the *sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God* and have it sharp so that you know! Have it meaningful so that you’re able to use it!

Verse 18: “And all of these things are **accomplished through prayer...**” That’s how they’re all done. Brethren, I think one of things where people fall short most of is in praying, then in studying. When those things accumulate and you get a guilty feeling and you don’t pray and you don’t go back to God and you don’t do those things—you’ll do it later or whatever—that’s when things deteriorate and begin to fall apart. That’s been my experience and I know that’s been your experience. That’s why Paul is saying that “...all of these things are accomplished through prayer...”

“...(which is the source of your spiritual strength, and enables you to be fully ready for battle)...” (v 18). How powerful is Satan’s way? We can even have the case where people have not been exposed to Satan.

Let’s go back to Rev. 20 and let’s see what happens when Satan is again loosed. We’ve gone through the whole Millennium and what happens? Satan has been bound, everything is glorious and wonderful, people are entering into the Kingdom of God and all that sort of thing. Notice what happens immediately when Satan is loosed. If you don’t think Satan is powerful, and if you don’t think that our adversary has ability:

Revelation 20:7: “Now, when the thousand years have been completed, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison; and he shall go out to deceive the nations that *are* in the four corners of the earth...” (vs 7-8). As soon as Satan gets out he deceives.

- Did these people know about God?
- *Sure they knew about God!*
- Did they understand what was going on?
- *Sure they understood what was going on!*

But I want you to notice the severity and the power that Satan has. He gathers them to battle. He incites them and they are ready to fight God—those that become obstinate and rebellious and disobedient to God. It’s really quite a battle that’s going on there—isn’t it? *Yes, it is!*

Satan has power and ability, and you see what happened. These people were deprived of the Holy Spirit because they didn’t *believe God*. Then when Satan was loosed on them, immediately they went into this rebellion and fighting God.

While we have the Spirit of God—which is true—we are living in this world that is controlled by Satan. We, in fact, are the enemy of Satan!

- Does he want to destroy the enemy? *Yes, he does!*
- Does he want to destroy us? *Yes, he does!*

Any way he can!

- by whatever subtle means
- by whatever lust or temptation
- by whatever thing he can put out there to you *to get you.*

Satan will want to, so we don’t want to give him any kind of opening. or any kind of permanent foothold into the door of our mind or the activity of our lives. We have to use prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit so that God will give us the strength.

Ephesians 6:18: “And all these things are accomplished through prayer (which is the source of your spiritual strength, and enables you to be fully ready for battle)...” Do you realize how important that is; how absolutely necessary that it is. We don’t want to let ourselves get out of training—do we? We don’t want to let ourselves be unclothed and naked

to the enemy—do we? Isn't that what has happened to the Laodiceans? *Yes!* They are naked, blind, open to the enemy and he has enticed them

- with riches
- with wealth
- with standing
- with understanding

—so that they become lukewarm.

Go back and study again all the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3. Who was the great adversary against the people of God? *Satan the devil!* This is absolutely important what we have through the power of prayer and God's Spirit, this battle array on us for that we're ready for battle.

"...even by earnest supplication and entreaty at all times in the Holy Spirit of God..." (v 18). There are times we have to really beseech God; we have to go to God and say: 'Oh, God, I don't understand, give me understanding. This is too much; I cannot handle this. Help me with this, this is a battle! Please give men the strength! Please give me the armor! Please give me the ability through Christ to understand and go through this thing!'

There are times when we just have to go to God that way in "...supplication and entreaty at all times in the Holy Spirit of God; in this very thing (the spiritual battle for your soul)..." (v 18). That's what it is. Satan the devil is there.

- He doesn't want us to see you attain to the resurrection.
- He doesn't want to see you in the Kingdom of God and live with Christ and rule and reign with Him a thousand years.
- *NO!*

He wants you to be a victim; he wants you to be:

- shipwrecked
- car-wrecked
- destroyed
- self-destruct
- do spiritual suicide

—as Esau who sold his inheritance for a small, pitiful bowl of porridge. He is there!

