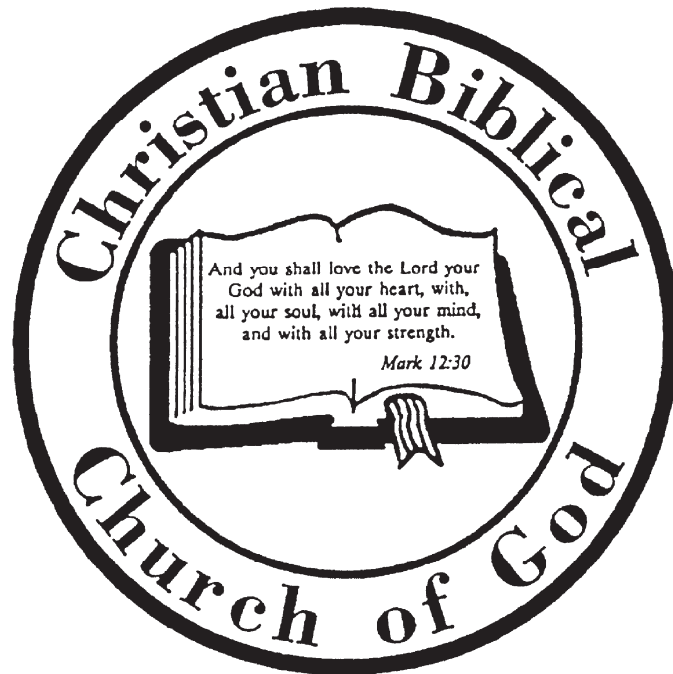


Good Works/ Evil Works



Transcript Book

By Fred R. Coulter

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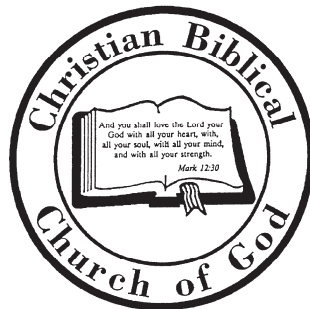
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Good Works/Evil Works

Series of 3 sermons by Fred R. Coulter



Signature

Date

☐ Good Works/Evil Works I

Date completed _____

☐ Good Works/Evil Works II

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Good Works/Evil Works

Foreword

This booklet consists of three sermon transcripts that illustrate what the Bible means when the Scriptures speak of a good work or of an evil work. This revealing of good and evil works is given by a minister of Jesus Christ for over 50 years, Mr. Fred R. Coulter, and because of his experience and insight it is applicable to all who are seeking a relationship with God on a personal level. The reader, through thoughtful reflective study should be able to come to an understanding of good and evil works in mankind on a societal level and on a personal level.

The first sermon transcript, “Good Works / Evil Works I,” show that Jesus Christ came as a human being to establish the 10 Commandments, and not to do away with them. The majority of people, due to not understanding Christ’s teachings in depth, think that the 10 Commandments are harsh and evil. Brought out in detail is that people as a whole think and say that if a perfect government is set up, then evil will be eliminated. People do not wish to acknowledge that, because their inner being is evil, that there is no structural form of government that will eliminate evil. No—the evil inside the human mind must be removed. That is the only way that evil can be removed from society. There is not a chance of any society of mankind, as long as the mind of mankind is evil, of being a utopian society. With evil in man’s innermost heart society, no matter what form it takes, becomes a dystopian society.

The second sermon transcript, “Good Works / Evil Works II,” is a study of good and evil. Any work, it is noted, rather good or evil has four categories. Additionally, how important mercy is in the sight of God, is shown in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The third sermon transcript, “Good Works / Evil Works III,” again goes over matters of the heart and mind regarding good works and evil works that are done by people. A reminder is given — God is good, and that there is nothing that we can do to force God to give us eternal life. It is God’s free gift. Noted is that God gives choices to people — they can choose to do right or they can choose to do wrong. Explained also is that God is not evil, but God has created evil and God has created good. Another thing not understood by mankind, but is covered in detail, is that God not only uses law, but also Satan and angels to accomplish His Will.

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

Good Works/Evil Works I

Fred R. Coulter

First of all, I want to cover this article High Court Rules Against Choice of Sabbath Day Off. I remember how happy everyone was when the Supreme Court ruled that you must be given the Sabbath Day off. Everyone said that this is God's will, God intervened, and now all Sabbath-keepers are going to have an easy time of it. Whenever you have a job then you can have the time off, you can get the time off. You can demand that. Yes, you can take them to court and force them to give you the time off. It passed the Supreme Court and everything is fine.

Here's a good example of when you depend upon men to enforce the will of God, they change their mind.

High Court Rules Against Choice of Sabbath Day Off (June 1985)

The Supreme Court, invoking the Constitution's demand for separation of church and state...

Nowhere does it say "separation of church and state." *It says there shall be no state-sponsored religion.* That's the intent of it.

- What was the intent of the founding fathers in using that? *That the State shall not establish any religion!*
- Go back to 1776 and what were they thinking of more than anything else? *To be irreligious, to where there would be no religion at all in the government!*
- What were they thinking of more than anything else? *Freedom!*
- Freedom from what?
- What did they have in mind?
- What did they have historically in their mind when they did it?

They could not perceive 200 years down the road to today. So:

- What was it they had in mind?
- What was the past, historical religious thing that they had in mind that they were trying to prevent here in America?

I think it's very obvious:

- the Catholic Church
- the Church of England

Which was—although they got rid of the pope—just as stringent a state religion as Catholicism. That's what they had in mind.

They, I'm sure, did not have it in mind that you come down to the point now where the

Constitution cannot give a person's own conviction. They wanted freedom of conviction, where there would be *no law against* freedom of conviction. Now it's been cleverly twisted. It always comes back the other way, which is, as this article says, that the people who cannot get the time off for other than religious reasons are discriminated against. So, it's been turned around. Now it's that there is no law that says—you can go to the Civil Service, or whatever it is—"I need my Sabbath off."

The Supreme Court, invoking the Constitution's demand for separation of church and state, said Wednesday that states may not force any employer to give workers their choice of a religious day off each week. In an 8-1 ruling, the justices declared unconstitutional a Connecticut law that protected employees from retaliation from missing work on their religious sabbath. "This unyielding weighing in favor of sabbath observance over the other interests contravene a fundamental principle of the Constitution," Chief Justice Warren E. Burger said for the Court. "The state law decreed that those who observe a sabbath any day of the week as a matter of religious conviction must be relieved of duty to work on that day, no matter what burden or inconvenience this imposes upon the employer or fellow workers," he said.

So we're right back to square one where we were before, with a little bit of latitude. Not much, but just about back to square one. At least we're not into enforced Sunday observance. It gets right back to the state cannot superimpose faith.

It is true that whenever you have a civil government enforce religion, it in itself can be as corrupt as religion can develop into. Let's just take a look at what God shows. This will be kind of in part on this good works/evil works. Let's just categorize works: *motive and appearance and effect.*

Let's see why God gave the Ten Commandments to everybody: His commandments, laws, statutes, judgments and everything. Deut. 5 has the Ten Commandments given. There are so many people that believe that the Ten Commandments are really harsh. Their belief in the Ten Commandments is that the appearance of the Ten Commandments, or their effect is evil, and that's why Christ came to do away with the laws, because the laws were harsh and evil.

Let's look at the motivation that God gave was. We could say that it's God's summary of all of His commandments and everything, we would have to put:

- **Motive:** good, because it came from God (Deut. 5).
- **Appearance:** good, because it does have the appearance
- **Effect:** good

That is **IF** you obey. Everything is going to be a contingency on if you obey. There is a vast difference if you *disobey*, and we will put, the motive from God is still good. What happens when you disobey? *There's a penalty for sin!* So, the appearance to human beings may not be necessarily good, because 'the wages of sin is death.' So, the appearance may be anywhere from good to evil.

If someone sins and dies because of the sin, and the community is saved from that hellish person, it is evil to the person who has suffered the consequences of that sin from his perspective.

That's where you get a lot of people saying, 'If God exists, why doesn't He stop the evil in the world?' But it is good from the point of view that the person is no longer here. Can you think of a contemporary case where that would fit exactly so? Under *the guise of good* a man lured people in to do things, and then it became evil. So you can't always go on appearance. What may be good on the surface may be evil. But when God sets His hand for correction, purging and punishment, on the surface it looks bad, it looks evil, because people die. *But the result is going to accomplish good!*

The final effect, *if you disobey*, from God's point of view, is good; from the sinner's point of view is bad. You can just take the example of AIDS. God gave the law:

Deuteronomy 5:18: "And you shall not commit adultery." Now the motive on that was very good. For what reason?

- to ensure that you have a binding marriage
- to ensure that you're going to have healthy children
- to ensure that you're going to have a stable societal factor of the family

All of that is good. But to the sinner, where he is told not to commit adultery, he thinks that is bad. So then, he goes out and contacts AIDS he says that is bad. *But that's a penalty for what he is doing!*

What is it going to do? *It is going to remove that person from the society!* So, that ends up being good. However, unless the civil and religious authorities of the land agree with God, that *this thing*

is coming from God and the punishment is upon them and:

- they need to be put away
- they need to be separated
- they need to be segregated
- you need to enforce the laws that there should be no sodomy in the land

—unless they move to do that then it begins to spread!

We were reading about a little girl brought into a hospital who is suffering from AIDS. I mean, she's about a year old. Then there was another article that also said that some of the morticians want, when an AIDS victim comes in, to cremate it. They said the reason—I think it really tells you what the situation could be—was that that's the way they stopped the plagues in Europe. They cremated all of their dead so the germs and viruses didn't spread.

When we look get some of these things, first of all we have to know God's laws and commandments. Then we have to know why God gave it, and then we have to know the appearance of it and also the effect of it:

- on the individual
- on the society
- on what God is going to do

After God summarized all the commandments, we find a good example of something that is good. God was there and the effect should have been good, the appearance was awesome, but the people didn't like it.

Verse 24: "And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has revealed His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen today that God talks with man yet he *still* lives. Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us....'" (vs 24-25).

So it's just like everything that a sinner will do. If he is sinning there is the fear of getting caught. So, this is the fear that the people had toward God. Rather than saying that this is fantastic! 'Who has ever heard that God has come down and talk to people and we live? Now we're going to be consumed by this fire.'

"....If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die. For who of all flesh has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and we will hear it, and do it" (vs 25-27).

Here is the first excuse *not to obey*. Because what happened after that? *God took them up on their word!* God said, ‘Okay, Moses, you come up on the mountain and I will talk with you, and you tell the people all My words.’

What is one of the first things that happened that the people used against Moses later on? They told him to go up there. The people said to Moses and Aaron, ‘You take too much to yourselves.’ *But they said to do it!* All the way through, keep this in mind about ***the good, the bad, the appearance and the effect.***

Verse 28: “And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.”

Here is the whole problem in everything that is done in the Old Testament and New Testament, this is the problem in anything that is done concerning human beings. People say, ‘Let’s set up a perfect structure. Let’s set up a perfect...’ What you’re really saying is let’s set up a perfect *government*. ‘If we set up a perfect government then we will eliminate evil.’

Isn’t that the basis of most governments? Except despots who want total power and to execute total evil! Read the works of Plato and Aristotle, and they go through the whole dissertation on what is the best kind of government. People still do the same thing today: ‘We will structure the government. We will structure the laws. If we get the right law, the right structure, the right government, the right enforcement, we’re going to have a perfect society.’

- Did God, in giving the Ten Commandments, have the right commandments? *Yes, He did!*
- Did He have a good structure? *Yes, He did!*
- Did it work? *No, it failed!*

The structure that God gave failed! Why? *Any structure is going to fail unless this is taken care of!*

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would ***fear*** Me...”—*to reverence God!* It doesn’t mean to just be there in trepidation quivering. Although there may be times when you ought to do that, too. Just considering all that God is and all that He has done. There isn’t one thing we can do to compel God to do something for us. ***God does it because He is God!*** He said, “Oh, that there were ***such a heart*** in them...” This is the problem with

- all human relationships
- all human structure
- all human governments

- even Spirit-led churches

It’s the problem of the heart, because we have human nature, and human nature has ‘the law of sin and death’ in it.

That is why in looking at this thing of

- a good work/an evil work
 - a right work/bad work
- it’s hard for us to decide
- what really is good
 - what really is right
 - what is wrong
 - how it fits in there.

You don’t know *the motive of the person involved*, and you don’t know *the person’s heart*.

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always ***so that it might be well with them...***”—***the motive.*** That’s God’s motive for the people.

“...and with their children forever! Go say to them, ‘Go into your tents again.’ But as for you, you stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I am giving them, to possess it” (vs. 29-31).

So, here God was going to give them the land. He gave them laws, He gave them every good thing right there. I think maybe this is going to give us a greater understanding and idea about human nature, because I think part of the difficulties in trying to understand about human nature is that we don’t realize how tricky, deceptive, wicked and evil that it really is, even in the good things that we do.

Just take all the rock stars that did the recording: *We Are the World*. Their motive was pretty good. It was to give money for the starving people in Ethiopia. We need to have ***origin*** or *the tree*. What kind of lives to these people live? *Drugs, dope, open sex!* They come along and they do this. It’s motivated from good, ‘We are going to feed the Ethiopians.’ But how many of them in there got publicity to further their own careers? *I’m sure that did not escape them!* So you do a good work, you send things to the Ethiopian children that are starving, which is fine. But is that a good work that God is going to say is wonderful and now He’s going to give you salvation? ***It temporarily does something!***

Verse 32: “And you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your

God has commanded you so that you may live..." (vs 32-33).

So, ***the origin*** in this case is *God*, because He gave the laws. ***The motive*** is good, ***the appearance*** is good, ***the effect*** is good ***IF*** you obey.

"...and that *it may be* well with you, and you may prolong *your* days in the land which you shall possess" (v 33). Don't people want to live long? *Sure they do!*

Deuteronomy 6:3: "Hear therefore, O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you, and that you may greatly multiply, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey." *Then He shows the whole basis, which is love!*

Here these people have all of their laws and rituals. They have a temple at this point; they are offering the sacrifices; it's the official law of the land to keep:

- the Sabbath
- the new moons
- the Holy Days
- the Feasts

It is the official Law of God that these things be done!

Keep in mind about the heart of the people, and also the degree of enforcement. Whenever there is a law you have to have enforcement. If there's not enforcement, ***then God has to enforce it with the wages of sin, which is death, and suffering in between!***

Isaiah 1:2: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken, 'I have reared and brought up children, but they have rebelled against Me.'"

- When there is rebellion, what good are laws?
- When there is anarchy, what good are laws?
 - ✓ they may be perfect
 - ✓ they may be right
 - ✓ they may be good
 - ✓ they may be true

Verse 3: 'The ox knows his owner, and the donkey his master's crib; *but* Israel does not know *Me*; My people do not understand.' ***Ah, sinful nation***, a people burdened *with* iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children who deal corruptly!...." (vs 3-4). So, you see how it's right to the heart, every time. It is in the heart.

"...They have forsaken the LORD; they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger; they have gone away backward. Why should you be stricken any more?.... [God is not interested in the

death of the wicked, but why would they be *stricken* any more?] ...You will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint" (vs 4-5).

So, we have a very similar situation to what we have in this government today. What is the big cry? What do they want to stop? *They want to stop sickness and crime! But they've left God!* There's no enforcement so people go on their own way.

Now they are going to be giving prayers every day in the Congress. They have a Catholic come in one day, a rabbi another day, and a Protestant another day, and then probably another Protestant, and then they rotate it around. Or maybe they do it for a week; I don't know exactly how they do it. They pray and ask God to guide them and lead them in all that they are doing.

God doesn't guide them and lead them in all that they are doing! God does not! Why? Because of sin!

Verse 6: "From the sole of the foot even to the *top of the head there is* no soundness in it; *only* wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor soothed with ointment. Your country *is* a desolation, your cities *are* burned with fire..." (vs. 6-7). That's when it gets to the extreme.

Verse 9: "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, *and* we should have been like unto Gomorrah"—which were just absolutely fried to a crisp, just burned up, just by the Divine fire from God.

Verse 10: "Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the Law of our God, people of Gomorrah. 'To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?' says the LORD..." (vs 10-11).

- Did God command the sacrifices to be given? *Yes!*
- What was the purpose of those sacrifices?

"...I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in *the blood of* bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats" (v 11). And you can go back through Leviticus and Numbers, and you can find the sacrifices that were to be given, the sprinkling of the blood, the bullocks, the rams, the lambs, the whole thing.

Verse 12: "When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more vain sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!" (vs. 12-13).

