

**Bible Study  
Transcripts**

**For**

**The Epistle of Paul to the  
Hebrews**



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# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews I

## Survey of Hebrews

Fred R. Coulter—July 21, 2001

This is number one in the series that I've been saying we're going to start for a long time in the book of Hebrews. We're going to start, and when we finish, we're done. So how many sermons that will be, that's what it's going to be. And we're going to find that the book of Hebrews is a very powerful and very unusual book. So we're going to begin by doing a little background on this.

First of all, let's just take the whole packet and let's just go through it. First of all, we have my translation of the book of Hebrews; you'll see it's in a nice large print, wide margin on both sides, and it has a column reference. Now if you turn, say, to two opposing pages you will see that you have the marginal reference for each page. This gives plenty of room for making notes.

Let's come to the next section, and what we have here is a comparison between my translation and the *King James* translation. So we have that side by side. Then the third section is *Special Word Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. It starts out with angels, and it's a good extensive study; covers all the major things in the book of Hebrews.

Then we come to the fourth section, and the fourth section is the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry. We just enlarged the print of that and included it in here. So this way you have a complete reference all in one: you have the translation which I did, you have the side-by-side with the *King James*, then you have the Interlinear which gives you all of the Greek and the English translation below it of George Ricker Berry; plus you also have another *King James Version* in the columns with it. So this gives you a complete study guide.

Before we begin, let me just mention this: we've already done the series in Romans and Galatians, in particular the one on *The Circumcision Wars*. When we finish the book of Hebrews we will have the three difficult to understand Epistles of the Apostle Paul all done with the translation, with word studies, with the side-by-side, and so forth. And Carl [Franklin] mentioned, Why don't we make that a separate book like we did *The Seven General Epistles*, just make it a separate book entitled, *Paul's Hard To Understand Epistles*, and just put those together in a book. So I don't know whether we should do that or not, but it sounds like a good idea. And if it seems like it's going to be something that would be good and would be helpful to people. It would really be nice for people who are really serious in their Bible study with the *Seven*

*General Epistles*. And you can have a verse-by-verse, in-depth study going through each one of the difficult Epistles of Paul. That might be very, very helpful. The reason that I started doing the translation, I just might mention, is not because I said, 'Oh, Fred, you're so smart you ought to do a translation.' *No!* You all know how it started. When we got done with the Gospel of John and I went through and explained what the *King James* endings of the words meant:

- 'eth' means *present tense participle*
- 'th' means a *present tense verb*

Then we discussed it with everyone at that time, and we decided to go through *The Seven General Epistles*. And I said I'm really tired of explaining what the *King James* means, separate from the Greek. So how about if I just do a translation and we have a study translation, and we go through it verse-by-verse?

As you remember, we started out with James, and then 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John, and Jude. And so now we've got that all compiled in a book called *The Seven General Epistles*. And then we have the sermons we can send out. If the person wants them, we'll send them. So likewise, we can do the same thing here.

Now let me just say this, that there is a great debate concerning the book of Hebrews: Who wrote it? It doesn't start out like the other Epistles of Paul—does it? Let's just look at a couple of them. Let's come to the book of the Ephesians, for example, and this is how Paul starts out almost all of his epistles. I'll let you check out the other epistles and see, but we'll just look at this one:

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 1-2). That's what you might call a fairly standard opening that Paul has for every one of his epistles.

Now let's look at the first part of Hebrews, and let's see that it doesn't start out that way. We'll see the reason why in a little bit. It starts out, Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by His Son."

Nowhere does this say through the entirety of the Epistle of Hebrews that, 'I, Paul, wrote this...'

Like he did in Galatians 6:11: “See with what large letters I have written to you with my *own* hand.” *Nothing!* Those who claim to be the experts say:

- Well, Paul did not write this because it’s not his style.
- Maybe Apollos wrote this, because it has the highest level of Greek of all of the New Testament books that we have.
- It was known in the days of Clement, because he mentions it in his letter to the Corinthians (1-Cor.)
- Maybe Luke wrote it.
- Maybe Timothy wrote it.

So, they don’t know who wrote it. We’ll go through and show you why it has to come from Paul.

Now, this is really not a traditional epistle—a letter. This is not a letter. There are only just a few features similar to a letter, which we find going here; this gives us a clue, in Hebrews 13:23: “*I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you.*” Or, that is, ‘If Timothy sees you and comes back to me, that’s good enough as if I have seen you.’

Timothy was with whom? *The Apostle Paul!* Timothy was also in prison with him. He’s released, then it says here, v 24: “Greet all your leaders, and all the saints. Those from Italy send greetings to you. *May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen*” (vs 24-25). This is the only part of it that is in letter form. In other words, personal rather than a sermon. The whole book of Hebrews is *a sermon*. It is not an epistle, therefore, the style is different.

Now notice the ending: “*May God’s grace be with all of you. Amen—To the Hebrews, written from Italy, delivered by Timothy*” (v 25). He carried it. It doesn’t mean that he wrote it. Let me just give you something that I feel is strong evidence that Paul wrote Hebrews. Having translated 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor., as well as all the other Epistles of Paul, but in particularly 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor., the style in the both 2-Cor. and Heb. is very similar in the Greek.

Let’s read the note right at the end of 2-Corinthians. “The second *epistle* to the Corinthians written from Philippi of Macedonia, by Titus and Luke.” Now Paul wrote it, but Luke probably edited it. After all, Luke wrote the book of Luke, he wrote the book of Acts. And this was under the Apostle Paul. Not only did Paul have fourteen epistles in the New Testament, he is also responsible for the book of Luke and the book of Acts. And you see many similarities in the Greek, especially in 2-Cor., and we will see the preaching of Paul in the book of Acts. Saying this could not be Paul’s writing because it’s not his style, is incorrect to say. There is

a writing style and there is a preaching style. And the preaching style is different from the writing style. So you could say that it’s not from the same person.

Over time, has my style of teaching modified, and changed? *Yes!* Over time has my style of writing changed? *Yes!* You could probably go back and get something that I wrote in 1981 and read that, and then get something that I have written today and you would say it’s similar, but it’s not the same style, so it can’t be the same author. We have the same situation with Paul. Not all writing is the same. When you take notes on a sermon, is that like writing a letter? *No!* It has nothing to do with a letter. So that’s why Hebrews is different—this is Paul’s sermon.

Now, let’s look at a couple of things that are important here that we need to understand. Most of the scholars say that Hebrews was written between 60 and 70 A.D.—and in that they are fairly correct. We need to understand something, that James, who was the apostle at Jerusalem—correct? He was martyred by the Zealots in 63 A.D. So this book of Hebrews, as we will see a little later, had to also go to Jerusalem. It doesn’t mention James. So since it doesn’t mention James, could it be that James was already martyred and this was written after 63 A.D.? We’ll answer that question a little bit later.

Hebrews 11:32: “Now, what more can I say?...” Who is the *I*? Everyone understood who it was then—correct? If there was anything that the Apostle Paul put his signature on, or identified in whatever he wrote that it came from Paul, going to Jerusalem, do you think it would have survived? *The way the Jews looked at Paul they would have burned it on arrival*, in my opinion.

Let’s look at another one where it talks about *I*; what more can I say...” Hebrews 13:19: “Now I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly.” Obviously, Paul was not going to go back to Jerusalem because he was run out of town. But the book of Hebrews was written to go to *every* congregation and every congregation that had converted Jews. They were all Greek-speaking. So in Paul’s saying, “...that I may be sent back to you more quickly,” Timothy—who hand-carried it—would have told them that he’s coming back to wherever that place may be. So, it doesn’t tell us; this becomes a mystery to the scholars.

Let’s back up here just a little bit. Just putting it together, I’m going to say that it is my *educated opinion* that this is a very refined sermon that Paul preached over and over again. Then it was added to, because of the condition of the Church overall. And, I think, he dictated it to Luke; I think that Luke wrote it—because it’s very similar to 2-

Cor., and Acts in particularly—and Timothy was the one who delivered it. I suspect that Timothy brought it back to Antioch, because Antioch was the home-base for the Apostle Paul. Remember that? And he wrote it while he was in his first imprisonment and made sure that it was sent to all the Churches.

Here is whom it has been written to: to all the Churches, and especially to where there was the Greek-speaking Jewish community, or the Diaspora. The reason being is this: all of the Scriptural quotes from the Old Testament taken out of Psalms and taken out of the Law come from the Septuagint word for word. And those parts of the Septuagint are still accurate. Some of the historical things, because of what Jerome and different other ones did to the Septuagint, have messed up the historical chronologies. But at least the Law and the Psalms are very accurate. Now, this is important to understand, because this is the way, then, that Paul could get this out to everyone.

There's one other thing that's also important to understand in getting this out. There came a time when the only way for Paul to preach and to get it across was that he did not identify that it came from himself.

2-Timothy was written from his second imprisonment just before he was martyred. 2-Timothy 1:12: "For which cause I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed to *Him* for that day. Hold *as the standard for doctrine* the sound words, that you heard from me, in the faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed to *you* by the Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me..." (vs 12-15).

If they're turned away from the Apostle Paul, how is he going to get something to them, in the way of something written or in the way of a warning? *By not identifying himself!* Send it in the form of a sermon with exhortation and admonition. Do not send it in the way of an epistle. Now this was toward the close of his ministry.

### **Why the book of Hebrews was written:**

1. It was for the Greek-speaking church containing the Jews and the Greek-speaking Gentiles.

All of the quotes are taken from the Septuagint. Meaning what? *They had the Septuagint Bible there as a guide* that they used for the Old Testament.

2. It was written for the Jews at Jerusalem

And we'll get that in particularly) as well as the different churches that were rejecting Paul. In

Jerusalem they spoke the two languages: Greek and Hebrew.

Let's see the situation concerning Paul. You know how Paul started out when he was Saul. He was persecuting the Church. He was getting letters to take people to the high priest, bind them in chains, and take them there. And when we come to Acts 21 we find the whole table—after the conversion of Paul—has been turned on him. The Jews who were cheering him on as Saul to get rid of the Christians were now disillusioned that he became a Christian and an apostle. And the Jews had their massad out to try and get Paul in many different places in Asia, and so forth, as he was traveling.

Now then, when it comes to the Jews in Jerusalem, there's a second problem: circumcision, the offerings at the temple, and the vows, and things like this. So Paul said he was bound in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. And he knew that everywhere the Holy Spirit said that he was going to have trouble, but nevertheless he went.

Acts 21:17. "Now when we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received us. And on the following *day*, Paul went with us... [This is Luke writing. Luke went with him, and probably Timothy, too] ...to *see* James... [there is the 'head apostle' as it were, in Jerusalem. This is the brother of the Lord.] ...and all the elders *were* assembled" (vs 17-18).

The reason that they had a lot trouble—as we covered in *The Circumcision Wars* in the book of Galatians—from those who came down from James and so forth, was when you were in Jerusalem and you're only dealing with Jews, and you set it up just like the Jews did, that's what James did. He had a little Sanhedrin, or council of elders. So, let's see what happens, and here's where I say that politics entered into it. Here is where the mistake was made of *looking to numbers* rather than God, and that's why Paul was sent there to give the witness, because no one else would give the witness.

Verse 19: "And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, 'Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous of the law of *rituals*'" (vs. 19-20).

We're going to see that their belief was not based and rooted in *faith*, as it should have been. Remember, we have learned many times over, it's one thing to say you believe in Christ; it's another thing to actually live by that, because you actually believe it. ***If they really believed***, would they try and kill Paul? ***If they really believed***, would they give up on Christ as the Passover lamb and go back to the

‘paschal lamb,’ which we’ll see there indications of it in Heb. 6? *No, they wouldn’t!*

Verse 21. “But they have been informed that you are teaching all *the* Jews who are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses...” Remember in *The Circumcision Wars*, the Jewish interpretation, as led by the Pharisees in Jerusalem was, the Law of Moses was interpreted by their method of doing so. No, he did not teach the Jews to forsake Moses.

“...telling them not to circumcise their children... [Paul never said that. Nowhere is it recorded. He did say that circumcision is not required for salvation (Rom. 2). And that was the problem, as we saw in the book of Galatians with the circumcision wars.] ...nor to walk after the customs.” (v 21).

There’s the key: *the traditions*. Even Jesus didn’t want the apostles following the customs or the traditions. But when you get into a situation, and you can see all the pressures that would be coming from the Jews of Judaism against the Church, and you know for sure that in Jerusalem they could not preach against circumcision as a means of salvation, they had a great problem with that. So here’s a political solution, which backfired. And **God intended the political solution to backfire**, because this was a witness. And so we will see that the book of Hebrews carries through this witness.

I suspect that the book of Hebrews was written during Paul’s first imprisonment, reflecting back upon what happened here in Jerusalem. And in order to give them a warning, and in order to bring them to Christ in faith, that’s why it is so loaded—the whole book of Hebrews—having to do with the history and God’s working with Israel, and Abraham, and the Old Covenant, and the temple, and the priesthood, and so forth.

Verse 22: “What then is going to happen? A multitude is going to assemble, for they will hear that you have come.... [you’re in Jerusalem] ...Therefore, do this that we tell you: there are four men with us who have a vow on themselves; take these and be purified with them, and pay their expenses, so that they may shave *their* heads; and everyone will know that what they have been informed about you is nothing, and that you yourself also are walking orderly *and* keeping the law of *rituals*. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we wrote *to them* after deciding *that* they do not have to observe any such thing, except to keep themselves from things that are offered to idols, and *from* blood, and *from* what is strangled [animals], and *from* sexual immorality” (vs 22-25).

Paul goes along with it, v 26: “Then Paul took the men, *and* on the next day he was purified with them *and* went into the temple, signifying the

fulfillment of the days of purification, until each of them had offered *his* offering. But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude; and they laid *their* hands on him... [These were the Jews who were after him. You go through the book of Acts and see how he was chased by the Jews from city to city.] ...crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man... [We got him!] ...who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people [Jews] and the law and this place...’” (vs. 26-28).

Now remember what happened when Stephen was martyred? He said, ‘God does not dwell in temples made with hands.’ They wanted to preserve that temple, because that temple gave them power. That temple gave them institutionalization.

“...and furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this Holy place.’ For they had previously seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, in the city with him, *and* they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple” (vs. 28-29). *No, he didn’t!* No different than today—is it? Division is caused by what? *Disinformation! Rumors! Lies!*

“And the whole city was stirred up, and the people ran together...” [Here is almost a riot. I mean, when you watch the news today about the riots in Italy because of the G-8 meetings, just think of this that they are rioting against Paul.] ...the people ran together; and they took hold of Paul *and* drew him outside the temple, and the doors were immediately shut... [he was contaminating it] ...But as they were attempting to kill him, a report came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in an uproar” (vs 30-31). Where was Fort Antonia? *Right next to the temple!* So, this is why the Roman soldiers were so close at hand and they could get down there right away.

“*And* he immediately took soldiers and centurions with *him and* ran down to them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the chief captain came up *and* laid hold of him, and commanded that he be bound with two chains; and he inquired who he might be, and what he had been doing. But some in the multitude were crying one thing, and some another. When he was not able to determine the facts because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the fortress... [into Fort Antonia] ...Now when he came upon the stairs, it happened *that* he was being carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the multitude” (vs 32-35). In other words, the soldiers had to take him and escort him out.

“For the multitude of people followed, shouting, ‘Away with him!’ And when he was about

to be brought into the fortress, Paul said to the chief captain, 'Is it permissible for me to say something to you?' And he said, 'Do you know Greek? Are not you the Egyptian who previously caused confusion and led into the desert four thousand men who were murderers?' But Paul said, 'I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, a citizen of Cilicia from Tarsus, which is no insignificant city. I beseech you, allow me to speak to the people.' And after receiving permission from him, Paul stood on the stairs *and* motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying..." (vs 36-40). He gives the whole background; how he studied at the feet of Gamaliel; how that he was called, and about the martyrdom of Stephen (v 20).

Acts 22:21: "But He [God] said to me, 'Go, for I am sending you afar off to the Gentiles.' And they listened until they *heard* him say this; then they lifted up their voices, saying, 'Away with such a one from the *face of the earth*...' " (vs 21-22). As soon as he mentioned the Gentiles, that was it! So that's why, even with those who believed at Jerusalem, if Paul had his name anywhere identified with the book of Hebrews, it would have never gotten into them, to be read or studied by them as a final witness before the destruction of the temple.

"... 'Away with such a one from the *face of the earth* for he is not fit to live!' And as they were shouting and casting off *their* garments and throwing dust into the air..." (vs 22-23). I mean, this was quite a scene going on. When you watch the news in the Middle East you can see the same thing going on—right? *Nothing has changed, for 2,000 years!* Today in so-called Israel, if you believe in Jesus Christ you must leave the country, even if you are a circumcised Jew. Now that's something! So then the captain took him up and found out he was a Roman. I think it was that night, or the next night, you can read it, he had to have a special night escort to convey him down to Caesarea and get him out of Jerusalem.

3. This was written was for all Gentile converts, so that they could understand the things of the law, which they should keep and should not keep.

You can read in the *Harmony of the Gospels* what I wrote there concerning the fulfilling of the law by Christ—completion of the sacrifices, and so forth—so they would know. So now they could no longer be subverted by those Jews who would come along and try and convert them either back to Judaism, or a Judaism form of Christianity.

4. The purpose of this epistle was to explain in great technical detail that the covenant with Jesus Christ is the *true, superior, spiritual* Covenant, and to show the *true*

*spiritual worship.*

Hebrews 8:6: "But on the other hand, He... [Christ—the heavenly High Priest] ...has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises. For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made. But since He found fault with them, He says, "Behold, *the days are coming*," says *the Lord*, "when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in *the day* that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them," says *the Lord*. "For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days," says *the Lord*: "I will give My laws into their minds, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people"'" (vs 6-10 ).

So, this is to fully explain the New Covenant, that it is *far* superior to the first covenant, and the earthly sanctuary, and the offering of sacrifices. The only one who could have written that in this great a detail could have been the Apostle Paul. Because he was a Pharisee; studied all of Judaism, and he knew all about the rituals and everything at the temple. Plus, he was taught three and a half years personally by Christ in the Arabian desert.

The one most qualified to understand about the technicalities of the temple and everything was the Apostle Paul. Let's come to Hebrews 10:16, showing the covenant. Throughout this he is showing the *superiority of the New Covenant*. I want you to really think and understand that if Paul would have had his name on this, and had it gone to all the Jews and into Jerusalem, they would surely say, 'You're writing against Moses.' But what he was doing was not writing against Moses. He was explaining the New Covenant and preparing the way for them, so that they would understand what they needed to do after the temple is destroyed.

Hebrews 10:16—again, explaining about the New Covenant: "This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days," says *the Lord*: "I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again" (vs 16-17). Now isn't it interesting that here in this particular location he does not put in there 'the house of Israel/the house of Judah.' So what he is doing by not having that there in this quotation, he is establishing that this is also going out to the Gentiles.

Now let's come to Hebrews 13:8—again, showing Christ is the Head: “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines. For *it is good for* the heart to be confirmed by grace *and not by* foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them*. We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat; for *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the Holy places by the high priest for *a sin offering*, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp.... [over on the Mount of Olives, at the Miphkad altar, right near where Jesus was crucified] ...For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming” (8-14). So again, he was preparing them for the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.

5. Hebrews was written to brethren who have been in the church a long time, and to second generation Christians who were slipping away.

Sound familiar? So when we come to understand it in today's terminology, *the book of Hebrews is written for the Laodicean*, because they got so wrapped up in their own ways. Now remember the sermon that I gave just recently, *The Stages of Apostasy*. They were institutionalized and culturalized. And once they had the culture that they had arrived, they became comfortable and complacent. And that's exactly what happened to the Christians at this particular time.

We're doing a little survey, going through and picking up all the reasons why the book was written.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.” And that's what's so important.

6. Paul was telling them to *take advantage of the time today to get right with God*, and preparing them for the coming martyrdom; especially at Jerusalem.

So again, he's warning them! And you will see that progressively he gets stronger—from Heb. 1-3 and down on into chapter 4—in admonishing them to watch out for themselves.

Hebrews 3:7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice... [Brethren, that message is alive and real for us today. That's for us, because there are many,

many brethren and ministers who today *will not hear* the voice of God.] ...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts... [If you harden your heart then you're going to apostatize, and you're going to commit the unpardonable sin, which is discussed in great detail in Heb. 6.] ...harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness...’” (vs 7-8). What did they do? What was the rebellion?

**First rebellion:** *they set up the golden calves*—correct?

**Second rebellion:** ‘God says we're ready to go into the Holy Land,’ and they said, ‘Oh, we don't want to go!’

Can you imagine, after spending two years in the desert, you say you don't want to go in? You talk about a rebellion. So then God said, ‘All right. Since you accuse Me of bringing you out here to kill your children, everyone that is over 20-years-old is going to die in the wilderness, and your carcasses are going to be strewn across this desert, and the children that you said I was going to kill are going into the land. And you are going to wander a total of 40 years’—a year for every day that they spied out the land.

So he says, v 8: “‘Harden not your hearts... [v 9]: Where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, ‘They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.’” So I swore in My wrath, “‘If they shall enter into My rest—’”” (vs 9-11). Notice that dash there. That is an incomplete sentence. To enter into the Kingdom of God is conditional; not upon God, but upon us. God is not variable in His behavior. We're the ones that have problems—right? *Yes!*

Verse 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.” So this is a powerful warning here, brethren. I mean, it's something! I think the Apostle Paul was given the understanding by God what was coming. And so God inspired him to write this epistle this way, in a sermon form, so it would get to everyone in Jerusalem and all the Jews in the Diaspora who were believers, as well as all of the Gentiles.

Verse 13: “Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.” Now that's why you've heard me say in the past many, many times: *Today is what counts*—right? Yesterday is already over. Whether you did good, or whether you did evil, that's yesterday. If you did good, wonderful. If you sinned and did evil, repent. Today, make today a good day whatever day *today* is, because we are always living in the present. We never live in the past, because that's over. And



we cannot live in the future, because it hasn't arrived—everyday! And that's why we have the model daily prayer: 'Give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.' Daily, while it is today.

Let's come here to Hebrews 4:3. "For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, 'So I swore in My wrath, "If they shall enter into My rest—" although the works were finished from *the* foundation of *the* world. For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: 'And God rested on the seventh day from all His works'; and again concerning this: 'If they shall enter into My rest'—" (vs 3-5).

Verse 7: "Again He marks out a certain day, 'Today,' saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), 'Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.'" And when we come to Heb. 4 we'll go into a full detailed thing concerning the Sabbath.

Hebrews 5:11: "Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, **but instead you need to have someone teach you again** what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food" (vs 11-12). Has that happened in the Church of God today? *Yes, indeed!* I mean, even if you give them some milk with just a few big hunks of meat in it, they almost choke. So there's the warning again.

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection..." And that's what God wants to do today with the saints. He wants to perfect them.

Why does He want to perfect them? *Because God is the only one Who can qualify you for the Kingdom of God!* You have your part to do, but you must be yielded into the hands of God and the Spirit of God to let Him work the work in you to be perfected. And you can't just stick with the basics. You will never get a college education by staying in the third grade—will you? *No!*

Verse 10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labor of love *by* which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*. But we earnestly desire that everyone of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end" (vs 10-11).