"...always be watchful and vigilant, with all perseverance and supplication concerning all of the saints" (v 18). That's why we need to pray for each other, brethren,

- that we can be healed
- that we can be strong
- that we can grow in grace and knowledge
- that we can overcome all of our little difficulties and problems; and major difficulties and problems that we have

I'm not without need for your prayers for me. I need them! In the work and business that I am in right now, real estate has been absolutely the bottom of the stack. It has been very difficult for me to even make enough to just exist. God has helped me in it, and I have been able to have enough to exist and get by. I'm trusting in God to do so. That's just the way that it is. But the only thing that is going to solve the problem is for God to intervene and bless me and bless you. We pray for each other that God is able to be with us. That's what Paul is saying here in everything that we do.

Verse 19: "And even for me... [Paul's saying being in prison here] ...in order that an opportunity for speaking and preaching with all boldness and courage may be given to me, to make known the mystery of the Gospel" (vs 18-19). We need that, too, brethren.

The time has come that now we need to ask God to help us to grow. That we ask God to help us to really reach out and help other people. I think that we have had enough time to be healed from the spiritual battles of the past. I think we have had enough time to overcome what we have gone through. Now that we can be strong enough, now that we can—with God's Spirit—ask God to help us, to open an opportunity for these things. If God wants me to, I will. If there is someone else that I can help and do it with, that will be practical, that's fine.

Whatever God wants, that it will be opened up so that we can preach with all boldness and courage that God can possibly give us to make known the *mystery of the Gospel*, which then is everything about the Gospel and Christ, being God, being human, dying and being resurrected, and intervening and sending His Holy Spirit. Those things just need to be and God can do it.

Verse 20: "For which (on behalf of which) I am an ambassador and envoy in bondage and chains, in order that, even in this condition... [Paul was not waiting to be loosed from prison to preach. He said, even in this condition]: ...I may be as bold and courageous as it is necessary to speak. But that you may also know and understand the things and circumstances concerning me, what I am doing and how I am fairing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful and believing servant in the Lord, shall make known everything to you; whom I have sent and dispatched to you for this very purpose, that he might make known the things concerning us, and that he might encourage, comfort and uplift your hearts" (vs 20-22).

I don't have anyone to send to you, so we're going to do the next best thing: we send these DVDs, CDs, etc.—which if Paul would have had

them there I'm sure he would have used them to send to the brethren.

Verse 23: "May the peace, harmony and tranquility of God be to the brethren, and may you have that Godly Divine love, coupled with faith and belief, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace (God's Divine favor, blessing and goodness, even God's generous gift) be with all of those who are loving our lord and Master Jesus (with Godly divinely inspired love) in sincerity, integrity, genuineness and incorruption. AMEN" (vs 23-24).

That is the expanded version of the book of Ephesians to this point, and in part six we are going to go through the third chapter and we're going to see the tremendous and absolutely elevated exalted heights of Paul's understanding of *the mystery and revelation of God, that God gave to him of God's plan and purpose for us and for the calling that He has given us!*

Scriptures in Ephesians from *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, An Inspirational Study* by Fred R. Coulter

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 6:1-9
- 2) John 8:31-39
- 3) Genesis 26:5
- 4) John 8:40-44
- 5) Ephesians 6:10-11
- 6) James 4:1-10
- 7) 1 Peter 5:2-9
- 8) Ephesians 6:11-18
- 9) Revelation 20:7-8
- 10) Ephesians 6:18-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 6
- Mark 7:21

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies!

Epistle to the Ephesians VI Chapter Three—The Mystery of Godliness

Fred R. Coulter

I want to ask the question today: What is the mystery of Godliness? As we will see, Paul said ‘Great is the mystery of Godliness.’

- What does that mean?
- What does that mean for us?

Let’s also understand that in the world there is also a mystery religion. Let’s look and see what that mystery is. We’re going to see that that is the mystery of Satan’s deception on this world: with Satan’s savior for this world; with Satan’s way and religion for this world.

Let’s first of all go to 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter, where it talks about *the mystery of iniquity* or *the mystery of licentiousness*—license to do evil in the name of religion. It’s going to become very profound, because we’re going to see—perhaps in our lifetime, and I say ‘perhaps’ because no one can tell how far into the future, or how much God is going to let men develop in their society, their civilization and all of this sort of thing. We don’t know, so we cannot say for sure exactly when Christ is going to return.