Can people pollute God's ways so much that even on the days God said to observe, and they gather to observe, they do it in their own way and they allow sin to continue? Is it fruitless? *Sure it is!*

I'm beginning to see that there can be many people who, on the surface, *think* they're doing right, *think* they're doing the will of God. They have their own little work that they're going to do, they have their own little axe that they're going to grind. But unless their heart is right with God, you can keep the Sabbath perfect in the letter from sunrise to sunset and God could care less, *because you've missed the whole purpose of the Sabbath!*

If the whole purpose of the Sabbath is to just do no labor, to just make sure that you don't violate any little teeny-weeny thing of the Sabbath physically, but you sit there and you have murder in your heart, and you have lust in your mind...

There is a good work given by God, which *the origin* is good, *the motive* was good, it was meant to be *in appearance* good, and *the effect* good. But because of sin, though the origin and the motive was good, now we come into *the human motive*. Why should a priest go offer the sacrifices when he doesn't call the people to repentance? *It does no good!*

God says, v 14: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood" (vs 14-15).

All these good works that God gave them to do, but *with an evil heart, without calling people to repentance*, it doesn't do any good. Then it becomes something that you are doing. It becomes *your* 'religion.' It becomes, in this case, 'playing temple.' Or as we could say today, 'playing church.' There are a lot of people 'laying church':

- running around to be deacons
- running around to be elders
- running around to do good works

There are even some people who do good works so that it will be a cover for their evil! That is an *evil, evil motivation* with an *appearance of good* with an *apparent effect of good*, but it really isn't.

Like a leading salesman who was a deacon in the Church, a used car salesman. He would give great donations, and he would help people, and do all these great works for the Church. Then after about five years in this church, because of some business dealings, the government got involved. Because of some complaints against this man, they

investigated and found out that he was a front for stolen cars.

What good did all of his church-going do? *No good!* What was his motivation? In fact, *the whole emphasis of the Bible gets down to the motivation of why you're doing it!*

Verse 16: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek judgment, reprove the oppressor...." (vs 16-17).

There are good, good works then. *The motive is good, the appearance is good, the effect is good!*

"...Judge the orphan; plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient...' [notice the choice; you have to be willing and obedient] (then): ...you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with* the sword'; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*" (vs 17-20).

Isa. 66 is a summary capsule of what we're talking about; Isaiah 66:1 "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where then *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD...." (vs 1-2). In other words, God is not going to be impressed by a physical thing that you can do.

- Are you going to build some great, fantastic temple that you're going to compel God to come and dwell in?
- Are you going to make some kind of religious thing where now you have a little formula like the Muslims who pray five times a day.
- Does that make God hear them, because they pray five times a day and bow to Mecca?
- Does it change their heart? *No!*

Hijackers in the 1980s who killed a man on the plane, they faithfully bowed down and prayed toward Mecca while they were holding the captives right on the plane.

It's not the outside that changes. Even God told David when he wanted to build the temple, 'You're not going to build it, but your son is, because you're a bloody man. You've had a lot of murder and killing. I don't want even to be

associated with that.” Yet, God said of David: *He was a man after God’s own heart!*

But God says, “...But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word” (vs. 2). Now we’re getting back to what kind of heart and attitude we need to have toward God. That’s the important thing.

- if in a church we all have this kind of attitude toward God
- if we do what Jesus said, to love each other as we ought to
- if we follow the other things in the Bible about not gossiping, and tattling, and doing people in

I think that that is one of the things that has sown so much discord, is the clitter-clatter of people’s busy-bodding about other peoples’ things, and they actually are hurting people. Yet, they will go and ‘religiously’ pray an hour a day, because someone told them that if you pray an hour a day, and if you don’t pray an hour a day you’re no good. Get that clock and put it right up there.

So you get a clock and you think you’ve gotta pray an hour. ‘What am I going to pray about?’ So, you get a prayer list, fine. You pray fervently, go through the whole list, and in ten minutes it’s gone. And you think: 50 minutes left! ‘How on earth am I going to be righteous with God? It’s only been ten minutes!’ Then you pray again and then, lo and behold, you find out, well, just to slot in the time, you end up repeating your prayers. I’ve done it! You’ve all done it! Sure you have! Did that impress God?

You think you’re impressing God and you come back and you’re talking, ‘God answered this prayer, and God did that, and I’m praying an hour a day.’ The minister comes in, ‘Well how’s everybody doing? Are you praying an hour a day?’ He looks around, and everyone is examining their conscience, and you think: Oh boy, did I? Yeah, yeah...well, uh, boy...only a half hour yesterday...

Isn’t that kind of the effect that it? *Sure it is!* You know exactly what it is. Then we have a minister who then says to everyone, ‘You do that...’ and then he turns around and commits adultery. Now what do you have? *Hypocrisy!* This is what we are dealing with here.

Are there good works that look like good works, which do evil things? *Yes!* That’s how we got on this, and I’ve been working on it, thinking on it off and on.

If you don’t have the right attitude, and if your motive is not right, and then you come up to the temple of God and you say that you have a lot of money; you got it from drugs or whatever: stealing,

usury. ‘I’ve got a lot of money here. I know what I’m going to do. I’m going to go buy an ox, and I’m going to offer an ox to God.’ Don’t think offering an ox to God didn’t cost a lot, and when you come in with an ox, or you let the priest know that you’re going to offer an ox, the priest gets a big hunk of it, a big portion of it. How would you like to have a quarter of an ox every time someone offered an ox? you bring home a quarter of an ox home to your family to eat? Oh boy, a feast day.

The priest would think this is pretty good. Everyone would think this is a righteous man. Look, he’s spending all this money for an ox. He’s going to offer an ox to God. Here’s the priest in all of his garb. If you’ve seen the book *The Tabernacle* by M.R. Dehaan, you know what his garb looks like.

He slaughters the ox, and gathers the blood and walks around the altar and sprinkles it; and everything is fine, supposedly. It’s supposed to be a sweet incense to God, but the guy is standing out there, ‘Everyone’s going to think good of me. This will be a cover for me.’ Here’s the answer, right here:

Verse 3: “He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man...” your heart is not right. You’re really not trying to seek God in Spirit and in Truth. You can pray ten hours a day and it isn’t going to do any good. How about these poor nuns that pray eighteen hours every day? I mean, their life is devoted, and it’s supposed to be a good, good work and praying for other people; that’s their whole life. They don’t talk to anyone; they don’t go to the outside world; they just stay in this nunnery and they pray every day with the beads. Can you imagine sixty years of doing that? In the sixty years you’d be batty.

“...he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog’s neck; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine’s blood...” (v 3). You go from the expensive to the not so expensive, to the cheap, and to the poor man’s offering, an oblation, as if he offered blood.

“...he who burns incense...” (v 3). Who’s the one who burns incense? *The priest!* So, if the priest partakes of this, and he burns the incense and goes into the Holy part, bringing this to God, when the origin is out here, *that is evil*, and he hasn’t called the people to repentance.

“...*is as if* he blessed an idol...” (v 3). Obviously, there are no idols in the temple of God. But that’s how God views the *heart problem*, if our heart and our attitude is not right toward God.

A priest would just be absolutely aghast to bless an idol. If you ask a priest to bless an idol, it would be like they did during Jesus’ day. He would rip his tunic asunder, and scream bloody murder,

‘This is blasphemy against God!’ *Yet, they killed Christ!* Now, there’s a good example. ‘We’ll get rid of this evil person. Look what He’s doing. We’re going to lose all these followers.’

“...Yea, they have chosen their own ways... [instead of God’s ways; and they have put the name of God on it] ...and their soul delights in their abominations” (v 3).

About the best description of that, and the abominations, that I can think of would be would be, in a modern day sense, where you would have a whole homosexual church that is supposedly worshipping God, supposedly studying the Word of God, and then go out and commit all their abominations.

God then does something else. He says, v 4: “I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them because when I called, no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear. But they did evil before My eyes and chose *that* in which I did not delight.”

Let’s see how God will choose their delusions. This will help us understand this verse. I have heard ministers tippy-toe and weasel around this—and I’ve tippy-toed and weaseled around it myself—where God says in:

Isaiah 45:7: “I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I the LORD do all these *things*.”

- Have you ever wondered about that verse?
- How can God, Who is righteous, create evil?
- Why does God create evil?
- Is it because God is evil?
- Is that why God creates evil? *No!*
 - ✓ God is good!
 - ✓ There’s no sin in Him!
 - ✓ He doesn’t sin!

*I have heard ministers say that God **allows** evil!*

- Does God just *allow* good? Many times you can take the reasoning and follow it through
- Does good just happen because good is good?

or

- Does evil happen because evil is evil?
- Does God just *allow* it?

Then the next thing would be *God uses Satan*. That is true.

(go to the next track)

- Did God tell Satan what to do in the case of Job? Yes!
- What did He say? *You can take all that He has!*

- Did God create that? *Yes!*
- How did He create it? *By speaking the word, giving the command!*

When God chooses our delusions, then God may present something to us that may not necessarily be true. If you believe in a lie and you believe in a delusion, and God chooses that for your own end, is that not a righteous work? *Yes, it is!*

I want to tell you about this Operation Fortitude in WWII. The whole plan has been uncovered part-by-part. But it’s now known that during WWII the reason that the Normandy invasion was successful. The reason that the allies won WWII was because of the greatest delusion in modern history. Lord Mountbatten said that this was the greatest Machiavellian, which is then to take an ultra evil thing to try and work good.

But let’s analyze a little bit. Were the Nazis, with their whole regime and the whole thing they had, inherently evil?

- origin: evil
- motive: evil
- appearance: evil
- effect: evil.

If God chooses the delusion of the Nazis as a tactic to inspire the allies on how to beat them, God did it with a big lie. In other words: Would God tell an inherently evil person something that may not necessarily be true so that they would choose their own delusion? *In this case God did!* You can read the article written by Lynn Torrance {of the former WCG}. He wrote the seven things that God did to make WWII happen correctly: the weather, etc. and the saving at Dunkirk.

But what else did God give to the allies to do? God did not do this directly, but He gave it to the allies. They perpetrated the biggest hoax, lie and deception that has ever been done in modern history. They made Hitler absolutely believe that they were going to invade at Calais instead of Normandy. They set up a whole dummy army. an army group called the First Army Group, and they brought Patton. He was in trouble, and the Germans respected him and thought he was the best American general. So, they brought him to England. They set up a whole dummy army group that didn’t exist. They had rubber planes, rubber jeeps, everything. They set up great areas as of England so that when they would fly over they had fires burning in the stoves, and it looked like there were troops all round. They set up dummy communications, where they had about six or eight different people that could do up to fifteen different voice interpretations of radio; they would pick a southern voice, and someone else from

Brooklyn. They set this whole thing up. Here are all the Germans spies over there listening.

Then they went many steps further: They got into the Gestapo intelligence; they had counterspies in the Gestapo intelligence, and they had counterspies and counter-counterspies working with the underground. Instead of doing like we would do, we would go out and we would ‘get those dirty rats.’ No, the allies were smart; they used them and they sent them disinformation. That was the great disinformation project in all of history of warfare. They even allowed the underground people to believe that they were going to attack at Calais.

On June 4th they had certain songs that they told all the underground—of course, they knew that the Nazis had infiltrated the underground—so the word got back that if you hear this music two days in a row the invasion is coming to Calais. That penetrated clear up to Hitler, and Hitler gave the absolute order that under no circumstances are you to move any troops away from protecting Calais and the beach, because that is where the invasion is coming.

Even the underground believed it. You talk about *choose their own delusions*. That’s how God did it. He chose the German delusion: we’re the greatest; we’re the best. They were evil, wretched, rotten and terrible. **God let them believe a lie!** That sounds a little Biblical: ‘That they might believe a lie.’ And they lost the war!

When the troops invaded: if you saw the movie *The Longest Day*, if you ever wondered why that they could not get Hitler, and, yes, and it was that Hitler had taken a sleeping pill. The German generals there, when they knew that the invasion was coming and saw that it was coming, said, ‘Get a hold of Hitler. This is a dummy operation.’ Hitler refused! They even had several drops of dummy paratroopers, these little midget paratroopers that they dropped down. The Germans thought that this was a dummy, and wondered: Where’s the real drop? So they had everything that way where it was *a tremendous delusion* to them.

So, when God says He creates evil, **He creates evil!**

- Who do you suppose enforces the penalty of sin? *God does!*
- How does He do it? *Read Deut. 28: through sickness, through disease, through those things!*
- Is that not evil from a human perspective? *Yes!*

Now we’re getting a broader perspective on some of these things.

Here’s what Jesus said concerning our righteousness; Matthew 5:20, “For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.”

How righteous did the Pharisees appear? *They appeared super-righteous!* What did Jesus say about them?

Matthew 6:1: “Beware *that* you do not bestow your alms in the sight of men in order to be seen by them...” Here we have a **good appearance**, a **supposedly good effect**. But what kind of motive? A **bad motive**, an **evil motive**, even though it may be a commandment of God to do. Didn’t God say to:

- relieve the oppressed
- assist the poor
- relieve the widows

I’m going to show you an example here a little later about how that law was used in an evil way, believe it or not. The effect, the answer that was given, if you would have just heard the conversation and known nothing about it you would of thought: that stingy old man. He wouldn’t even give this to the poor, he took it to himself.

“...do not bestow your alms in the sight of men in order to be seen by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father Who *is* in heaven.” (v 1).

That’s why when someone said to me, ‘Wouldn’t it be wonderful if you and I reconciled? Just think of what an example it would be to the brethren.’ I said, ‘Hey, it isn’t going to work.’ ***If it is not of God, if it is not before God, you can impress all the people you want. That’s your reward!*** They would come up and say, ‘Oh, wonderful and nice. Oh that’s sweet and good. God is in it.’ ***When God had nothing to do with it!***

Verse 2: “Therefore, when you give *your* alms, do not sound the trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But *when* you give your alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (vs 2-3).

That means don’t sit down and plan it out so that you’re going to have the effect that you want: to be thought of as good in the eyes of other people. In other words, let it be spontaneous and from the heart.

Verse 4: “So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly. And when you pray, you shall not be as the **hypocrites**...” (vs 4-5).

We're going to see a lot of hypocrites. And the Greek there means *sanctimonious pretenders*. Anyone who is a hypocrite is a pretender. In this case, a 'religious' *pretender!* Doing 'good works' on the surface is *a sanctimonious pretender!* Just like we heard before that God said, 'All the Sabbaths and all the Feasts, and all these offerings are a weariness to Me.' Why? *Because your heart is not right, and you're sanctimonious pretenders!*

"...for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward" (v 5). *They were seen of men!*

Now you might do this as just a little side study in the Bible: Go and see how many long prayers you have where it is showing that Jesus prayed publicly. *You won't have any!* He blessed the food. He said when He raised Lazarus from the dead, 'Father, thank You that You hear Me. I know that You hear Me always, and I'm saying this so they may believe.' That was a short prayer. You would think, normally you would think that if anyone was going to do something to resurrect someone from the dead...

The disciples thought that Jesus should have come earlier because Lazarus would not have died; they thought that Jesus deliberately neglected. They were coming close to saying, 'Lord, You know that You didn't do quite as good as You should have. If You would have been here earlier this wouldn't have happened.' And Martha and Mary came out and were crying, and even Jesus cried; He didn't get up there and have some long great prayer. He just said, 'Thank you Father,' and 'Lazarus, come out,' and it was done. That might tell us something about that when we connect it here.

Verde 6: "But you, when you pray, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions..." (vs 6-7).

I've had many questions as to this, because when I used to preach praying an hour day—and I did—I did pray an hour a day. But I'll tell you what happens when you do that: you end up repeating the same thing over and over again. God says don't use 'vain' repetitions. What are vain repetitions? *Those things that you do over and over again to fill space!* I mean, there is no difference to having a list that you go through rigorously every single day, and make sure you don't miss it.

I'm not trying to belittle or put that down. There are things you need to pray about constantly until there is an answer. *That is not a vain*

repetition! But if you believe your prayer is going to be heard, and if you know that God is going to answer that prayer, why do you have to come back and ask it every day? Why do you have to come back and do it ten times a day? Or:

"...as the heathen *do*; for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him" (vs 7-8)—if your heart is right.

Compare the prayer of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18). I will just refer you to that. I imagine the Pharisee's prayer was long. The publican's prayer was short, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner. Who was justified? *The publican was!*

Luke 7—here's a parable, and here we can get a good contrast of the judgment of a good or an evil work, where *the appearance* of it is different to the perception of one person and another, and especially the difference in perception between what Jesus saw and what the Pharisees saw. We're going to find out about the Pharisees and *their motivation.*

Luke 7:36 "Now, one of the Pharisees invited Him to eat with him..." That was nice. Isn't that nice? That's a *nice work*. He invites someone over for dinner. That's a reasonably *good motivation*. A *good appearance*, reasonably *good effect*, you're going to get fed.