And God has impressed upon my mind, brethren, while we have peace, while we have safety, while we have security:

- grow

- study
- learn
- overcome

And it's going to be just like back then. The day is coming when you're not going to be able to. And remember the parable of the ten virgins? *Five wise/ five foolish!* The five wise prepared; the foolish didn't. The foolish came to the wise and said, 'Give us of your oil.' And they said, 'We can't. You go to them that sell and buy.' You can't take what God has given to you through the process of conversion and developing Godly character in you and transfer it to someone, just like you jump-start batteries. *Never happen!* So that parable is showing, you've got to do the things you need to do. So Paul is saying the same thing here.

Verse 12: "So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises."

Hebrews 10:21—admonishing them to improve their faith; admonishing them to not slip away; and giving some very strong warnings. "And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God... [Not the temple in Jerusalem on the earth, but over the house of God in heaven above.] ...let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience..." (vs 21-22).

There are a lot of people out there who are weak today. If they have to face tough times and martyrdom, they better start getting strong right now, because coming upon the temptation of the whole world is the *mark of the beast*. If you are lazy, if you are sluggish, if you do not have a relationship with God, and you are concerned about the physical things when they tell you, 'Well look, it's really just a simple thing. If you love your family and want to provide for them, then go ahead and get this little chip in your right hand or in your forehead, and everything will be fine. You can take care of them.' It will be so tempting. And if they have a weak conscience, I fear for them.

Verse 23: "Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near. **For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*" (vs 23-27).

Boy! That's strong language! Those out there who are pure Laodiceans, you better listen! You can say all you want to; you can accuse me or others of being harsh and hard-hearted; you can accuse God of being not a God of love. But let me say this: ***If you turn down what God has given you, you have no recourse!*** So you better think it through, and you better turn to God, and you better not be looking to men to justify your lukewarm behavior, because men don't please you.

I'll tell you one thing, the Apostle Paul said 'If I please men, I would not yet please God.' And that's the same thing that I'm going to do, brethren. God is no respecter of persons, and we are not going to have respecter of persons and politics, and play little mickey-mouse religion, nicey-nicey, patsy-hands. This is it *for real*, and if you don't understand that at this point, then you better get busy because you have need of milk. You better at least find yourself some good spiritual Gerber's ground-up food that you may be able to slurp down without choking so you can get enough strength to understand what Christ is doing.

Hebrews 11 is all about faith, what every one of them had to do; how he is preparing them for the coming martyrdom, to stand strong. Hebrews 11:33: "Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of fire... [like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego] ...escaped the edge of the sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, and turned back the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection; and others endured the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were brutally interrogated, and slaughtered by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, and ill-treated..." (vs 33-37).

Verse 38: "Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, living in caves and in holes in the earth. But these all, though they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise because God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect" (38-40).

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; and let us run the race set before us with endurance, having our minds fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of our faith... [there's the solution] ...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him

endured the cross, although He despised the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 1-3).

There are a lot of people out there who are weary and discouraged because they just look to themselves, and they just look to their little old problems, and then they begin accusing God, and saying, 'Oh God, why are these things happening to me?' ***They're happening because you're not looking to Christ, and you are not drawing close to God!***

Verse 4: "You have not yet resisted to the point of losing blood in your struggle against sin." The it talks a good deal about correction.

Verse 26: "Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven also.'" Remember, there's a time coming on this earth that is called the Great Tribulation which is going to be so awful that there has never been a time like it from the beginning of the world. So I don't know how we can more better prepare ourselves than to stay close to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and to—while we have the time—to really get about, as Jesus said, 'My Father's business.'

Verse 27: "Now the words 'once more' signify the removing of the things being shaken, as of things that were made, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a pleasing manner with reverence and awe; for our God is indeed a consuming fire" (vs 27-29).

Hebrews 13:5: "Do not allow the love of money to influence your behavior, but be satisfied with what you have; for He has said, 'In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.'" He is saying this because he knew that they had tough times ahead. But he's also saying this because some of them were slipping away and figuring that Christ was forsaking them, rather than they were forsaking Christ.

Verse 6: "So then, let us boldly say, 'The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'"

Verse 22—here's how serious the situation was: "Now I admonish you, brethren, to **patiently listen to this message of exhortation**, for I have written to you in only a few words." I like that. And this has to reflect the Apostle Paul, because remember how many times he was speaking for hours and hours, especially in Acts 20, where he

talked all day and all night, and this poor guy was up on the third loft, and he finally went to sleep and fell down. Then after Paul was sure that he was alive, he got back up, had something to eat, and continued until sunrise. So that's why he is saying, 'Look, this is just a few words.' For indeed, yes, it is just a few words.

Now let's come back to Hebrews 1, and let's look at the style in which this was written. We'll just look at chapter one. We're just going to look at style. We'll come back to it and we'll go through it in detail.

Hebrews 1:1: "God... [He starts out there. He wants to get their attention, that they have to look to God. And this is the whole thing that goes through the whole book.] ...Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say..." (vs 1-5).

Now notice the *quoting of the Scripture* here. This is the thing we want to pick up, *the style of the quoting of the Scriptures*. And then we will go back to Acts 13 and we will analyze Paul's sermon that he gave in Acts 13, and you will see the style is exactly the same.

Verse 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, '**I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me**'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, '**Let all the angels of God worship Him.**' Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, '**Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.**'.... [Psa. 104:4] ...But on the other hand, of the Son *He* says, 'Your throne, O God....'" (vs 5-8).

Is Jesus Christ God? *Yes!* But again, you see all of these are Scriptural quotes. Does this give us a clue as to how God inspires the kind of preaching that He wants? *Yes!* What is Paul doing here? *He is preaching from the Scriptures!* He is not quoting the Scripture, and then telling a nice little bedtime story not too much different than a Little Red Riding Hood.

"... 'Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your Kingdom. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God,

has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.'.... [that's quoted right there in the Psalms.] ...And, 'You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain *forever*; and *they* will all grow old like a garment, and You will roll them up like a covering, and they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end'" (vs 8-12). Again, Scripture!

"But unto which of the angels did He ever say, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'?" (v 13). And you can come to Heb. 2, and we will see the same pattern. You come to Heb. 3 and you see the same pattern—quoting Scripture.

Now, let's come to Acts 13. Now remember, Luke recorded this sermon of the Apostle Paul. And I want you to go back and re-study it after we cover it here, because you will see exactly the same style of preaching and writing; which then also helps to confirm that Paul is the author of Hebrews, dictated to Luke, who wrote it, and was delivered by Timothy.

Acts 13:14: "Now after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day *and* sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue said to them, 'Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak'" (vs 14-15).

This is why God also called Paul, because he was a Pharisee before his conversion. He used that as entrance into the synagogues. None of the other apostles could have done that. Why? *They were never Pharisees!* So Paul could go into the synagogue of Jews and be well received. Barnabas also, because he was a Levite. So that's why they said, "'Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak'" (v 15)

Verse 16: "Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, 'Men, Israelites, and those who fear God... [the Gentiles] ...listen *to me*.... [Notice how he starts his sermon. Almost identical to the way that Hebrews starts off.] ...**The God**... [And in the Greek in Heb. 1:1, it is 'ho Theos.' Here it is 'ho Theos': *God!*] ...The God of this people Israel chose our fathers... [So what is he doing? *He is reviewing the history of the people of God—right? Yes!*] ...and exalted the people when they were sojourning in *the* land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought them out of it. And *for* a period *of* about forty years, He put up with their manners in the desert.... [That ties in with Heb. 3—does it not? *Yes, indeed!*] ...And after destroying seven nations in *the* land of Canaan, He gave their land to them by lot. And after these things, He gave *them* judges *for*

about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul..." (vs 16-21).

Now remember, these are the notes of Luke. And I am sure that he spent a whole lot longer going into much more detail. Just like those of you who are taking notes, you're taking notes of what I say, but you cannot possibly get every word. And Paul did not have a cassette recorder to do it. So this is summarized. Then he talks about giving them Saul.

Verse 22: "And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, 'I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.' Of this man's seed has God according to *His* promise raised up to Israel a Savior, Jesus, after John had first preached, before His coming, *the* baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, 'Whom do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* one Who comes after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet.'" (vs 22-25).

Now what does this also show? This also shows that the book of Matthew was probably written at that time, and available. He talks about the baptism of John.

Verse 26: "Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent; for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*. And though no one found any cause *worthy* of death, they begged Pilate to execute Him" (vs. 26-28).

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 1:1-2
- 2) Hebrews 1:1
- 3) Galatians 6:11
- 4) Hebrews 13:23-25
- 5) Hebrews 11:32
- 6) Hebrews 13:19
- 7) 2 Timothy 1:12-15
- 8) Acts 21:17-40
- 9) Acts 22:21-23
- 10) Hebrews 8:6-10
- 11) Hebrews 10:16-17
- 12) Hebrews 13:8-14
- 13) Hebrews 2:1
- 14) Hebrews 3:7-13
- 15) Hebrews 4:3-5, 7
- 16) Hebrews 5:11-12

- 17) Hebrews 6:1, 10-12
- 18) Hebrews 10:21-27
- 19) Hebrews 11:33-40
- 20) Hebrews 12:1-4, 26-29
- 21) Hebrews 13:5-6, 22
- 22) Hebrews 1:1-13
- 23) Acts 13:14-28

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 2
- Acts 20
- Psalm 104:4

#### Also referenced:

#### Books:

- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Sermons Series:

- *Romans*
- *Galatians*

#### Sermons:

- *Circumcision Wars*
- *The Stages of Apostasy*

Transcribed: 07/27/2003  
MDS/cis  
Re-formatted: bo—3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews II

Fred R. Coulter—August 4, 2001

I want to pick up where we left off last time, and what I want to do, I want to go back and just review a little bit, so let's go to Acts 13. Then we can see the style of how Paul preached. Hebrews is not an epistle; it is a sermon. Now, in scholarly terms they call it a homily, but it is a sermon. And so what we want to do is see exactly how Paul used the Scriptures. And we will see that's the exact same pattern that is used all the way through the book of Hebrews.

And I think that the book of Hebrews was a written sermon that he had given over and over and over again. That's why it is so perfected. I just might mention that the only commentary I ever use is the *Word Biblical Commentary*. Because what that does, that just analyzes the words. And the comment that was made in that commentary was that Hebrews has the best Greek of all the New Testament. And it also mentions something very interesting, that a good number of the verbs are in the infinitive form; meaning this: instead of saying, for example: *said*—he said, they said—it's put in the form, *to say*. Now, Greek for *I say* is 'lego.' The infinitive form is 'legin.' And so that is a distinctive thing, which is very similar to what Luke has, the way that Luke writes.

Now I also noticed in going through and translating Hebrews that there are a good number of what are called *articular infinitives*, which is a very sophisticated way in Greek of saying something. We have nothing like it in English; except, if you would say, 'the going to town,' which is very awkward. But that's what you have in Greek. For example, if you go back and look at the booklet that we did on Acts 2:1—*The True Meaning of Acts 2:1*—you will see that the whole problem there, or the whole understanding lies in what is called an *articular infinitive*. So this is another sign that it is Paul's words, written and refined, and perfected by Luke; and Luke was always with Paul. And as we covered last time, he would not get it even in the door of Jerusalem if it had his name on it.

Let's see how Paul uses the Scriptures. Not only does he quote the Scriptures, but he *uses* the Scriptures in a way to tell the whole story in a summary without necessarily going to a direct verse, in this particular case in Acts 13:17: "The God of this people Israel..." That starts out very familiar, similar to Heb. 1:1, where the very first word is *God*.

Verse 25: "And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, 'Whom do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* one Who comes after me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet.'"

Now where did he get this, except out of Matthew? *Because Matthew was written very shortly after the resurrection!* This whole thing of saying that nothing was written down for years and years, and was passed by word of mouth from generation-to-generation until we come to the beginning of the fourth century, about 310<sub>A.D.</sub>; then the disciples, out of the imagination of their minds, began to write down the things that they learned, and it was passed on; so therefore, there are many, many errors in what is called the New Testament. *That is a satanic lie!* It is not true!

Let's go to Matthew 3:3 <sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>; it talks about the baptism of Christ. "For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying... [So he is saying that he is not the Christ.] ...'*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."*'"

Verse 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the one Who *is* coming after me is mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to carry His sandals; He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire."

What also makes sense is—since Luke wrote Acts—that part of the book of Luke was already written. He says in the book of Acts that he had already written the book of Luke. He says, Acts 1:1: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus..." is a beginning part of the book of Acts.

Luke 3:15: "But as the people were *filled* with expectation, and they were all reasoning in their hearts about John, whether or not he might be the Christ, John answered all *of them*, saying, 'I indeed baptize you with water; but He is coming Who *is* mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to loose the thong of His sandals. He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire" (vs 15-16).

Now let's come back to Acts 13. So what Paul does here, he summarizes that, at least the summary of the sermon that Luke wrote, summarizes the answer of John. So this shows that they were totally familiar with what John had preached, what he had done, and that it was written down.

Acts 13:26, he says: "Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent... [this is also referring to the things here] ...for those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have

themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*” (vs. 26-27). You also have that where? *In Matthew, in Mark, and in Luke*, ‘Thus it was fulfilled by the prophets.’ So he’s summarizing that.

Then we come down here to v 40, and again, he shows the use of Scripture while he’s speaking. “Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you: ‘Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe... [This is cited from Hab. 1:5] ... *even* if one declares it to you’” (vs 40-41).

Let’s back up to v 33, I missed that one, where he quotes Psa. 2: “...As it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; today have I begotten you.’”

Verse 35, he’s quoting Psa. 16: “Accordingly, he also says in another *place*, ‘You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.’” And then he repeats the same thing in v 36 that Peter did on the day of Pentecost, that David is both buried and dead, and in the grave to this day.

Now let’s take our study translation, and let’s come to the first chapter of Hebrews. Let’s just review that again, because I want you to see how the Scriptures are used. One quote, after another quote, after another quote. And this becomes important.

Let’s just begin here in Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son...”

Then he explains about Him being superior to the angels, v 5: “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me’?... [quoting from Psa. 2:7] ...And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, ‘Let all *the* angels of God worship Him.’ Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, ‘Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.’ But on the other hand, of the Son *He* says, ‘Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your Kingdom... [Psa. 45:6-7] ...You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.’ And, ‘You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands.’ [Psa. 102]” (vs 5-10). And he quotes that for another couple of verses.

Verse 13 (quotes Psa. 110): “But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’?” And we’ll see this all the way through.

Almost every chapter is that way: chapters 2-8, all the way through. And this is the only book of the New Testament, by the way, that clearly defines the special things of Christ in the New Covenant.

Now, one other thing I want to cover, let’s come to Hebrews 10:33. This is another hint of Paul. “On the one part, you were made a public spectacle by both insults and severe trials... [And who caused those? *Paul did, when he was Saul*—did he not? *Yes, he did!*] ...and on the other part, you became companions of those who were enduring the same things. For you not only showed compassion to me in my bonds... [that has to be referring to Paul] ...but also gladly endured the plunder of your possessions, knowing within yourselves that you have a greater and more enduring possession in *the* heavens” (vs 33-34).

And then as we covered last time in chapter 13, it talks about Timothy, and Timothy was always with Paul. So those are all evidences that this is from the Apostle Paul. So we have the use of Scriptures; and also, the same way of preaching that Paul did of a chain of Scriptures.

Now then, we’re going come to something very important here. Let’s come back to Hebrews 1 again, and let’s understand one of the things that Hebrews is telling us: How then to view and use and understand the Word of God; that’s what it’s telling us.

Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets...” Who’s doing the speaking? *God!* You go back and you go through the first part of Genesis, and Who’s doing the talking in the first person? *God is!* All the way through His dealings with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, God is dealing with them either in person, as He did with Abraham, or in person and dreams as He did with Isaac and Jacob. Then when you come to Moses He dealt with him face-to-face.

So we will see that as the book of Hebrews unfolds, he is showing the superiority of the Son. In other words, what we’re going to find in the book of Hebrews is this:

- Christ is the ultimate Word of God
- Christ is the ultimate Son of God
- Christ is the ultimate Sacrifice of God
- Christ is the ultimate High Priest of God

Why is this necessary? *Because He was paving the way for the time when there would be no temple and no priesthood in Jerusalem!*

We also need to understand this: When God sent His Son, you had to have

- a greater revelation
- a greater sacrifice
- a greater priesthood
- a greater covenant

And that's why Paul starts out this way, referring to the prophets. All of the prophets prophesied that, as we will see when we get into the book of Hebrews here. So the thing to understand is, God is speaking through His Word. And since His Word is still here, when you read it God is speaking to everyone who reads it: to you, to me, whoever it may be—whether they are converted or unconverted. For the unconverted it's a witness against them because if they read it and don't believe, it's a witness against them. God expects this, which is very important to realize: *Since this is the Word of God, this is the same as if God*

- is personally telling you
- is personally telling me
- is personally telling anyone who reads the Scriptures

That's why when you read of Christ, He's called *the Word of God!* There's a reason for it.

Verse 1: "...has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son... [Then he immediately begins to point out the superiority, or the ultimate reality of Christ, Who is the ultimate Son] ...Whom He has appointed heir of all things... [Which means what? *The universe!* Put in your margin there, right there, Rom. 8, that we're co-heirs with Christ.] ...by Whom also He made the worlds [ages]..." (vs 1-2).

Now notice He brings this out in a very powerful way so that they will know and understand that there is no human being, there is no prophet, no, not even Moses can compare to the Son. Verse 3: "...Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory..." Now Moses sure enough absorbed temporarily some of the glory of God when he spent the forty days and forty nights on the mount. But that glory faded away, as a prophetic type of showing that the covenant through Moses was going to fade away for the covenant with the Son.

Verse 3: "...Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person... [No prophet was ever like this. Then he is going to show no angel was ever like this.] ...and upholding all things by the word of His own power... [Now that's something!] (Christ upholds the universe) ...**by the word of His own power**... [But notice what He did]: ...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high.... [Now you know why John said, 'No man has ascended to heaven but the Son'; no man has seen the Father but the Son'] ...Having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them"

(vs 3-4). And that's the whole theme of Hebrews: *the New Covenant is exceedingly superior to anything that has gone on in the past*, save the swearing to Abraham; that comes in second. But this is superior to anything. He never said this to the angels. This one knocks in a 'cocked hat' all of Mormonism. Because they say that Jesus was a created being, and He became an angelic being; He became Michael the archangel, and joined Moroni who is the angel of the Mormon Church.

Notice what the Scripture says, v 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 5-6). Then he goes on to show how much greater that He is than the angels. That's important to understand, brethren.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning **was the Word**... [That was Christ! And isn't it amazing, it is absolutely amazing to me how some people can say that Jesus Christ was a created being, when it clearly tells us here that *He created everything*. So if He created everything, He had to create Himself—correct?] ...**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**" He had to be as much God as He could be in the flesh, but He could not be 100% God and 100% man, in the same body; they cannot exist together, because they are two separate kinds of existences. So when He became the Son of God He had to take on the flesh of man.

By the way, the Jehovah Witnesses' translation was translated by a Jesuit Catholic priest—did you know that? Their version is called *The New World Translation*. What's another word for 'world'? *Age!* It's almost identical to the *NIV*. Now they do something here with the phrase, *and the Word was God*. When you look at it in the Greek there is no definite article. If it had the definite article it would read 'ho Theos.' But it doesn't have 'ho'—it just has '*Theos*'—and reads this way: 'Kai [and] Theos [God] en [was] ho logos [*the Word*].' Now why, in the Greek, did they not put the definite article *the* there? *To show that Christ was everything that God is; the whole, same characteristic as God!*

This is almost telling us, like we have back here in Hebrews 1:3: "Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person..." That's another way of saying the same thing to define it. Without the definite article here, it is not *a* God, it is the whole of what God is. So when Christ came to the earth it was a profound thing. Like I said, God's ultimate Son, God's ultimate Word.

John 1:2: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God..."

What do we have back here in Hebrews 1:3?: "...and upholding all things..." Notice how that closely parallels with John's Gospel as compared to the book of Hebrews. Starting out the same way. The same message is brought with greater clarity for one meaning in John, and greater clarity for another meaning in Hebrews. And put together, you have the whole picture.

John 1:3: "All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him.... [Why is that put that way? *To exclude the possibility that He was a created being! To exclude the possibility that He could have created Himself!*] ...In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it" (vs. 3-5). The world is deceived. That's why it doesn't comprehend the light, because

***The Light is Truth!***

The light penetrates!

The light exposes!

Now, men cannot handle that!

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us..." [Here's the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles, *God dwelling with us!*] ...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth." ***Christ was the only begotten of the Father and came directly from the Father.*** This is what is so important concerning the Word of God. Who was Christ? The Gospels show without a doubt—confirmed beyond any shadow of question—that ***before He became a human being He was God!*** Now that's why in the book of Hebrews Paul is spending so much time on it. Because he is establishing that everything in the rest of the book of Hebrews is going to be contingent on vs 1-4. Everything else!

Comment was just made from someone who studied with the Seventh-Day Adventists, that there are some of them who believe that Christ is Michael. So you've got Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, and some Seventh-Day Adventists who believe that. That's one of Satan's tactics, to come in and to degrade Christ. Why is it an important tactic of Satan the devil to degrade Christ? *So that he will pry open your mind to bring in error and lies!* And I'm sure it was happening there, because we're going to see that in this sermon of Paul's, in chapter one and the first part of chapter two, he spends a great deal of time showing the difference between Christ and the angels; and the angels in this world and the angels in the world to come.

Philippians 2:5: (Int): I'm going to read from the Greek text: "This for let mind be in you which also in Christ Jesus was..." Now why does he say let it be in you? *Because*

- You have to *choose* to let the mind of Christ be in you through the power of the Holy Spirit!
- You have to *seek it* from God the Father.
- You have to *grow in grace and knowledge*.
- You have to *study the Word of God* so that you begin to have the mind of Christ.
- You have to *let it*.

And in order to let it, then, ***you've got to fight the carnal mind.*** That you 'bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2-Cor. 10). When you let the mind of Christ come in you, then you also have the humility that comes from God, the same type of humility that Christ had when He became a human being.

Verse 6 (Int): "Who... [existing as God] ... in (the) form of God subsisting... [as God, or existing as God; 'hup arkon' in the Greek means *to exist*.] ... not rapine esteemed it... [or think it robbery] ...to be equal with God... [If you are equal with God, you are what? *God!* That's very important, brethren.] ...**but Himself emptied** ..." (vs 6-7).

In *The Christian Passover* book—go back and read *The Nature of God* (pg 324) and *The Nature of Man* (pg 334). I have that there; that will be a good one to review for this.

Verse 7 (FV): "But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man..." We'll see that again when we come to Heb. 2. Being made exactly like a man.

Verse 8 (Int): "...And in figure having been found as a man..." That is, all of His bodily functions were the same as a human being's. Everything that your body does to function, He had the same. Now that's very important so that we understand, ***no one is going to ever say to God:***

God, You never understood what it was like to be a human. God, You made us of flesh and blood, and You put us on this earth, and You turned Satan loose against us. You're way up there in heaven. Why don't you come on down to this earth and share this with us?