But we do know that there is a system of deception that is now even developing more and more, which has been entitled by the President Bush {the 1st Bush} *the New World Order*. I don’t think he even has the faintest idea of what that is going to usher in if it really takes place.

In 2-Thess. 2 it tells us about this system and what is going to happen. Let’s pay attention and be alert to this. 2-Thessalonians 2:1: “Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**... [there is no authority that is greater than that by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ] ...and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us... [there were counterfeit letters going around; there were people] ...*saying* that the day of Christ is present” (vs 1-2)—that Christ is returning, and all of these things were happening. Even letters coming saying that the day of Christ is at hand.

Verse 3: “Do not let anyone deceive you by any means...” It may sound very Scriptural; it may sound very authentic; they may even be able to build a fairly good case to make it look like it could happen. What they want to do is usher in—what the whole Feast of Tabernacles pictures—the rule and reign of God on the earth. He gives this warning:

Verse 3: “Do not let anyone deceive you by any means, because *that day will not* come unless the apostasy shall come first...”—in the rebellion or the apostasy come to its full. Do we know how full the rebellion against God and the apostasy is going to be? *No, we don’t!* We don’t know how great God is going to let this be. But we do know from the book of Revelation that it’s going to be so fantastic that Satan is even going to convince the world and the armies that are there, that they can fight Christ when He returns and win. That means that they’ve got to think that they really have the ability, that they really have the capacity.

Just a little aside so we can understand, concerning human beings: Back in Psa. 8 it says, ‘What is man that you are mindful of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels’ (*KJV*)—but the Hebrew word for *angels* is ‘Elohim’ and in fact, really means that *man has been made a little lower than God*. We’re made in the image of God! We’re made in the likeness of God! But we’re made in the flesh, and we’ve been made a little lower than God.

So, when people have accomplishment, technological abilities and things that we have in today’s society, Satan is going to be there to make man think that he can become God *without* God. After all, isn’t that exactly the message that Satan told Adam and Eve?

Out of this system, out of this rebellion it says that it’s going to come first, “...and the man of sin shall be revealed... [the only way he’s going to be revealed is if we know and understand the *mystery of Godliness*, if we understand the Word of God, because that’s the only revelation to tell us that we know who this man is.] ...—the son of perdition” (v 3). That means that he is cast into the Lake of Fire as *the beast* is when Christ returns.

Notice what he’s going to do, he’s going to be proclaimed as savior; he’s going to be proclaimed lord, v 4: “The one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God...” A great and marvelous manifestation of religious fervor and power and understanding in this world as far as Satan’s way goes. So much so that he is going to be *exalted above* all of that. This is going to be the greatest thing that has happened to men since there have been men on the earth; that is apart from God and the coming of Jesus Christ.

“...or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (v 4). That’s

going to be something!

Now let's see how this system is described, v 7: "For **the mystery of lawlessness** is already working..." What is this mystery of lawlessness/iniquity? *That only the insiders know they are worshipping Satan!* And all the world is deceived into worshipping the beast, but they really are worshipping Satan. 'All the world shall worship the beast whose deadly wound was healed' (Rev. 13). It is Satan who gives him power and all the world is going to worship the dragon, Satan the devil. This is going to be awesome! That is called *the mystery of iniquity!*

Verse 9: "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... [We need fight against all the deceivableness of Satan. Well, here it is, it's coming on the world.] ...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. And for this cause..." (vs 9-11).

There's going to come a time when God is going to do something supernaturally in this world that is going to turn them to the will of the beast, that is going to turn them to the will of Satan the devil, because they don't love the Truth. The Truth is going to have to be preached in enough power and force and revelation so that the world is going to have heard it. Then God is going to do this:

"...**because they did not receive the love of the Truth**, so that they might be saved. And for this cause... [for this reason; for this purpose] ...God will send upon them a powerful deception... [this is going to appear to them to be the greatest thing that has ever happened in the history of mankind. It's going to be a strong, or powerful, delusion] ...that will cause them to **believe the lie**" (vs 10-11). That this *man of sin the son of perdition* is God. That they will believe the lie that they can make themselves God, rather than only God can give us salvation.