"...And after going into the Pharisee's house, He sat down *at the table*. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner...[which means that she was probably a harlot] ...when she knew that He was sitting in the Pharisee's house, took an alabaster flask of ointment..." (vs 36-37).

Now we have two perceptions of this: by Christ and by the Pharisees. Now we will see how one was perceived of as an *evil work* by the Pharisee, which was really a good work because of her heart, and the way that Jesus saw it, *because He knew the hearts of men.*

Verse 38: "And she stood weeping behind Him, *and knelt* at His feet, *and* began to wash His feet with *her* tears and to wipe *them* with the hairs of her head; and she was ardently kissing His feet and anointing *them* with the ointment."

You can picture whatever you want, however you could say this woman may have been typically... Even though she was crying, had a repentant heart, you'd be a Pharisee sitting there and say, 'That's one of those women. And I've seen her before, and I've heard about this person.'

Verse 39: "But when he saw *this*, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying..." Aha! Here's what happens. When you

have a heart that is not right with God *then you start judging other people's motives!* Look what he said:

“...‘This *Man*... [Who was the Messiah, Who was doing the healing and all these things] ... if He were a prophet...” (v 38).

- How many times do we justify evil by imputing evil?
- How many times do we justify our evil motives when we impute evil motives to someone else?

Therefore, since we know that this other person is evil, we are justified in imputing evil motives! Isn't that what's happening here? A Pharisee who was supposed to be righteous, who on the outside, as Jesus said, is like a whited sepulcher, but on the inside, this is within, he is thinking to himself,

“...‘This *Man*, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what the woman *is* who is touching Him because she is a sinner.’ Then Jesus answered *and* said to him...[notice, chooses his own delusion, gives him a little parable] ...‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he said, ‘Teacher, say *on*’” (vs 39-40).

You can almost see him, quivering, fawning, feigning, ‘say on, Master.’ But what did he say in his heart? “...‘This *Man*, if He were a prophet, would have known...’”

Then He turns and says “...‘Simon, I have something to say to you.’ And he said, ‘Teacher, say *on*.’ [*Hypocrite!*] ...‘There were two debtors of a certain creditor ... [He gave him a very simple thing to figure out] ...one owed five hundred silver coins [‘denarius’] ...and the other fifty. But when they did not have *anything with which* to pay *him*, he forgave *them both*....’” (vs 40-42).

What irks someone who has a little to be forgiven? *When someone who has a lot to be forgiven, that they are forgiven!* That's why He uses this. Frankly, He forgave them both.

“...‘Tell *Me* then, which of them will love him most?’ And Simon answered *and* said, ‘I suppose *the one* whom he forgave the most.’ And He said to him, ‘You have judged rightly’” (vs 42-43).

Just imagine how he would feel. Here is this person wanting compliments, wanting to do all this on the outside and wanting to be stroked, and all of this ego stuff involved. Let's just picture this. Jesus said, “...‘You have judged rightly.’”

Verse 44: “And after turning to the woman, He said to Simon, ‘Do you see this woman? I came into your house, and you did not provide *any* water to wash My feet; but she has washed My feet with *her* tears and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

You did not give Me a kiss...’” (vs. 44-45). Can you imagine the kind of hypocritical kiss that would have been given?

“...but she, from the *time* I came in, has not ceased to ardently kiss My feet” (v 45). If there's any part of the body that would be terrible to kiss: walk in off the dusty old trail and start kissing those. I wouldn't want anyone to kiss my feet.

Verse 46: “You did not anoint My head with oil; but she has anointed My feet with ointment. For this cause, I tell you... [who is supposed to be righteous]...her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, he loves little.’ And He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven’” (vs. 46-48).

Instead of everybody saying, “Hurray, there's a repentant...this woman has changed. Her sins are forgiven. Wonderful!”

Verse 49: “Then those who were sitting with *Him* began to say within themselves, ‘Who is this, Who even forgives sins?’” Their lips were probably sneering up, and their eyebrows were kind of looking out, and all these beady-eyed gossips with their tongues plowing along.

Verse 50: “But He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.’” There is a classic example of ***a good work and an evil work***, but God looks at the heart.

Matt. 23 is perhaps the classic example of *religious works* that ***appear good***, that Jesus condemns because the heart is not right.

Matthew 23:1: “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying, ‘The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moses' seat *as judges*... [they were in authority] ...therefore, every judgment that they tell you to observe, observe and do....’” (vs 1-2).

That is all the official things that obviously are based upon the Word of God. Obviously, if they ask them to sin they should not do that.

“...But do not do according to their works; for they say and do not” (v 3). Now when we focus in on the works, it's not so much of the works as it is the heart. It's not so much the work that is evil, but ***the motivation*** behind the work makes it more evil.

Verse 4: “For they bind heavy burdens and hard to bear, and lay *them* on the shoulders of men...” That sounds familiar! I've heard, ‘Tithe, even if you have to go on welfare.’ Isn't that a grievous burden to be borne?

“...but they will not move them with *one of* their own fingers. And they do all their works to be seen by men... [now the whole wrong motivation]: ...

They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments; and they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues..." (vs 4-6).

I remember we went back to visit a church that we pastored, and we went on a Holy Day. The ministers had a table set up on the stage, and they instructed the deacons to bring them the best of all the food: the desert, the meat, the vegetables. The brethren were down there, and rather than associate with that, I went to the back of the line. Not to be seen of men, but not to be seen of them! I was ashamed, and obviously, that is something that shouldn't be.

So, I just made myself unavailable and just went down with the brethren and some that I knew were talking with in line, we just went on through the line. And the word came down to come on stage to eat with the ministers, etc. I said, 'No, I'll just get my food.' I didn't want to be up there with this thing, where everybody can see, and all the brethren whispering, 'All of the ministers are up there...' Now you see how clear all this becomes?

"...They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments; and they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called by men 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren. Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father..." (vs 5-9). What happens? It just becomes a very fawning thing: 'Oh, father this, father that, father the other thing...'

"...for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven. Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled; and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted" (vs 9-12). Then He takes this whole principle here and applies it to all the rest of the sayings in Matt. 23.

Verse 13: "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and as a pretext you offer prayers of great length. **Because of this, you shall receive the greater judgment.**"

How they do that? By taking, by robbing, under the pretense of donating it to the temple, and it is corban, and you are released.

Verse 14: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven before men; for neither do you yourselves enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter."

Is it a *good work* to pray? *Yes! But* if for a pretense you pray, it gets nowhere. God says that when you spread forth your hands to heaven, 'I will not hear you, for your hands are defiled with blood.'

Verse 15: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel the sea and the land to make one proselyte..."

Isn't that a good work? *Go out and get a convert!* You dedicate your life. The Mormons do this. Every young man gives two years at no salary from the church; he gives it to the Mormon Church to go out and be a missionary. And what do they do? *They compass land and sea!* I know, I talked to one Mormon missionary and guess where his mission was? *France!* Guess what one of the Mormon doctrines is? 'Thou shalt not drink.' Can you imagine telling a Frenchman not to drink wine? *It's like trying to keep a baby from nursing!* You can't do it. During his two years he said he went into many villages, talked to a lot of people and made a lot of friends, but *not one convert in two years*. Was that a good work? *It was a good work!* He came home and was thought well of by the Mormon Church because he set a good example.

"...and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of Gehenna than yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever shall swear by...' (vs 15-16).

This is the *religious* argument. We got into that a little bit last week. The person said, 'How can one live in adultery when adultery is an act?' I said, 'Well, if the marriage is not binding by God then it is an adulterous state of living in adultery.' Here is the same thing. A person comes in and says they're going to vow a vow to God, and going to swear by the temple. And you Pharisees say that's nothing.

"...but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.'.... [Jesus said]: ...*You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple, which sanctifies the gold?" (vs 16-17).

All these nitpick little arguments are nowhere. Of course, that would be a 'good' work: 'I'm going to swear by the gold of the temple!' And the Pharisee runs out there and says, 'Hallelujah, you're a debtor! You're a good boy. You're a good man. God loves you because you swore by the gold, and you're going to do what you said you would do.' A good work? *No! Not a good work!*

Jesus gave the answer then, v 18: "And *you* say, 'Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.'" *He is guilty!* Oh yes! That was their argument!

Someone walks up and says, 'I swear by the altar of God that this is true.' That's what is called the horns of the altar. Remember that Joab wanted to come in and grab hold of the horns of the altar so that he could not be killed? That's what it's talking about. But the Pharisees said, 'That's nothing. If you swear by the altar, that's nothing.'

"...but whoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.' *You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift, or the altar, which sanctifies the gift? Therefore, the one who swears by the altar swears by it, and by all things that *are* upon it. And the one who swears by the temple swears by it, and by Him Who dwells in it. And the one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God, and by Him Who sits upon it" (vs 18-22).

In other words, it gets back to the condition of the heart again. All these things are *on the surface* of a good work, every one of them.

Verse 23: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin..." Those are good works to do. 'I'm a good Pharisee. I sit here and there's 10% for God, there's 90% for me. There's 10% for God, there's 90% for me. Oh, by the way, get these widows out of here. We're not going to give them anything.'

"...but you have abandoned the more important *matters* of the law—judgment, and mercy and faith. These *you* were obligated to do, and not to leave the others undone" (v 23). Here's a 'good' work. It doesn't matter if you do a good work. But your heart is locked up and not doing the things that God wants you to do.

The question came up about a person being baptized. You can go dunk people in the water all day long. Technically, when you get down to it, it really doesn't matter who baptizes the person. I mean, it says Jesus baptized, but the disciples did it. But if your heart isn't right and you haven't repented, you can go to Christ Himself in the flesh and your baptism would not be any good. So we have the same thing here.

Verse 24: "Blind guides, who filter out a gnat, but swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish..." (vs 23-25). Isn't that what most people do? Do the outside?

Now this Bitburg thing, the Jews all came and they pleaded with President Reagan, 'Don't go to Bitburg.' The Jews all got together and they said, 'If President Reagan changes us we don't want to have the appearance that we forced him to do it,' when they were all the ones that were doing it. It's

the same thing when Jesus was crucified. 'We don't want to give the appearance that we had anything to do this, so we'll go out at midnight.' *Clean the outside!*

"...For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess. Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the outside*..." (vs 25-27).

This is but one of the things that really gives you a key on *the good work, the evil work: the origin, the effect, the appearance*, and everything here. We could say with what the Pharisees were doing, *the origin* was not right because it really wasn't from God. Who did Jesus say they serve? *You are of your father, the devil!* *The motive* was not good because the heart was not right; *the appearance* looked good because they were doing it on the outside; and *the effect* was evil because it brought God's correction upon the whole community. So, that which looks good may not be good.

"...which indeed appear beautiful *on the outside*, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness. Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men *to be* righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness" (vs 27-28). Then He went on and labeled their attitude. We'll finish the last few verses here of this section.

Verse 29: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the righteous; and you say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets'" (vs 29-30).

In other words, we wouldn't have martyred them. Come on! What did they want to do to Jeremiah?

Verse 31: "So then, you are testifying against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets; and *as for* you, you are filling up the measure of your fathers. *You* serpents, *you* offspring of vipers, how shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?" (vs 31-33).

There He said that the judgment was coming upon that generation for everything that was done from Abel clear down to the present time.

Now let's look at one more example here of *a cloak of righteousness to cover evil*.

John 12:1: "Now, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus

was who had died, *and* whom He had raised from *the* dead. There they made a supper *for* Him, and Martha served; and Lazarus was one of those who sat with Him. Mary then took a pound of pure spikenard ointment worth a great price *and* anointed Jesus' feet, wiping His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the aroma of the ointment. As a result, one of His disciples..." (vs 1-4).

Now here is a cloak of evil and criticism. Notice how it's done. This is very common that people do:

"...Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, who was about to betray Him, said, 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred silver coins, and given to *the* poor?'" (vs 4-5). Aha! A waste! Didn't that look like on the surface a righteous cause, a good work?

Verse 6: "Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and carried what was put in *it*."

So, here's a righteous cloak to disguise evil. ***An apparent good work to cover up an evil work!*** Then we know what Judas did when he betrayed Him.

What did Judas do? *He said, 'The one Whom I kiss is the One Whom you are to arrest'!* So, he betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Now a kiss is supposed to be:

- a sign of affection
- a sign of love
- a sign of friendship
- a sign of, 'I am with you; I will never do anything against you or harm you' type of thing

So, he used this as the signal to betray Jesus so that Jesus could be arrested. Now there is an example of an apparent good work with an evil motive, with an evil result, etc.

This gives us something to work on it to sink our teeth into.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 5:18, 24-33
- 2) Deuteronomy 6:3
- 3) Isaiah 1:2-7, 9-20
- 4) Isaiah 66:1-3
- 5) Isaiah 45:7
- 6) Matthew 5:20
- 7) Matthew 6:1-8
- 8) Luke 7:36-50
- 9) Matthew 23:1-33

10) John 12:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Deuteronomy 28
- Luke 18

Also referenced: Book:

The Tabernacle by M.R. Dehaan

FRC: bo

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Good Works/Evil Works II

Fred R. Coulter

In going through this study, man is a varying degree of the mixture of *the knowledge of good and evil*. That's what man is, all the way from the gross extremes to being devious. We'll cover a little bit about human nature here in just a minute. But first of all, in order to kind of classify these different things that we go through, what I've come up with is this: for a work; any work, good or evil:

- **Origin**—Who did this come from?
- **Motive**—What is the purpose behind the work?
- **Appearance**—What does it appear like?
 - ✓ to people
 - ✓ to God
- **Effect**—What is the effect/result?

So, you could take those four categories, and you might want to add another one or two to it as we go along.

Just for example, when we are studying the Bible we're going to find that this will help us understand so much in the Bible and help us understand our own circumstances and different things as we go along.

Hebrews 11:24 says concerning Moses, and why he did what he did: "By faith Moses, after becoming a great *leader*, refused to be called *the* son of Pharaoh's daughter..."

That appeared to be, just as far as *the appearance* of Pharaoh's court, that appeared to be a stupid thing, a bad work. After all, who would want to reject being the son of Pharaoh? *The motive* though was good, because God was inspiring Moses' motive. It was based on *a good motive*. *The origin* was good because it came from God. *The effect* was good because Moses was used to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Verse 25: "Choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God..." You can categorize that, too. *The appearance* is pretty bad: leave the court of Egypt to go live in Sinai desert. You've got to be kidding! Think about it: If you had a nice home that was all air conditioned and you had people to wait on you, you had all the money you wanted, all the food you wanted, anything you wanted to do. You get up out of that and you walk out to the Mojave Desert and you find an adobe hovel out there, and you go live out there and say, 'Hey, this is better.' It doesn't make sense from a human perspective.

"...rather than to enjoy *the* temporary pleasure of sin..." (v 25). To enjoy the pleasures, *the appearance* is good. It appears good to have something that's pleasurable. *The effect* can be

either good or bad, just depending on how it is viewed, but the final effect is death, 'the wages of sin is death.' So, though the appearance is good, the effect is evil, it ends in death. *The motive*, if he chose to stay there, would have been because of covetousness. *The origin* would not have been of God, but would have been of Satan. So, he didn't do that.

Verse 26: "For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt..." That's the whole perspective. Remember, *the end result of anything that is truly good has got to come back to God!* It's got to be in the realm of the spiritual benefits that last for eternity.

Job had a lot of good works; he did a lot of good things. If you read through there, I would just have to say he was, as the Bible said, *perfect*. I think if you read all the things that he did to help people, to counsel people, to give, to do all those things, he outdid everyone a hundred times over.

But God said that was not good enough for eternal life. Eternal life cannot be done to be earned by a good work. God has to give it! He requires good works.

If you hear me say, 'There is nothing you can do—which *you* can do—to cause God to give you eternal life,' don't think I'm saying we can merrily go off and do anything we want to. *No!* That isn't what I'm saying at all.

- God requires all the commandments to be kept
- God requires that we do all the things that is required, and then go above and beyond
 - ✓ love God
 - ✓ love the brethren
 - ✓ love our enemies

Those are the things; God looks to the heart. You'll see all the way through here God looks to the heart. That's why there are *different appearances* and *motivations* for different things as they come around.

Verse 26: "For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered, as *if he were* seeing the *One Who is invisible*" (vs 26-27).