***God did!*** We'll see that the very reason for Christ coming was for that purpose; and also to answer the complaint of the Israelites. We'll see that in just a little bit.

Verse 7 (Int): "...He humbled Himself..." Now, you talk about humbling yourself. Has anyone ever humbled himself so much as Christ did? to divest Himself of being God, all of His glory and



power and being? to put His complete trust and faith in the one Who became God the Father?

And the covenant that They had {see series on the *Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*.} The last one is the covenant that God made with Christ, where He made a covenant with God the Father. The Father said, ‘I will become the Father’; and Christ said, ‘I will become the Son. Since You gave Me authority to create all of these things, and the whole creation is subject to what I have put it through, then I will take it upon Myself to become as My creation so I can be the perfect sacrifice.’ And They agreed. So the One of Elohim Who became the Son humbled Himself to become a pinprick of life to be begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary. And it had to be a virgin. God could not have His Son born of a woman who ever had contact with a man. Now, that’s not Catholic doctrine. *That’s just truth!*

Was He really at our level? *Yes, with the exception that He had the Holy Spirit from conception!* He was at our level. Obviously, being the Son of God, it had to be special. But as far as His human existence, it wasn’t any different than ours. He had to eat, He had to sleep, He had to breathe; He had all the bodily processes; and He was subject to death. So, why don’t you go back and review *The Nature of God* and *The Nature of Man* in *The Christian Passover* book. That will go through it in great detail.

Verse 8 (FV): “And being found in the manner of man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Now, wasn’t it fitting that He died such an ignominious death, rather than die to the praise of men? Even His own disciples didn’t believe it. And that had to be, because it was so profound in what He did.

John 3:13—this ties right in with the first part of Heb. 1: “(And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)” That is, meaning at the time he wrote it He’s in heaven.

John 1:16: “And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.... [The same as Paul wrote; and we will see all through all of the epistles in the New Testament that they preached the same message. They used many of the same comparisons.] ...For the law was given through Moses... [Which up to that point, the Law and the Prophets were the greatest thing that God had done.] ... but the grace and the Truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*” (vs 16-18). Now at the time He wrote this, Christ was in the bosom of the Father. That is explaining their close, personal, relationship as Father and Son.

Let’s understand why Christ is the ultimate Word of God. Let’s come here to Deuteronomy 18.

This is why it becomes so important to understand the way that Hebrews has been written, and the very things that are brought out in the New Testament. {see sermon, *Who Is ‘That Prophet’?*} I can guarantee you it’s not a minister who’s living in the flesh today, who’s supposedly a head of a church—***‘that Prophet’ is Christ!*** And you find that very clear, clearly explained in Acts 3 by Peter. And even John said he [John] wasn’t ‘that Prophet’.

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me. To Him you shall hearken.” And we’re going to pick up on this about *obeying the words of God*. But what I want to do is to bring to you the reason why Jesus is the ultimate Son, this is the ultimate Word of God, and that in the Scriptures God speaks *today!* You need to understand that. Whenever you’re reading the Scriptures, ***God is speaking to you!*** That’s why sometimes when you’ve sinned you don’t like it.

There’s a big flap in the paper because there’s a Seventh-Day Adventist who rented a billboard right along Hwy 5, going up out of Northern California into Oregon. And it says, ‘The Pope Is the Antichrist!’—which is true! That man has received death threats. It shows Catholics are not concerned with Truth. They’re not concerned, to say, ‘Well, if that’s true, I’ve been deceived.’ *No!* They want to kill the man. How’s that for Christian love? *No! They don’t want the Truth!* Rather than saying, ‘Boy, I ought to check out the Scriptures.’ I do believe that even in the *Douay Version* of the Bible that Rev. 17 is still Rev. 17, though they deny it. And I do believe that in their Bible, Exo. 20:4 still says, ‘You shall not make any graven image of any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth, and you shall not bow yourself down to it’. They don’t read the Bible, but *the Bible witnesses against them!*

I think we need to understand that *God means business!* They need to realize that.

- We’re not dealing with a ‘religion,’ ***we’re dealing with God!***
- We’re not dealing with personal interpretations; ***we’re dealing with the Truth of God!***

Verse 15: “...To Him you shall hearken [listen], according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying... [that’s when they received the Ten Commandments] ...‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die’” (vs 15-16).

What did they tell God? Come back to Exo. 20. This is important. What is it that human beings want? *They want another human being to talk to!* Today it's put this way; let's just use the example of the pope as the antichrist: 'I don't want to find out whether that is true or not. I'm going to go ask my priest whether it's true or not: father, is the pope the Antichrist? *Why, no, my son. Those are just the heretics, the enemies!* Rather than checking the truth.

We have the similar thing here. The people were right in the presence of God. Exodus 20:18: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings..." If there's one thing that really sends it through a person's being, is to hear thunder crashing and rolling, and lightning sparking and flying back and forth; especially if it's close to you. How do you think that sounded when they were as close to Mt. Sinai as they were? Have you ever been close to a real cracking, sparking, lightning storm, and the thunder just right over your head? It about blows you away!

"...and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled... [No question about running up on the mountain to go up, 'Let me run up and see God!' *No, indeed!* They backed away!] ...and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die'" (18-19).

So what is it that humans want? They want a human being to talk to them: 'I'll talk to a man, not to God.' But did they listen to Moses? *No!* because they said, 'Well, Moses said...' And isn't that the way that human nature is? What is the favorite trick of Satan and other human beings when you don't want to listen to someone? *You make them out a bad guy! You demonize them!* Does that not sound familiar? *Yes, indeed!* And that's what happened.

God, in the person of Christ, took the children of Israel up on their proposition *to let a man speak to them*. Now with *this* Man, as we're going to see, it's going to be entirely different than a regular man because this one is going to be the only begotten of the Father.

Deuteronomy 18:17: "And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well what they have spoken.... [He said 'I'm going to take them up on it.'] ...I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One like you...*'" (vs 17-18). Now Moses was what? *Lawgiver! Priest!* What was Christ? *In the flesh He was Lawgiver! When He was resurrected He was High Priest!*

"...and will put My words in His mouth.... [Remember, everything that Jesus spoke came from the Father. That's what we need to understand.]

...And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him.... [God is saying, 'Since I am going to do it...'—and we can put it today, past tense: 'Since I *have done* it...'] ...And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him" (vs 18-19). That's anyone who will not listen.

Now notice, for preachers and prophets, all pay attention, v 20: "But the prophet **who shall presume** to speak a word in My name... [Get the series we did on *The Epistles of Peter* where I cover this quite a bit more in depth.] ...presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even **that prophet shall die.**" That's pretty profound! So every minister who picks up the Bible and says, 'My interpretation is...'—if it is not God's, you're in *deep trouble!*

Let's come to John 3:33—referring to Christ; here is the way that it has to be. "The one who has received His testimony... [That is anyone who receives the testimony of Christ, the Word of God] ...has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God.... [What did it say back there in Deut. 18? 'He shall speak all that I command Him'—right? 'All My words!'] What did Jesus speak? *Words of the Father!*] ...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him" (vs 33-36). That's a summary of all of the book of Hebrews—is it not? *No question about it!*

John 5:30 "I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me." Never did Christ at any time do anything other than the will of God.

Verse 45: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me.... [We just read what he wrote of Him—right? *Yes!* What does that do with the licentious grace of the Protestants, that you don't have to keep the commandments? *Wipes it out—doesn't it?*] ...And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?" (vs 45-47).

John 14:23: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, **he will keep My Word...**'" Now it's very important, because we're going to do a study here, we may begin part of it in just a little bit, concerning **obeying the voice of God**. And as a matter of fact, that's really the whole

story of the Bible: *to obey or not obey the voice of God!*

“...‘If anyone loves Me, he will **keep My Word**; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.... [Everyone wants God to love them—don’t they? But they want it in their own way. However, *it’s going to be God’s way or no way!* Because so many say, ‘Well, God knows my heart, and I’m good. So therefore, before God, I’m good.’ *Not so!* It has to be God’s way!...] ...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” (vs 23-24). And that agrees 100% with Deut. 18.

The book of Hebrews clearly defines the New Testament worship, clearly defines

- the ultimate Son of God
- the ultimate sacrifice
- the ultimate High Priest
- the ultimate Word of God

*If Christ has said it, that’s what the Father commanded Him to say.*

John 12:42—we’ll show the problems that people have: “But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*... [In other words, as he said in another place, they loved the praises of men more than the praises of God. They are political, and seek to do *their* will in the name of God, if I could put it that way.] ...so that they would not be put out of the synagogue.”

They should have said, ‘Hey, we believe on Him since He’s the Son of God; Hooray! I’m put out of the synagogue. Let me leave the synagogue.’ But what would they lose?

- their power
- their control
- their prestige

they would have no hierarchical position.

Verse 43: “For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. Then Jesus called out and said, ‘The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And **the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me**. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. **The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day**” (vs 43-48). Now that’s why it is so important.

Let’s read Hebrews 1:1 again: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things ... [which He did not do to Moses, which He did not do to the angels] ...by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory... [‘If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father’] ...and *the* exact image of His person... [having the same character as God the Father] ...and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high...” (vs 1-3). In other words, Paul is saying through this sermon—to begin with—‘Wake up, pay attention! *This is the ultimate Word of God.*’

John 12:49: “For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself... [Does that not agree with Deut. 18? *Absolutely!*] ...what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me” (vs 49-50).

Let’s see why Paul wanted all of the Hebrews to know that when God speaks, and He speaks through His Son in particularly, *you better pay attention!* 2-Timothy 3:15: “And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings... [That’s all the Old Testament, and how much ever of the New Testament was that was written up to that point.] ...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed... [And if it is God-breathed, that means what? *God said it!* So if you read it, *God is speaking to you!*] ...All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 15-17).

And when you really want to summarize the whole Bible, let’s understand something here: *it boils down to obeying the voice of God*. So let’s just do a little survey. We’ll go through the Old Testament and New Testament, and we will back up and we will see that everything in relationship to God and human beings has to do with whether you *obey the voice of God*, or whether *you do not obey the voice of God*. And if you don’t believe the words of Christ, then you don’t believe God the Father.

What gets you in trouble with God? *When you listen to another human being instead of God!* Now in this case, the only other human being was Eve, his wife. With a whole lot more people, there are other human beings that you can listen to; and if you listen to them instead of God, you’re going to

get into the same trouble that Adam and Eve got in when they both listened to the devil.

Genesis 3:17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife [instead of Me]... [Now Adam saw Him face-to-face. God appeared to them in a form that they could see, they could talk to, they could understand. And even then, how many people have said, ‘Well, if God would come down and tell me, I’ll do it.’ *God was right there! He just created them!* They still did not.] ... ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it!”— ...’” Whenever we put anyone else’s words—regardless of who it is, how important they may be—above God, ***we don’t believe God***; we’re not listening to Him.

We’ll look at the places where it is *to obey*. We’ll look at some of them. We covered this recently, so we’re not going to go through the whole thing. We’ll just come to Genesis 22:15. “And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, ‘By Myself have I sworn,’ says the LORD, ‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens... [that’s the spiritual seed through the resurrection] ...and as the sand which is upon the seashore...’” (vs 15-17). All the physical seed first; because in order to be the sons born of the resurrection, you have to first be a human being—correct? *Yes!*

“...And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, ***because you have obeyed My voice***” (vs 17-18). If we are Christ’s, we are what? *Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise—correct? And what makes us the children of Abraham? That we do the works of Abraham: we believe and we obey!*

Genesis 26:5—we’ve gone to this one many, many times. But I tell you what, it’s very important that we go back and review these things and we understand them. “Because that Abraham ***obeyed My voice***...” That’s the first key thing. Now since we have the words of God, and God has spoken them, if you obey what’s in the Bible, you’re doing what? *You’re obeying the voice of God!* If you do not obey, then you are not obeying the voice of God. It’s very important, remember John 12, ***if you won’t listen to the Son, there’s no eternal life***. What does that tell you about the coming one-world religion, where everything is amalgamated in? *The first thing they have to do to come to common ground is reject Christ, to lower Him to the status of another human being!* And that has happened in many so-called Christian-professing religions already; we’ve

covered three of them—haven’t we? “**Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws**” (v 5), which, brethren, are same ones that He gave to Israel.

God did the same thing to Israel. That’s the first thing that God told the Israelites, the very first thing. That’s why when we first come to the knowledge of the Truth, this is the most important thing for us to realize. It’s just like with what happened when God brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. He wanted to know first, before He began to speak—***would they obey His voice?***

Exodus 19:4: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine” (vs 4-5).

Exodus 24:3: “And Moses came and told the people ***all*** the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ***‘All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.’***” Now God does something every time it’s required to obey the words of God—when God is not going to be there in person holding your hand—He has it written down by human instrumentality, and recorded and preserved so you will have it, so you will have no excuse.

Verse 4: “And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar at the base of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bullocks to the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant... [our covenant is the New Testament] ...and read in the ears of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient’” (vs 3-7).

Now then, when we get to the book of Hebrews we’re going to see that the Son is so much greater. That’s why He said, ‘If you don’t believe Me, you have no life.’ But there’s the agreement ***to obey the voice of God***.

Now let’s come over here to Deut. 5 where Moses reiterates it again just before they go into the ‘promised land.’ You know, it’s kind of like what parents do when their kids go out. What do they do? They sit them down and they talk to them—right? ‘I want you to remember this; I want you to remember that.’ Why? *Because Mommy and Daddy ain’t coming with you this time—right?* ‘Now, you’re on your own, and you have to be responsible for

yourself. What is it you are to do?" At this point, the presence of God was no longer going to be there with them in the same way that it was in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. It wasn't going to be with them to be giving them manna everyday, give them the food to eat. Now they were going to be on their own with God's blessing and protection, *if they obeyed!*

Comment was made concerning the Jewish tradition of 'oral law.' That is absolutely no different than the Catholic traditions of the 'fathers.' It was added to, never was from God, never given as *oral* commandments. God would not leave it to word of mouth, in spite of what men would say. That is their excuse so they can change the Word of God when they have an oral tradition that contradicts the Word of God, they must have some authority, so they dream up the authority.

Just like the Pope has dreamed up the authority of perverting the interpretation of Matthew 16:18: "...upon this Rock I will build My church, and the gates of the grave shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven ..." (vs 18-19). And so the pope says, 'That's me!' *No, it's not!* When we get done you will understand why the pope can *never* be the 'Vicar of Christ.'

Deuteronomy 5:24—after giving the Ten Commandments: "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. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die'" (vs 24-25). That's is why He took them up on the proposition, Deut. 18.

"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*.' 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....' (vs 26-28). This tells you what? *Be careful what you say*—right? God is going to take you up on it—is He not? *Yes indeed!*

"...which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.... [In other words, they are well-intentioned in all that they have said, but there's one thing lacking.] ...Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" (vs 28-29).

Deuteronomy 6:3: "**Hear**... [What are the last three letters of that word? *Ear! Hear!* That means, *listen!*] ...O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you..." All human, carnal beings and hate God say, 'Why does God treat human-kind so miserable, and rotten, and let all these things come upon them?' The answer is,

- you won't hear the Word of God
- you won't keep His commandments
- you reject Jesus Christ
- you trample Him underfoot
- you desecrate His Holy Days
- you desecrate His Sabbath
- you desecrate His Word
- you ministers out there stand up and use His Word for your own benefit and your own merchandise
- you ask why God brings these things upon you

*Be thankful that lightning bolts do not fall from heaven for those who disobey God* as it did when they made the golden calves; and Moses came down and Moses said, 'All of those on the Lord's side come over here, and all the rest that are not...' And God created a new thing and opened up the earth and killed them! God holds us responsible *if we hear*, we have the words of God written right here. It tells us

- to hear
- to listen
- to hearken

What are we to do? And the job of any elder and minister is to do this, and say, 'Here, this is the Word of God. God says to do it, you do it.'

Verse 3: "...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. Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* LORD, *the* LORD" (vs 3-4).

- *Hear!*
- *Listen!*
- *Pay attention!*

That's what the whole book of Hebrews is about. The whole book of Hebrews says *listen to Christ!*

Let's come to Deuteronomy 11:26: "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: **A blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you this day;** and a curse, if you will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but will turn aside out of the way which I command you this day to go after other gods which you have not known" (vs 26-28).

Deuteronomy 27:9: "And Moses and the priests the Levites spoke to all Israel, saying, **'Take**

**heed and hearken...** [*listen attentively to obey*] ...O Israel. Today you have become the people of the LORD your God. You shall therefore **obey the voice of the LORD your God and do His commandments** and His statutes which I command you today.” (vs 9-10).

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

#### Scriptural References

- 1) Acts 13:17, 25
- 2) Matthew 3:3, 11
- 3) Acts 1:1
- 4) Luke 3:15-16
- 5) Acts 13:26-27, 40-41, 33, 35
- 6) Hebrews 1:1, 5-10, 13
- 7) Hebrews 10:33-34
- 8) Hebrews 1:1-6
- 9) John 1:1
- 10) Hebrews 1:3
- 11) John 1:2
- 12) Hebrews 1:3
- 13) John 1:3-5, 14
- 14) Philippians 2:5-8
- 15) John 3:13
- 16) John 1:16-18
- 17) Deuteronomy 18:15-16
- 18) Exodus 20:18-19
- 19) Deuteronomy 18:17-20
- 20) John 3:33-36
- 21) John 5:30, 45-47
- 22) John 14:23-24
- 23) John 12:42-48
- 24) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 25) John 12:47-50
- 26) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 27) Genesis 3:17
- 28) Genesis 22:15-18
- 29) Genesis 26:5
- 30) Exodus 19:4-5
- 31) Exodus 24:3-7
- 32) Matthew 16:18-19
- 33) Deuteronomy 5:24-29
- 34) Deuteronomy 6:3-4
- 35) Deuteronomy 11:26-28
- 36) Deuteronomy 27:9-10

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 2:1
- Habakkuk 1:5
- Psalms 2; 16
- Acts 13:36
- Psalms 2:7; 45:6-7; 102; 110
- Romans 8
- 1 Corinthians 10
- Hebrews 2
- Acts 3

- Revelation 17
- Exodus 20:4

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- *Prophecy of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- *Who is 'That Prophet'?*
- *Epistles of Peter*

Transcribed: 08/23/2003; Revised: 01/05/2004

MDS/cis/cis

Formatted: bo—3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews III

## Hear the Voice of God

Fred R. Coulter—August 18, 2001

Before we get back into the book of Hebrews, what I want to do is again show the style of writing and preaching which connects the authorship of Hebrews to the Apostle Paul. Now many people do not believe that Paul wrote it. As I pointed out, these are the words of Paul, undoubtedly written by Luke. Because the style is very, very similar to the way that Luke writes. And especially the Greek and 2-Corinthians, because you read at the end of 2 Cor., it says 'by Luke.' Luke was the one who traveled with Paul, and I'm sure that he did a lot of the recording and the writing and taking notes. The Hebrews is not an epistle as a regular epistle is, which is a letter that was sent out like the other ones, but it is a written-out sermon. And probably one that was given many, many times, well refined, and, therefore, Hebrews turns out to be one of the best written books of the New Testament.

Let's come to Romans 9, and what I want to do again, I want to show how Paul quotes Scripture and then gives some instruction from that Scripture, just like we saw in Hebrews 1 & 2.

Romans 9:6: "However, this does not mean that the Word of God has failed because not all of those who *descend* from Israel *are* Israel, nor because they are Abraham's seed does it mean that they *are* all children of the promise. But, 'In Isaac shall your seed be called'" (vs 6-7). So then, Ishmael and Esau *had no part* of the promises that were given.

Verse 9: "Because this *is the* word of promise... [O.T. quote]: ...'According to this set time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.'.... [Then he also refers to Rebecca]: ...And not only *that*, but Rebecca also having conceived by one, Isaac our father, but before *the children* had been born, or had done anything good or evil (in order that the purpose of God according to His own selection might stand—not of works, but of Him Who calls), it was said to her, 'The elder shall serve the younger.' Accordingly, it is written, 'Jacob I loved, and Esau I hated.'" (vs. 9-13). So notice the Scripture quotes right there, just coming, *boom, boom, boom*, one right after another.

Verse 15: "For He said to Moses, 'I will show mercy to whomever I show mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion.' So then, *it is* not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs; rather, *it is* of God, Who shows mercy. For the Scripture said to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up in order that I might show in you My power, so that My name may be declared in

all the earth.' So then, He shows mercy to whom He will, and He hardens whom He will" (vs 15-18).

Verse 25: "Accordingly, He also said in Hosea, 'I will call those who *are* not My people, "My people," and those who *were* not beloved, "Beloved." And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, "You *are* not My people," there they shall be called *the sons of the living God*.' But Isaiah cried out concerning Israel, 'Although the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. For *He is* accomplishing and limiting *the* matter in righteousness; because *the* Lord will limit *the* matter *He is doing* upon the earth.' Accordingly, Isaiah also said before, 'Unless *the* Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah'" (vs 25-29).

Notice the same exact style that we found in Acts 13—quoting Scripture—as we found in Heb.1 & 2; where then he said, he quoted the Scripture, 'and then again...'; 'and again...'; 'and again...'; and we we'll see that all the way through the book of Hebrews.

Now Hebrews 11:2: "God did not repudiate His people whom He foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in *the account of* Elijah? How he was pleading with God against Israel, saying, 'Lord, they have killed your prophets, and they have torn down your altars; and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.' But what did the answer from God say to him? 'I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed a knee to Baal.'" (vs 2-4).

Verse 8: "According as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that are not able to see, and ears that are not able to hear,') unto this day. David also says, 'Let their table be for a snare and for a trap, and for a stumbling block, and for a recompense to them; let their eyes be darkened so that they are not able to see, and bow down their backs continually.'" (vs 8-10).

We have the same kind of pattern—don't we?—all the way through. Now, especially when it comes to dealing with those things concerning Israel, because chapters 9 & 11 concern Israel. The whole book of Hebrews concerns the children of Israel and the Greek-speaking converts, and all the Jews. The book of Hebrews has to do with

- the ultimate Word of God
- the ultimate Son of God

- the ultimate sacrifice
- the ultimate High Priest

And so the message of the book of Hebrews is this: **hearing God!** and **obey My voice!** This becomes the whole key, the whole important thing. In other words, since God manifest Himself in the flesh—there were the two of Elohim: *one became the Father the other became the Son*—and the One Who became the Son was God manifest in the flesh to bring the Message of God the Father to mankind, first through the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to fulfill His promise. The whole story of the book of Hebrews is:

- Will you listen to God?
- Will you obey His voice?

All the Scriptures have come from the *voice of God!*

After it talks about the importance of Christ and the difference between Him and angels, Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, **it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things which we have heard**, lest at any time we should slip away.” If you don’t pay attention to it, you slip away, because the Words of God never slip away. They are always there. They are always true.

Verse 2: “For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord...” (vs 2-3).

And that’s the whole thing: spoken by the Lord. And I was just kind of stuck at the coincidence of it. When we started Hebrews, that was the same time that the third edition of *A Harmony of the Gospels* went out. What is *A Harmony of the Gospels*? *The words and teachings of Christ!*

“...and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the Holy Spirit*, according to His own will?” (vs 3-4).