Verse 12: "So that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness." There's going to be that demarcation.

We know that in Rev. 17 it talks about '*the woman, Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations in the world.*' Yes, there is the *mystery of iniquity, the mother of harlots, Mystery Babylon the Great!*

- that's what's going to rule the world
- that's what is going to setup the false millennium

- that's what is going to bring on the New Age

But that is NOT the *mystery of Godliness!*

Let's see what 1-Tim. 3 says about the *mystery of Godliness*. This is really a tremendous and profound Scripture in itself. 1-Timothy 3:16: "And undeniably... [no doubt about it; there is no question; there is absolutely no dispute about this] ...great is the mystery of Godliness... [What is the mystery of Godliness? Do you know what it is? *Paul tells us right here*]: ...**God was manifested in the flesh...**" Not just a man in the flesh revealed God, referring to a Christ Who was not God before He became human; but it was GOD Himself Who "...was manifested in *the* flesh..."

That's why when we go back to the very basic Scripture: 'In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God, and the Word became flesh.' God was manifested in the flesh. That's a tremendous mystery. People wonder how can God do that and still be human? Look! *Nothing is impossible for God. Human beings have been made a little lower than God, in His image, in His likeness, for the purpose to be born into His Family from the resurrection of the dead.*

"...God was manifested in *the* flesh, was justified in *the* Spirit..." (v 16). Why did Christ have to be justified in the Spirit? He didn't sin! We know we're justified because we sin. He had to be justified in the Spirit because He carried within Himself *the law of sin and death*; because He carried within His body *all of our sins*—He bore in His body our sins!

- that's why He had to be crucified
- that's why He had to die
- that's why He had to take on the death of Adam

"...was seen by angels... [after the resurrection, obviously] ...was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory" (v 16).

There's a whole encapsulation in one verse the whole story of the Gospel. But it is a mystery because people can't understand it unless it is revealed. People cannot understand the mystery of God because it is several-fold, not only what God did through Christ, but what God is doing to us, through us, and in us that, yes, we can be sitting here keeping the Feast of Tabernacles, and yes, we can be saying, 'Yes, that's God's plan,' but do you know *the mystery of Godliness?*

Colossians 1 talks an awful lot about *the mystery of Godliness* and the mystery of God. Colossians was written approximately the same time as Philippians, and perhaps the same time of

Ephesians. Paul is beginning to teach something to them; he is beginning to tell them something very, very important. Let's understand something about the ministry of Paul that he never preached to them personally. Perhaps after he got out of prison he was able to see them—we have no record that he did. While writing this in prison:

Colossians 2:1: "Now, I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh; that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ" (vs 1-2)—*the whole mystery of God!*

It's going to be a mystery revealed, because we're going to see that Paul said, 'I had direct Divine revelation from God about the mystery of God to teach you.' That is so exciting, brethren, it's just absolutely fantastic when we understand that. Not only what it's going to be when we are in the Kingdom of God, but what it means right now and what God wants us to be inspired with right today, so that we know and understand and have burned in our mind and heart and our being the very inspiration and power of God's Spirit to do His will. To go forward and to accomplish what God wants, and to understand that *mystery of God*.

Verse 3: "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." When that is said there is virtually nothing more to say when we understand about the mystery of God. We are to grow in this.

Colossians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colossi: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for you continually since hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love that *you have* toward all the saints; because of the hope that *is* laid up for you in heaven..." (vs 1-5).

- What is that hope? *That's all bound up in the mystery of Godliness*—that we are going to become God!
- What is that hope—the earnest, the down payment—for us now? *The Spirit of God, Christ in you the hope of glory!*

That's profound, brethren!

Verse 9: "For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Which is what we are trying to do

here, brethren, at this Feast of Tabernacles and with what we have prepared here for you.

Verse 10: "That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God." That is to be continually increasing!

Verse 11: "Being strengthened with all power ...[through the power of God's Holy Spirit. That's what we need to do with this; let the Spirit of God strengthen us with all might] ...according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father, **Who has made us qualified**... [It is God Who qualifies us for the Kingdom of God; or has made us competent through His power] ...for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (vs 11-12). God is the One Who has done this.