We know that Moses is going to have a tremendous reward in the Kingdom of God. But he really had a miserable life for 80 years of his life. He lived to be 120: 40 years in Egypt, 40 years in Sinai with Jethro He married the eldest of the seven

daughters, and out there shepherding sheep for 40 years; and then another 40 years leading the children of Israel around the wilderness of Sinai. He had to be out there another 38-1/2 years, because the children of Israel didn't want to go in when God said to go in.

He had 80 years of misery. Then he got frustrated right at the last, just before they were ready to go into the 'promised land. Instead of commanding the rock to bring forth water he beat the rock, and God said he would not be going into the 'promised land.' 'I'll let you climb this mountain and you can look at it, but you aren't going in. He had to count the riches of Christ greater than anything else.

When we get through with all of this, this will help us to understand more about human nature and more about the things that we do. But what it's going to help us do is it's going to help us get along with each other a whole lot better. We have no problems getting along with each other; thank God; I'm happy for that. Feel great for that, after some experiences we've had all I can say is it's good to be home.

I want to give you two examples of good works/evil works. The first one is really terrible hypocrisy. Both of these are side-by-side.

Article: Parents Who Went On TV to Plead For Baby Indicted In Her Slaying

They were indicted for the slaying of their baby.

A couple who pleaded tearfully on television...

People look at that and they're sympathetic. Oh, the tears, how they loved their... A good work? *Yes, on the surface, a good work!* But we will see that that was a mask, a guise, a ruse to divert from the sin that they committed. It's called an ideological mask. All politicians use that all the time. On the Fourth of July they have the movie Mr. Smith Goes to Washington. It shows a little bit of the political hypocrisy that goes on. Right here is the worst classical example I've ever heard of, or even known of.

...for the life of their missing four-month-old daughter were indicted Friday on charges that the father sexually abused the infant girl before the mother beat her to death. The six-count indictment returned by the Providence County grand jury also charged George G. and Donna J. Richard with lying to police investigating the November slaying of their only child, Jeri-Ann.

Mrs. Richard, 33, was charged with first-degree murder. Her 34-year-old husband was charged on sexual assault of a child under 13. Both were also charged with filing false police statements, two counts of conspiring to obstruct justice, and obstructing justice. Arraignment is scheduled for July 24 in Superior Court. The murder and sexual assault charges are capital offenses carrying a maximum sentence of life in prison.

That's too good for these people! Here's what they did:

The Richards reported that their blue-eyed daughter was kidnapped November 11, telling the police she was snatched from her crib by an intruder who apparently entered their apartment through a window while they slept nearby. Four days later, hours after the tearful couple had made television appearances to plead for their baby's safe return, Jeri-Ann's beaten and raped body...

Now, this is a four-month old!

"...was discovered in an alley a block from the family's apartment. An autopsy showed the infant had been a victim of chronic sexual abuse. A later FBI analysis of the crime scene determined that the body was placed in the alley in a manner to indicate that there was a close, personal relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. The police reported the body was carefully positioned with a folded diaper under its bettered head, its arms crossed on its chest, and tree branches covering it.

So to cover up what they did, they get on TV, they lie, and they say, 'Oh please return our baby.' There is a very good example of an apparent good work on the surface, what it looks like. So what we're trying to do, ***the appearance of everything that you see is not necessarily the reality of what's occurring!***

Some people are very good liars. You could not tell when they're lying or when they're telling the truth. Just picture yourself now as someone who viewed that. Maybe you're sitting there clutching your four-month-old baby. The parents just tearfully cry, 'We were sleeping in the bedroom and someone just came and stole our daughter away from us. Oh, whoever it is, whoever you are, please bring it back!' They knew very well that they had done the things that they did and killed the baby and left it out there. ***An ideological mask!***

Here's the other one. This is a little more humorous:

Utah Convict Sues Prison for Allowing His Escape: Salt Lake City

A killer who claimed the Utah State Prison allowed him to escape with two other convicts is suing the prison for trauma suffered while free. Walter J. Wood contends his constitutional rights were violated when he inadvertently wandered into an escape-in-progress situation.

Wood, fellow murderer Wesley A. Tuttle, and kidnapper Darrel E. Brady strolled from the prison in civilian clothes.

Oh, the clothes just happened to fall on them!

Tuttle and Brady were captured within hours, but Wood eluded authorities for six months. Wood complained in the lawsuit he filed this week that his reluctant escape...

So reluctant he stayed away for six months. I wonder who on earth his attorney is. This is so bad you can't believe it.

...put him in several life-threatening situations...

Poor little baby.

...“Because of extreme fear of being shot to death, I was forced to swim several irrigation canals.”....

Poor kid! Kids do that all the time. I imagine they were all of 20-feet wide at the most. Isn't that about what most of these huge ones are, twenty feet wide? I know that area up around Salt Lake City, and I don't think they could be more than 10-feet wide up around there.

...[He] attempted to swim a raging Jordan River...

Now, I know the Jordan River up there is not raging. I mean, even in a terrible, terrible rainstorm it's not raging.

...And exposed himself to innumerable bites by many insects. “At one point I heard a volume of gunshot blasts, and this completed my anxiety,” wrote Wood, acting as his own attorney.

No wonder! He's acting as his own attorney; can you believe that?

The lawsuit seeks \$2 million in damages...

Yes. I'm going to spend the rest of my life in prison and spend my \$2-million. Gotta be kidding!

...And just punishment for all prison personnel involved in allowing inmates to escape.

Here's a perfect example of taking something evil, escaping from jail. He's a convicted felon anyway, a killer, and now the poor little dear has his nerves all just torn apart. How is he going to survive the rest of his life? Terrible!

Now maybe you understand what I'm talking about, *an evil good work*. This is an evil good work. It is using the good court, the good laws for an evil purpose. This other one here is a good work on the surface to cover up evil. So that is, in both cases an evil good work.

In order to understand about good works/evil works, and so forth, we need to understand about human nature. So let's review about human nature and where it puts us with God. God does not deal with each person exactly the same, and we'll see the reason why. *God is interested in the heart!*

Jer.17:9 is one you should all have memorized. You all know it tells about human nature, and it tells about the way that human nature normally is. There are degrees of severity of goodness and evil that that people have in their own personality. But just to give you an example: today we have so many people that are going around looking to cause trouble.

Recently here at Great America in Santa Clara they would not allow a girl in who had her hair cut and all pegged up in these spikes, with half of her face black and half of it green, and looking like a weirdo. So now there's a lawsuit. But they gave the example of what happened down in Magic Mountain in Los Angeles when they had an all-night graduation party for seniors in high school. There were twelve people stabbed, because there were gangs of kids out there looking for trouble. Once a person gets into evil and continues in it, they must—in order to justify what they are doing—become more and more evil. That's the way Satan leads a person into it. The ultimate is here:

Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things...” The easiest thing in the world to do is lie to yourself. The easiest way that you justify something that you are doing that you know is not right, is you justify it by accusing someone else of doing something worse. We'll see a couple examples of that here in the New Testament.

Verse 9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” That's the extreme. There are people who sell themselves to evil. There are people who just give themselves over to it. And we can think of many

kings that are listed in 1st & 2nd Kings. We can think of Ahab, Jeroboam and Manasseh. Ahab and Manasseh both repented after they had done all of the evil things that they did. Some of the others never repented of any of the things that they did. So, there are degrees to which human beings will be involved in evil.

Now let's see the least degree of an evil heart. We know that for children, God calls them *innocent* children. But ***the evil in children*** can be stirred up at a very early age by exposing them to a lot of evil. That's why you can find young kids in the streets of the cities who are hardened criminals, say at age ten and twelve, because they have been brought in to that situation. You can say in some cases they were forced into it. But in almost every case a person has to agree with it to go along with it. Otherwise they come up with a silly sounding thing like this convict, suing the prison for *allowing* his escape.

John 1:48^[transcriber's correction]: "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said concerning him, 'Behold, truly an Israelite in whom ***there is no guile.***'"

If you look it up in your Interlinear you will find that this is the same word that is used for *deceit*. So, a person can, just of their own choice choose to be honest, choose to be ethical. Of course, when they do, whose laws are they following in the first place? *They're following God's laws!* So that good—though it's in a person who has 'the law of sin and death' in them, and though there's a mixture of good and evil in every person—has more good about their character and more good about their personality than they do evil. We're going to see some other examples here about evil people, or sinners, or whatever. And we're going to see just exactly how that fits into the whole overall perspective.

Matthew 10:40—here we have by choice, a person decides to do something: "The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me.... Obviously God the Father] ...The one who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive *the* reward of a prophet; and the one who receives a righteous *man* in *the* name of a righteous *man* shall receive the reward of a righteous *man*" (vs 40-41).

God is going to take care of all of those things. God is going to ultimately judge the hearts of everyone (Rom. 14).

Verse 42: "And *if* anyone shall in *the* name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold *water* only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward."

There are varying degrees of things that God is looking to. But notice that in every case it has to do with a ***pure motive***. Or we could say *a right heart!*

This is why, even in dealing with our children, if they do something that is just out of a motive to have fun, and there's no evil intent to it, though evil may result out of it. They snuck some firecrackers, or something like this, and they get out and they blow some out in the garage, and lo and behold, the garage catches afire and it burns down the garage.

There was no evil intent in that. One thing led to another, and, 'let's have some fun,' and lo and behold, the garage is gone. But if they, on the other hand said, 'We're going to take care of this. We're going to spray gasoline all over here, and then throw a match in there and run.' *That is an evil intent!*

God is interested in the heart and in the intent! And we'll see this all the way through as we go along.

If a person is going to help someone and to really do good, not thinking they will do good and then be thought well of by other people. If you do good to really do good, that's fine; God will honor that. It may or may not count for salvation; that depends on the rest of your life. Obviously, here He's talking about those then who are called to salvation in the way of receiving a reward.

There are many good things out here in the world that are going on now, people doing good things for one another. There may be someone or a lot of people right now helping out the sick, helping out the widows, helping out the poor, and that's fine. Whether that counts for salvation or not, ***God is the One Who's going to have to judge that!*** Whether God has called them, what their heart is, all of these things involved.

Let's see on the other hand something that looks really good that people think, as you view it, is good. Jesus is saying virtually the same thing that we're saying right here right now.

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me "Lord, Lord" shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven." That's right after the section where it says:

Verse 15: "But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing..."

So, here is a work. ***The origin*** is evil; ***the appearance*** is good, because they're coming in sheep's clothing; ***the result*** is evil, because they will lead you from God instead of to God.

"...for within *they* are ravening wolves....

[we need to catch the inward part, your heart] ... You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire. Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits" (vs 15-20).

But you can't just accept something that is on the surface that looks good. I mean, some of the nicest, most friendly people you'd want to meet are the real connivers. How do you think con men do the work they do? *They have a multitude of trickeries that they use to con people out of money or property!* It looks good.

You can't always go by on what *you think* the record is. Therefore, you have to really just ask God for discernment and understanding. Because something that looks good and sounds good on the surface may not be good at all.

Now here's the opposite example, v 21: "Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven..."

Isn't it true that unless you acknowledge that Jesus is Lord you're not going into the Kingdom of Heaven? That is true; you have to acknowledge that He is Lord, to the glory of the Father! Here are people who are saying, 'Lord, Lord,' and Jesus said they're not going to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, "...but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven" (v 21). In other words, even if you acknowledge that Christ is Lord, it isn't going to do you any good unless you're doing the will of the Father. Then He gives an example.

Verse 22: "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?....' On the surface that looks good, sounds good. 'I bring to you these prophecies in the name of Jesus Christ!' And maybe some of them come to pass.

"...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?...." (v 22). Stand up there and say, 'In the name of Jesus Christ, I command the demons to come out of this person now!' They're gone!

"...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?" (v 22). Here's **the appearance**: wonderful works, casting out demons, prophesying in the name of Christ. I mean, you can't have it any better. For the appearance, it can't be any better than that!

Verse 23: "And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you...'" That's going to be a strange twist of events. Christ is looking to the heart, not

looking to the outward appearance, not looking to the things that have been done; but to the person's heart.

"...Depart from Me, you who work **lawlessness**" (v 23). Greek: 'anomos,' which means *against law*.

There are a lot of people who preach in Jesus' name who say that you don't have to keep the commandments. Are there a lot of people who cast out demons who say it's all by grace? It's true, it is all by grace, but what is the motive behind it? It's kind of like this prisoner here. Once saved, always saved?

I talked to a man who found out through someone else that I was a preacher. This fellow's a good 'religious' person, graduated from Brigham Young University and is a good, righteous Mormon. So, he was asking what we believed in. I said we believe in the Bible. I had to go through and explain a few things, and then I got down to really what God is looking to is your heart and your standing before Him; that's the most important thing.

Let's see what Jesus said to His disciples. When we get done with this you're going to understand why Jesus said, 'When you do your righteousness don't let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.' In other words, do it from the heart, spontaneously, and don't plan for any result that's going to come back to you. That's what it means.

Luke 11:1: "...one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us how to pray, as John also taught his disciples.'" So, He taught them, and then He gave them a couple parables about being persistent in prayer.

Now I've mentioned about how that people use vain repetition in prayers and have great long lists that they just go over and over, and that without a clock and without a list they can't pray, and a lot of that can get into vain repetition. But here it's talking about that you be earnest, and that you keep importuning God until you get the answer. But so many other things just can be so much rote.

Jesus gave this promise here, v 9: "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you..." God will give and provide. I think we're learning to walk more and more in faith as we're going along; walk more and more in the grace of God as we go along. Each of us are trusting that God is going to lead and help in the way that God sees fit, then we don't have to worry about interrupting anybody's life to tell them how to live.

If someone is truly sincere, truly seeking God, truly wanting what God wants them to have, then you don't have to be 'buttinskies' and tell

everybody to do this or that, or the other thing. You teach them what God's Word says and if God's Spirit is in them, and if Christ is in them, they're going to want to do it. You can't force it into them by fear. It just can't be done. We've seen that, we've experienced that.

"...ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives... [a promise] ... and the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, it shall be opened" (vs 9-10).

Notice the next three verses because this is very important in relationship to understanding human nature. That means we also have to understand ourselves.

Verse 11: "But which of you who *is* a father, if a son shall ask for bread, will give him a stone?.... [no] ...Or if *he shall ask* for a fish, will give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he shall ask for an egg, will give him a scorpion?" (vs. 9-12).

This tells us, for all of those who are conscious about health, that bread, fish, eggs are good to eat.

Notice what Jesus said to His own disciples. Now, you had to have a certain **good motive** of heart to follow Christ. He said some pretty tough things.

Verse 13: "Therefore, if you, being evil..." Now that's a pretty tough saying; telling His own disciples they're evil, and that is *evil by nature*. Any human being, given the choices of evil, will end up in the same deprivation as any other human being. You may not have chosen that so far. Or a person may have decided to reject that kind of behavior, so their degree of evil is not that intense.

But Jesus said, v 13: "Therefore, if you, being evil, know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

That helps us understand why there are *ideological masks*, why people like to cloak themselves in the things that look and sound right. This is why people hire agents. They hire agents, and what do the agents do? *They dress everything nice; they have a spokesman!*

Ronald Reagan could not get along without a spokesman, because he would say things that are not good for his image. 'We can't have that, so we have to have everything all filtered out and planned out and stated ahead of time, because you aren't going to show yourself off as good as we would like to project you.'

I imagine there are times that he just grits his teeth over it, but he goes along with it because he

knows politically that is true. But ***no one's going to fool God!*** The only agent you have for you to God is *Christ*. He is the best Agent because He is going to deal with you in Truth and He is going to deal with God the Father for you in Truth, *so there won't be any ideological masks there*.

Now we will see just a reiteration of something that we read a little bit earlier, but with just a little bit different slant on it. There are certain things that we can do. We do have choices.

Matthew 12:33: "Either make the tree good and the fruit good..." There comes a point when you need to have things done right. How do you make a tree good? *That's a parable referring to human beings!* The tree has roots, and if the roots aren't any good, and if the roots are not having good nourishment then the tree and the fruit is no good. Where should our roots be? *Our roots should be grounded in Christ!* Then it will be a good tree. Then it will bring forth good fruit. Otherwise, it won't. It will be just like these two accounts I read of here. What good are either one of them?

Verse 33: "Either make the tree good and the fruit good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for a tree is known by its fruit. Offspring of vipers, how are you able to speak good things, being evil?..." We'll see a little bit more about the Pharisees, and Christ has an awful lot to say about the Pharisees.

"...For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man..." (vs 34-35). A person can be called good. Jesus said, 'Call no one good; there's none good except the Father.' But He's talking about a person who **chooses good** and is good by the fact that they **choose** what is good and what is right, not that they are inherently good of their own.