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ...” When I first read it in the *King James*—*let us leave the beginning oracles of Christ*—“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrines of Christ...”; I thought: How can that statement be right? Why would they want to leave the principles of Christ? And for someone who is not acquainted with the Scriptures when they first read that, they may think they don’t have to pay any attention to what Christ says. *No!* It’s the other way around.

“Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of

repentance from dead works, and *of* faith in God...” (v 1) and so forth.

Verse 6: “If they have fallen away... [it is impossible] to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.” So that ties in with Heb. 2, that ***they were slipping away!***

The whole thing is very imperative, that *anyone*... That’s why it says in another place, ‘anyone that names the name of Christ let Him depart from evil.’ In other words, since one of the Godhead of Elohim became the Son, God manifest in the flesh, and spoke the Word. That’s what John calls Him: *the Word!* It’s not a thing to be taken lightly, and it’s not something that you can just go ahead and interpret any way you want to, to make it say what you desire.

Hebrews 10:22: “Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 22-23). So he is saying, regardless of the circumstances, He is faithful. If there is any difficulty in the problem, it’s our own lack of understanding.

Let’s come to Romans 14:7—this becomes the important thing in our lives: “For no one among us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we should live unto the Lord; and if we die, we should die unto the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. *It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the dead and the living*” (vs 7-9). One of the things we need to understand concerning the book of Hebrews and the apostles: When they went out to preach, one of the last things they said to Christ just before He ascended into heaven on the 40<sup>th</sup> day, recorded there in Acts 1? They said, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ And they were expecting Christ to return in their lifetimes.

So we go on down through all the way through the 30s<sub>A.D.</sub>, the 40s<sub>A.D.</sub>, the 50s<sub>A.D.</sub>, we’re coming into the first part of the 60s<sub>A.D.</sub>, and they are seeing the droughts, and the famine, and the wars, and all of these things. James then is martyred. The book of Hebrews is written, because now the Jews, especially at Jerusalem, and, of course, all those in the churches and the synagogues, they were beginning to get very restless because Christ was not coming. ‘He may not fulfill His promise. And if He doesn’t fulfill His promise, that is—in our lifetime—then we best go back to Judaism.’ And so this is what they were doing. They were on the verge of leaving Christ—Who was God manifest in the



flesh—and go back to Judaism and the claim of Moses alone. That’s why there’s so much comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; between Christ and Moses; between Christ and the angels—all the way through the book of Hebrews.

Verse 10: “Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, because it is written, “*For as I live,*” says the Lord, “every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God” (vs 10-12).

This is what it is talking about here in Heb. 10:23: “Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised is faithful... [Regardless of the circumstances around you] ...and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do...” (vs 23-25).

What they were doing, they were beginning to not assemble together in the churches. And it became habitual. Has that not happened with Laodiceans? *Yes, indeed!* So you have the same thing—don’t you? You have the same thing of the wearing out of human nature. Instead of relying on God, they relied on themselves. And then they just start slacking off, and you know what happens when you slack off. A little more slack *leaves a little more slack*, leaves a little more slack.

And I know what that’s like. I’ll apply it to exercise. I have to exercise. If I don’t exercise—say I lay off two or three days—my hip gets real stiff on me. I remember I laid off for two weeks because I took a trip. I tell you, my body and every thought had every reason not to exercise after that two weeks. I would start exercising and I would do a few repetitions of the exercise and think: Oh well, maybe you can get by with a few less. I know none of you ever have these arguments in your own mind. So there I am doing my exercise—no, I don’t need to do 800 of these, just 300 will be good enough, and if I do pretty good today, then I don’t need to do anything tomorrow.

This happens with people. They become accustomed to not going to church, or assembling together. Then you add into the mix the preaching that becomes lukewarm and watered down, and so you go to church and you’re bored; therefore you don’t want to go. And then you pray and say, ‘O God, give me a good attitude so I can go to church and get something out of it.’ Between praying from Monday through Friday, you are ready for the Sabbath and you hope you’ll have a good Sabbath

this week, and you’re all prayed up and you’re all ready to go, and you go to Sabbath services and it’s another dud. Then someone offends you, or a false doctrine is preached. Well, in the case of false doctrine you have good cause to leave. But ***don’t give up on God!*** Here they were going through it. So that’s why I said in the beginning, the book of Hebrews was written for the Laodiceans today. They are getting tired; they’re getting weary, and when you get tired and you get weary then you *are ripe for false doctrine*. That’s what’s happened.

Now notice, verse 25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near.” This was not only a warning to them, but a prophecy for today. We all see two days drawing close—don’t we?

1. the ***Day of the Lord***, being the end of the life, if we die in the flesh. That day is drawing close.
2. the ***return of Christ***, and that day is drawing close,

even as it says there in Rom. 13, because it’s closer than when it was when we first believed.

Verse 26—notice the end result; notice this warning again: “For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*” (vs 26-27). This is why this is a warning. In other words, Christ’s Word is the *ultimate word*, and everybody better pay attention, and hear and obey and repent and love and serve God, because that is it.

Verse 28: “*Consider this:* anyone who rejects the Law of Moses... [which some of them were going back to] ...dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, “Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!” says the Lord.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’ *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God” (vs 28-31). Then he goes on trying to encourage them to really pay attention and listen to what they were to do.

Hebrews 12:25: “Beware that you do not refuse to *hear* Him Who is speaking! For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused to *hear* the One Who was on the earth divinely instructing *them*... [Jesus Christ] ...how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who

speaks from heaven...” Those are some pretty powerful words.

Now let’s go back and let’s continue our survey of

- to hear God
- to obey His voice
- to hearken to His word

Remember the word ‘hear’ is the same thing as ‘ear’ only with an ‘H.’ And hearken has ‘ear’ it in it, and hearken means *to hear to obey!* And at one place we’ll see Jesus said, ‘Let this sink deep in your ears.’ In other words, *put it in your memory and don’t forget it.* And that’s the whole story of the book of Hebrews.

There’ll be quite a few Scriptures we will look to here. What we need to understand in Jeremiah 7 is this: The Jews and the Israelites would go to the temple God, they would offer offerings and incense to other gods right there at the temple of God. So the whole system of burnt offerings, rather than being a thing to draw them close to God, became a thing where they used it for their own means and ends. That’s why He said here:

Jeremiah 7:21: “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices’” (vs 21-22). However, that doesn’t mean that God didn’t intend to give them to them, nor that He didn’t have the whole system ready with the burnt offerings. He did, but to put them to the use that they were doing. Burnt offerings without the rest of it, which we find in v 23, do you no good.

Verse 23: “‘But this thing I commanded them, saying, **‘Obey My voice...**’” Going through this I want you to remember that Christ is the

- ultimate Word
- the ultimate Son
- with the ultimate message

“...Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people; and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, so that it may be well with you.’ But they did not obey, nor bow their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels, in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them” (vs 23-25).

Now, let’s go back and read the first part of Hebrews 1, the very first verse. Notice that the first thing he does, he wants to impress upon them that

God has spoken to us by His Son, that God spoke to the fathers by the prophets, but now He is speaking to us directly by His Son.

Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds...” (vs 1-2). So this is a greater message.

And yet, look what God did back here in Jer. 7. God always sent the prophets. God always sent someone to warn them. Jeremiah 7:26: “Yet they did not hearken to Me, nor bow down their ear, but hardened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.” Now then, the words spoken by Jeremiah become a witness and a warning and a testimony against them. And if you want an interesting study go through, read and survey, the whole book of Jeremiah. And as you go through you’re going to see how profoundly it fits this nation today—in everything!

So what is said needs to be a warning, a witness, a testimony whether they will hear or whether they will not hear. That’s why Jeremiah, when he started out, he said, ‘Ah, Lord, I am just a child!’ God said, ‘Don’t worry. I have known you before I formed you in the womb. And I will make your forehead like flint.’ Jeremiah had to *stand alone* against every one of them. Did that make God’s Word of any less effect because only one man spoke it? *No!*

Today, in the age of committee that we live in, you’ve got to have three or four opinions. And the design of that is never to come to the Truth, but to only come to a predetermined consensus. Now you watch the news on Sunday, and you go from channel-to-channel. With the exception of Meet the Press—Tim Russert—every one of the programs are a panel of two or three people. Listen carefully; analyze what they are saying. None of them want truth. They either want a consensus or a political position. So, if it’s the Truth of God, only one needs to say it, and it is so—in this case, Jeremiah; in the case of Christ, the Son of God.

Verse 27: “‘Thus you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not hearken to you... [even if they won’t listen, God says, ‘*Speak!*’] ...you shall also call to them, but they will not answer you’” What does this tell us brethren? This shows us the mercy of God, that in spite of the fact that they won’t listen, in spite of the fact that they won’t answer, *God still gives them a witness and a warning.* Isn’t that amazing? So you can go through and you can read all of the death and destruction, which is in here—and there’s plenty of it—but nevertheless, God is merciful to give them a warning.

“‘But you shall say to them, “This is a nation which does not obey the voice of the LORD their God, nor receives correction; truth has perished, and is cut off from their mouth”’” (vs. 28). And, boy, is that not true. And when you read the book *Vatican Assassins*, you are going to understand that there is virtually no truth in anything that you hear or read. It is all a deception. *Everything!* Now that may sound a little radical, but that’s the plain truth of it, if I could coin a phrase.

Jeremiah 11:1: “The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying... [Isn’t that interesting? *Did the same thing as Moses!* What did God say to Moses all the time? *Moses, you say unto the children of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord.’*] ...**‘Hear the words of this covenant...** [What did we see last time? *Yes, all that the Lord has said, all that He has spoken, we will do.*] (So He says): ...**‘Hear the words of this covenant,** and speak to the men of Judah and to the people of Jerusalem. And say to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, **‘Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant...’**” (1-3). Now think about that in relationship to the New Covenant, in relationship to Jesus Christ. That’s what the book of Hebrews is telling us.

“...**‘Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant,’** which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, **‘Obey My voice** and do according to all that I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God... [That’s exactly the same thing as it is with Christ. We will see in a little bit.] ...so that I may fulfill the oath which I have sworn to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day.’...” (vs 3-5).

“Then I answered and said, ‘Amen, O LORD.’ Then the LORD said to me, ‘Declare all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, **“Hear the words of this covenant, and do them,** for I earnestly forewarned your fathers in the day I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and warning persistently, saying, **‘Obey My voice.’** Yet **they did not obey** nor bow down their ear, but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart. So I will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them.’.... [Notice what he was up against! We’re up against the same thing today!] ...And the LORD said unto me, ‘A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem...’” (vs 5-9).

Are we facing a conspiracy today of a grander scale? So we see here that God said again, v 7: “...**‘Obey My voice.’**.... [That’s what God

wants.] ...Yet they did not obey nor bow down their ear, but walked each one in the imagination of his evil heart. So I will bring on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do; but they did not do them” (vs 7-8). And here’s the conspiracy.

We have a conspiracy today that is so humongous, and is so perfect, that when people are told there is a conspiracy they don’t believe it. Now that’s a perfect conspiracy—isn’t it? When you can lay out the Truth right before them and they say, ‘You’re a nut. You’re a radical. That couldn’t be.’ My answer is, look at all the honest politicians in Washington, D.C. Why do you think that nothing turns out the way that they say when they campaign? *Because they are not in control of their own decisions!* They’re told what to do.

Verse 9: “And the LORD said to me, ‘A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the people of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers ... [Did this not happen in the Churches of God? Did they not turn back to Sunday worship, and Christmas, and Easter, and all of that? *Yes!*] ...They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who **refused to hear My words.** And they went after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.’ Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will bring evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry to Me, **I will not hear them**’” (vs 9-11). *There comes a point that if you don’t listen to God, God won’t listen to you!*

Verse 14: “‘And you, do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them. For I will not hear *them* when they call to Me in the time of their distress.’”

Jeremiah 12:16: “And it shall come to pass if they will diligently learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, “As the LORD lives”... [the Gentiles] ...as they taught the people to swear by Baal; then they shall be built in the midst of My people. But **if they will not obey...**” [This is to the Gentiles. Please understand, that’s why I had this here. The Gentiles that live within Israel, He’s saying, ‘If they will do with the same diligence to Me as they did to Baal, then I will build them.’] ...But if they will not obey, I will utterly uproot and destroy that nation,’ says the LORD” (vs 16-17).

If there’s any one thing we need to understand, when God says He means business, *He means business*—right? Is anyone going to turn back God? I mean, Job had to learn quite a hard lesson—didn’t he? And he was one who was in good standing with God—correct?

All right let's come back to Jeremiah 2, and we will see the whole message of all of the prophets was simple: **hear the Words of God and obey His voice!** And that's the same message all the way through the whole Bible: **hear the Words of God, and obey the voice of God!**

Jeremiah 2:4: "Hear the Word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the LORD, 'What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me and have walked after vanity, and have become vain?'" (vs 4-5). You might say 'What did you find wrong with God after you accepted Christ for your Savior to blot out your sins, and were baptized? What fault have you found in God, that you should turn backwards and go back into this world?'

Now I want you to notice how this prophecy fits this society today, to a 'T'—Jeremiah 6:13: "For everyone from the least of them even to the greatest of them is greedy for gain..." Even the poor buy lotto tickets in hopes of making—don't they? Those who are rich and powerful take, and take, and take, and buy, and take, and buy and take. And that's why you have the various cycles, planned and determined by the Federal Reserve to take money. Now remember when we said, when the market was way high, 'Someone's got the money, and they're going to take it down.' So if you had money in the stock market, and you rode it down, it's nobody's fault but your own—*given to covetousness*.

"...and from the prophet even unto the priest everyone deals falsely." And everyone who follows Sunday and Christmas and Easter are dealing falsely.

- Do they not handle the Word of God deceitfully?
- Do they not make it lie, when it doesn't?
- Do they not twist the Truth so it justifies their perversion, and their ungodly understanding of the Scriptures?

That's quite a thing— isn't it? *Yes!* "They have also healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly..." (v 14). And that's what Protestantism does. It heals sin slightly. It may modify behavior, but it doesn't change the overall results.

Verse 15, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?..." Now we've got a whole generation being raised on Harry Potter, don't we?—being raised on witchcraft! And by the way, Fox Family Channel was bought by whom? *Disney, the witchcraft station of the world!* They can't let anything good stay good for long. And from an evil point of view, that's the beauty of publicly owned corporations. That sooner or later, someone with

enough money can come and buy the whole lock, stock, and barrel and do with it what they want.

"... 'No, they were not at all ashamed, nor could they blush... [You watch some of these stupid soap operas with 'Lesbian Rosie,' etc.] ...therefore they shall fall among those who fall. At the time *that* I punish them, they shall be cast down,' says the LORD" (v 15). So there's a time when God visits. And that time is not too far down the road. The time of visitation is going to come. We have seen it in the Churches of God. And those Churches of God that have not returned to God, the time of visitation is coming. It's already come on several of them, and it's come upon them.

"Thus says the LORD, 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths where the good way *is* and walk in it, and you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, **"We will not walk in it."** Also I set watchmen over you, *saying*, "Hearken to the sound of the ram's horn." But they said, **"We will not hearken."** Therefore hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what *will happen* to them'" (vs 16-18). That's us! That's a prophecy for today. Remember what Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away'

Listen, "... 'O congregation, what *will happen* to them. Hear, O earth... [Since the people aren't willing to listen, God is going to say it to the earth.] ...behold, I will bring evil on this people, even the fruit of their thoughts **because they have not hearkened to My words, nor to My law, but have rejected it**'" (vs 18-19). Now what happened? Did Judah and Jerusalem fall and go into the Babylonian captivity? *Yes it did!* Over approximately a 20-year period, from 605<sub>B.C.</sub> to 585<sub>B.C.</sub>—three waves of invasions and captivity. Did they listen? *No!*

Jeremiah 7:2: "Stand in the gate of the LORD's house... [Look at it this way: Picture today someone going to Rome and standing right there at St. Peter's Basilica, and on the day of the high mass, that he gets up on one of those statues and stands up there right along side it.] (and he says): ...and proclaim there this Word, and say, **'Hear the Word of the LORD**, all Judah, who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.'" Stand there in St. Peter's Basilica and say you are coming to worship Satan the devil. This is not the house of God.

How many people do you think would repent and get on their knees? They would run after you like they did Stephen, they would take you and pull you down and tear you from limb from to limb. Good, loving Christians. Never turn the other cheek, but ready to kill at the slightest provocation. But they didn't hear. *They didn't listen!*

Let's see how he begins the book of Isaiah; very similar to what we read. And as we read it, let's ask: Is God consistent? *Yes! He's always consistent! He never changes!* 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.'" *They didn't listen to God!*

Now let's come to Psalm 95:6, which is also a part of Heb. 3. "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker, For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. **Today, if you would but hearken to His voice...** [Why is it 'today'? *You have to hear God's voice everyday!*] ...'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways'—to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest'" (vs 6-11).

Let's come to the New Testament, Matthew 7. This is one we've gone over many times. But in the light of everything that we have read, let's read it again. And let's see where all the false doctrine comes from. This follows all the way through with the thoughts. These are the teachings of Christ as recorded by Matthew, who was a Levite, and wrote all these things down. As a matter of fact, it's very clear that most of the book of Matthew was finished by 35 to 37<sub>A.D.</sub>—many parts of them were already circulating.

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it" That is, they're going to go in that gate. That's the majority of people.

So what does this tell you about all these polls? The majority think this, the majority think that. Did you know that those polls are lies anyway? They never count the people that hang up on them because they don't want to answer the poll. So that makes the poll all skewed. And those that want to answer will give the political answer that they want. So they come up with the answer that they want, and they only poll 1,083 people for a statistical whatever. And then they apply this to the whole nation. So next time you see these polls, watch them, and ask the question: What are they trying to manipulate by putting this poll this way? What is the outcome they desire from taking this poll? Then you've got your answer for why the poll. That's the broad way. That's the way the world is.

It takes absolutely no faith to keep Sunday. Just go to any church. Takes no faith. You just walk in the door. *It takes faith to keep the Sabbath!* It

takes no faith to lie and cheat and steal and commit adultery. *But it takes faith if you're honest before God*, and don't do those things.

Verse 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it. But beware of false prophets..." I tell you, Christ spoke over and over again, 'Beware of false prophets. Beware that people don't deceive you.' And, lo and behold, what happens? *Someone will come along and they will quote Truth* for a long time until they get to the point that they want you to do a right or left turn. *Then they got you.*

"...beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing..." And I still have never seen a false prophet coming with a placard hanging on his neck, saying, 'Watch out for me, I'm a false prophet.' But if they did, I'm sure CNN would go and find out what he has to say.

"...for within *they* are ravening wolves... [You'll understand that when you read *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*. You will understand that!] ...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" (vs 15-19).

Sometimes God lets it grow, and grow, and grow. It makes a bigger fire—doesn't it? But it's still going to be cut down. Satan and the religious forces of this world are going to think they have total victory when they have extinguished every Christian on earth. Then look out! *God is going to answer it.* And they shall be "...cut down and cast into the fire." You read about all the things in the book of Revelation, what's going to happen. Is that not being cut down? *Yes!* And where are *the beast and false prophet* thrown immediately, the first thing Christ does? *The Lake of Fire!*

Verse 20: "Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord'... [How many times have we read this?] ...shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing [practicing] the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven.... [These are the words of Christ. Remember what we read in Heb., that if you refuse Him, there is no more forgiveness of sin.] ...Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we* not cast out demons through Your name?... [Whether good speaker or bad speaker, it doesn't make any difference. If they don't speak the words of Christ, He didn't send them.] ...And *did we* not perform many works of power through Your name?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you.'..."

(vs. 20-23).

‘But Lord, You spoke to me!’ How many times have you heard Pat Robertson, even on TV, say, ‘The Lord said to me...’? Or Jimmy Baker? Remember when he was in his heyday? And with his weeping, streaking mascara wife Tammy, ‘The Lord spoke to me.’ *God never spoke to them!*

Here’s the key: “...I never knew you....” What does it mean to know God? ‘And hereby we know that we know Him *if* we keep His commandments”—correct? *Yes!* The test is: Do they keep the commandments of God? *Not just some of them, but all of them!*

“...‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness’” (v 23). That’s what *iniquity* means in the Greek—*lawlessness*. Now, lawlessness is a very interesting thing. Lawlessness against God. But it is so perverse that in their system of lawlessness they even incorporate some of the laws of God. They will denounce adultery, and murder, and thievery, unless it benefits them, of course. They will extol the virtues of Christ, but they won’t keep the Sabbath. They will try and put Christ in Sunday, but He’s refused to go in there, never has been in there. And every year when Christmas time comes around some self-righteous preacher who is tired of all the merchandising says, ‘Let’s put Christ back into Christmas.’ *He was never there!* Workers of iniquity. And they are so adept at it, they use the name of Christ, and people believe them. *This is what Paul was fighting here in the book of Hebrews.*

Verse 24: “Therefore **everyone who hears...** [actively hearing] **...these words of Mine and practices them...** [There you go! That’s the key, because just a couple pages back there in Matt. 4:4, He says, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ And He’s called the Word of God. And we’re going to be judged by what Christ says.] ...and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house...” [Now there will be some times when your life will feel like that. But if you’re built on the Rock, you’ll survive.] ...but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock” (vs 24-25).

You wait and see, when rain time and flood time come again this year, you’re going to see what? *You’re going to see houses going down the river, being torn apart as they go, because of the floodwaters!* Now remember this Scripture when you see that.

Verse 26: “And **everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them...** [The hearing must result in doing, or practicing. The

hearing without action is null and void.] ...shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand.” Now that’s nice and smooth— isn’t it? I mean, if you go out and you find some nice, good, level land that has compacted sand, man, I tell you, it’s easy digging. I mean, to dig the foundation, all you have to do is just kind of soak it down good, and it’s all nice and firm. You just get your trencher in there and it slices through it like soft butter. You know, just like a knife going through soft butter. And you got your foundation, you have your trench all ready to go, and you put everything up there, and that compacted sand is a good thing to build upon. But watch out. The dam upstream may break.

Watch Discovery Channel if you have it, because they did a good series on dams. And they actually have pictures as to what happened when a dam broke. And I used to drive by that dam every couple of months. It was in my territory when I was pastoring up in Salt Lake City. I would go up through eastern Idaho and on into Wyoming. As you go into Wyoming you follow along the Snake River. Just right as you come into Wyoming, just right after you get over the border, there is a little narrow gorge, which the road crosses over a little bridge where the stream down below the dam is. And you go up this road, and the dam is here, and you get to the top of the road, right at the top of the dam— WHOOM!—you look out and there’s a lake up there that goes for miles, and miles, and miles. And Dolores and I went up there, and she said, ‘I wonder what would happen if that dam would break?’ *And sure enough, that very dam broke, and swept everything out of its way!* Now, everyone below the dam was secure for years. And this dam was flood control, gave them water for irrigation, they had crops, they had things for cattle, and everything. And then one day it broke!