Showing then how, if we follow what we learned in 'resisting the devil' and fighting and putting on the whole armor of God and all of that, v 13: "Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness..." There is no need for us to be enslaved by the mystery of iniquity or the mystery of Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, because we have been delivered from the power of darkness.

"...and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love" (v 13). That is put under the authority and jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, which now rules and controls our lives in which we are looking for that kingdom to come when He returns.

Verse 14: "In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins." There is no sin that He cannot forgive if there is repentance. But there are sins He will not forgive, and those are the *unpardonable sins* of: rebellion, obstinance, going against God and coming into that mystery of iniquity of Satan the devil—the way that it's going to be in the world.

Verse 15: "Who is *the* image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**"—'protokos'—*the firstborn from among the dead*. He couldn't be the firstborn of every creature, because He was not the first thing created. As a matter of fact, Jesus Christ didn't come on the scene until well over halfway in the entire history of all human kind—pretty close to the end of 4,000 years of human history.

So, it doesn't mean the firstborn in that sense, the firstborn of every creature. We know that in Rom. 8 that He is the 'firstborn among many brethren'—the 'protokos' of many brethren. And that is the *firstborn from among the dead*. The first birth is your physical human birth. The second

birth—born again—is to be raised from the dead—‘prototokos’—as Christ was. Then we will be the firstfruits in a collective sense. We will be a kind of ‘prototokoi’—plural in the Greek.

Verse 16: “Because by Him were all things created... [He had to exist before they were created if He is to create them] ...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...**” (vs 16-18).

Being the Beginning means that He is the firstborn from the dead, which then is the beginning of the creation of God through the resurrection of the dead to bring those people into the Kingdom of God. That should be very clear and that’s part of the *mystery of Godliness. Great is the mystery of Godliness:*

- God manifested in the flesh!
- Justified of the Spirit!
- Seen of angels!
- Raised to the right hand of God!
- Preached in the World!

Maybe we understand a little more of what that means.

“...so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence.... [always, forever] ...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” (vs 18-20). Because the whole plan has got to be all justified and made right.

Verse 21: “For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled *you*.” God is part of the great mystery of Godliness for us. Paul said how he preached and how he was made a minister of God.

Verse 26: “*Even* the mystery that has been hidden...” It wasn’t revealed; wasn’t made known. Even when Paul first started preaching, God had to reveal and make this known to him. He didn’t know this. He didn’t understand this. He didn’t realize what God had in store for him.

When he was on his way to Damascus and knocked off that horse and knocked on the ground and made blind, he didn’t know what God had in store for him. He didn’t know there was going to be the time when he would be taken off to the Arabian Desert to be taught of Christ. He didn’t know that he was going to have those visions and dreams that God

gave him. He said, ‘I knew a man in Christ once about 14 years ago, whether in the spirit or whether in the body I cannot tell.’ He was carried up into the third heaven. Paul didn’t know, and now this is being made manifest to him. Now this is being revealed:

Verse 26: “*Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom God did will to make known...” (vs 26-27). This is a mystery being unfolded, being revealed, being told to us by the very Word and Power of God and Christ so that we can understand His way.

Verse 27: “To whom God did will to make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles...” This is what so set afire so absolutely the forces of hell against Paul and his preaching, and even caused a division between Peter and the other apostles and Paul, because of what he was preaching and saying: ‘This is fantastic, you are going to be God! The One Who was Christ was God before He became a human being, and He is there at the right hand of God and God took upon Himself all of these things to pay for our sins! Now you can worship God in heaven above. You can have direct access to God the Father in heaven above.

- no longer in this temple on the earth
- no longer with these sacrifices
- no longer with these traditions
- no longer with these things that are just physical things and amount to nothing compared to the mystery of God

And preaching that among the Gentiles, “...which is Christ in you...” (v 27). There’s the first step of the *mystery of God*, the Spirit of Christ *in* you. If you have the Spirit of Christ *in* you, then you belong to Christ:

- He can live in your heart and mind
- He can lead you
- He can teach you
- He can inspire you
- He can help you
- He can uplift you
- He can correct you and teach you

—that you can prepare for the resurrection and Jesus Christ at His return.