Verse 35: "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings out good things; and the wicked man out of the wicked treasure brings out wicked things." That certainly is true. We saw two examples of it right here today.

Let's see an example of good, this is the account of the good Samaritan. Of course, the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans. We're going to see several examples of good and evil/evil and good, and apparent righteousness/righteousness before God, which is true righteousness.

Luke 10:25 "Now, a certain doctor of the law..." Oh boy, they're some people who are just picky, arguing with God. I said at the beginning of the Bible study that there are those people that take Scriptures and argue with God. And guess what? *Someone came back and started arguing with God!* It's just amazing. Sometimes you can't believe it.

Verse 25: “Now, a certain doctor of the law suddenly stood up, tempting Him and saying, ‘Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ And He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? How do you read *it*?’” (vs 25-26).

One of these times I’m going to get the point. I think I’m almost at the point now, that when I’m provoked I’m going to ask questions instead of a frontal assault. I think I got that almost in my head now. Jesus always asked a question. Here’s a frontal assault.

Verse 27: “Then he answered *and* said, ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’”

Now those are the classic good things that a human being should do, and it’s found in the Law.

Verse 28: “And He [Jesus] said to him, ‘You have answered correctly. Do this, and you shall live.’... [notice the lawyer]: ...But he, desiring to justify himself...” (vs 28-29). That’s where people cling on to their evil. They justify themselves.

(go to the next track)

Verse 29: “But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’ And taking *it* up, Jesus said, ‘A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and was encircled by thieves; *and* after they had stripped him *of his goods* and inflicted *him with* wounds, they went away, leaving *him* half dead. Now, by coincidence, a certain priest went down that road...” (vs. 29-31).

You go back and you read all the laws of what a priest is to do. If he’s on duty he’s not to touch any dead body; he’s not to touch anything that has any blood on it; he’s not to contaminate himself, lest when he make the offering that he be profaned. Are those the Laws of God? *Yes! True! He gave them the Laws of God!*

I’ll tell you what he should have done when we get to the end of it, because it would have been very simple. Jesus is telling him that the priest should have helped the one who was wounded. So what should the priest have done? He should have gone back and said, ‘I helped a man who was wounded. Just count me out for duty this week, I’ll pick it up next week.’ No problem! When people get so nitpicky in doing right, even though it’s the Law of God, when there is a greater need beyond a ritual or a statute or a judgment, then that greater need falls into the category that Jesus said, ‘I want mercy, and not sacrifice.’

Here is an example of sacrifice, of ritual: ‘I will do the sacrifice rather than show the mercy.’ That’s what happened with the priest.

Verse 31: “Now, by coincidence, a certain priest went down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.... [and walked away] ...And in like manner also, a Levite... [who was the priest’s helper] ...when he was at the place, came and saw *him*...” (vs 31-32)—*walked over and looked at him!* He saw someone who was naked, who was wounded, who was obviously in need.

“...and passed by on the opposite side” (v 32). In the Jewish society, or in the society with the temple, the two most respected citizens were the priest and the Levite. They held the two highest offices in the land. They were to lead people to God. How on earth can a priest or a Levite lead someone to God when they don’t have the right kind of heart toward their fellow man? So, this is why Jesus gave the parable.

Verse 33: “But a certain Samaritan...” Now, you couldn’t have said anything worse to a Jew. Because you know that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Here comes this dirty, slimy, greasy Samaritan on his donkey, trailing down the trail. You know, just kind of picture it in your mind. Maybe even flies hovering over his head as he goes along, who knows?

Verse 33: “But a certain Samaritan, *as* he was journeying, came to him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion.” God is interested in your heart and your emotion. He had compassion on him.

Verse 34: “And he went *to him* and bound up his wounds...” I just imagine that the guy who was lying there, the priest looked from a distance and walked on. I don’t know if the victim saw him, but the Levite went over and looked right at him, and the guy probably groaned, ‘Help!’ But the Levite probably said, ‘Oh, I have to go offer a sacrifice,’ and goes on his way. Then here comes this Samaritan. He saw his wounds, had compassion on him:

“...pouring on oil and wine; then he put him on his own beast *and* brought him to an inn, and took care of him” (v 34). That takes a lot of effort; that takes a lot of work, and brought him to an inn, his own expense.

Verse 35: “And when he left on the next day, he took out two silver coins... [denarius] ... *and* gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him, and whatever you may expend above *this*, I will repay you when I come back.’” Therefore, which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor of him who fell among the thieves?” And he said, ‘The one who showed compassion toward him.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘**You go and do likewise**’” (vs 35-37).

In other words, don't stand there and ask a stupid question, 'Who is my neighbor?' Anybody that has need, *that's your neighbor, whether you know them or not!*

Now let's look at another example. When you read and study the New Testament, go through and see that every time Jesus has an encounter of some kind He deals with **the origin, the motive, the appearance, and the effect!** Let's keep those four things in mind. It will really help you see the love and compassion that Jesus Christ has, and that's how He wants us to act. That's how He wants us to be.

Matthew 9:10: "Then it came to pass when Jesus sat down *to eat* in the house that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples."

This looked bad, for those righteous Pharisees this was bad. This woman who was a sinner touches Him, and 'if this Man were a prophet, He would know...' Then Jesus asked him a question, he said, 'Yes, Master?' The purring, fawning, 'Oh, yes, yes, *yes!*'

Verse 11: "And after seeing *this*, the Pharisees said to His disciples, 'Why does your Master eat with tax collectors and sinners?'.... [He didn't answer that question either] ...But when Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, 'Those who are strong do not have need of a physician, but those who are sick. Now, go and learn what this means: "**I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**"....'" (vs. 11-13).

In other words, all those little ritualistic things that were added to the Laws of God to separate people and destroy love, mercy and compassion are against the Laws of God, though they appear righteous by religious leaders, are just so much dung. Now you can understand why.

When I first read Isa. 58 it was hard for me to understand it, but it's crystal clear now.

Isaiah 58:1: "Cry aloud, do not spare, lift up your voice like a ram's horn, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet, they seek Me daily..." (vs 1-2). Isn't it interesting that people still seek God even though that they are just living in sin?

"...and seem eager to know My ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and one that did not forget the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they seem eager to draw near to God" (v 2).

'Oh yes, we're going to offer a sacrifice today, everyone, we're going to have a feast,' *or* 'Today is the Day of Atonement, the most Holy Day of the year.'

Verse 3: "They say, 'Why have we fasted,

and You do not see? Why have we afflicted our soul and You take no knowledge?' Behold, in the day of your fast you pursue your business and exploit all your workers. Behold, you fast for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickedness..."

That's sure true of human nature. Here's human nature, ***religious human nature in the raw!*** This is why Jesus went and ate with sinners and publicans. He did eat with some of the Pharisees and scribes, and so forth. But that's all they were doing. They were fasting for:

"...strife, debate and the fist of wickedness you cannot fast as *you do* this day, and expect to make your voice to be heard on high" (v 4).

Isaiah 64:6. "But we are all as the unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags..." Now you'll understand why the righteousnesses of the scribes and Pharisees were as filthy rags, because their heart was not right. The whole thing is, God does not care what the outward appearance of what you may be doing. ***He's interested in the motive and in the heart!*** That's the whole key thing, ***motive and heart!*** Otherwise it's just like filthy rags.

"...And we all fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (v 6). When you find that you should keep the commandments and they are righteous, and then you go back and read that all of our righteousnesses are as an unclean thing and a filthy rag, and then you read the book of Job, you think: How's anyone ever going to make it?

Honestly, when I first read the book of Job I thought God was wrong. *Really!* I knew that wasn't right. It took me a long time before I really have understood the book of Job. I think I understand more than I have in the past.

Now let's see this righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees would not eat with publicans and sinners. What good did all of that righteousness do them? *None!* Jesus said:

Matthew 9:13: "Now, go and learn what this means: "**I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**"...." That's the whole key thing: mercy, compassion and doing the things that God wants and not the sacrifice of 'religious ritual.' Or we could say today, not the sacrifice of 'playing church.' There are a lot of people that 'play church': Protestants, Catholics, Church of God people.

"...For I did not come to call *the* righteous... [Paul said ***none*** is righteous] ...but sinners to repentance" (v 13). We're going to see that's the key all the way through.

Now let's look at an example of a *good work*, a *righteous sacrifice*, a *proper judgment*. John 8—the first eleven verses where they came and they brought a woman who was caught in the act of adultery, the very act. They're taking God's Word to use as a club again. It's right, it did say that adulterers and adulteresses were to be stoned. Didn't the Law of Moses say that she was to be stoned? *And you know the result of it!*

John 8:7: "And as they continued to ask Him, He lifted Himself up *and* said to them, 'Let the sinless one among you cast the first stone at her.'"

To them they thought, 'We're going to catch Him, because we are right! We have the Law of Moses behind us to back us up and prove it is right!'

But what did Jesus do? *He went right to the heart, and He said*, 'The one who is without sin, let him cast the first stone!' Then you know the rest of the account. *No one was there!* It was a crowd around and then Jesus and the woman, and surrounding Jesus and the woman was a circle of Pharisees and scribes who brought the woman. Just picture it today: Police catch someone red-handed and bring him right in. What are you going to do about this?

So, when there was no one there and Jesus said to her, v 10: "...Woman, where are your accusers? Did anyone condemn you?" And she said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go, and **sin no more**'" (vs 10-11)—that's the key thing.

I imagine she was scared to death. Imagine how she felt. Did Jesus change the Law here? **No!** They evoked the Law of Moses that said to stone the adulteress, *but you also have to stone the adulterer.*

They didn't bring him with her. They caught her in the very act, but how are you going to catch her in the very act *without him*? That's a little strange! Maybe one of those shining-robed, broad-phyllactery priests was the one who tricked her into it. Maybe that's the whole thing behind it, they tricked her into it. They said, 'Aha, we're going to get this guy.' No, it isn't that Jesus did away with the Law of Moses, because He told her to "...Go, and sin no more."

He said, "...Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go, and sin no more.'" He couldn't condemn her, because legally you needed two or three witnesses: 'Everything shall be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses'; that's Old Testament doctrine.

So, there were many things wrong in their case. Rather than Jesus getting onto an argument over the rightness or wrongness of the case, He got to the heart of the matter by saying, 'The one who

has no sin, let him throw the first stone.' Then He told the woman, "...Go, and sin no more." This is showing that adultery is still sin, and in a sense 'the wages of sin is still death,' but it's going to be administered in a proper way.

I just imagine how that poor woman felt, even though she may have been what she was, dragged up there. The whole bottom line is that they were using this incident as a means to trap Christ. In other words, they were taking something that God had given to Moses, which was to be used for good: to keep adultery out of the land, to eliminate it, to keep it to a smaller degree. They were using this to try and trip up Christ. It was ***an evil motive*** behind what they were doing and had nothing to do with truth and fact. So, that's why He answered the way He did.

Rom. 2 will tell us about the heart, the conscience, and what God is looking to. Here we get down to the heart and the core of the whole problem. It's talking about judging, condemning, and using the judgment of God. But then he goes on to show that unless your heart is right, it doesn't matter what your judgment of another person is going to be, God is going to reward you according to your heart: whether you are led to repentance by God and seek honor, glory, truth and immortality, then you receive eternal life; *or* whether you're hard-hearted and won't repent, then you're going to receive anguish, wrath and so forth.

Romans 2:11: "Because there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish... [separate from the knowledge of the law] ...without law; and as many as have sinned within *the* Law shall be judged by *the* Law, (because the hearers of the Law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified" (vs 11-13).

- What is he talking about?
- What kind of doers?
- How should you do it?
 - ✓ in a ritual?
 - ✓ just because the Bible says to do it?

You should do it because the Bible says do it, but that should not be the only motivation. ***You should do it because it becomes a part of you!*** What does the whole purpose of the New Testament to do with God's laws? *To write them in your heart, in your mind and in your inward parts, so that it becomes a part of you:*

- Christ in you
- the laws of God in you
- the love of God in you

Here again, Paul uses the example of the Gentiles, v 14: "For when *the* Gentiles, which do not

have *the* Law...” They weren’t given the Laws of God. God never went to any other nation and said, ‘I am God, here are My laws, follow them.’ *Only to Israel!*

Verse 14: “For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the* Law, practice by nature the things contained in the Law...” In other words, these things are always a law unto themselves.

“...these who do not have *the* Law are a law unto themselves; who show the work of the Law **written in their own hearts**...” (vs 14-15).

Of all the mixture of good and evil that people have in the world, there are some who have reasonably decent societies. I know when I first saw the movie on the pygmies I was impressed. They don’t commit adultery, they believe in one god, and they don’t steal. Now, they don’t have the Laws of God, but believe me, I’m sure God honors them for that much of what they do and what they know.

Verse 15: “Who show the work of the Law written in their own hearts, their consciences...” *God is interested in the heart and the conscience!* That’s the only thing God can truly deal with because these are spiritual things. God cannot deal with a stick, a stone or a hard-hearted person. He’s got to deal with someone who has some conscience, someone who has some heart.

“...bearing witness, and their reasonings also as they accuse or defend one another); in a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel” (vs 15-16).

Then he went on showing here very clearly about what a true Jew was: one of the heart, not of the letter.

- Were the Pharisees Jews by nature? *Yes!*
- By physical circumcision? *Yes!*
- By heart? *No!*

Let’s take a little survey in the book of Luke and see if we can cover some of these. The book of Luke is really full of some of these examples of an evil work/a good work, an evil motive/evil imputation to a person, and so forth.

Luke 5:17: “Now, it came to pass that on one of the days when He was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come out of every village from Galilee and from Judea, including *the villages* around Jerusalem...” Here were all the nitpickers all gathered around. There they were.

“...And *the* power of *the* Lord was *there* for healing the *sick*. And behold, men *came*, carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; and they sought to bring him in and place *him* before Him.

But when they could not find a way to bring him in because of the multitude, they went up on the rooftop and lowered him with the stretcher through the tiles into the midst, *directly* in front of Jesus” (vs 17-19).

If you can picture some Middle Eastern type up there, they’re taking away the tile, and here’s everybody gathered around there. Then they start letting this fellow down, right in the middle of where Jesus was teaching. Remember, there were sitting around scribes, the doctors of the law and the Pharisees. Here’s Jesus teaching. And all of a sudden, right down in the middle of this, here comes this man being let down. I imagine everybody looked up and said, ‘I wonder what on earth this is? Look at that.’

Verse 20: “And seeing their faith, He said to him, ‘Man, your sins have been forgiven you.’” Very simple statement. Aha! Self-righteous antennae go up!

Verse 21: “Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying... [they began to reason] “...‘Who is this Who speaks blasphemies? Who has the power to forgive sins, except God alone?’ But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts...” (vs 21-22).

That must have been interesting on Jesus’ part. He knew their thoughts. Sometimes I wish I knew that. That might save me from a lot of grief, to know the thoughts of people. On the other hand, I wouldn’t want to do that. *No!* You wouldn’t, you’d have to be God in order to handle it. I mean, truly, the human mind is so wicked, you wouldn’t want to know everybody’s thoughts. *No!* Only God could handle it. You think at first that would be good in some circumstances. But if you knew everybody’s thoughts all the time, you wouldn’t want...

Verse 22: “But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, answered *and* said to them, ‘Why do you reason in your hearts?’”

That must have been interesting. Here, they’re sitting there and trying to have a pious look on their face, and Jesus is reading their thoughts, and then He turns to them and says, ‘Why are you thinking this?’ I imagine they’d swallow once or twice. Sometimes it makes you wonder, you wonder what on earth went on in the minds of these scribes and Pharisees.

Verse 23: “Which is easier, to say, “Your sins have been forgiven you”? Or to say, “Arise and walk”? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins,’ He said to the one who was paralyzed, ‘I say to you, arise and take up your stretcher, and go to your house.’ And he immediately stood up in front of them; *and* after

taking up *the stretcher* on which he had been lying... [in other words, just wrapped it all up] ...he went to his house, glorifying God. And amazement seized everyone, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, 'We have seen strange things today'" (vs 23-26).

He went by and He told Levi to follow Him, who was then later called Matthew.

Verse 29: "And Levi made a great feast for Him in his house, and there were a large number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. But the scribes and the Pharisees complained to His disciples..." (vs 29-30).

Here, these perpetual critics. All they did was grumble and murmur and gripe. Didn't all their criticism cause a lot of problems in the New Testament church when supposedly the Pharisees were converted? *Oh yea, verily yea!*

"...saying, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?' Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Those who are in *good* health do not need a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Then they said to Him, 'Why do the disciples of John fast often...' (vs 30-33).