That’s what it’s talking about. I want you to have this in mind as we read this Scripture, v 26: “And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them...” Kind of like the old farmer that was up on the hill up over the gorge? He said, ‘I don’t think I’d right likely build my house down there alongside the river.’ *Well, it hasn’t flooded here ever since they had the dam.* ‘I just don’t think that that’s a place one ought to build a house.’ How long could they go? *Sooner or later it’s going to happen!*

The story of this in life is: How long can you go and everything looks good when you’re not obeying God? *Maybe a long, long time!* And your own deception is, that since God hasn’t done anything, it’s okay. But the reality is, the reason nothing has happened for a long, long time is because God has given you a space of repentance, and you haven’t used it. But it’s going to come. Just like we read in Jeremiah.

Verse 26: "...who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.".... [That's because *he heard the sayings and he didn't do them*. So that's what it's talking about here in the book of Hebrews.] ...Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching... [Hello? Is doctrine important? Doctrine means *teaching*.] ...for He taught them as one Who had authority, and not as the scribes" (vs 26-29).

A scribe could only say, look into the book of Moses, and say, 'God said...' That's all a scribe could do. And he could say, 'That means this...' But notice what Christ did. You go through and read Matthew 5, 6, and 7. He said, 'You have heard it said in old time, but I say to you...' No scribe could do that. And the scribes would always refer back to their teacher, be it Moses, or be it a chief rabbi, such as Hillel, or Shemei, or Gamaliel. Christ didn't do that. *He didn't refer to any man!* As a matter of fact, when you go through here, He talks about 'You have heard in old time...'—he didn't even refer to Moses.

Comment was made that the oral law—which is no different than the Catholic traditional laws; it's in the same category—came from the scribes and the Pharisees. Didn't come from God. But they all claim it comes from God.

Matthew 17; this is quite a thing here. This answers the question: If I could talk to God, or if I heard God directly, what would He say to me? There are a lot of people who palm it off on men—don't they? Look at a preacher and say, 'Well, you're only a man.' That's true! I don't want to believe any man. The Bible says trust no man, so I don't want to believe any man. I won't believe anything you have to say. The truth is that if what you say is the Word of God, then it's the Word of God. You're just a mouthpiece. So here's the answer: If you have anyone who comes up to you and says, 'Well, if I heard God speak, then I would do what God said to me to speak. What He spoke to me, I would do.'

Matthew 17:1: "And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them... [Now this is important, so that the apostles understood that Christ was the same One Who appeared to Moses, transfigured. This shows *His heavenly authority*, not the authority of men.] ...and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light. Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him" (vs 1-3). This is a vision. He says later, 'Tell the vision to no man.'

Verse 4: "And Peter answered *and* said to

Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. **Listen to Him!**'" (vs 4-5). That's all that was said—right? If God spoke to you from heaven today, what would He say? *This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased—hear Him!* And this, brethren, is exactly what the book of Hebrews is saying: **Listen to Christ! Obey My voice!** I mean, this is profound— isn't it? We need to understand that.

Peter recalls this on a couple occasions, so let's look at one of those occasions he recalls it. 2-Peter 1:15: "But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves... [How are you going to have things always in remembrance? *Written down!* That's why he wrote it.] ...for we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory" (vs 15-16).

When they were on the Mount of Transfiguration, when they heard God the Father's message—which was an angel that spoke the message—'This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear Him.'

Verse 17: "Because He received glory and honor from God *the* Father when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.' And this *is the* voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the Holy mountain." (vs 17-18). So the whole basis of what we are to do is based on that. And that's what the apostles did. That's what they wrote.

Verse 19, "We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word... [Now that is not prophetic sayings of the Old Testament. This is the more sure word of the preaching's of Christ. This is what it's referring to.] ...to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place... [What was Christ? *He was the Light*—wasn't He? And the darkness doesn't comprehend the light—does it? *No!*] ...until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture... [This does not refer only to the Old Testament, but this can refer also to the New Testament.] ...no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will... [And it means *by any time by the will of man*. Not just necessarily *old* time.] ...but the Holy men

of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 19-21).

Transcribed: 10/04/2003  
MDS/cis  
Re-formatted: 3-7-11

And so there you have the whole lesson: ***hear the voice of Christ!*** Now we’ll have a little bit more to finish up on this next week, and then we’ll get a little more into the book of Hebrews. But I think it’s important for us to really have the foundation and grasp and understand, that when you’re dealing with Jesus Christ, *you’re dealing with God manifest in the flesh. If you don’t listen to Him, you are in deep trouble!*

- you can’t ignore Him
- you can’t reject Him
- you can’t interpret Him any old way you want to

—to make things your own religion, and your own things. No, you are to do it the way that God wants you to. ***Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 9:6-7, 9-13, 15-18, 25-29
- 2) Romans 11:2-4, 8-10
- 3) Hebrews 2:1-4
- 4) Hebrews 6:1, 6
- 5) Hebrews 10:22-23
- 6) Romans 14:7-12
- 7) Hebrews 10:23-31
- 8) Hebrews 12:25
- 9) Jeremiah 7:21-25
- 10) Hebrews 1:1-2
- 11) Jeremiah 1:26-28
- 12) Jeremiah 11:1-9, 7-9, 14
- 13) Jeremiah 12:16-17
- 14) Jeremiah 2:4-5
- 15) Jeremiah 6:13-19
- 16) Jeremiah 7:2
- 17) Isaiah 1:2
- 18) Psalm 95:6-11
- 19) Matthew 7:13-29
- 20) Matthew 17:1-5
- 21) 2 Peter 1:15-21

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Corinthians
- Acts 13; 1
- Romans 13
- Matthew 4:4; 5-7

#### Also referenced:

#### Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Vatican Assassins* by Eric John Phelps



# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews IV

Fred R. Coulter—August 25, 2001

One of the most important things that we find in the book of Hebrews is that the book of Hebrews is telling us about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who was God, and is God, and Who brings the *ultimate message* from God, because He is the *ultimate Son*. And how that what is stressed all the way through the book of Hebrews that

- we are *to hear*
- we are *to listen*
- we are *to do* the will of God

So let's finish up with just a few things that we did not cover last time in '*hearing, have ears to hear.*' And, of course, we find that in the New Testament quite a bit. Let's go to Mark 4, and let's see that one of the things that Jesus said many times over, and over, and over again was that *we are to hear!* And this hearing means that we are *to listen, to do!* And there is a saying of Jesus that we find in many places in the New Testament, and we'll look at quite a few of them. When you put them together back-to-back-to-back, it really brings an impact as to what He said.

After He gets done talking about the parable of the sower, in Mark 4:9 "Then He said to them, 'The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.'" And that is an admonition, and also we will see, a warning that is given time and time again.

Verse 23: "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus said of the Pharisees, *they could not hear* because they weren't of God. So it's a very interesting thing. If you hear and then subsequently do, then you are going to want to listen again. And if you hear and then do, you keep your spiritual ears open. But if you hear and do not do, then as we find in Matt. 7, *you become like the foolish man* who built his house upon the sand. And as long as it doesn't rain, and as long as it is dry, it'll stand. But know for sure, the wind is going to blow, the rain is going to come, the waves are going to beat on it. And if you're not founded on the rock—you're founded on sand—you're washed away.

Matthew 11:11: "Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a *great* struggle... [That means it's taken by those who violently strive to achieve it.] ...and *the zealous ones* lay hold on it" (vs 11-12).

That sounds like it's kind of conquered—

doesn't it? It doesn't mean that. It means that *those who put forth the effort are able to enter into it*. You have to put forth the effort. It's not something that God is just going to kind of give to you, and you sort of bring it into your system by osmosis, just by being there.

"And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who was to come. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear" (vs 14-15). In other words, that is *hear to understand!* What do you do when you come across a Scripture that you don't understand immediately? *Well what you do, you just set it on the side for the time being!* And you go through and you study the things that you can understand, that you know and that you learn from, and then you can come back to it, and then you will understand it. Or we can find a parallel of it in the Scriptures.

This has perplexed a lot of people. And the first time you read it, it sounds like that from the time of John the Baptist, the Law and the Prophets are no longer applicable, and therefore you can ignore the whole of the Old Testament entirely, which is a false interpretation of it. So sometimes when you come to a verse that's hard to understand, you just set it aside for the time being, do some more study, and then come back to it.

Luke 16:16: "The Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it." Now then, taking that one verse alone you could stand up and you could say, 'Well, it does look like that the Law and Prophets only were applicable until John.' But what it is really saying is this: the Law and the Prophets were the *authority* until John; from the time of John, who preached the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom of God is the higher authority of the Word of God—which then, is Christ and His message all brought together.

Notice how Luke clarifies it: "But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away than *for* one tittle of the law to fail" (v 17). So that explains it. This means that the message of the Kingdom does not do away with the Law and Prophets, but it has a higher authority because it comes from God through the persons of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. And John the Baptist was the messenger to come to prepare the way for Christ. This is what it's saying.

Let's come back here to Matthew 13. And again, we have the parables that are given, the parable of the sower. And all the way through Jesus says, *He that has an ear, let him hear*. Matthew 13:9: "The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Verse 43: “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.**”

Verse 18: “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower... [That means *to hear, to listen, to understand!*] ...When **anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom** and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way” (vs 18-19).

Luke 10:16: “**The one who hears you hears Me**; and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me.” It also then comes down to when you hear the Truth of God preached, if you don’t hear, then you’re held accountable for it.

Luke 14:34: “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes tasteless... [Who is the salt? *You are the salt of the earth!* That is, those who have the Spirit of God are the salt of the earth.] ...with what shall it be seasoned?... [Think of this in relationship to apathy, about turning back on God’s Word. Those who do so have lost their savor.] ...with what shall it be seasoned? It is fit neither for the land, nor for the manure; *but* they cast it out. **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear**” (vs 34-35). And that ties directly in with the message of Hebrews.

Now, let’s go to the book of Revelation. There are quite a few places in here where it says, ***He that has ears to hear.*** I think it’s very important, because somehow when people are baptized in the Church of God, and they get into a comfortable routine, and they get into a situation where they’re going to Sabbath services, and Holy Days, and all of these things are involved; they reach a comfort level. And when you reach a comfort level, then you begin to reinforce that with a social level. And then when you to reinforce that with a social level, and you’re not growing in grace and knowledge spiritually, that social level begins to have more hold for you than the Word of God.

So then your Christianity is not based upon Christ. Your Christianity is based on *church socialism*. Then when it comes time *to hear*, too many people won’t hear because they get into the comfortable position that they won’t take any correction. So that’s why the messages to the seven churches are very important and profound; and especially the way that Christ ends the message to every church. So we won’t go through the message to all the churches, but we’ll just look at the ones where He says, ***He that has an ear.***

Revelation 2:7: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches...” And what it is that is heard is an admonition and correction, as well as recognition for what has been

done. God is not going to forget the good things that we do. But we cannot rest on the good things that we do and say, ‘Aha, we have accomplished.’ Always remember this: what you do today is fine; that’s for today. What you did yesterday, whether good or bad, if it’s good be thankful; if it’s bad, repent. And always remember this: ***never drag yesterday’s problems into today, and never drag today’s problems into tomorrow.*** When you do, you’re never going to come to the point of overcoming where you can put it behind you. If you’re always fighting the *past* battle, *you’re never able to overcome to fight the future battles* and go ahead. So hence, you stop overcoming.

So that’s why He tells them the good things that they have done, He tells them how they have endured; He tells them that they also have left their first love. And now He says, ‘Now listen to what the Spirit is saying.’

Same way in v 11: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches....”

Same way as v 17: “***The one who has an ear, let him hear*** what the Spirit says to the churches....”

And I find Pergamos very interesting. Pergamos was so wound up in cross-breeding Satan’s doctrines, and hierarchy, and government into the Church that God gave the warning that unless they repented Christ Himself would fight against His Church.

Now, I think that when you look at all the misplaced authority that we’ve seen in the various Churches of God, if I were one of them I would be very afraid at this point, having seen what has happened to Worldwide Church of God. Did not Christ fight against it? *Yes!* How did He do it? *He sent the enemy in to become part of them to take them down!* So that’s a tremendous lesson. And the wrong authority has caused so many problems. The long and short of Pergamos is, any church that has an overbearing hierarchical authority to where the authority of the minister is called ‘the government of God’—which it is not—look out! Christ is going to fight against you; and the end is not going to be very pleasant. So he that ***has an ear to hear, let him hear!***

Now we come over here to Thyatira, and we have v 29: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.”

To Sardis—almost dead—I have nicknamed Sardis a ‘corpse with a pulse.’ Revelation 3:6: “**The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches.” It was very interesting that during the time that we were covering here, about the things that are coming out concerning the

conspiracies, the synagogue of Satan—the Illuminati, the Bilderbergers, the Trilateralists, the Federal Reserve, the Catholic Church, the Jesuits, the Jews—all of it all mixed in together is the synagogue of Satan. And Christ tells those who love Him and hold fast to His Word in spite of all of it. And, of course, there's a lot of opposition against us—isn't it?

Today we have so many things to garner our attention. Plus, we've got peace and prosperity so there's no urgency. Now, when you have no urgency it's very tough to be zealous. That's why it is so critical. Everything of Satan is out there to come and take you away:

- leisure
- pleasure
- sports
- false religion
- false education
- your own carnal nature.

All of those things are pulling at you. Then you've got to face the conspiracy out there, and everything that is going on. And when you get done reading this *Vatican Assassins*. When you get done reading this book, believe me, you're never ever going to view the world the same way. And you will see the hand of the Jesuits and the Catholic Church and all of their accomplices because they use second parties, and third parties, and fourth parties to carry out their work. That's why the admonition is given to *stay faithful to the Word of God*.

Verse 11: "Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown." And boy, there's a lot of crown-stealing going along today. It's a man that can take it away from you. *If you don't listen to God, if you don't listen to Christ, you're going to lose your crown!*

"The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name. **The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches" (vs 12-13). Now since we beat up on the Laodiceans plenty enough, and we're all Laodiceans, we better be repenting. We won't beat up on us any more today.

Verse 22: "**The one who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation 13 shows we are going to come to a time, brethren, that it's going to be either/or. It's not going to be either this one/or that one. It's going

to be *either your name is written in the Lamb's book of Life* and you're going to receive salvation, *or it's not*. The time is going to come!

Revelation 13:8: "And all who dwell on the earth shall worship him... [*the beast* who received the deadly wound and was healed] ...whose names have not been written in the book of Life of the Lamb slain from *the* foundation of *the* world. **If anyone has an ear, let him hear**" (vs 8-9). It's interesting that you have the little word *if*. Because it shows it's a conditional choice that you must make. *Everyone who hears must choose to hear*. Which also means, *those who do not hear choose not to hear*.

I thought it was absolutely amazing what was written in *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*, where they gave the solution of triumph over the Catholic Church; that if you follow Christ and follow the Word of God, and keep the Sabbath of God, you will have the victory over the apostate church. You will stand on the Sea of Glass and have the harps of God; sing the song of Moses.

Revelation 16:15: "Behold, I come as a thief...." Now, you can rest assured if a thief is coming in your house he's not going to wear a placard and walk up and down in front of your house at the sidewalk and say, 'I'm a thief, I'm coming in at 2:30<sub>a.m.</sub>' *No!* You don't know. So this tells us that the circumstances are going to be such that before it happens it's going to look so great that it's going to be almost unbelievable that the events are unleashed that come. That's why He says,

"I come as a thief...." Now also understand there's something else that is in this verse, which is this: We are to be faithful unto what? *To the end!* The end of what? *There are two ends!*

1. to the end of your life
2. to the end of the age

So for those who don't come to the end of the age, this warning is for all of us at the end of our lives.

"Behold, I come as a thief.... [There are occasions when someone dies just like that. And you just *gasp*—you're struck; the person is gone. And in a sense it comes upon you like a thief, that you weren't expecting it; totally unexpected. This is what it's saying.] ...**Blessed is the one who is watching...**"

1. You've got to read and watch the Word of God
2. you've got to watch yourself and your carnal nature
3. you've got to watch against the attacks of Satan the devil
4. you've got to watch that no man take your crown

—right? *All of that!* “...who is watching and is keeping his garments... [Remember what it said of the Laodiceans? *They are naked; they don’t have garments!* (So Christ says): ...so that he may not walk naked and they *may not* see his shame” (v 15). The garments are what?

Revelation 19:8: “And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”

So how do you keep your garments from being spotted? *By not letting sin take over your life!* That’s how it is. If and when you do sin, *repent!* Christ is there as a *propitiation continually* that we come to Him. He knows we’re going to sin. He knows that we have difficulties. He knows that we have problems—doesn’t He?—because we have His Spirit in us, and if we have His Spirit in us, then He is in us—correct? *Yes!* He knows! The way you ‘keep your garments and not walk naked’ is that you are always going to God.

Now then, all of these things apply to the book of Hebrews. Let me just mention this: We’ve covered quite a few things in the book of Jeremiah last time, so we’ll cover just a couple of things there. But let’s understand how important this is. In the book of Jeremiah it says:

- 7 times that ***they will not hear***
- 15 times that the children of Israel ***have not heard***
- several times that they ***will not obey***

Jeremiah 25 contains a summary, as well as a warning. And I tell you, if you want something to help sort of perk up your spiritual juice a little bit, just set aside time to read a couple of chapters of Jeremiah every night just before you go to bed. And just think of it from the point of view, ‘How much is in there that is directed to me personally?’ *Take it personally for correction* and I think you’ll be amazed.

As you go through and read the book of Jeremiah, let me just encourage you to do this: There are many conversations between Jeremiah and God. Jeremiah was the only one who was speaking the Truth, and he had to go in front of all of the people and condemned them, as they would view it.

- He pleaded with them to repent.
- He pleaded with them to do God’s way.
- He pleaded with them to keep the Sabbath.

***They wouldn’t listen!***

Jeremiah 25:3: “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even to this day, that *is* the twenty-third year, the Word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you,

speaking again and again. But **you have not hearkened.** And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, again and again and sending them again and again; **but you have not hearkened nor bowed down your ear to hear.**... [What does it take to get through to some people?] ...They *all* said [the prophets], ‘Turn again now, each one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. And do not go after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and ‘do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no harm’” (vs 3-6).

Now just think of today, how they’re going after all these other religions, amalgamating them all in. I know when I drove on California Avenue, here was a Universal Church. And this week they were specializing on having Understanding the American Indian Spirit. And the next week they’re going to have something on Buddhism. And the next week they’re going to have something on Hinduism. And then maybe the next week they’ll have little something on Christ. ***That provokes God to anger!*** Because after all, God is God, and God is the One Who is Creator, and God is the One Who should be worshipped. And every other god is either a demon or a figment of your imagination, which you have made with your hands and you bow down to it. God gets really angry over that. But He says, ‘Look, if you stop it, I won’t bring it upon you.’

Verse 8: “Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘**Because you have not heard My words,** Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ says the LORD, ‘and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant...’” Now you think about that! How far that the Jews had gone down that He would call the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, ‘My servant.’ And you read the book of Daniel that God did deal with him rather directly—didn’t He? And he did write a letter of repentance after his seven years of insanity—didn’t he? *Yes!*

“...and will bring them against this land, and against its people, and against all these nations all around *you*. And I will completely destroy them, and make them a waste, and a hissing, and everlasting ruins” (v 9). And boy, there’s nothing that describes the area of Palestine anymore than that. Maybe it’s a little better now that some of the Jews are back there and they are irrigating and growing some crops and things like that. But I tell you, you look at some of those pictures of the so-called Holy Land. They are desolate, they are barren, they are forsaken. And especially if you go into the Negev and south of there. It’s just absolutely something.

“And I will take *away* from them the voice

of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (vs 10-11). Now God did that. We have that recorded right in the history of the Bible, and God brought them back. And what did they do as soon as they got back? Read the book of Ezra! Read the book of Nehemiah!

Notice Daniel’s repentance for Israel, Daniel 9:3: “And I set my face toward the LORD God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God and made my confession, and said, ‘O LORD, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and mercy to those who love Him, and to those who keep His commandments. We have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, and have turned aside from Your commandments and from Your ordinances’” (vs 3-5).

The reason that God allows these things to happen, and yes, brings them about—not because God delights in evil; not because God delights in death and things like that—is it’s the only way to bring them to repentance. When you come to the point that

- you won’t hear
- that you won’t see
- that you won’t do
- that you won’t listen

then God has to do something in your life to bring you to the point that you are willing to do so. And so Daniel could see that. So he admitted all of their sins.

Verse 6: “Neither have we hearkened unto Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our rulers, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O LORD, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us confusion of face, as at this day... [How this fits right in with the Church of God today. Is the Church of God in confusion today? *Yes!* Over so many issues, it’s incredible.] ...to the men of Judah and to the people of Jerusalem, and to all Israel who are near and who are afar off, through all the countries where You have driven them because they dealt treacherously with You. O Lord, confusion of face belongs to us, to our kings, to our rulers, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the LORD our God belong mercies and forgivenesses even though we have rebelled against Him. **Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God...**” (vs 6-10). So there it is. That ties right in with *obeying the voice of the Lord our God*. And I’ll say it again, because this is the

most profound thing of the Bible. The whole Bible is the recorded Words of God, either given by direct speaking or direct speaking from Moses, or the prophets. And you know, in their examples in what they did, they were not self-willed to do their words. They were not self-willed to preach their preaching’s. They did what God said. Why? *They were called of God and put into a relationship with God that they always would honor God’s way!* And that’s what it has to be with us.

Verse 10: “Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God to walk in His laws which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and have turned aside, so that they might not obey Your voice...” (vs 10-11).

There’s another thing that happens when you won’t hear. When you won’t hear and turn off your ears from listening to obey, then what do you do? You get busy doing other things so your conscience doesn’t bother you. You get busy doing other things so you won’t have to think about what you really have to do. And you tie that together with apathy and avoidance; what a recipe for disaster! Now you’ve done that, I’ve done that. How many times have you said, ‘I’ll do this; I’ll do that...’? And then you always find something else that you need to do before you do that; you never get around to it. So then they even make jokes and make a little teeny round doughnut which says ‘round tu-it,’ and pass that out to people who say, ‘Well, I’ll get around to it.’ So that’s what happened to Israel.

And another thing, *the greatest deception* that you can have—which is the excuse that the Protestants use for worshiping on Sunday—which is this: ‘God knows my heart, which is good, so therefore, I’m justified to worship on Sunday because my heart is good.’ ***That is the nicest excuse for the worst rebellion possible!*** People don’t have the gall to stand there and shake their fists at God and say, ‘No, God, I won’t do it!’ However, they can say, ‘My heart is right, God knows. I’m doing this to Him. Sunday is just fine. And you know—Christmas, boy, I’m glad we can go back and have that. I really missed that all the years that I was in the Church.’ They don’t look upon that as utter, rank rebellion because they couch it in such good terms.

You talk to any Sunday-keeper and you start pinning them down on the Sabbath and the first thing they do is what? *God knows my heart!* Doesn’t God judge the heart? *Yes, He judges the heart!* What is His judgment on the heart? *Jer. 17:9—deceitful above all things!* Isn’t that the greatest deceit? You don’t want to rebel in harsh words against God, so you use pleasant, good-sounding words so you are justified in your own mind, because that sounds good to you, therefore it must be good to God.