That’s fantastic, brethren! That is absolutely marvelous and unbelievable, that God would make know this mystery; that through the Apostle Paul—who was beaten, who was scourged, who was shipwrecked, who was rejected, who was just made the minced meat of the enemies—so that he could suffer as God said. But because of that suffering, God revealed to him things that God did not reveal

to any of the other apostles in the fullness and the measure of the mystery of the knowledge of Christ.

That is absolutely fantastic, and we need to ask God to help us to understand that. To help us to realize us, to give us of His Spirit that we may know, realize and understand. This is fantastic, brethren, absolutely beyond belief!

“...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v 27). That is absolutely magnificent!

Now let's go to Ephesians, chapter 3, and you're going to see why I have held chapter 3 until the end. Ephesians 3 tells about *the final revelation that God gave to Paul* when he was in prison. When he was there in chains and bonds and crying out to God: 'Oh, God, what am I going to do? I know that I'm here as a prisoner in Your hands. I know I am here for whatever You want—whether I live or whether I die, I am Christ's. Oh, God, tell me Your plan. Give me understanding and comprehension of Your way.'

So, God did! God revealed to Paul the great and fantastic and magnanimous and glorious plan that He has given for us. That ought to motivate us and inspire us beyond belief and understanding, that we can grow in this.

Ephesians 3:1: “For this very reason and cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of, and for you Gentiles. If truly you have heard of the administration and stewardship (the ministry) of the grace of God, which was granted and entrusted to me, in your behalf” (vs 1-2). That's how every minister needs to feel about his relationship to God, to God's Word and to the brethren. That he is the steward and he is to pass on the Word of God in truth and in sincerity.

Verse 3: “How that by direct Divine revelation He made known to me... [It came to Paul first] ...(giving me comprehension and understanding) of the secret mystery of His plan; (according as I had previously written to you briefly.” So, he had a little inkling of it; he had a little understanding of it and he wrote to them about it. But he says, 'Now—in this third chapter—I'm going to give you more of it.

Verse 4: “Whereby, you are able when you read this... [this Epistle to the Ephesians] ...to perceive and comprehend my understanding and knowledge (such as only God can grant) of the secret mystery of Christ.” Christ in you, the hope of glory! The secret mystery of God:

- that God came in the flesh
- that God gave His life
- that God took upon Him the law of sin and death

- that God died

to be resurrected and live forever, and bring all the brethren into the Family of God.

Verse 5: “Which in other generations and previous ages was not made known or revealed to the sons of men...” God didn't do it; God didn't give them understanding. Remember Daniel said, 'Lord, when will these things be? I've had the great privilege of writing them down; when will it be?' He was told, 'Go your way and seal up the book until the time of the end. For many shall go to and fro and knowledge shall increase.' And we're living in this age. Then He gave a little bit of understanding, and He said, 'But you go your way until the end of the age, but you shall stand in your lot, in your time—that is at the resurrection at the end of the age' (Dan. 12 paraphrased).

Peter said that this Gospel is brought to us, the Prophets spoke of it to us, part of it—little glimpses of it here and there—of this grace that should come to us—which the Spirit of Christ in them was signifying and causing to be prophesied for us—that we should be partakers of God's way. Peter was given the understanding, too, but that was after this understanding that Paul had.

Verse 4: “Whereby you are able, when you read this, to perceive and comprehend my understanding and knowledge (such as only God can grant) of the secret mystery of Christ. Which in other generations and previous ages was not made known or revealed to the sons of men, as it has now been Divinely revealed and made manifest to His Holy apostles (who have been commissioned and sent, bearing the authority of Jesus Christ) and His prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, conjointly receiving of His inheritance...” (vs 4-6).

Let's see a little bit about this inheritance and how fantastic it is that part of the *mystery of Godliness* is that Christ is going to share everything that He has with His brethren; with those in the first resurrection as His bride.

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.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs...” (vs 14-17).

We are going to inherit with Christ, and he's saying here that it's not just to the Jew, it's not just to the Israelite, it's not just to the descendents of Abraham, but of the Gentiles. That means *all* nations are going to participate in this. That we are going to

be joint-heirs with Christ! What is Christ inheriting? *The Kingdom!* He is going to give us of that wealth and those riches and that responsibility. And all of those things are so fantastic in the inheritance that we now share in, that all human beings that God calls can share in.