He has a little to say about John [the Baptist]. It's just like a technocrat. They'll even use something that they hate. They didn't like John. John called them vipers, and 'who warned you to come and flee the wrath and be baptized?'

Verse 33: "Then they said to Him, 'Why do the disciples of John fast often...' They were so beady-eyed jealous with them eating and having a good time, and having a feast, they stood out there, and when they couldn't answer back to Jesus then they said, 'Now, why don't You fast?'

"...and make supplications, and those of the Pharisees do the same, but Your *disciples* are eating and drinking?' And He said to them, 'Can you make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?'" (vs 33-34).

Again, He answered with a question. *Very clever!* He never really answered their questions, because *He knew their hearts; He knew the motive!* Is it good to fast? *Yes!* Is it good to pray? *Yes!* What was *the origin?* *It was the Pharisee who was self-righteous!*

The motive was to try and use something good, that *appeared good*—fasting and praying—to use a good thing in an evil way.

Can people use a good thing in an evil way? *Sure they can!* We're going to see that God will use an evil thing in a good way. One time He said, 'Let's send a lying spirit down to deceive...' Can imagine

God commanding a spirit to go down there and lie? To be a lying spirit in the mouth of all these false prophets? God said, 'I create good and I create evil.' God does create evil to enforce the penalty of sin; He does create it.

When I first read Isaiah 45:7^[transcriber's correction]: "...I make peace and **create evil**. I the LORD do all these *things*.'" I couldn't believe that; tippy-toed around it, God allows it. Does God allow good? *No, He blesses the good!* He's determined what is good and what is evil. But *He will create the evil to enforce the good!* So, when someone sins, He's decreed 'the wages of sin is death,' that's an evil result, He enforces the penalty of it, 'I create evil,' says the Lord. But you see, God can do that because He has the power to undo it if there's repentance. That's so very important.

Let me just clarify what I said, lest someone misunderstand me. God *is* God, and He is righteous, and in Him is no sin at all. We all agree to that. God has given His laws, which are Holy, righteous, just, perfect, good and true. We all agree to that. We also know that God is not sin; God cannot sin. But does that mean that God cannot enforce the penalty for sin, which is evil? It does not mean that. God can enforce that.

God creates a law, and says, 'This is good. The transgression of it is evil.' You go through Deut. 28. 'You'll be blessed if you do what is right, you'll be cursed if you do what is wrong. I, the Lord, do it.' *He makes the blessings happen by blessing!* He brings about the result of sin by bringing the curse, which is evil. *He is creating the evil!*

In that, He can use the agency of Satan the devil, the demons, human nature, or God Himself can do it directly. But He is enforcing the wages of sin, which even God says He does not like to see the death of the wicked, that it's an evil thing. But He does it because the righteousness of God and God's plan is so fantastic and so great that there is no room for that kind of thing.

I know we're getting into a rather deep area because our concept of God is more limited than we would like to admit, *far more limited!* I mean, God has made the fantastic universe, that's true, but probably what we know of it is so infinitesimal from what God has done.

So therefore, when God says, 'Behold, I create evil,' *He does just that!* If you make a law that is blessing on one side, cursing on the other side, you have to create it, and you have to enforce it. God does not like to enforce the evil. God loathes enforcing the evil, but He will do it. Even when it came time for the Flood, what does it say? It repented God in the heart because of all the evil that was there, and He was sorry that He made man. God

does not like to enforce the evil, but He eventually will. In enforcing the penalty of sin with the evil, and enforcing it, God does it so that *in hopes that the wicked would repent and turn to God!*

That's why the Tribulation! God is going to take care of a lot of things at the Tribulation. God has a way of storing up His wrath, and look out. That's why Jesus said, 'Why do you desire the Day of the Lord?' We're to pray, 'Thy kingdom come,' that is true. But why do you desire the Day of the Lord? It's a terrible, terrible, terrible day. Even Jesus said it was. It doesn't rejoice God at all to go through it.

Let's just take the case of David and Bathsheba. God does not stop anyone from sinning. All that took place: the conniving, the planning on Bathsheba's part, because she bathed right out underneath his window, and then on his part to send down and get her, to have her husband killed, and all that that went on, and *then the correction from Nathan the prophet* came and said, 'You are the one.' And David repented, and God said, 'Ok, I've put away your sin. But because you have done this, and because you've caused the enemies of God to blaspheme, I am going to wreak havoc in your family the rest of your life.'

I'm just summarizing what He said. That's what happened. God ensured that havoc was reaped in his family. It was terrible. But when by the time David got old he was worn out with all the strife that went on. Look at Absalom and the rebellion that took place, all because David did this sin. Had he not sinned he wouldn't have had any of that.

There are some people right now who are going through terrible trouble because in righteousness they sinned. Their families are just being absolutely being torn asunder, and sickness and things. Because in the name of God they perpetrated evil. I'm not going to wish anything upon anybody. Boy, I tell you, we'll learn a lesson. We will see that God is interested in our heart, and interested in what we do.

Luke 6:20: "And He lifted up His eyes upon His disciples *and* said, 'Blessed *are* you, the poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed *are* those who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed *are* those who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed *are* you when men shall hate you, and when they shall cut you off...' (vs 20-22). Sometimes you can be thankful that that's a blessing.

"...and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as wicked, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy; for behold, great *is* your reward in heaven; for their fathers did these same things to the prophets. But woe to you, the rich, for you are receiving your consolation! Woe to you who

have been filled, for you shall hunger! Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep! Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you!...." (vs 22-26). People can use a compliment. Isn't that a good thing?

- how nice you are
- how good you are
- how wonderful you are

But *beware* when everyone speaks well of you. Beware! Because your vanity can be gotten into sin just as much on compliments as in sin. That's how deceptive human nature is.

"...For their fathers did these same things to the false prophets" (v 26). 'Oh, that was a wonderful message.' Imagine everyone when the lying spirit came from God to be a lying spirit in the mouths of the false prophets, and all the false prophets got done and said, 'You're not going into captivity. You're not going to see the evil that's going on. We're the prophets of God.' They all come up and, 'Oh, bless you. That was marvelous; oh, that was nice; oh, you're such a good boy.' It didn't happen that way!

Verse 27: "But I say to you who hear... [here is where it comes; this is what we need to aim for]: ...love your enemies..." Why does He say to love your enemies? *So you don't end up with the same kind of heart that your enemy has!* If they could do that in the Middle East today.

- Can you imagine that?
- Can you imagine the Arabs and Jews embracing?
- the Shiites and the rabbis?
- the Hamal and the rabbis hugging each other?
- kissing each other?
- on their knees repenting to God?

Love your enemies! They will, one of these days. Not now; now's not the day.

"...and do good to those who hate you..." (v 27). Why? *Because if you turn around and do bad to them, you're going to put yourself in their same shoes!* That's why Jesus said to the woman, to those who caught her, 'You who are without sin, throw the first stone.'

"...do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other *cheek* also; and if anyone takes your cloak, do not forbid your coat also. Give to everyone who asks you; and if anyone takes what is yours, do not ask *for it* back" (vs 27-30).

That seems, on the surface, not a good thing to do. Well obviously, if it comes down to a threat

on your life, let them have it. Don't worry about it. God is able to supply it. How about all these poor people who have had all their homes burned out? They're right there. *There's nothing!* Don't worry about it. God will take care of it.

Verse 31: "And exactly as you would have men do to you, you do the same to them also. But if you love *only* those who love you, what praise is it to you?...." (vs 31-32). In other words, what have you done that is **gracious**? Greek: 'charis'

"...For even sinners love those who love them" (v 32).

So even a false love one to another is not good enough. God wants to make sure our hearts are sincere. It's the hypocrisy of human nature that is the root of all the sin. '*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*' Jesus said all these evils proceed from *within*. So therefore, if you come to God and ask God to get rid of the hypocrisy, and the guile, and the deceit, *He will!*

Verse 33: "And if you do good *only* to those who are doing good to you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive, what praise is it to you? For even sinners lend to sinners, that they may receive as much again.... [and more] ...But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be *the* children of the Highest; **for He is good to the unthankful and the wicked**" (vs 33-35).

It's quite a statement! Our whole perspective of God has got to be broadened out tremendously. God is not going to be narrowed down into some little confines of a set of doctrines that people may have. You want ten? twenty? fifty? a hundred? two hundred? Doesn't matter how many sets of doctrine you have. If your heart is not right with God and Christ is not in you, then it's all just so much 'playing church' and so much good work to be seen of men, you've had your reward.

That's what we're talking about here, with the good works and the evil works!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 1:24-27
- 2) Jeremiah 17:9
- 3) John 1:48
- 4) Matthew 10:40-42
- 5) Matthew 7:21, 15-23
- 6) Luke 11:1, 9-13
- 7) Matthew 12:33-35

- 8) Luke 10:25-37
- 9) Matthew 9:10-13
- 10) Isaiah 58:1-4
- 11) Isaiah 64:6
- 12) Matthew 19:13
- 13) John 8:7, 10-11
- 14) Romans 2:11-16
- 15) Luke 5:17-26, 29-34
- 16) Isaiah 45:7
- 17) Luke 6:20-35

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 14
- Deuteronomy 28

FRC: bo
Transcribed: 1/19/18

Good Works/Evil Works III

Fred R. Coulter

Before we get into the sermon I want to cover a few basic things, a few main things that are very important for us to understand. John 14—here is a promise that Jesus Christ gave to us. We will have to see, how this is done. How does it work in our lives? This is really quite an all-powerful, all encompassing statement. Now first of all, before you can get to the condition to where this thing will take place...I just want to summarize some basic things.

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” That is a very basic important thing. I want to emphasize that, which is true, *there is nothing that we as individuals can do to compel God to give us eternal life!* I’m not saying by any means that we are not to keep the commandments of God. Keeping the commandments of God

- show that you love Him
- show that you are loyal to Him
- show your response to God

Verse 23. “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...’ It goes to more than just commandments. As we’ve already seen, commandment-keeping without the right heart is as worthless as sinning with an ignorant heart. It really is. It accomplishes nothing. That’s why when you get to Isa. 1, He says, ‘the sabbaths, the new moons, away with it,’ *because their hearts aren’t right with God!*

Here is the key of having our hearts right with God. All too many times we let other people come in between us and God; this is the thing that cuts people off from God. So, if you personally do this:

“...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me. I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you. But *when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, **that One shall teach you all things...***” (vs 23-26). But what is the condition before that will take place?

- that you love God
- that you keep His commandments
- that you realize that this comes from God the Father

“...**that One shall teach you all things...**” This is why we want to get into God’s Word so that *it will teach us*. Remember what it says about the

Words of Jesus? *These are Spirit and these are Truth, and these are spiritually discerned!*

Let’s see how, then, we can let the Holy Spirit teach us all things. I think we’ve been experiencing in some degree some of what this says. It’s a promise. God says that the Holy Spirit will teach us all things. How is this accomplished? It’s accomplished in very basic ways:

2-Timothy 2:15^[transcriber’s correction]: “Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**”

That is a very basic thing. Another thing is that God is able to use so that we can understand God’s Word and *so God’s Spirit can teach us all things!* It has to do with the way that we are living, and it has to do with the way that we are thinking.

- *if* the Holy Spirit is in our mind, which it is
- *if* the Holy Spirit is to teach us all things, which is a promise that it will

What are the ingredients that we need to put into that formula?

- we have to love God
- we have to study
- we should walk (Psa. 1)
- we need to put into our mind

In other words:

- What can we meditate on unless there’s something there to meditate on?
- How can we think on God’s Word or think on God unless we’ve studied God’s Word?

Psalms 1:1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked...” That is part of the blessing that God gives. Sometimes it’s not easy. Sometimes we may think it is not a blessing to walk in God’s ways just because of circumstances that take place. But there is a blessing. That’s where faith comes in. That’s where faith comes in, that ***we walk by faith in every circumstance.***

I was explaining to this person I was talking to on the phone that that’s what we are really learning, that we are:

- a) saved by grace
- b) we have to walk in faith

The more that you really study the Word of God, the more you have to realize that you have to walk in faith. That God’s Word is true and right. God is there to:

- back it up
- to enforce it

- to carry it out
- to love us
- to watch over us

He is:

- merciful
- gracious
- longsuffering

So, there is a blessing that you don't "...walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in **the way of sinners...**" (v 1). There is the way we are to follow. Who is the way? **Christ is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life.'**

"...nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But **his delight is in the Law of the LORD...**" (vs 1-2).

I'll tell you one thing about the Law of the Lord. When you see the goodness of it, the blessings of it, and the reason for it, then you are also going to understand why God has to enforce the penalty of the breaking of the Law, as well as give the blessing for the keeping of the Law.

"...and in His Law does he meditate day and night" (v 2). Here's the key: if you are **loving God, studying His Word, meditating in His Laws and Word, then the Holy Spirit can reveal whatever the Holy Spirit wants to reveal to you!** That's why a skeptic out here can never understand God's Word. Because there's a certain way to do it, and there's a certain way that must be done with God's Spirit so it will activate in our mind.

Just like electricity. In order for these lights to work you must have electricity. In order for God's Spirit to work in us we must also have the components. So if we could say the electricity is likened to God's Spirit, and you cannot have an electrical fan working without electricity; likewise you cannot have the fan working without the components for the fan.

You can have the electricity, which is God's Spirit, but unless you have the components it isn't going to work. If we have God's Spirit but we don't study and we don't meditate and we don't pray, then the components to be led to all things are not there. It doesn't mean that God is rejecting us or God is putting us aside. But it just means that we cannot grow in grace and knowledge as God would have us grow in grace and knowledge unless we put these components together. If we do, then it's no great thing because we're following what God has said. We can't go along and say look how great a scholar, great this, great that, great anything else. No, it just won't be.

"...and in His Law does he meditate day and night" (v 2). There are a lot of people who like to meditate. Unless you have something to meditate with, what good is your meditation? Isn't the whole

object to have God's Word written in our heart and mind and our inward parts? *Then we have the tools whereby God's Spirit can work with us, and work with anybody, because God's Spirit is not limited.*

We've heard it said in past time that only the ministers would be the ones revealing knowledge. That is not true. **God is the One Who reveals knowledge!.**

- Can He reveal knowledge to anyone? *Yes!*
- Does that mean that there need not be any teachers? *No, because God's Word says, 'How shall they hear unless a preacher be sent' (Rom. 10) and teach the Word of God?'*

Everything fits into a tremendous picture that God is presenting for us!

If we put it all together and rather than, as so many scholars do, take part of God's Word and fight it with the other part of God's Word. They never come to an understanding because they're fighting God's Word. That isn't what God wants us to do. *He wants us to take all of it and to understand it in the whole context!* Then we can be led more and more of God's Spirit into all things.

It says that the Holy Spirit will teach us all things! I think it's really tremendous that most of the opening prayers that we have for our Sabbath services, we ask God's Spirit to be here so that Christ will teach us. It isn't going to do any good if I teach you *my* thoughts, ***unless those thoughts are anything but the thoughts of God, or the thoughts in God's Word.*** This is how this is able to happen. It's really a tremendous thing. I hope you can think on that and meditate on it. Hopefully, with God's Spirit we can come to something to understand here.

With that preface—and I know that's an awful long preface to a sermon—I want to present just a couple things here so that we can understand more about God. There are certain things in the Bible that, in our own mind without God's Spirit, are completely contradictory things because of a limited knowledge of God.

We need to reconcile 1-John 4 with Isa. 45. Today we are going to see how God, Who is love, can also be God Who creates good and evil. The logical conclusion would be—in the way that most people understand God—is that if God is love, which it says so here:

1-John 4:8: "The one who does not love does not know God **because God is love.**" Isn't that an interesting statement? How do you understand? *First, you love God and keep His Word!*

If God is love, how then can He create good and evil? if love is the opposite of evil? We're

getting into areas that philosophers—they're mostly Greek—which Paul said that *'the wisdom of man is the foolishness of God, and the foolishness of God is greater than the wisdom of man.'* So, even the Greek philosophers were not able to understand what we're going to understand today.

It's like everything else. The key is very simple: You've heard of *the simplicity of Christ?* That's part of it. God is love; we know that.