But notice, Daniel is repenting for all Israel, v 11: “Yea, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and have turned aside, so that they might not obey Your voice. Therefore the curse has been poured out upon us, and the oath that is written in the Law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him.” The problem was they didn’t listen to the voice of God.

Let’s look at Hebrews again, and let’s understand this:

- Heb. 1 is the *proof of the Divinity of Christ*.
  - Heb. 2 is the *humanity of Christ*.
  - Heb. 1:1-4—we’ve read them, so let’s just analyze them a little bit more and let’s understand some things here that are very important:
1. It tells us that **Christ is the heir**, the heir of all things. Hebrews 1:2: “Whom He has appointed heir of all things...” Verse 1 tells us that He is **the ultimate Son**; that He is speaking to us.
  2. **He sustains the creation**: “...By Whom also He made the worlds [ages]” (v 2). And, of course, we’re living in the final age.
  3. **He is eternal and pre-existent**, and now in glory, v 3: “Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of *His* person...”

Brethren, that’s the whole goal of us. The Greek there is ‘character’ meaning *we are to have the character of God with the mind of Christ* through

- the Spirit of God
- through the laws and commandments being written in our hearts and our minds

Also it talks about the exultation: “...and upholding all things by the word of His own power... [sustaining the universe] ...When He had by Himself purged our sins...” (v 3). Showing that **He is the ultimate sacrifice**.

These first four verses set the whole stage for everything through the book of Hebrews. And He had to do it alone. Why? *Because He created mankind!* He brought upon mankind the kind of nature that we have because of sin. So only He could do it. Then He is exalted with the resurrection, exalted “...sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high... [v 5 shows His appointment, by the virtue of what He is] ...having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them” (vs 3-4).

The better covenant; the superior covenant. Now understand this: if God is going to send His own Son on this earth, then what He has to say and

bring has got to be so much superior to what was given through Moses, to what was given through the angels. And this is the whole purpose of showing it, that this is the ultimate of God’s Word and expression to us and message to us.

Now vs 5-13; five things that this shows, and then we will go back and read them and look at some other verses which connect with it.

### 1. He is appointed as the Royal Son!

No angel was ever appointed to that.

### 2. He is God!

Is that not a higher authority than angels? Is that not a higher authority than a man? *Yes indeed!* He is God! He was God!

### 3. He is greater than any of the angels!

### 4. He is Eternal!

### 5. He is exalted and is told to sit at the right hand of God!

“...until I make Your enemies a footstool...” (v 13). Never said of that of any of the angels.

Verse 5: “For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me’?... [And we find that back in Psa. 2] ... And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, ‘Let all *the* angels of God worship Him’” (vs 5-6). *Firstborn!* Let’s focus on *firstborn* for a minute, because Jesus was firstborn twice: once *in the flesh*, and once *from the dead*.

The *King James* has ‘the first begotten.’ If it were begotten, it would read ‘protogene/protogenes.’ But it should be *firstborn*, because the Greek is ‘prototokos’—‘protos’ means first; ‘tokos’ means *born*. The verb of the noun ‘tokos’ is ‘tikto’—which means *to be born*. So, ‘prototokos.’

Matthew 1:25: “But he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her son, the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus.” So there is His physical birth—*firstborn*—counted from the mother. Christ, being ‘monogenes’—the *only begotten* of the Father, is counted from the father. So He is firstborn in the flesh. *And all the angels worshipped Him.*

Now, there is another purpose in this, because all the way through the book of Hebrews, what are we going to see? *That we are connected with Christ!* Our destiny in God’s plan is connected with what Christ has already done. And this is to give us hope, this is to give us inspiration, this is to give us strength and understanding, this is to give us *spiritual tenacity* in the face of difficulties. Another way of putting it is *endurance*.

Romans 8:28 fits in with it. This is what we need to know. Now many, many times—and I know and you know—we’ve all gone through

experiences—haven't we? We wonder why is this happening? And we don't see anything but the trouble. And when you come to the point the only thing you see is the trouble, then what you need to do is look up and find God and see God in it. And here's the place that you start, because it has to be done by faith. What you see is nothing but the problem, so you must have the faith to see beyond the problem.

Romans 8:28: "And we know... [this is something we need to come to know, to believe, and to believe with conviction] ...that all things.... [not some things, not part of the things, not most of the things, but all things] ...work together for good to those who love God... [if you don't love God, it's not going to work together for good] ...to those who are the called according to *His* purpose, because those whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son..." (vs 28-29).

What was the image of Christ? *Christ was the image of the person of God the Father*—correct? *Yes!* We are to be conformed to the image of Christ. And that's why God wants us to really understand that. Now when you do, then you can have zeal in times of peace. You can have purpose in times of confusion. You can have endurance in times of trouble.

"...He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren" (v 29). Now that's awesome! So whenever things get tough for you,

- Remember this verse (Rom. 8:28-29)
- Remember your calling!
- Remember your destiny!
- Don't let any man steal your crown!

—from the point of view that if a man goes bad, not all good men always stay good; some good men go bad! So if a good man goes bad, don't let that disillusion you in your faith toward Christ, because *if it does then he has stolen your crown!*

Let's come to Revelation 1; here again, the *King James* translates 'prototokos'—*firstborn*—as *begotten*. It would be 'protogenes' if it were the *first begotten*. Jesus is referred to as the *only begotten*—right? *Yes!*

Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead..." showing that the resurrection is the new birth. Not some sort of ethereal spiritual thing that takes place when you open your heart and let the Lord in. It actually works the opposite way around. Christ opens your heart and He lets you in. It's the opposite. 'The firstborn from among the dead.'

Now we have this confirmed in Colossians 1—it's confirmed twice. When you put all the Scriptures together, they really form a great and beautiful picture of what Christ is, what Christ has done, what He is doing, and the whole plan and purpose of God. And you couple that together and you put it on the framework of the Holy Days, and then you have the full plan and picture of God's way. That's why the Sabbath and Holy Days are so important.

Colossians 1:15: "Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* firstborn of **all creation**" Those who believe in a 'created' Christ turn to this Scripture and say, 'There it is, He's the firstborn of every creature.' Who was His mother? *No!* You couldn't have that—could you? It says He's the firstborn—right? It doesn't say He's the first 'created.' You would first have to have a mother for Him to be firstborn—right?

Verse 18 clarifies it: "And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, ***the firstborn from among the dead...***" means that *He's the firstborn among many brethren who are going to follow Him!* Are we going to be a new creation in Christ? *Yes, we're going to be a new creation in Christ through conversion and at the resurrection permanently as a spirit being*—correct? *Yes!* Will we be a new creature? *Definitely!* Hey, I don't want this old one to stick around very long. So 'all creation' refers to those who are going to be born of the resurrection.

Notice how this goes right along and shows why it was that Paul wrote Hebrews, v 16: "Because by Him were all things created... [Sound a little bit like Heb. 1? *Yes!*] ...the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And **He is before all, and by Him all things subsist**.... [Hebrews says He upholds the universe *by the Word of His power*. You've got to be wholly righteous in order to do that, to be trusted with that power. ***Christ is!***] ...And He is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell" (vs 16-19). ***We're going to share in that, brethren!***

Now let's come to the book of Hebrews 12, because it talks about the Church, and the Church is also viewed as the *firstborn*, as a group. Christ is the Firstborn as the individual, the first of the firstborn. We are called the Church of the Firstborn, as a group. Meaning what? *That we'll be in the first resurrection!* We'll be born from what? *From the dead! Firstborn!*

Hebrews 12:22: “But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the Church of the firstborn, registered in the book of Life in heaven*; and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of* Abel” (vs 22-24). There you have it. We’re all part of that *firstborn*. That’s quite a thing, brethren!

Remember this when you get kind of over-pressed with troubles and difficulties, and sort of downcast, always keep that in mind. Just go pray! Get on your knees, get out the Bible, open it up, and just go through these verses again. And ask God to help you, to comfort you, to show you the way, to lead you, to give you the thoughts that you need. And I’ll tell you what, God will deliver you out of that difficulty or predicament. ***He will!*** Absolutely will. And then all of a sudden you’ll go along, and one day—BING!—you’ll see that God delivered it.

This is why faith is so important; and also the love of God is so important. I’m not going to go through the whole thing, Remember this: You look at your old, physical, deteriorating, rusting-out, old body, getting old is not the problem, it’s the *rust* that goes along with it. Remember that! At the resurrection God wants to fill you with the fullness of God. That is overwhelming! When that makes a spiritual impact upon your mind—which it will—there will come a day, I guarantee it, you’ll be going along—you’ll either be praying or you’ll be studying, or you’ll be thinking on God’s way and you’ll be thinking on God’s plan—and it will come upon you in an overwhelming way that you—yes, ***you—are going to be filled with the fullness of God!*** That’s amazing!

Now Paul ends that section here, Ephesians 3:20: “Now to Him that is able... [has the power—‘dunamis’] ...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us.”

Have you ever just thought of something, and God answered that thought? Maybe you didn’t really even pray about it. You just, sort of a passing thought: ‘God, You know that would be nice,’ but not really demanding anything, not really in a prayer, but just kind of thinking. That’s happened to me twice, and it’s one of those things that you don’t think about it until it’s done, maybe already passed, and then you think, ‘Thank You, God, You did that. You heard that thought.’ He has the power, He has the ability to do it, and will do it.

“...above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory

in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen” (vs 20-21).

We have it tied in with Hebrews 1:2: “Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds [ages].”

Verse 7: “Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, ‘Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.’ But on the other hand, of the Son *He says*, ‘Your throne, O God... [Is Christ God? *Yes!*] ...*is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your Kingdom” (vs 7-8).

Now let’s stop right here and let’s look at a couple of other verses. This is quoted from Psalm 45:6-7. Let’s come to Titus 2, please. The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Jesus was Michael the archangel. Even some Seventh-Day Adventists do. So this knocks it into a ‘cocked hat.’

Titus 2:11: “For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared; Teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and Godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and *the* appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ... [It calls Him *God, Savior and God*. It’s not talking about two personages. It’s talking about our Savior, Jesus Christ, Who is the great God.] ...Who gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works” (vs 11-14).

Titus 3:4: “But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior... [We know that’s Christ, but He’s called *God our Savior*.] ...toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we practiced, but according to His mercy He saved us, through *the* washing of regeneration and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit, which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior” (vs 4-6). So there it is, clear as can be:

- Christ is God!
- Christ is our Savior!

Now let’s go back to Psalm 45 where this is quoted from. So what he’s doing, he’s showing that none of this can be said of any of the angels at any time. Psalm 45:6: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of justice is the scepter of Your kingdom... [a righteous scepter] ...You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God... [This is referring to God the Father. Is God the Father the God of Jesus Christ? *Yes!* {see booklets, *The Two Jehovah’s of the Psalms*, *The Two Jehovah’s of the Pentateuch*, *Defining the Oneness of God*, and *The Trinity*} ...Your God, has



anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows” (vs 6-7).

Hebrews 1:9—almost an identical quote; there is one thing you are to hate: “‘You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, *even* Your God, has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.’” We’re to do the same thing: *We are to love righteousness! We are to hate lawlessness!* And if there’s any one thing that’s lawlessness, that is Sunday-keeping. You think about that. You can read it in *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

Verse 10: “And, ‘You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands.’”

That confirms John 1:1-3—doesn’t it? You got that memorized? “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him” (vs 1-3). He laid the foundations of the earth. I’ve often wondered what’s that like? You know, the earth is quite a phenomenal thing.

Oh, by the way, I have the solution for the Kyoto greenhouse thing. Perfect answer, **God’s answer**: Don’t be so stupid, little man. If you want to stop the greenhouse effect, then I challenge you to stop every volcano I have created from blowing up. Because every time one of My volcanoes blows, it spews into the air carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide and sulfur and sulfuric acid many more times over than all the autos burning on the earth at the same instant. Foundations of the earth: God laid that.

They talk about the core of the earth being solid iron or whatever? But then you go down in the earth and then here is all of this molten magma, just sloshing around under the surface of the earth. And it serves a purpose. It keeps the earth at an even temperature, also with the oceans, and with the universe, and its place in the universe, and everything combined, and that the earth is always moving. All the land everywhere is always moving. It’s really amazing. You watch on the Discovery Channel; every once in a while they will show you some of these deep-sea things. And they will show you some these volcanic vents down at the bottom of the ocean. And clear down there, thousands of feet below the surface of the earth, are animals that God has created to live and thrive right there in an environment, that even other fish higher up in the elevation of the ocean could not survive. God has made so many strange and wonderful, different creatures. We look at them and think they are weird, but they are not. God made them, and for a tremendous purpose. And I’ve often wondered,

another place talks of about the four corners of the earth. And I know I’ve looked at the globe and I’ve tried to figure out where the four corners are. Where are the four corners of a round sphere? The closest I can come to it is this: the North Pole, the South Pole, then the area in the Atlantic called the Devil’s Triangle, and the area in the Pacific where they have the equal thing on magnetism that they do at the so-called Devil’s Triangle. And those are four points on the earth. Whether that is, I don’t know.

- God made it!
- God designed it!
- He laid it!
- He put it together!

Notice the second part of this which is greatest yet, Hebrews 1:10: “...and the heavens are *the* works of Your hands.... [Brethren, God has made that for His family. Imagine that! There’s going to be a new heaven and a new earth.] ...They will perish, but You remain *forever*; and *they* will all grow old like a garment, and You will roll them up like a covering... [just like you take a blanket or something and roll it up] ...and they shall be changed...” (vs 10-12).

So just like God is using this physical body which we have now, it’s going to be changed—isn’t it? *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye!* So likewise with the heavens and the universe that is out there that we see. It is going to be changed. What is that new heaven is going to be like? *The only way we’re going to find out is to be in the Kingdom of God* so we can travel out there and see it. And I tell you one thing for sure, God must have something so great that He has in mind, so marvelous beyond what we can even think or dream, that we can’t handle it with this physical mind. But He is going to do it. So God is absolutely incredible. His Son is absolutely incredible, that He is going to do that.

“...they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end.’.... [Imagine what it’s going to be like to live forever. Forever, and no rust.] ... But unto which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’?.... [Never!] ...Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation? (vs 12-14).

I want to go over the first four verses of chapter 2 to end this section of Hebrews. We will see this all the way through the book of Hebrews. Paul will explain something very profound, give Scripture after Scripture, and then what is he going to do? *He is going to give a warning!* So we have chapter 1, all this inspiration of what Christ is, what God is doing, how much greater He is than the angels, our destiny with Him. So then he gives the

warning,

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away**.... [It’s not that we let the thing we heard slip away, but that *we slip away because we’re not still listening.*] ...For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail...” (vs 1-2).

Remember Zechariah, John the Baptist’s father? *Gabriel came and said*, ‘When you go home, Elizabeth is going to conceive.’ And instead of Zechariah saying, ‘Well, thank you. I can hardly wait to get home,’ he said, ‘How’s that going to happen?’ And the angel said, ‘Because you didn’t believe, you’re not going to be able to speak until after the child is born.’ Was that enforced without fail? *Yes!*

“...and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” (vs 2-4).

So if God has intervened in our lives, brethren, it puts a great responsibility on us—doesn’t it? This book of Hebrews really, I think, is not only for them at that day when they grew weary of doing the things they should be doing, but it is also for us that we may get our eyes up and see Christ, ***that we may always be inspired with the Word of God and God’s plan!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 4:9, 23
- 2) Matthew 11:11-12, 14-15
- 3) Luke 16:16-17
- 4) Matthew 13:9, 43, 18-19
- 5) Luke 10:16
- 6) Luke 14:34-35
- 7) Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29
- 8) Revelation 3:6, 11-13, 22
- 9) Revelation 13:8-9
- 10) Revelation 16:15
- 11) Revelation 19:8
- 12) Jeremiah 25:3-6, 8-11
- 13) Daniel 9:3-11
- 14) Hebrews 1:2-4, 13, 5-6
- 15) Matthew 1:25
- 16) Romans 8:28-29
- 17) Revelation 1:5
- 18) Colossians 1:15, 18, 16-19
- 19) Hebrews 12:22-24

- 20) Ephesians 3:20-21
- 21) Hebrews 1:2, 7-8
- 22) Titus 2:11-14
- 23) Titus 3:4-6
- 24) Psalm 45:6-7
- 25) Hebrews 1:9-10
- 26) John 1:1-3
- 27) Hebrews 1:10-14
- 28) Hebrews 2:1-4

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 7
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Psalm 2
- Hebrews 1:5

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *Vatican Assassins* by Eric Jon Phelps
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

##### Booklets:

- *The Two Jehovah’s of the Psalms* by Carl Franklin
- *The Two Jehovah’s of the Pentateuch* by Carl Franklin
- *Defining the Oneness of God* by Carl Franklin
- *The Trinity* by Carl Franklin

Article: *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants* (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, Appendix N)

Transcribed: 02/10/2004

MDS/cis

Re-formatted: bo—3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews V

Fred R. Coulter—September 8, 2001

As we have seen, the first chapter of Hebrews talks about

- the Divinity of Christ
- the proof of His Divinity
- that He is special and unique
- He is greater than the angels
- He is greater than any human being
- the firstborn in the flesh
- the firstborn from among the dead

In Hebrews 2:1-4, you'll see this is a pattern all the way through Hebrews. You set the stage, in this case the Divinity of Christ—the greatness of the salvation—that God personally came in the flesh and talked to mankind to answer the question: If God were a man, what would He say? And that's what most people would say of God. 'If God would come down here and talk to me as a man, then I would believe Him.' That's why Christ came. Have they believed Him? *No!* They find another excuse, because when you take away one excuse human nature does what? *It looks for another excuse*, rather than *believe God and obey Him!*

After he states the case very clearly—which he did in Hebrews 1—now comes a warning. Verses 1-4, then vs 6-18, are also stating the case for *the humanity of Christ*. If He is a human being—which He was—and by the way, you might want to read those sections in *The Christian Passover* book again: The Nature of God and The Nature of Man. Also the sermon series on *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*. That will add a great deal to your understanding as we go through. By the time he gets done with Heb. 2:18, Paul compares Christ with Moses. What did the Jews say concerning Christ? '*Moses we know. God talked to him. As for this Man, we don't know.*' So he's got to answer the question concerning Moses, which he does in the first part of Heb. 3.

When he comes to Hebrews 3:7, there is another warning: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness'" (vs 7-8). Then all the rest of chapter 3 and the first part of chapter 4, all the way down to Hebrews 4:14, is a very strong warning. And we will see that in the rest of the chapters again.

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we** should slip away.... [Now the *King James* says, 'lest they should slip away.' But that's not correct.] (It is):

...lest at any time **we** should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall **we** escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (vs 1-4).

Now let's come back to verse 1: "For this reason, it is imperative... [that's the strongest that I could get in the English for the Greek 'obligatory.'] ...that we give much greater [full] attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away."

After Hebrews was written they slipped away even more, in spite of the warnings here in the book of Hebrews about committing the unpardonable sin. Now we are living in the identical days today.

- Are people tired of hearing God?
- Are people tired of keeping the Sabbath?
- Are they tired of keeping the Holy Days?

For whatever reason! Now true enough, the ministers did not do much to inspire the brethren to keep the Holy Days, because they became disinterested and bored. So the brethren would come to church and they would become disinterested and bored, and they weren't fed. So they *slipped away* because they weren't paying attention to the things which they heard.

Let's see what we need to do when this occurs. If you begin to neglect—and as I mentioned before, it's for the Laodicean age—v 3 says: "How shall we escape, **if we have neglected** so great a salvation..." Why does he say that? What is *the salvation* that God is giving us?

- to be His sons
- to be spirit beings
- to live in glory with Christ with the same glory that He has

Is that not a great salvation? *Yes, it is!* What do people settle for when they give up on that? *They settle for comfort in the flesh*—don't they? And when they give up on that they begin to compare themselves with other people.

Let's look at the process here of comparing yourself with other people first. Today this is even more of a troubling problem than back when this

psalm was written. We can be almost guaranteed of that—can't we?

I mentioned to you that I used the *Word Biblical Commentary*, and it gives some very good things. I don't use any other commentary because very few of them really discuss the Greek in a way that is helpful. But here is part of the commentary that was written. And this, I think, is a very well-written paragraph from the perspective of Christology. Now unfortunately, they use these long words. What is Christology? *That is the study of Jesus Christ to know who He is.*

Hebrews is an unusually important document because of the distinctiveness and the clarity of its witness to Jesus Christ. The key to that witness is the recognition that the Christology...

Or that is the presentation and understanding of Who Christ was, Who He is, and what He is doing now

...in Hebrews is a pastoral response to a crisis.

What was the crisis? We just read it—*they were neglecting! They were not paying attention! They were letting other things get in the way.*

The failure of nerve on the part of the community addressed, as evidenced by the parenetic warning sections, occurred because of an inadequate Christology... [understanding of Christ] ...an inadequacy the writer is endeavoring to address by the exponential sections of the discourse.

In other words, he's trying to correct them in certain sections, just like I pointed out in Hebrews.

The laxity against which this writer is striving... [spiritual laziness] ...in this series of exhortations he directs to his audience results at least partly from a deficiency he attempts to remedy, and the development of his theology.... [teaching about God] ...To be more precise...

Now this is in easy-to-understand English here:

...the reader's lethargy derives from their failure to grasp the full significance of Christ: that He was God, that He became flesh, was the Son of God, died for our sins, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of God as our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

They didn't grasp that!

They were prepared to abandon their confession because they had lost the realization of its significance.

Let me give you a good example of that: When the Spanish came over here and conquered Central America and South America, what was it they were after? *Gold and silver*—right? And the Indians, especially the Incas, had so much gold that it had lost its value. They willingly gave it away. And a lot of them gave it away so they could live a little longer in the flesh. The Spanish were there to run the spears through them and chop off their heads because, being Catholics, these heathen were heretics and deserving of death. But they could stave off death if they would profess Catholicism and give them the gold. Now in the face of death, gold didn't mean too much—did it? *So they willingly gave it!*

We have the same thing here. People did not appreciate—the brethren did not appreciate—what God had done and they were prepared to abandon their confession because they had lost the realization of its significance. And that is profound, because that is exactly what has happened in the world, in Protestant Christianity, and in the Church of God, with the true Christianity of Christ.

- How did they lose it? *They became lazy!*
- Lazy in what? *Listening to the Word of God!*
- How is it that you become lazy?
- What is the first neglect that people slack off on in their Christian growth? *Study! Less than that, even reading the Bible!*
- When you don't study, what is it that is really happening?
- What are you reading when you study, or when you just read the Bible? *You're reading the Word of God!*
- Which is what? *The voice of God! To obey the voice of God!*
- What happens when you don't study? *God is not talking to you!*

God does not come down with an audible voice in your brain and say, DING! 'Hello, this is God. May I have five minutes of your attention please? I want to tell you something.' *NO!* Because

- *you have to choose* to open the Bible
- *you have to choose* to strive after God
- *you have to choose* to serve God and love God

God is the One Who is perfect; we're the ones who are imperfect. Therefore, in their laxity, if they don't study *they don't hear the voice of God.*

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater [our full] attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away."