“...—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him...” (v 17). Paul did! We have! Not like Paul, none of us will ever be able to stand up and say, ‘Oh boy! This has been really tough; it’s been really hard to make it as a Christian.’ Well, you try telling Paul that at the resurrection. Just read what Paul went through. When he talks about suffering, he *knows* was that is.

“...so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon... [calculate, figure, estimate, plan in my own mind] ...that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us” (vs 17-18). No comparison what God has for us through the *mystery of Godliness* in the plan of God, to come into His kingdom is so fantastic that there is nothing—not even the most miserable suffering in the world—to compare to what God has to give to us in this inheritance and glory that He says He’s going to give to us. And it’s going *to be revealed in us* that we will share in that Divine splendor and magnificent glory of God.

Verse 19: “For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God”—the completion of the *mystery of Godliness*.

Verse 20: “Because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, in order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (vs 20-21). That’s what we are being brought into, brethren, to that glorious liberty! That’s what we are going to bring the world. That is another part of the mystery of God: the glorious mystery of the sons of God ruling in splendor and power and glory with Christ!

Verse 22: “For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now.” If that’s what was going through in the days of the Apostle Paul, pray tell what is it going through today with all of the wretchedness and death, dying, war, disease, and everything that man is doing? The earth is moaning and groaning, every bit of it, waiting for us!

Verse 23: “And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies.... [That’s all part of the

mystery of God.] ...For by hope we were saved...” (vs 23-24). This is the hope we are looking to: that very mystery of God being fulfilled and revealed. Then it talks about Christ being the firstborn of many brethren. That’s another part of the *mystery of Godliness*.

This wasn’t known before, that God is going to reach down and call the Gentiles. Of course, to a Jew that is the most unthinkable and unspeakable thing, because the Jew has turned that into their own private little form of vanity against the rest of the world in hatred and in violence and in deprecation to them. Now God is saying, ‘No, that’s not the way. I love the whole world. I gave My Son to save the whole world. *I gave My Son!*’

Ephesians 3:6: “That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, conjointly receiving of His inheritance; members of a joint-body... [We compare that with the mystery of the Church and Christ and the marriage] ...which is His Church; and joint-partakers, sharing God’s very own promise (of eternal life) through the good news of the Gospel.” And through the power of Christ’s Holy Spirit in you.

Fantastic, brethren! I want you to really grasp this. I want you to understand that with the very fullness of God’s Spirit in you what God is going to do and is doing, that you understand the full *mystery of Godliness*. That you can rejoice with Christ. That you can rejoice with God the Father and all of the brethren in all of God’s plan.

Verse 7: “Of which I became a servant and minister... [not because he was great, not because he understood anything] ...according to the gratuitous gift of grace... [any preaching, any ministry, has to be by the grace of God, as a gift of God—can’t be any other way] (which then is): ...the gracious intentions of God, which was specifically given to me... [that’s not being presumptuous; that’s just telling the truth, because God gave it to him] ...according to the inner workings of His very own dynamic spiritual power. Even to me, the lowest of the least of all the saints, was this grace given, in order that the good news of the Gospel should be preached and announced among the nations...” (vs 7-8).

All the Gentiles, and now at the end of this age in *all the world*; not only for a witness, but a calling for repentance and salvation, and goodness, righteousness and Truth.

“...even the unsearchable and unfathomable (yes, even the inscrutable and incomprehensible wealth and luxuriant riches of Christ” (v 8).

(go to the next track)

- You think you set your sights high?
- You think you have goals that you're going attain to?

Brethren, lift you eyes up on high! Lift you eyes up to heaven and see Christ and see God! Ask God to enlighten you.

Verse 9: "To enlighten and spiritually illuminate everyone of you..."

- God wants you *to know*
- God wants you *to see*
- God wants you *to understand*

"...by making clear what is the fellowship and participation, that close relationship with God, as revealed in **the secret plan**... [the mystery of God] ...which from the beginning of the world has been hidden (concealed and withheld from sight or knowledge until now), in God, Who created and brought into existence everything by and through Jesus Christ; so that it might now be made known through the Church, to the principalities and rulers, even the authorities, who are exercising power (yes, including even the angels) in the heavenly or spiritual realm what is the infinitely immense and supreme Divine wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose of the ages, which He proposed and planned (thoroughly worked out beforehand) in Christ Jesus our Lord and Master" (vs 9-11).