James gives us a little understanding, gives us something to think on. This tells us how God uses what He calls the creation of evil. God is *not* evil, but *He has created good, and He has created evil!*

Did He not in the Garden of Eden create the two trees, the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? *Yes, He did!* Actually, you know what this will help us do when we come to a full understanding of what we're going through? ***This will help us to trust God more and to put everything in His hands!***

Many times we get all upset because things don't work out the way *we think* that God should work them out. That's a contradictory statement with the knowledge you have. Things may not work out the way *we think* God should have them worked out. We're going to see how God will actually use what is an evil circumstance *and turn it for good*. To give us just a little greater understanding:

James 1:12: "Blessed is *the* man who endures trials..." There is a blessing for enduring temptation and resisting evil. See how all these things fit together? We do have choices; people in the world have choices. I'm not so inclined to say that this world is totally Satan's world. It is not totally God's world, *yet!* But God is more involved in the world than perhaps we have thought of in the past. Just to give you an example, during a hostage thing:

- What was it that most people did, or said?
- What is it that was said to have been the greatest comfort for the pilot? *His faith in God!*
- What did he say carried him through? *Reading God's Word!*
- Did He pray? *Yes!*
- Did all of the hostages pray? *Yes!*
- Did people pray and look to God who had not prayed and looked to God before, maybe in a long, long time, if ever? *Yes!*
- Did God hear and answer their prayers? *Yes!*
- Are they going to be in the Kingdom of God?
- Has God called them for salvation? *Probably not at this point!*

But it falls into that category that we discussed earlier, *'He who is not against Me is **with** Me.* And he who honors Me I will honor.'

There are a lot of people out there who, though they have not been called for salvation any more than ancient Israel was, but if they, like ancient Israel, have a certain amount of faith in God, have a certain amount of trust in God, God will honor that. In the confines of a very narrow interpretation of how God works with people that might seem somewhat unrealistic. But I think it is true.

"...because after he has been proved he shall receive a crown of life..." (v 12). That means we're all going to go through trials.

- Are trials easy? *No!*
- Are trials in some cases evil to endure? *Yes!*
- What does it help us do? *Draw close to God!*
- How does God try us? *He gives us choices!*
 ✓ *to choose good*
 ✓ *to choose evil*

He does not try us with evil alone. *God does not tempt any man with evil.* He gives us the choice to follow Him, *or not.* That's how the trial comes. ***If you endure,*** then you shall receive the *crown of life.*

As a matter fact, since Abraham endured (Gen. 22) the blessing of God to the descendants of Abraham became irrevocable. God bound himself irrevocably from that point. He could not change it, because of what Abraham did.

"...he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (v 12). Notice again how that love for God has got to be there. Almost every circumstance, even with the fires that we have here, what did it do for all those people living up in the mountains? *They prayed!* They helped one another. So, out of that catastrophe good came. That's a key that we're going to see all the way through.

Verse 13: "Do not let anyone who is tempted say, 'I am being tempted by God,' because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust" (vs. 13-14).

This shows the operation of sin; it begins with lust, *which is in the mind!* Who is the one who tries to accentuate and thrust lust into your mind even more and more? *Satan the devil, through the operation of the spirit of the power of the air, through the operation of all the visual things that we have in today's society, along with all radio and television and everything all combined!*

We're living in a tremendously intense time to live, intense mentally. There's nowhere you can go without some kind of sound, a sight, a book, a record, a tape, a radio, a television, a movie or a newspaper. *It's very intense!*

Go back to the time of Jonah; his time was not too intense. He even sat down and let God create a gourd behind him, and then had a worm chew it down just to teach him a lesson. Today God might do that on television. It'd be entirely different. So, it's a very intense time!

God *does not* tempt with evil, ***He tempts with choices!*** The choice is to obey God or not. But if your lusts get involved—and this is where people begin falling; drawn away of his own lusts—and begin thinking of his own way rather than God's way, and is enticed. So, there is an *ensnarement*, an entrapment that comes along.

Verse 15: "And after lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death." *The wages of sin is death.*

You're going to notice that we are going over Scriptures that we've gone over in the past. But I don't know about you, there's a lot more meaning in every one of these Scriptures, though we've gone over them in the past. It's like that 'precept upon precept,' or concept, or 'line upon line,' all that together.

Exodus 34:5: "And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*... [without repentance] ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation'" (vs 5-7).

This was right at the time when God said to Moses, 'Because these people have sinned, let Me destroy them and I will continue My plan with you.' Moses prevailed upon God so that God would change His mind. God is merciful and kind and ready to forgive.

Whenever you feel down and kind of bad, and you've sinned, and just wonder, 'Well, am I worth it?' *or* 'Is God even interested in me anymore?' Whatever, as long as you are not turning your back on God, as long as you are seeking God, go to Him. *He'll forgive.*

One of the best examples in the Bible is Manasseh. Read the indictment against Manasseh,

what an evil, *evil, evil* person he was. For how long? *Fifty-five years!*

Listen to this prayer beginning in Psalm 86:1: "Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy."

Part of the understanding of God and how great God is, is that you realize how weak and puny and infinitesimal and needy that we are of God.

Verse 2: "Preserve my soul, for I am Holy; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You.... [there's got to be that trust; you can't have faith without trust] ...Be merciful to me..." (vs 2-3). Isn't that what we just read, that God said that His name is *gracious, merciful and longsuffering*?

"...O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good and ***ready to forgive***..." (vs 3-5). You can tie that in with what Jesus said about:

- forgiving your brother seven times seventy.
- to whom sins you forgive they are forgiven

God is interested in forgiveness! This is the key to understanding how God can be ***good, Holy, loving, merciful and kind***, and yet, at the same time:

- execute vengeance
- bring about wrath
- create evil against the wicked

Now we can understand both concepts.

"...and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You. Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications" (vs 5-6). *He was weeping, crying unto God!*

That's why God puts us in circumstances, that sometimes the only thing we can do is just go to God and weep and cry and say, 'God, I'm here,' and maybe open the Bible to Psa. 86 and read, study and pray about that as you go along. ***God will answer!*** I absolutely guarantee—not because I can guarantee it, but because God has already guaranteed it; so, my guarantee is not on me, but on the Word of God—that *He will hear* and that *He will forgive*.

Verse 7: "In the day of my trouble..." How many hostages said, 'We prayed. We sat there and prayed'? I imagine after they saw one of them beaten up—kicked and killed—everyone was praying, 'O God, save me. O God, that is terrible. We are in their hands; deliver us from their hands.'

That's one of those episodes that one of those times we can ask God, 'How involved were the angels in working this thing out? What happened?' *It even changed old President Assad of Syria's mind!* He's the most blockheaded, hard-

headed, stubborn, unresilient person in the world. Even He was changed.

Verse 7: “In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, for You will answer me.”

Verse 15. “But You, O LORD, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and Truth. Oh, turn to me, and have mercy upon me; give Your strength to Your servant and save the son of Your handmaid” (vs 15-16). *Quite a tremendous and moving Psalm!*

Just keep in mind what the children of Israel had done, what they had gone through, what they had done to God. Remember that the cloud was there every day, the pillar of fire every night. They didn’t need streetlights and all that sort of stuff.

Numbers 14:1: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried. And the people wept that night.”

That was after they sent the spies into the land. This was after a year and a half in the wilderness. You think a year and a half in the wilderness would have been enough for anybody. They were ready at the second Feast of Tabernacles time to go into the land, because they came out at Passover time.

By the second Passover they finished the tabernacle of the congregation and everything was ready to go. Then now at this time they were ready to go into the ‘promised land.’ So, Moses sent in the spies, they brought back the grapes. Joshua and Caleb told how great God would be, what a fine land it is. The other ones came back and said, ‘Oh no, they’re giants!’ So, all the people wept and cried all night. ***They didn’t have faith in God that He would deliver them!***

Verse 2: “And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron. And the whole congregation said to them, ‘Oh that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or, Oh that we had died in the wilderness! And why has the LORD brought us into this land to fall by the sword...” (vs 2-3)—*accusing God!*

Then when God has given all this mercy and graciousness, sometimes God will judge us back with the judgment we judge God. This is not what God said. He said, ‘I’ve done it for your good. I’ve done it so that you can have a land flowing in milk and honey, for blessing, for everything that you want.’ So, they turned that all around backwards.

“...so that our wives and our children should be a prey? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” And they said to one another, ‘Let us make a leader, and let us return to Egypt.’ And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of

the congregation of the children of Israel” (vs. 3-5).

I guess so! Bow down, put your face right to the ground. ‘O God, what a terrible situation this is.’ Moses prayed to God and he said, ‘You know, God, what if the Egyptians hear this? They’ll say that You’re really not a God, You couldn’t really bring them out of the land. They got stuck in the desert and You couldn’t do it.’

Verse 15: “And will You kill this people as one man? Then the nations who have heard Your fame will speak, saying, ‘Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which He swore to them, therefore, He has slain them in the wilderness.’ And now, I beseech You, let the power of my Lord be great, according as You have spoken, saying... [Moses referred back to this time when he heard God say]: ...I beseech You, pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy, and as You have forgiven this people from Egypt even until now” (vs 15-19).

Verse 20: “And the LORD said, ‘I have pardoned according to your word.... [so He forgave] ...But truly, *as* I live, all the earth shall be filled *with* the glory of the LORD. Because all those men who have seen My glory and My miracles which I did in Egypt...” (vs 20-21). That must have been awesome, to see all that going on.

“...and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times... [God really endured a lot with those people] ...and have not hearkened to My voice, Surely they shall not see the land, which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it. But **My servant Caleb, because he had another Spirit with him and has followed Me fully**, I will bring him into the land...” (vs 21-24)

Then God gave their own judgment, v 28: “...‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘as you have spoken in My ears, so I will do to you. Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against Me, you shall certainly not come into the land, which I swore to make you dwell in, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which you said should be a prey, I will bring them in and they shall know the land, which you have despised. But *as for* you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall feed in the wilderness forty years and bear your whoredoms until your dead carcasses have been consumed in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you searched the land—forty days—each day for a year you shall bear your iniquities, forty years; and you shall know My displeasure *of this generation*. I the LORD have spoken it; I will surely do it to all this evil

congregation who are gathered together against Me. They shall be destroyed in this wilderness, and there they shall die” (vs 28-35).

Isaiah 45:7: “I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and **create** evil....”

- Why does God create evil?
- For what purpose?

in doing so

- Why is God still Holy, righteous, good and true?
- Why is He not in the same category as Satan the devil?

I don't think you've ever heard anyone ask the question straight that way, because *we know* that Satan is evil. We know that he is wicked and he brings evil upon people. But he also appears *as an angel of light*. We will see an example here as to why God brings the evil.

Ezekiel 14:1. “And some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I at all be inquired of by them?’” (vs 1-3).

Here again, **God looks to the heart!** I want to emphasize that over and over again. They are coming trying to be religious, trying to be nice, **but their heart is evil!** That's why those in the New Testament worship God in Spirit and in Truth! Didn't it say of Caleb that he was of *another Spirit*? *He had the right attitude, the right Spirit to God*. So, here they all come.

Verse 4: “Therefore, speak to them and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Every man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him according to the multitude of his idols.”’”

God has to answer back, kind in kind. Why? *If you don't answer back kind in kind, then who is greater? God? or man? Righteousness? or sin? **God** has to answer kind in kind!*

Verse 5: “So that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart because they have deserted Me for their idols—all of them. Therefore, say to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Repent...’” (vs 5-6). That's why God brings evil, **so there can be repentance!** The key is **repent!**

The difference between the evil that God creates and brings and what Satan does is this: God sends the evil as a correction for their sins. If they will not repent, ‘the wages of sin is death,’ so God

carries out His Word. If God doesn't carry out His Word, God is no longer God.

Therefore, *He will execute the wicked*, and to the wicked that is an evil thing. **God is giving them a chance to repent**, which is a good thing, and to eliminate the wicked if they won't repent. I'm very thankful that is true. I'm very thankful that people like Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin and Mao Tse-tung—and we could probably go on down the line of all human, great, whatever—that they die so that evil can stop.

They have also found that this law works. When there is a recession—happens every time, they can prove it by statistics—if you are out of work, to you that is evil, it's hard, it's tough and it's difficult on the nation and the people. What happens? *Stealing goes way down*; you would think it would be the other way around. *Adultery goes way down*. Why? *Because people in their hardship stop the sinning!* Keep that in mind.

“...‘Repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations’” (vs. 6). What are all the abominations to God? *That which is a blessing to man may be an abomination to God!*

Now let's see what it says that God is going to do, but notice why He brings the evil; v 12: “The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, when a land sins against Me...’” (vs 12-13).

Jeremiah 18:1: “The Word, which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ‘Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.’ Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he was working at his wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was ruined in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it” (vs 1-4).

He just took that, you know, if you seen that, you can just take a wad of clay and if it's no good, then you just mash it all up and you put it on the wheel and you make a new one.

(go to the next track)

Verses 5: “Then the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you *even* as this potter?’ says the LORD. ‘Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hands, *so are* you in My hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy it” (vs 5-7).

To destroy a nation, for those on the receiving end of it, *that is evil!*. There was a time when God said to the children of Israel, ‘When you

go in the land you are to destroy everyone: man, woman and child.’

After seeing that report on satanism—Baalism is satanism—you know why God said to kill the children. We also have to keep in mind that God is eventually going to resurrect all of them. But God has to deal with the here and now. If you don’t get rid of evil here and now when God says to get rid of it, it’s going to come back and plague you later. We saw in a satanism report, little kids of ten and twelve can be so infected with it that it ruins their entire lives. That’s why God said to do it.

Concerning a nation, v 8. “If that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil...” It says He’s going to destroy it. Now just keep in mind the city of Nineveh—the nation of Assyria and Jonah—*repented*. Even the king made all the animals go without eating and drinking for three days. I imagine at the end of the third day there was a lot of bellowing, crying, bleating and everything going on, not only from the animals, but from the people.

God said He would spare them. Just like with people who like to have God do it the way they want it done, Jonah was all upset. It shows that Jonah complained against God, ‘O God, I knew that You would do this. You sent me all the way up here...’ But God told him, He said, ‘Jonah, I wanted you to go. I have sent you. I made you go and to do that.’ Because there is something called, ‘the wicked have to be warned *before* it comes.’ *God will send someone to do the warning!*

Verse 8: “If that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them.”

That’s the exact verse that ties in with Isaiah 45:7: “...I make peace and create evil...” God uses the force of evil to destroy itself, or bring repentance. If they repent, God is merciful, gracious and ready to forgive. *If it’s from the heart, God does not turn down repentance!*

Now, there’s a superficial repentance where God says, ‘I am weary of repenting.’ People come along and then they do what appears to be a good work with an evil motive: ‘I’ll repent because God will forgive.’ *God doesn’t want that kind of repentance!* ‘Oh well, once I’m forgiven I can go out and do it again, and then I’ll repent, and then God will forgive me.’ *God doesn’t want that kind of repentance! That is an evil repentance!* God wants repentance from the heart; *that you fully turn to God with all your heart!*

Jeremiah 18:9: “And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight, that it not obey My voice, then I will

repent of the good with which I said I would do them good” (vs. 9-10).

That’s how God works! It can work with nations; and you can go back and read Ezek. 13 where God said that He gave everything into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar was not a Godly man. God still dealt with him. He said, ‘Every nation that doesn’t submit themselves to Nebuchadnezzar, I will destroy.’ Then He says, ‘When his time has come to the full, I’ll send the hand to correct him.’

Ezekiel 14:13: “Son of man, when a land sins against Me by trespassing grievously...” {note Gen. 19 and Sodom and Gomorrah} All the verses where Abraham came up and said, ‘Lord, if there are 50...? 45...? 40...? 30...? 10...?’ So it’s *grievously*.

“...and **I stretch out My hand** on it, and break the staff of its bread...” (v 13). Now granted, that’s probably what’s happening in Ethiopia. But isn’t it interesting that all the Americans and the Britons are the ones—even the worst people in this society, the rock stars—you could say the worst people in this society are at least doing something good? It’s in Britain and America. Interesting, if you know Biblically what that means.

“...**I stretch out My hand** on it, and break the staff of its bread and send famine on it, and will cut off man and beast from it... [God is doing it] ...and *though* these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver *only* their own lives by their righteousness,’ says the Lord GOD” (vs. 13-14).

God is saying that it’s an individual judgment upon everyone. God looks to the heart of everyone. We can’t collectively go to God and maintain an evil heart and say how good we are. *No way!*

Here are the four things that God does, v 15: ““ [#1] **If I cause wild beasts to come through the land**, and they spoil it and it becomes desolate, so that no one may pass through because of the beasts, *though* these three men were in its midst, *as I live*,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters. They only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate. Or [#2] **if I bring a sword** upon that land, and say, “Sword, go through the land”...”” (vs 15-17).

We’ll see how God says for the sword to go through the land. God will raise up armies, and He will have power behind those armies.

“...so that [#3] **I cut off man and beast from it**; *though* these three men *were* in it, *as I live*,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they *only* shall be delivered themselves”” (vs 17-18).