What happens when you don't study the Bible for a long time? What is the first thing that happens when you don't study? *The first thing that happens is you get a guilty conscience because you know you ought to!* Then somehow you justify your guilty conscience so it doesn't stab you. But what the guilty conscience is, is *God's Spirit* saying you better study. Then if you don't, you begin to forget. And what happens with forgetfulness? First of all, you let it slip; then next, you deliberately avoid it because you don't want to remember it. *And then you give up on God!* You don't give up on God first. You give up on the Sabbath and the Holy Days, and you opt for a Sunday god. You still think you have God, but *you don't have God!*

Now in this age, what's another factor that comes into play that they didn't have in other ages? *The things in the world, the ways of the world!* And it's so easy— isn't it? I mean, in your own home how many things are there to distract you if you let it? *Television, radio, movies, neighbors!* Then you assuage your conscience by saying, 'Well, God wants me to do good.' So then you make friends with your neighbors that you were enemies with, and you think, 'I've really done a good deed.'

God could care less, because *you haven't come back to Him.* Especially when your employer wants to work on the Sabbath or Holy Days, and he comes up and he says, 'Now look, I'll pay you double-time, but I really need you tomorrow, Saturday.' If you are not strong in Christ, that could be very enticing. And you don't view that as coming from Satan, because, after all, he's just your boss. But your boss is in the world— isn't he? So *it's the world knocking on the door of your mind!* And who's the 'god of this world'? *Satan the devil!*

Here is the ultimate that happens, Psalm 36:1 "The wicked utters transgression in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes." Let's understand something:

- If you start slacking up on the Sabbath, what does that represent?
- If you then do not keep the Sabbath, what does that represent?
- If you begin sinning, what does that represent?
- ***No fear of God!***

God expects you to keep the Sabbath the way He has defined it, from sundown to sundown—correct? And He wants you to keep it because you love Him so that you can get a great deal out of the Sabbath and God can fellowship with you, because God loves you. *This is an expression of your love to God!* But if you lose that love and come to the point that you no longer have any fear; in other words, *fear* is a last resort to keep you from sinning against God.

Now what about a man or a woman who is taken up with temptations of adultery? And they get ready to fall into it? And then all of a sudden it comes to their mind and they run away and do not commit the act, because they're afraid. *They are afraid of the penalty of God!* That *fear* is the bottom line to keep you from going over and transgressing.

That's why it's saying, v 1: "The wicked utters transgression in his heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes, for he flatters himself in his own eyes until his iniquity is found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he has stopped acting wise and doing good.... [Slacking up! Not even doing any good.] ...He plots iniquity upon his bed; he sets himself in a way that is not good; he does not hate evil" (vs 1-4). So that's the ultimate condition of falling away.

Let's look at a more likely one that takes place with us, Psalm 37. And it's interesting how these come, one after the other. I'm going to write 'Lot' right up here at the beginning of this, because it says in 2-Peter that Lot was vexed, or frustrated because of the evildoers in Sodom. He could have moved out; he didn't have to stay there.

It's like a person living in the middle of San Francisco, coming to church every Sabbath and saying, 'Oh, those wicked people! I see them on the street: men holding hands with men, and kissing men in public. And boy, I went by one of those gay bars the other day, and you wouldn't believe what I saw!' Well if that upsets you, move out of San Francisco. God had to send down an angel to deliver Lot and his two daughters and his wife and his two sons, and their families didn't even believe. They said, 'No, this is craziness; we like Sodom. We know the problems of it, but we like all the benefits of it.' And even his wife couldn't stand to obey the angel and she looked back. Remember it says, 'Every transgressor of an angel is just recompense.' And hers was instant, *a pillar of salt!*

So here's what happens, Psalm 37:1: "Do not fret yourself because of evildoers... [don't be frustrated] ...and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity." That is, in their prosperity. Now, why does God let the wicked prosper? *And they do*—don't they? There are two reasons:

1. in hopes that they will repent
2. so that when His judgment finally comes it will be completely just

He has given them space. That's why God sends the rain on the just and on the unjust. Verse 2: "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb."

Right now we're right at the tail end of the haying season. And as I go do my water therapy—

and Rachelle said, one man thought that my water therapy was colonics; trust me, water therapy is not colonics, it's exercise in a pool—and I have to go by this place where their business is making hay. He's got these fields of alfalfa, and he does a really good job. He, so far, has had five cuttings, and he's working on his sixth cutting. Now this far north, that's a well-managed set of fields to do so. And it's alfalfa that he cuts, so it grows fast. But as soon as it's cut, what happens? *It loses its life sap from the stem from the roots*—correct? And it begins to dry up. That's the whole purpose of hay, to dry up. That's what it's talking about here. Don't worry about it if they look green and prosperous. When they're cut they're going to dry up.

“Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land... [or enter into the Kingdom of God at the resurrection] ...and cherish faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD...” (vs 3-4). This is how you overcome the neglect and laxity. Don't fret because of the prosperity of the people out there. Don't be envious of the things that they have. Just remember, there's an economic downturn. And the repo-man is just around the corner. You will see it!

Remember all those dot-coms two years ago? *They've had repossession sales!* You can buy nearly brand-new equipment for a few cents on the dollar. And all those rich highfliers—where are they now? *In bankruptcy court!* Were they cut down? Were they shriveled up? Did it go away? *Yes!*

So if you are faithful and continue with God, v 4: “Delight yourself in the LORD and He shall give you the desires of your heart”—which may not be physical things at all. But a greater thing which is: If you desire to know the Word of God and really love God, that's what He will give you, and that's what is more important and that is something that no money can buy. So that's why, as we will see with the Laodiceans, it is so tragic that they say, ‘We're rich and increased with goods,’—what does that amount to? It's like they asked when the rich man died, ‘How much did he leave?’ *All of it!*

Verse 5: “Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday.... [What I'm giving you is how to overcome the laxity.] ...Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way; because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil.... [And isn't that what happens? *Carnal nature!* ‘If they do it, I'll do it.’ And that's generally because you get frustrated and you feel deprived] ...For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. It is but

a little while, and the wicked shall be no more... [that's going to happen] ...yea, you shall diligently consider his place, *but* he shall not be *there*” (vs 5-10). And what does God say is going to happen to the wicked? *They're going to be burned up!* Where are their ashes going to be? *Under our feet, (Mal. 4)! Is that not a complete fulfillment of this? Yes! You don't even consider their place.*

Verse 11: “But the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes against him with his teeth. The LORD laughs at him, for He sees that his day is coming” (vs 11-13). So the first way you overcome laxity is to understand that the world and all of its prosperity out there is a deception. Yes, for a little while you can enjoy some physical things. But it's going to come to an end.

Verse 14: “The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, to kill those who walk uprightly. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. Better is the little that a righteous man has than the riches of many wicked” (vs 14-16). So that's how we stir ourselves up.

Let's come back over here to Psalm 36:5. So you compare all of that, compare all the world, all the riches, everything that's here. “Your lovingkindness, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgments are like the great deep...” (vs 5-6). You think about that!

I was watching the other day something about the Himalayas. And I tell you, those mountains go up as nearly vertical, it's unreal. And I never thought of it until just reading it now, that the righteousness of God is like the great mountains. And even at almost incomprehensible heights there is life. There are birds, there are animals, there are plants. And I'm just glad I'm a valley, sea-level person.

Verse 6: “...Your judgments are like the great deep; O LORD, You preserve man and beast. How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!.... [Now that's what to focus on. That's what to get your mind on, the loving kindness of God.] ...Therefore the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Your wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the richness of Your house... [When will that be? *At the resurrection!*] ...and You shall make them drink of the river of Your pleasures, for with You is the fountain of life... [Doesn't that sound a little bit like Rev. 22 and the tree of life that's on either side of the river as the water flows out under the throne of God? *Yes it does!*] ...in Your light we shall see light. O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You... [That's the

key. You know God because you have His Spirit and because you keep His commandments. And don't ever let that slip away.] ...and Your righteousness to the upright in heart. Do not let the foot of pride come against me, and do not let the hand of the wicked move me.... [In other words, this is saying, watch yourself, discipline yourself; don't let pride and vanity and foolishness come up in you. Realize everything you have comes from God.] ... There the evildoers have fallen; they are cast down, and cannot rise" (vs 6-12).

Now, let's look at a couple of other things that we need to do. The first thing that you become lax in is *study*. What is the second thing you become lax in? *Prayer*! So therefore, in the first instance when you become lax in it, God is not talking to you because you're not studying His Word. In the second instance you're not talking to God because you are not praying. And we could probably get a list ten feet long of all the excuses that everybody—including me—have used as to why we can't pray when we know we need to. Isn't that something? It's an amazing thing! This human mind is tricky!

Peter is doing the same thing. He is dealing with those who have been slack. And this was the problem that Paul was addressing in Hebrews. So this was a church-wide problem. John addresses the problem, Peter addresses the problem, Jude addresses the problem, Revelation addresses the problem, Hebrews addresses the problem. So Peter, in being able to point out the solution to the problem is this: He wants to inspire them.

Today you hear the word *focus*—don't you? Almost anything that you hear about instruction to do this, or do that, or how to improve, or how to motivate employees, or how to be better in sports, or whatever it is, the key word is *focus*. *Focus* on this; *focus* on that. That's not too bad of a word, but Peter is trying to get them to focus on *what God has done for them* so that he can stir them up. In other words, there is a stirring-up that comes through the power of God's Spirit to help inspire and motivate people to change, to get them to come to the point that they say, 'Enough is enough in my life, and I'm going to change'; whatever that may be.

2-Peter 1:3: "According as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue... [So he is saying to *focus*, get your mind up on the glorified Christ and your calling to glory and everlasting virtue.] ...through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature..." (vs 3-4). So there's a promise! You're going to get rid of the human nature. Now the older we get and the closer we come to putting our feet in

the grave and laying our head down there, the more weak we become and the more fantastic having the Divine nature really becomes. We realize that, as we get older, because of the weakness of the flesh you have the reverse of growing up. Growing up you get stronger and bigger, have more ability and skill. When you get older it reverses—doesn't it? You get weaker, you rust out, you have *senior moments*.

Verse 4: "...having escaped the corruption *that is in the world through lust*." There is a big key to overcoming, which is this: ***learn to recognize lust for what it is when it starts!*** It's easier to see in other people; somehow it is. It's harder to see in yourself, because you don't want to say, 'you lustful old fool'—whatever it may be. And I'm not just talking about sex lust; it can be lust after this or that or the other thing. So we escape that. And when you begin to recognize it in yourself as well as other people, then you know you are escaping the lust of the flesh. And if you escape the lust of the flesh, that means what? You're going to be minding the things of the Spirit. And minding the things of the Spirit leads to eternal life.

Verse 5—here's how he is stirring them up: "And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides... [Then he gives the steps on spiritual growth. {see sermon series on the *Epistles of Peter* and *The Seven General Epistles* book}. So I won't do a detailed thing here other than to just read through it.] (But notice the steps): "...having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*" (vs 5-7)—'agape.' So this shows the building blocks of your Christian character. This shows you how you can look and evaluate yourself before God by looking at these things and see that you practice them.

Verse 8: "For *if* these things exist and abound in you... [That's what it needs to be. We are going to see that it is going to be, I am convinced, a dwindling number of people in whom it is in and is abounding; no question about it. And that's what happened in the Church at that time, too.] ...they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind... [Sound a little Laodicean? *Yes!*] ...so short-sighted... [In other words, you are only looking at the present, up close.] "...*that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time" (vs 8-10).

See how that ties in with Hebrews 2:1:

“...lest at any time we should slip away”? And if you slip away, what happens? *You have failed*—correct? *Yes!* No doubt!

2-Peter 1:11: “For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.... [That is, if you do these things.] ...Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*” (vs 11-13).

Now if you do that, then you’re not going to slip away—right? So here is the responsibility for everyone who is a teacher or a minister to stir up the brethren. And we all need to be stirred up—don’t we? Aren’t there times when you go along and you kind of feel *blah*? You know, the *blahs* hit you? Well, go to Christ and let Him stir you up. And every once in a while if you do that, every once in a while God will really intervene in your life; and there is going to be a spiritual experience that you will have either in studying, or in praying, or together where God’s Spirit will be with you and inspire you and stir you up like you never have been before. And that will happen. If you apply yourself as Peter has said.

Let’s notice here what was happening. Let’s pick it up here in Jude 3: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence...” Jude the brother of Christ, was stirred up because of what was happening—right? And what happens when you get all stirred up and you come against some laid-back, kind of just ‘cool’ Christians: ‘Don’t get excited. Don’t rock the boat. There’s no need for this. We’re doing fine.’ And if you give them any correction at all, ‘you’re hateful; you’re putting a guilt trip on me.’ Isn’t that what they say?

Notice why he had to write, v 3: “...when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.” Now you’re losing it. They are *slipping away!* And it’s like as we brought up many times, when you’re standing in the light, walking to the light, you are making progress.

Let’s go to John 3:19, because this is the trap and the snare that comes upon everyone that thinks he or she is secure: “And this is the judgment... [And there has been a judgment on this world because Christ came.] ...that light is come into the world...” That can be:

- a) the Truth of God
- b) Christ, the Son of God

...but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil” (v 19). They don’t like them exposed. If you try and expose them in the climate that we have today—let’s say for example you’re against homosexuality and you won’t work with them—you can lose your job. They can’t stand to have their deeds exposed because they’re evil. So, what God does, He sends a little virus. God can take care of them with something that is so small they don’t even know it.

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the light... [‘Don’t preach this Bible to me. I don’t need the Bible.’ Or if they’re in the Church of God, ‘Well, you are just hard-nosed. You are a bigot. You’re radical.’ **Hates the light!** ‘Just keep it calm.’] ...and does not come to the light... [doesn’t come to God or to Christ Himself] ...so that his works may not be exposed... [or corrected] ...but the one who practices the Truth comes to the light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (vs 19-21). Here’s what happens:

- you’re coming to the Light
- you are walking to Christ
- you’re coming to the Word

and then there comes a time when laxity sets in. You’re still standing in the light and you’re looking at the light, but you don’t understand that the light is moving on, because if you don’t move with Christ, it’s going to move beyond you. So as long as you are standing in that light, you think you are in good shape, even though you’re lax.

Now then, a day will come when that person will turn and start walking away from the light. And it’s so deceptive when it happens because of this: you still see the light as you are walking away from it. Have you ever done that at night, when, say, you’re at a place where especially if there’s any land or acreage around and there’s a big light on the back porch? And as you walk out from that, there is light that you can see. You can see where you are going. But unless *spiritually* you understand that you are walking away from Christ you won’t realize that you’re going to walk off into the darkness. So that’s what happens when you become lax. It’s very, very imperative, this is not the first time it’s happened; it’s happened over and over again. The Church runs in cycles. We’re in the correction phase and the regrouping phase right now.

Jude 3: “...fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For... [the reason you need to do it is] ...certain men have stealthily crept in...” You’ve heard of the stealth bomber—haven’t you? You can’t detect it on radar, but did you know that now they can detect it with cell phones? You can get two



or three or four cell phones, and they're getting a beam down from satellite to the cell phone. And what happens, if you have a certain set of equipment you can see where in the air the beam comes down around the stealth. Radar going up is the beam going up, and it's meant to bounce off of it, so you can't see it. But when whatever kind of radio wave is coming down from the satellite down to the cell phone, it's coming down on top of it and exposes it. You only need about six \$40 cell phones and you can detect a stealth plane coming in on you.

Now then, there's a good analogy for us. If we know our Bible we can detect the stealth infiltrators into the Churches of God so we won't let them get a foothold. But it's easy for them to come in where there has been laxity. And it's easy for them to come in and sit there and wait until the right moment to spring it. And that's what happened then! That's what happened now!

"...those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v 4). While at the same time, we can add, they use the name of Christ. Now isn't that a tremendous deception? *Yes, it is!* Next time you hear the pope speak, listen to how many times he may use the name of Christ. Just using the name of Christ proves nothing. You can hear it on the golf course, but that has nothing to do with worship. The worst is on a Sunday morning from the pulpits.

Audience question: What do you mean we're in a regrouping stage? I meant revival stage. In other words, being scattered, and now we're being revived. That would leave you hanging, regrouping. In a sense it's regrouping into smaller groups according to how God scatters. But revival is more what it is.

Here's how the infiltrators take advantage of *laxity*. They come in and they sow the seeds of discord, v 16: "These are complainers... [Now what does a *complainer* do? *Passes rumors; passes innuendos, criticisms, and false judgments!* 'Oh, he's just too hard. Oh, I wish we had something more pleasant. All he does is talk about sin,' etc.] ...who are walking after their own personal lusts, *while* their mouths are speaking great swelling words, flattering persons for the sake of advantage."

Go back and read about the son of David, Absalom—what did he do? He came and stood at the gate in said, 'I'm David's son. And I know if you go to David you're not going to get the judgment that you want. So, if you come to me I'll be able to give you a better judgment.' You go back and study it and see what happened to Absalom.

Verse 17: "But you, beloved, remember the

words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; because they said to you that in *the* last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts. These are the ones who cause division; *they are* psychic... [and the Greek there is 'psuche'—psychic], having not *the* Spirit of God" (vs 17-19). Meaning this: they have a spiritual something about them, which we call today 'psychic,' but it is not the Spirit of God. Or, you could say they have another word which comes from the Greek, which transliterated in English is 'charisma'—'He has charisma. You wait and see, the next pope is going to have lots of charisma; they'll talk all about it.

"But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most Holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit, *so that* you keep yourselves in *the* love of God..." (vs 20-21). That's how you overcome all of this. That's why the love of God is so very important. The love of God comes two ways:

1. keeping of His commandments
2. loving Him on a spiritual and emotional basis because He is your Father

"...while you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now on the one hand, show mercy to those individuals who are doubting..." (s 21-22).

This is talking about those who have been victimized by these men who crept in unawares and turned the grace of God into license. If you know other brethren who have been victimized by it, then what you do with them, and you can do with the latest thing that we mailed out to you, *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*. I tell you, if anybody who has ever kept the Sabbath reads that with a clear mind, even though they have left keeping the Sabbath, they will quit going to Sunday, because that's profound. It blew me away, that here that's been out there. It was written 108 years ago and never heard of it in the Church of God, whatever brand of Church of God you were in. But I tell you what, if someone were handed that to them when they first began keeping the Sabbath and they kept that in mind, they would never go back and keep Sunday.

Then here's how you can deal with brethren that you know. And there are a lot of you out there who know. And that's why I have said, [see book: *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

So what you do, v 22: "...show mercy to those individuals who are doubting."

- I know it was hard for you.
- I know you've been duped.
- 'I know that you trusted the men.
- 'I know you believe what they said.

- ‘Listen to this’ or, ‘read that.

And if you can give them a copy of *Rome’s Challenge* and say,

‘Look, I know you’re keeping Sunday, and I know you probably think that it has been justified to do so. But do me a favor, would you, please? Here, read this and see if you want to keep Sunday. Now promise me that you will read every word of it.’ ***Maybe you can help someone.***

Verse 23: “But on the other hand, save others with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh.” In other words, they have come to the point that the last resort is fear of the Lake of Fire. Now if you don’t have fear of the Lake of Fire, it’s over with. If you don’t have any fear of the Lake of Fire, watch a special on Discovery Channel about volcanoes. And just look down into this bubbling lava, and you are looking at a lake of fire. And just think about how you would want to be cast in there, and you burned up, and there is nothing left; and all hope, everything of your existence is gone. So some people you have to do that with.

Verse 24: “Now to Him Who is able to keep them from falling, and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy, to *the* only wise God our Savior, *be the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity. Amen.” (vs 23-25). Dynamic little book— isn’t it? Just 25 short verses, but wow, what a real message that it has there. So sometimes that’s what we have to do.

Let’s come to 2-Timothy 1:6 to show what we need to do. There is something that each one of us needs to do. Whether we have begun slipping away or not, but just when we start getting lazy and start letting ourselves slack up, then here’s what you need to do. Peter said he would stir them up. Now then, when that happens, you need to respond by what? *Stirring yourself up!* How do you stir yourself up?

2-Timothy 1:6: “For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands.” You go to God and say:

- God, grant me Your Spirit.
- Help me to overcome.
- Give me the strength to put these things aside.
- Help me to see what I am doing that’s not right.
- Help me to pull back from my laxity.
- Give me zeal and understanding to go ahead.

We’re told of the Laodiceans, ‘Be zealous, therefore, and repent.’ And that’s what it needs to be. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness” (v 7). That’s how to recover yourself out of it. So if you have been slipping away and if you have neglected so great a salvation, then that’s how to get yourself back on track. And God can help you do it. The only unfortunate part about it is this: *those that really need to hear this are not here.* That’s why if you can give this to someone who needs it, you can help them. Maybe they will listen. Maybe they won’t. But at least you can say you have tried.

I think it’s very interesting, as one person commented, that the series on Hebrews came out about the same time as *A Harmony of the Gospels*. Now if you want a good, fresh study on that, remember that that gives us the fulfillment of

Hebrews 2:4: “God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders... [through Christ and later the book of Acts] ...and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?.... [So maybe that can be something which will help inspire you, too.] ...For *it is* not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking” (vs 4-5). They are the ones who rule and control this world.

Let me just mention this: When we are converted and receive the Spirit of God, we come into a different relationship with the angels because of our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ; meaning this: In the world the angels rule—righteous and demons—angels war and fight, as we see in the book of Daniel. When we are converted and brought into the Church and have the Holy Spirit of God, angels now become ministers to help and protect those that have been called. They don’t rule over us. Who rules over us? *Jesus Christ!* He is the Head of the Church. Therefore, Christ deals directly with us. If Christ deals directly with us, then an angel—but for helping us—can be a messenger to intervene to protect you to keep you from evil. But the relationship to God is direct through Jesus Christ, as we know in Heb. 10, that we have direct entrance into the Holy of Holies through the blood of Christ. So that’s why he is emphasizing this.

He is going to make a comparison between the angels and Christ, and the angels and men, v 6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him?.... [please put Ps. 8. We will need to add that.] ...You did make him a little lower than *the* angels... [here in the Greek the word is ‘angelos’—*meeting angels*] ...You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands...” (vs 6-7). What a fantastic thing it is. God made this whole

world, created everything upon it, and who did He make it for? *For mankind!* And what did He say? He said ‘have dominion’; you rule over the world. Do men do that? *Yes, they do!* The controlling factor is angels, because of sin, now take the place of God’s rulership over them. That’s the only difference.

“You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet” (vs 7-8). And boy, as we see that the scientific things that men are doing now, that is absolutely true— isn’t it? *Absolutely true!*

“For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him.... [in the earth, that is true, and even a little bit in space] ...But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (vs 7-8). Why?

1. because of sin
2. because the ultimate destiny of man is to become a son of God

So therefore, until you become a son of God and have the character of God the Father and Jesus Christ, you are not capable of having everything put into your subjection that you will use it rightfully. Witness the world!

Are you fed up with when you dial a number to call, that you get a recording? If you want this, press #1. If you want this, press #2. If you want this, press #3. So you ask which one do I want? They didn’t answer my question. And if that doesn’t help, go ahead and press ‘0,’ and you’ll get the next available operator. So it comes on, ‘Hello. All the operators are busy; it may be 20 minutes before we can talk to you.’ They say we have too many mechanical things that do not really relate to people. So what we need to do is make human-like robots. In other words ‘we’re going to put cloning to a good purpose.’ Wouldn’t you like to have your own humanoid robot?