Fantastic and marvelous words, brethren, what God has done. It's not just the words, it's the Spirit, God's intervention and revelation, and God's power that makes these things alive. It's not because anyone has done anything to take any credit for anything. It is what God has done!

Verse 12: "In Whom we are having the boldness, courage and assurance, even the direct access to God (by being allowed to have admission into the very presence of God the Father)... [So, when you pray 'Our Father' you're coming into His Divine presence 'in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ] ...in complete confidence and absolute trust by His faith (Christ's very own faith and trust implanted into our own heart and mind)."

- Isn't that something?
- That God would do that?
- That God would choose us?
- That God would call us to this?

Fantastic, brethren!

Verse 13: "On account of this, I am imploring and beseeching you not to lose heart... [doesn't matter what the circumstances are] ...or weaken in confidence or faith, neither be discouraged or downhearted at my trials and tribulations for you, which are for your own glory in

God's eternal plan. Now, it is for this cause and reason that I am bowing my knees... [in chains, in shackles, in this prison] ...in worshipful adoration and humble submission to the Father of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, from whom the entire Family of God, the angels in heaven and the saints on earth, is named; that He may grant, graciously bestow and gratuitously endow you, according to the luxuriant, abundant riches of His very own magnificent splendor and glory, to be mightily strengthened and energized with dynamic power through His very own Holy Spirit in the inner man" (vs 13-16).

Verse 17: "That Christ may dwell and live in your heart and mind... [Christ in you, the hope of glory] ...through faith and trusting belief. And that you may be constantly rooted and firmly planted..." (vs 17-18). Brethren, we need to be constantly rooted and firmly planted in

- the Word of God
- the Truth of God
- the love of God

so that it gives us the strength and the stability that we need.

"...(that is stabilized, grounded and established in love (that Godly Divine love), so that you may be spiritually strong enough and to be able to **fully comprehend**..." (v 18). God wants us to know; this is the hope that God gives us. He doesn't want to hold back from us. God is not there to hurt us or destroy us, ruin us or put us down, or cause grief, sorrow and wretchedness in our lives. But if that comes, so be it.

"...and understand with every one of the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height (of God's eternal plan and purpose)" (v 18). That's what God wants for you; that's what God wants for me; that's why all of this futility, vanity, wretchedness in this world is going to come to an end; to usher this in! And God is giving us a part in that, brethren. *Great is the mystery of Godliness!*

Verse 19: "And to know and understand the Divine Godly love of Christ..." What Christ has done! What He did to come to this earth!

- to give up everything to become a human being
- to risk all of the universe
- to risk being God to die for our sins

"...which surpasses and exceeds all human knowledge and understanding..." (v 19). There isn't any way you can figure it out by sitting down and using the best brain in the world; absolutely won't happen.

“...that you may **be filled with all the fullness of God...**” (v 19). Brethren, I want you to think on that.

- that’s what God wants us to do
- that’s what God wants us to be
- that’s what God is working in the mystery of Godliness

“...(so that with His Holy Spirit spiritually satiating every fiber of your being—that in the end at the resurrection you will be a son of God, composed of Spirit as God is composed of Spirit, for you shall see Him as He is, for you shall be like Him—truly a son of God). Now to Him Who has the eternal capacity and dynamic ability, which transcends all things...” (vs 19-20).

Brethren, we need not doubt one thing of God, or His way, His plan or His purpose. We need to set aside every one of those things that afflict us:

- whether it be old age
- whether it be trying to live in the world
- whether it be trying to have a job
- whether it be trying to be healed

Whatever it may be, set aside all of that, because *God’s plan transcends everything!*

“...to do exceeding abundantly above everything that we can ask or think, according to the dynamic, spiritual power, which is working within us, **to him, God the Father, be the magnificent splendor, honor and glory in the Church, in Christ Jesus, throughout all generations, expanding into the ages of eternity!** Amen.”

Great is the mystery of Godliness!

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