Here again it's still a call to repentance. Even in the worst thing that God is saying, there is still a hand being held out for *repentance!* *You as an individual get right with God!* 'I will deliver you from it.' Even in the midst of the worst thing.

Verse 19: "'Or ^{#4}if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out My fury upon it in blood, to cut off man and beast from it; though Noah, Daniel, and Job *were* in it, *as* I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'they shall deliver neither son nor daughter. They shall *only* deliver their own lives by their righteousness.'.... [the righteousness of God] ...For thus says the Lord GOD, 'How much more when I send My four evil judgments against Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the destroying beast, and the pestilence, to cut off man and beast from it?'" (vs 19-21).

But what did God say before He'd bring it? He said to *repent!* God is interested in repentance. At any time *God will turn His hand from evil when there is repentance*, because God only brings the evil in hopes that there will be repentance. If not, 'Vengeance is Mine,' says the Lord, 'and judgment belongs to Me' He is the One Who does it.

I draw your attention to Deut. 28. Go back and study Deut. 28-31, and just read through it and see the whole thing there. God is interested in every case that people repent.

Deuteronomy 28:1: "And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments, which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God" (vs 1-2). God said He would bring these blessings *for obedience*.

We see that *if* you do not do the things that God says, He will bring the curses. He says so directly.

Verse 15: "...all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you."

Verse 20: "The LORD shall send on you cursing, vexation..."

Verse 21: "The LORD shall make the pestilence cling to you..."

Verse 22: "The LORD shall strike you with lung disease and with a fever, and with an inflammation..."

Verse 24: "The LORD shall make the rain of your land powder and dust..."

Verse 25: "The LORD shall cause you to be stricken before your enemies..."

Verse 27: "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt..."

Verse 28: "The LORD shall strike you with madness and blindness and astonishment of heart."

Verse 35: "The LORD shall strike you in the knees and in the legs with an evil ulcer..."

Verse 36: "The LORD shall bring you, and your king, which you shall set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known..."

The point I want to make is, *the Lord is bringing it!* How does the Lord bring it? *He's responsible for it!* God says, '*I create peace and evil.*' How does the Lord bring it?

1. The execution of law; blessing for law-keeping, cursing for law-breaking

That is automatically built in, just like the law of gravity. Or if you don't drink poison you won't die of poison. Same thing! Garbage in/garbage out. Even the world knows that.

The book of Proverbs is filled with the simple day-to-day operation of the Law, good and evil. Because where there is a positive part of the law: blessed will you be for doing this. There is the penalty for those who don't. Otherwise, why would you have any incentive to do anything? *You would have no incentive to do anything right!*

I heard a report, that because of all of the venereal diseases, people are getting back to the old-fashioned thing of one husband and one wife. There is even a book out, which I heard about on one of the talk shows, which is, *How To Love One Mate Forever*. Put out by one of the experts at the sex therapist clinic of Masters and Johnson.

So, the correction of the evil, the automatic wages of sin being the evil of the sickness has brought a better standing for the whole society, beginning to get the point. *One husband/one wife!* That's not such a bad idea; it was God's idea in the first place. The truth of the matter is that you can never get along with one person tremendously all the time. That's what God wants us to learn in the marriage estate. There are going to be ups, there are going to be downs. If you can't make that work, which you can by following the principles and Laws of God, being as God: merciful, kind, understanding, not self-seeking, and all that sort of thing! Isn't that how marriage counselors say how people ought to get along? They've come to the great conclusion that it is good for one man to have one woman, remain married all their life. They even have a book to tell you how to love one person forever. God had that all along.

The operation of law! That's how God does it. He doesn't have to come down and personally do

it. For example, if you eat raw pork or raw bear: I know group of hunters, they went up into Idaho and they shot a bear and all nine of them died of trichinosis. The law is there. That's why God says, 'You shall not eat these things.' Some of them you can, but by taste you can't. God is straightforward in what He says. He gives His laws clear and easy to understand.

He lets you know about everything if you want to know. Satan then, on the other hand, will take part of the good... For example, God can change anything He wants to, which is a true statement, and then say that the laws of 'clean and unclean meats no longer apply,' which is not a true statement. That's where you have evil/evil that *appears* good. The source is evil, which takes part of a good statement and makes it sound good, and then comes to an evil conclusion. That's part of the unconscionable evil of Satan the devil, that he will have the counterfeit that looks good, which he knows is going to cause God to bring the penalty of sin upon them.

What else does God use to enforce the correction, or to bring about evil that He creates?

2. Satan the devil!

The book of Job is a classic example of it. But even with using Satan the devil, what was the end result of the book of Job? *Repentance!*

- What about those people who have turned their backs on God and are no longer in the Church of God? *God is not done with them, yet!*
- When God brings the evil in their life, will they repent? *Chances are, yes!*
- Will God forgive them? *Yes!*

*God says He is ready to forgive, **provided it's true repentance!***

Job was perfect, Job 1:1: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job. And that man was **blameless and upright**, and one who feared God and turned aside from evil."

Verse 6: "Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD. And Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' Then Satan answered the LORD and said, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.' And the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?'" (vs 6-8).

I think sometimes in our life Satan does this to God and to us, and we go through certain trials;

I'm sure that is true. We know that God tempts no man with evil. So, when you get tempted with evil, guess who it's coming from? *Satan!*

Verse 9: "And Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Does Job fear God for nothing?' *You've given Him everything. Take it from him.*

Verse 11: "But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face. And the LORD said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has *is* in your power. Only do not lay your hand upon him.' And Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD" (vs 11-12).

Satan can only do what God explicitly allows, provides for. You know, then it went down to where he took everything, his sons and his daughters. That is evil! Isn't that an evil thing? *But in the end Job repented; and God blessed him with far greater, far better!* Plus, all of his sons and daughters can be resurrected in the second resurrection, and they'll have a chance for salvation. Maybe we can get a greater view of God, a greater appreciation of God, of how that God works. That ended in repentance.

3. Angels and Demons

Revelation 12:7—we know it's talking about Satan, and God, and Israel, and Christ: "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels warred."

There are the agencies that God uses, His own angels. How about the times where it shows the vision of the throne of God, where there are angels, ten thousand times ten thousand: There are the twenty-four elders. You wonder what the twenty-four elders do? *They talk with God on how to carry out the things on the earth, very obviously.* 'How should we do it? What should be done?'

2 Chron. 18—when Ahab, who was noted for his wickedness, got together in a league with Jehoshaphat. They were to go fight the king of Syria. I will just make a long story short and won't read through all the Scriptures; except to say that Ahab said, 'Let's talk to the prophets and see whether we will be successful in this battle.'

So, all the false prophets came and said, 'Yea, the Lord says go on up against the battle in Syria and you will prevail.' Then Jehoshaphat asked, 'Is there not a prophet of the Lord around here? I want to check with the prophet of the Lord.'

So the prophet of the Lord—Micaiah—came and he told them what they didn't want to hear. Because Ahab considered Micaiah, who was also contemporary then with Elijah out of the school of

the prophets, as an enemy, and that he said, 'This person hates me.'

So here's what he told both of them. 2-Chronicles 18:18: "Again he said, 'Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting upon His throne, and all the host of heaven were standing on His right hand and *on* His left.'"

I would refer you to Rev. 4 & 5 so you can get a good view of what that looks like.

Verse 19: "And the LORD said, 'Who shall tempt Ahab king of Israel so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead?' And one spoke saying in one way, and another saying in another way. Then a spirit came and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will tempt him.' And the LORD said... [How will you do this?] ... 'With what?' And he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And *the LORD* said, "You shall tempt him, and you shall also prevail. Go out and do so." And now behold, **the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets,** and the LORD has spoken evil against you" (vs 19-22).

God uses law, Satan and angels! We know that in the book of Revelation it talks about *the seven spirits of God* that go to and fro in all the earth. We have that in Zech. 4, Rev. 1; 4 & 5. So, God is able to carry this out through the agencies of His creation, where:

- God will directly do it
- He will use Satan the devil
- He will use the demons
- He will use His angels

Dan. 10—Gabriel was explaining why he delayed coming. Poor old Daniel, he set his face to seek God, he fasted and prayed ten days. *No answer!* Then all the sudden Gabriel shows up and he says:

Daniel 10:12: "Then he said to me, 'Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you **set your heart** to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. And I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days. Then lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; for I had been there alone with the kings of Persia" (vs 12-13).

That is showing the struggle that goes on. This then is between the angels of God and the angels of Satan; obviously a struggle right there. So, God uses the angels.

The whole book of Revelation shows the use of angels in carrying out the will of God, all the way through. Let's just go and take a quick survey of Revelation so you can see how the angels of God are so involved in carrying out the will of God.

- Rev. 1—the vision of Jesus Christ. John sees the seven candles, which are the seven angels of the Churches. ***There are angels that God uses to carry out that portion of His plan.***
- Rev. 2 & 3—the seven angels, one to each of the Churches.
- Rev. 4 & 5—the vision of all the angels of God, the seraphim and the cherubim, all of the 10,000 times 10,000.
- Rev. 5 & 7—then Christ opens the seals and the prophetic things coming out of the seals. God is making it happen, everyone of them!
- Rev. 8-10—angels with the seven trumpet plagues.
- Rev. 11—the seventh angel that sounds.
- Rev. 16—the seven last plagues come and *angels that do it!* So, that's how God is able to enforce it.

The wrath of God, from a human point of view, is going to be very evil. But it's going to accomplish repentance. If they repent, they will be spared! If any man worships *the beast or his image* he will die! I imagine there will be people getting rid of that as quick as they can. In using these agents, ***God will send a strong delusion,*** just like He sent a lying spirit.

2-Thess. 2 talks about the man of sin, ***the one who will be personally possessed of Satan the devil!*** This ties right in with Rev. 13, about *the beast*. Who is able to make war against the beast?

2-Thessalonians 2:9: "*Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." People are going to think this is great. They will believe what they want to believe rather than believe the Truth.

Verse 10: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because **they did not receive the love of the Truth,** so that they might be saved.... [here is an automatic thing that takes place]: ...And for this cause..." (vs 10-11).

In other words, there comes a time, and the time when it looks like the world is going to solve all of its problems, the time when it looks like the world is coming together and great love and understanding,

"...because they did not receive the love of the Truth, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe the lie" (v 11).

That's going to be awesome! That's how God works in bringing the good and bringing the evil and working these things out. That's why God

says, ‘Vengeance is Mine. Don’t go execute your own judgment. I will take care of it.’ God will have a better plan. He’ll entrap them in their own evil. Let them alone! I think in our circumstances that we’ve seen that’s exactly true.

Let’s look at an example in Gen. 50 about a very evil circumstance, *which God turned around and used for good!* This is the story of Joseph. And remember what happened to Joseph? Just put this in the context of a family. Here’s the youngest one coming around bragging to the older brothers; said, ‘I had a dream. All you bowed down to worship me.’ That was the sum of the dream. He wore this favorite jacket. His dad thought he was the greatest thing that walked the face of the earth. Joseph’s brothers were going to kill him, then they decided not to kill him; they decided to sell him off to the Arabs and bring back the jacket.

For how many years this thing went on, where Jacob thought his son was dead, you talk about an evil thing. You talk about a difficult thing. You know what happened to Joseph: He went in, and he was sold as a slave, and then he went into jail. On one day God raised him up out of the dungeon and seated him as #2 next to the throne of Pharaoh.

After this was all done, after all the blessings that had been given, the bringing of Jacob down to Egypt, and Ephraim and Manasseh and the whole thing, right here just as he concluded here:

Genesis 50:15—after Jacob, Joseph’s father, died and they took them over and buried him: “And when Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘Joseph will perhaps hate us, and will certainly repay us all the evil which we did to him.’” They were beginning to think a little rationally here. But also very carnally in revealing their own heart, that they figured that Joseph would do evil to them for the evil that they had done.

Verse 16: “And they sent a message to Joseph, saying, ‘Your father commanded before he died, saying, “Thus shall you say to Joseph, ‘I beseech you now, forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin, for they did evil to you.’” And please now forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.’ And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. And his brothers also went and fell down before his face. And they said, ‘Behold, we *are* your servants.’ And Joseph said to them, ‘Do not fear, for *am* I in the place of God?’” (vs 16-19).

Joseph could have said, ‘Aha! Now I’m going to get you dirty rats. My father is dead, and now I’m going to swing the sword, boys!’ *But he didn’t!*

Verse 19: “And Joseph said to them, ‘Do not fear, for *am* I in the place of God? But as for you,

you thought evil against me, **but God meant it for good to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save a great many people alive**” (vs 19-20).

That’s why Jesus said, ‘When they speak evil of you, or do evil to you, *rejoice!*’ God will turn it to good. This is the thing that got me started on this whole thing. *It was evil!*

- Was God behind it? *Yes!*
- Was it miserable for everybody? *Yes!*
- Did it turn out good in the long run? *Fantastic! Yes!*

It saved all of Israel. That’s great! That’s how God can take something that is evil and make it good, because God is in it. But quite a statement that Joseph said: “...you thought evil against me, **but God meant it for good...**” *Quite a tremendous thing!*

This helps us have a whole lot more peace of mind when we can put it in God’s hands and just know that that is the way it is. It saves a whole lot. I don’t know about you, but I sure has just opened my eyes a lot to really have more faith and trust in God, and let Him do it when the circumstances get difficult to trust in God even more.

It’s the other way around sometimes; when circumstances get difficult we begin to doubt and not trust in God. It ought to be the other way around. When it’s difficult, say, ‘God, You know it’s difficult, it’s hard,’ and have more trust in Him. Then He’ll work out.

This gives us a good summary of the whole thing, Romans 2:1. “Therefore, you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges *another...*”

Now you understand why judging your brother becomes so bad? When you think evil against your brother and you do things against them that are evil, then you are taking into your hands something that God alone should do. Let them alone and let God take care of it. If they are interfering in your life, then just don’t have them associate in your life so much that it’s going to hurt you. But don’t come back with a vengeance upon them.

“...for in that in which you judge the other, you are condemning your own self; for you who judge *another* are doing the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to Truth upon those who commit such things” (vs 1-2).

That’s where we have to be. God will take care of it according to Truth. Though our circumstances look evil in the moment, if we turn to God it will be good in the long run. I can say I have personally experienced that. Leave it in God’s hands, let him judge.

Verse 3: “Now, do you think yourself, O man, whoever is judging those who commit such things, and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?**” (vs 3-4). That’s what God is concerned about, ***repentance***.

Verse 5: “But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God’s righteous judgment, who will render to each one according to his own works... [God is going to do it] ...on the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality... [to those then He’s going to give]: ...eternal life” (vs 5-7). Whether it’s good times or bad times, we’re seeking that.

Verse 8: “On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath... [there’s the operation of law, automatic] ...tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the* Jew first, and of *the* Greek; but glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek, because there is no respect of persons with God” (vs. 8-11).

Just one other thing that I want to cover has to do with righteousness. I have listed four kinds of righteousness:

1. **Godly righteousness** that comes from God
2. **human righteousness**, which is our own self-righteousness that may or may not be based on God’s Law.
3. **vain righteousness**, which in most cases is righteousness based upon God’s Law

Making the Law an idol or god, and worshiping the Law instead of God, then you come to the stature of the Pharisees. They take good that was intended by God to be good *and they make it evil*, because they’ve left God out of the picture by worshiping the Law *instead of worshiping the Lawgiver!* Vast difference! If you worship the Law then you are going to take the Law and use it in an evil way. ***There is good being put to an evil use!***

4. **satanic ‘righteousness’** in the sense that *it appears righteous*, because of Satan appearing as ‘an angel of light’

- 2) 2 Timothy 2:15
- 3) Psalm 1:1-2
- 4) 1 John 4:8
- 5) James 1:12
- 6) Exodus 34:5-7
- 7) Psalm 86:1-7, 15-16
- 8) Numbers 14:1-5, 15-24, 28-35
- 9) Isaiah 45:7
- 10) Ezekiel 14:1-6, 12-13
- 11) Jeremiah 18:1-8
- 12) Isaiah 45:7
- 13) Jeremiah 18:9-10
- 14) Ezekiel 14:13-21
- 15) Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15, 20-22, 24-25, 27-28, 35-36
- 16) Job 1:1, 6-9, 11-12
- 17) Revelation 12:7
- 18) 2 Chronicles 18:18-22
- 19) Daniel 10:12-13
- 20) 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11
- 21) Genesis 50:15-20
- 22) Romans 2:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 1
- Romans 10
- Genesis 22
- Ezekiel 13
- Genesis 19
- Deuteronomy 29-31
- Revelation 4; 5
- Zechariah 4
- Revelation 1-11; 16; 13

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- 1) John 14:15, 23-26

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