Now, that’s a good example of being able to do things without the character of God to do it correctly, or to do it righteously. You just do it because it’s convenient and it’s there, and because you want to satisfy your own lust. That’s why all things have not been put in subjection to him, because

1. of sin
2. because he doesn’t have the character
3. he’s not a spirit being yet

The rest of the story through the book of Hebrews is how to become a spirit being while you overcome in this life.

However, v 9: “But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels... [which is true] ...crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death...**” [His one particular death, *the* death of God manifest in the flesh] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone... [—who repents. It’s not going to happen unless you repent.] ...Because it was fitting for Him...” (vs 9-10).

In other words, this is the fitting judgment of God that He Himself put upon Himself, being this: God said—two of God, two of Elohim—One Who became the Father, one Who became the Son. The One Who became the Son was the One Who was the Creator of all things. Being Creator, what is He? If you make something, what is your relationship compared to what you have made? *You are responsible*—are you not?

Just like in driving a car. If you drive a car and you kill somebody, you’re responsible—correct? *Yes!* So likewise, God created all these things, made it for man, created man, gave man choice. And in giving men choice—just like with your own kids, you give them choice—there’s a danger they may not choose the right thing. So what happened? *There was sin!* And because God is righteous, He had to bring a penalty. Then came the curse. Then came death. But God is still responsible—isn’t He. He brought the curse, and He brought the death—did He not? So therefore, in order to redeem His creation and mankind, He said, ‘I will become a human being’—which He did, born of the virgin Mary, lived in the flesh, lived a life without sin, though ‘I have *the law of sin and death* in Me, so I overcome. Then, My death, because I made everything, is the perfect death for the forgiveness of sins.’ No other death could do it. That’s why it’s fitting. That was His judgment.

Verse 10: “Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” In other words, if God makes something (which He did), made mankind (which He did), and He looked upon them, and behold, everything was good (Gen. 1; now then, if something goes wrong—though God loses none of His perfection as God—His creation is marred—isn’t it? Therefore, it’s not perfect—is it? If He comes in the flesh, *He gives up His perfection as God* to become a human being. And in becoming a human being, there is a perfection that happened to Christ because of His suffering, ***because He did not sin!***

How else can you explain, v 10: “...to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings?” By suffering the same thing that all human beings do, *but not sinning once*. You talk

about a perfection—isn't that something? So what Paul is doing here now, he is showing that now there is no excuse for you not coming back to Christ, because look what He has done.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one... [Put in John 17—we are to become one as the Father and Christ are one.] ...for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Now, you think on that!

God calls you 'My brother.'

God calls you 'My friend.'

Jesus said to the disciples, '**You are My friends** if you do whatsoever I command you.'

Verse 12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.'" There are three ways this can apply:

1. Jesus declared the name of the Father, revealed Him to the disciples who were His brethren.
2. In the midst of the Church, all the other brethren who were called hearing the Word of God declared to them.
3. The great congregation, which takes place at the resurrection, and we are all standing on the Sea of Glass and Christ proclaims the name of the Father to all the brethren who are there in the first resurrection.

You have those three applications of it. That's really something—isn't it?

Verse 13: "And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.'... [Showing if you're lax, you're not trusting in Him. So he's trying to inspire them to trust in Him.] ...And again, 'Behold I and the children whom God has given Me.'" And that's what Christ is going to say at the resurrection—right? And I think He will literally say those words. When we're all there on the Sea of Glass, and Christ is up there in front, and God the Father is there, He will say, "...Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.'" Boy, what a magnificent thing that's going to be!

Now then, back down to earth, v 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest

in things pertaining to God... [So here's the first time we're told He's High Priest.] ...in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (vs 14-18).

This last part shows us the humanity of Christ, and the purpose of that humanity, and what it is in relationship to our salvation.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 3:7-8
- 2) Hebrews 2:1-4, 1, 3 1
- 3) Psalm 36:1-4
- 4) Psalm 37:1-16
- 5) Psalm 36:5-12
- 6) 2 Peter 1:3-10
- 7) Hebrews 2:1
- 8) 2 Peter 1:11-13
- 9) Jude 3
- 10) John 3:19-21
- 11) Jude 3-4, 16-25
- 12) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 13) Hebrews 2:4-18

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Malachi 4
- Revelation 22
- Hebrews 10
- Psalm 8
- Genesis 1
- John 17

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *The Christians Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

##### Sermon Series:

- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- Epistles of Peter

##### Articles:

- *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, Appendix N)
- *Nature of God* (*The Christian Passover*)
- *Nature of Man* (*The Christian Passover*)

Transcribed: 06/05/2004

MDS/ cis

Formatted/Corrected: bo—5-1-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VI

Fred R. Coulter—October 27, 2001

Last time we came down through Hebrews 2:5. So we'll pick it up from there and we will go through and finish as much as we can on chapter 2 today. We're just going to have the briefest review.

- Chapter 1—tells us about Christ as the *spiritual* Son of God, coming in the flesh, and then now back at the right hand of God on the Majesty on high.
- Chapter 2:1-4—gives a warning.

We'll see this all the way through the book of Hebrews. There will be instruction or exhortation, and then there will be a warning.

- Chapter 2:4-18—is instruction
- Chapters 3-4—we start with the warning again. And a very long warning

Remember that the book of Hebrews was written to those who had been in the Church a long, long time, and they were beginning to *slip away*, as it says here:

Hebrews 2:1: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away." Knowledge really doesn't slip away; knowledge is always there; *people slip away when they let the knowledge that they have slip away!* And that's what happens, especially living in the Laodicean age that we live in today, it is so easy. As a matter of fact, the world and everything around us and the religious thing of the world accommodates that, to give you an excuse to apostatize, as we have seen: go back to Sunday-keeping, go back to worshipping a false Christ. That's what Catholicism and Protestantism have, *a false Christ*. Howbeit they do use the Bible so it makes it look like it's the authentic thing. That's why I gave a sermon that God's love is conditional. And we will see here, it is conditional all the way through.

Verse 2: "For *if* the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation..." (vs 2-3). So what he is doing here, he is now leading up to the rest of chapter 2 to show how great this salvation really is and what God did to make it possible.

"...which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (vs 3-4). Isn't that interesting? People like to have and to see miracles. But

remember, it's according to God's own will. And there will be great miracles when God determines that He is going to do it. Even the Apostle Paul said of Epaphras—remember? And the Apostle Paul did a lot of miracles. You can read of it in his ministry in the book of Acts. But Epaphras he said, was near unto death because he was serving the brethren and 'we prayed for him and God heard us at the last minute and raised him up.' Miracles are according to God's will and timing and what He's going to do. It is not a miracle upon demand that we go to God and demand it and God is obligated to give it.

And here is the whole summation of this section from Heb. 1 down to here, v 5: "For *it* is not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking.... [We are looking for the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom of God is going to be given to the sons of God (Rom. 8). The whole world is waiting for that completion of that plan. And it's also very interesting that those who are going to be in the Kingdom of God are going to be the firstfruits. And it's also very interesting that you come back to the Passover. When the Passover in Egypt took place, who did it protect? *The firstborn!* All the rest of Israel was blessed because the firstborn were spared. All of Israel came out of Egypt. But now you're looking at the Church, which is called the Church of the Firstborn. And God is going to spare the world—though He's going to correct it—because of those who are going to be born in the Kingdom of God to rule with Christ.

That's why it's so great a salvation, and none of the others are going to participate in it. Concerning God's love is partial according to His calling: God is not unjust because He will give an opportunity to others later through what we know as the second resurrection; that way *God is no respecter of persons*. But there has to be someone who is first; there has to be someone who is last. And we happen to be first. And we're kind of what you would say the last of the first—right? The first started with the few through the Old Covenant, through David, the prophets, and so forth; and then a greater of the harvest beginning on the day of Pentecost.

And it's very interesting that the #8 is a new beginning. Day 50 is the eighth day after the seventh week—right? *Seventh week, fiftieth day is eight!* There was a new beginning at the temple, wasn't there, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and being baptized and receiving the Holy Spirit and having the remission of sins. That was the beginning of the firstfruits within the Church of God. Now

we're coming down, there are still firstfruits, and *we're the last of the firstfruits*. Not exactly the very, very last, because you have the 144,000 of Rev. 7 and the great innumerable multitude who will be the very last, and the two absolute last ones are going to be *the two witnesses*. When that harvest is finished, the world is going to be put in subjection to the sons of God, not to the angels.

Let's just review that in Romans 8. It's important that we understand it. When you understand the greatness of what God is doing, and the greatness of your calling and how profound that it is, then even in times of prosperity and pleasure and leisure, as we have today—which is being taken away from us, by the way—you will still be able to maintain the love, the zeal, the enthusiasm because the goal is so high, and the calling is so great, that you understand that there is **nothing** that is going to separate you from the love of God.

- *No man!*
- *No person!*
- *Nothing* concerning your own life
  - ✓ whether it be a problem in overcoming sin
  - ✓ whether it be weakness because of old age
  - ✓ whether it be because when you're getting old your memory is slipping

But remember, it is all still there in the brain and the only difficulty is your recall. So if you hear it, it is there.

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led... [We're going to see when Christ is going to bring *many* sons unto glory. And that also can mean leading.] ...by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (vs 14-15).

Romans 8 makes it very clear here—especially v 15—that we have a Father/son relationship with God the Father that was opened to us by Jesus Christ. And that's why it's so important that we maintain that relationship through the proper fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which includes

- worship
- prayer
- service
- study
- growing
- keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days

All of those combined form a complete salvation for us, a complete way of life for us. When

all those are combined together it excludes the religions of the world, because all the religions of the world are a *satanic substitute* to take people away from God the Father and Jesus Christ. Now if that sounds exclusivist, then you take it up with God because God is the One Who has devised it. If we read what is in the Bible and believe what is in the Bible, and that's what the Bible tells us, then that's what God has done.

"The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." (vs 16-17). *The world to come is going to be put in subjection to us under Christ*. That's something to really contemplate.

Now notice, there's something else that has to happen with it: **IF**. There are 1,200 **IF**s throughout the Bible. And if you get bored in Bible study, just get out a concordance and look up every place where the word **IF** is, and make yourself a little list. **IF** means *there is a condition!* Is that true? *Yes!* Jesus said, '**IF** you love Me, keep My commandments.' The condition is commandment-keeping and loving. {see sermon series: *IF Statements of the Bible*}

Verse 17: "...if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. For I reckon that **the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us**" (vs 17-18). Never forget that! In the ultimate of suffering, the worst you can do is die—right? *If that happens and you die in the faith, you've got it made*—is that not correct? Does not God take pleasure in the death of the saints? Why? *Because they have attained to the purpose of God in their life!* And then the glory will be revealed in us.

Verse 19: "For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God." And the Apostle John said that when He appears 'we shall see Him, for we shall be *like* Him.' It's waiting for us. This also tells us that everything that is being done in the world will not work—correct? There may be temporary successes here and there for various things. But the truth of the matter is, *it's all going to fail!* And God wants us to understand that, but have hope in Him.

"...awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God... [here's why it's going to fail]: ...because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly..." (vs 19-20). No one went up to God and said, 'Oh, God, fill me with vanity.' *No!* God ***gave*** the *law of sin and death* within us—didn't He? *Yes, He did!* You inherit it. You have no choice over it—right? That's why there's the grace of God, to help you in salvation.

“...not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope, in order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (vs 20-21). And that’s when the world will be subjected to us. And that’s why he’s making it very, very, very clear there in Heb. 2.

Verse 22: “For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now. And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies” (22-23)—by the resurrection. So if this body we have sort of wears out and fades away, don’t worry. You’ve got a spiritual body coming, and God’s going to give it to you. And you won’t have to fight all the battles of the flesh any longer.

Hebrews 2:6-18, then we’ll come back and we’ll go through each verse, verse-by-verse. As we are reading this, what we’re going to see is this: God is showing what He *has done* through Jesus Christ, what He *is now doing*, and what He *will do*. But first of all, we have to see what He has done.

Hebrews 2:6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the son of man*, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than *the angels*; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet.’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the angels*, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death, in order **that by the grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone**; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (vs 6-10). And we just read that in Rom. 8.

Verse 11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the midst of the Church* I will sing praise to You.’ And again, ‘I will be trusting in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.’ Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the angels*; but He is taking upon

Himself to help *the seed of Abraham*. For this reason, **it was obligatory for Him to be made like His brethren in everything** that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in things pertaining to God*, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted” (vs 11-18).

Now let’s come back and we’ll go through it verse-by-verse. Verses 6, 7, and 8, are quoted from Psa. 8. We are going to see four things concerning Christ, vs 7-8:

1. “You did make Him a little lower than *the angels*...”

Now when was He made a little lower than the angels? *When He divested Himself to become the pinpoint of life and to be impregnated in the virgin, Mary*. Angels on the other hand were created, by God, as completed beings. Christ gave up all of that and was made lower than the angels.

2. “...You did crown Him with glory and honor....”

And when did that happen, referring to Christ? That happened when He was resurrected.

3. “...You did set Him over the works of Your hands.”

Christ rules all—right? Because *by Whom and through Whom are all things made and created!*

4. “You did put all things in subjection under His feet....”

And that’s going to happen!

Let’s come to 1-Corinthians 15; we’ll see when that happens. We’ll go back and we’ll apply this to human beings, but first I want to apply it to Christ, then we’ll come back and apply it to the human race. This gives us a timeframe when all of this is going to happen.

1-Corinthians 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the dead*... [That’s when He received glory and honor.] ...He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the resurrection of the dead*. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order... [and we understand that with the resurrections] ...Christ *the firstfruit*; then, those who are Christ’s at His coming. Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet. *The last enemy to be destroyed is death*. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who

[God the Father] put all things in subjection under Him. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him, so that God may be all in all” (vs 20-28).

So that’s what it’s talking about here, Hebrews 2:8: “‘You did put all things in subjection under his feet.’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. But we see Jesus...” (vs 8-9). So here we have an application to Christ in all of these things, and we have an application to mankind.

Let’s go back to Psalm 8 and let’s see this application to mankind. This goes back to the very creation of God. And we will see some of the things that He gave to crown us with honor and glory, and why it talks about that we are crowned with honor and glory; *yet we are not glorified as spirit beings*—are we? But mankind has an honor and glory that the rest of the creation of God does not have. And we will see what that is.

Psalm 8:3: “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have ordained...” And that’s the way you feel when you go out, and it’s a really clear night and you can look up into the heavens and see all the stars. If you’re in an area that really makes the stars look a whole lot closer—no smog, no city lights, and you can look up and you can see the vastness of the heavens up there. You’re standing out there all alone, you feel just like that. You feel like just a little pinprick of something—don’t you?

You get the same feeling when you’re on any vessel and you’re out on the ocean. And you look out on the ocean and you see all around you for as far as you can see nothing but water. And even if you’re on a pretty good-sized ship, that ship is nothing but a little speck in that ocean. So that’s why God has created the things the way He has:

- to glorify Himself
- to humble man
  - ✓so man will seek God
  - ✓so man will come to Him
  - ✓realizing that this is so great

“...What is man that You are mindful of him...” (v 4). You know how it is with human beings. If you are a big important ‘mucky-muck,’ you don’t care about the underlings, any down there, because you have the power, you have the authority, and you’re on top. *God is not that way!* Now we’ve already seen here in the book of Romans that we can call God ‘our Father.’ Now that’s a tremendous thing! “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?” (v 4). And God has! Started right out with Adam and Eve—correct?

And didn’t the beginning of the book of Hebrews say that, Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His Son*.” ***God Himself!*** *God* visited man, visited him in the flesh!

Now concerning mankind, Psalm 8:5: “For You have made him a little lower than God and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.... [And boy, that is sure true—isn’t it? *Look at what man is able to do*. Absolutely amazing!] ... All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and all that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!” (vs 5-9).

How is it that man has been crowned with glory and honor above all the rest of the creation? Gen. 1 reveals part of the plan of God in a way that this is a prophecy of what He is going to do. I mean it’s really an amazing thing—isn’t it? And here, there are many, many things that are revealed about God, which we won’t go into {see booklets: *Defining the Oneness of God; The Nature of God; Sermon Series: The Names of God*}

Genesis 1:26: “And God said, Let Us.... [We know the word God means *Elohim*, more than one. The Bible reveals there were two beings, one Who became the Father, one Who became the Son, that are included in the term *Elohim*.] ...Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness... [that is the glory and honor that is given to mankind, made in the likeness of God, after His image.] (The unspoken story of the rest of the Bible after this): ...after Our likeness...”—the rest of the story in the Bible tells us we will be after His kind. So that’s quite a thing, brethren, really! Now you know why Paul was so emphatic there, writing that we shouldn’t let these things slip away. We shouldn’t slip away ourselves.

Now notice what else He did: “...and let them have dominion...” So He subjected the earth—didn’t He? Now, granted, with the fall of Adam and Eve it’s subjected to angels. Originally, God was there with Adam and Eve. After that, God put the angels in charge. So the angels were over men from that time forward.

But even with that, He still says of man: “...let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.’ And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the



fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (vs 26-28). *That’s the honor and glory that God has given man!*

Since God has given it, He also requires responsibility. And that’s why we have the account of Adam and Eve, and how that God expects a response back from those that have been crowned with that kind of glory and honor. When man puts it to use in a wrong way, God has to intervene. We see that in the case of the Flood of Noah—don’t we?

Let’s come to Genesis 11. We see in the case, after the Flood, at the Tower of Babel and the building of those things that they were doing. And we will see that this verifies when it says that God left nothing that was not in subjection to man. But yet not all things are in subjection to him, because he doesn’t have the spiritual character to do it. That’s the long and the short of it. But nevertheless, God has given that to man, and He only intervenes when man comes to the point of doing great evil. And I think that we’re rapidly approaching that time again, because remember, Jesus said: ‘As it was in the days of Noah so shall be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.’ At this time the Tower of Babel is still in the days of Noah.

Genesis 11:1: “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.” Now we’re getting there again—aren’t we? *Yes, we are*, through English, through the computers. And just as an aside: What is going to happen in that area of the world of Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, and all of those? The English language is going to be imported in there in a way that has never been in the past. Which is also a way of paving the way so that the Gospel can be preached so they will understand the Truth. Even in that, God is going to use that to lay the foundation and groundwork so that those people will be able to hear the Word of God.

Verse 2: “And it came to pass, as they traveled from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they settled there. And they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.’.... [because they want to waterproof them] ...And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar” (vs 2-3). This is more like asbestos ooze that was coming out of the ground in what we call Saudi Arabia, Iraq, or Kuwait today. And Someone got all mad because I said that *Josephus* records that they were going to build a tower and make it waterproof just in case God was going to flood the earth again, that they could all flee into it and escape the flood. Well I’m just reporting what *Josephus* said. So if that makes you upset, well then go be upset.

Verse 4: “And they said, ‘Come, let us build us a city and a tower, *with* its top reaching into the

heavens. And let us establish a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.” Of course, it was God’s decision to put them in their inheritance. God created the nations. And now that we are trying to amalgamate everything in Babylon the Great, you see the difficulties that we have when you begin putting a superstructure over the nations and taking away the sovereignty that God gave them. They didn’t want to do it.

Verse 5: “And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had built. And the LORD said, ‘Behold, the people *are* one and they all have one language. And this *is only the beginning of* what they will do—now nothing which they have imagined to do” (vs 5-6). Now that is part of the glory and honor that God has given man.

I mean, right while we’re sitting here today, out there in the heavens, the next planet out—Mars—they have successfully put in orbit a spacecraft which is going to photograph all about Mars, it’s going to create a whole new map of Mars. They have detection equipment in there; they’re going to find out: Is there water? Was there water? And, of course, the mystery is, if there was water—where did it go? It will become a greater mystery if they can’t detect water underground, or if they can only detect a very little water underground. But that’s quite amazing— isn’t it? That men can sit down to computers at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, California, and direct that satellite circling and orbiting around Mars and gathering all of this data and everything.

They’re doing this, because man wants to go to Mars. Man has gone to the moon. And really they found out, there’s not much you can do with the moon. So they figure they’re going to go to Mars. So there is nothing that they can’t do which they have imagined to do. Look at all the different devices and gadgets that we have today. There are so many of them it is absolutely incredible. We even have machines that can make machines. It is phenomenal! We have computers that compute computers. And all this came out of the imagination of man.

So, God confounded the languages and scattered them and took them to their inheritance where God originally intended that they go. So when it says that ‘man is crowned with glory and with honor,’ that means that. When it says that ‘He subjected all things under him,’ He means that. But He hasn’t let man have yet *all* things—has He? *No, He hasn’t!* Mankind is not ready to have all things subjected under him. There must be a change of nature. There must be a change of your existence from flesh to spirit before that will happen. So there’s the reason for all of this, Psalms 8.

Now then, he applies it to Jesus again, Hebrews 2:9: “But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a

little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death**..."—and the definite article is in there in the Greek: 'tho thanatos' means *the one death*, which had a particular significance for all of mankind. In *The Christian Passover* book—The Nature of God and The Nature of Man—will explain in great detail, much more than we're going to do in the study, about how God accomplished that. But it is suffering **the death**. And that is a special, one-of-a-kind death. That God, manifest in the flesh, would come to this earth and die for those that He created to bring them salvation.

Notice, here's why it is **the death**, v 9: "...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone." There's just a little caveat here with this, which is this: *Everyone*—and the rest of the Bible shows us—*who repents!* If you do not repent, the death of Christ is not applied to you as a sacrifice for the propitiation of your sins. Your death will take care of your sins and they shall no longer exist.

We need to look at a couple of Scriptures here, which are really important, because for God to manifest Himself in the flesh, and to become a human being just like we are for the purpose of dying, that's quite profound. And in this God has done a tremendous thing. This is something that very few of the religions of this world even have a clue to understand. They cannot conceive, or they cannot picture that God would do this, *this particular death*.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God pronounced upon them as His judgment that they would die, which is in full accord of Old Testament and New Testament doctrine which is this: ***the wages of sin is death!***

I need to mention just a couple of things in line with this. Rev. 13:8 says that Christ was 'slain from the foundation of the world'—meaning that God had in His plan to save His creation because He knew that in giving the power of free moral agency Adam and Eve would sin. He didn't make them sin, but He knew that in giving free moral agency, they would sin. So therefore, it wasn't any surprise to God that they did sin. And remember, after they had sinned and God was pronouncing the judgment upon them. He also gave the prophecy of His coming future death right there in Gen. 3:15 [transcriber's correction].

So God showed—beginning with Adam and Eve—that there was coming a time when He was going to solve the problem of sin. But in the meantime, He passed the sentence of death onto all human beings. That's why in Adam we all die. We are subject to death because God gave that sentence of judgment because of sin, and we didn't receive it willingly; it's inherent within our very being. How is God going to save His creation after He judged mankind in such a way?

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death..." So, death passed upon *all* men; we're all subject to death. The sentence is so universal that no one has escaped death. Satan has a counterfeit plan to try and make it look like human beings don't die, because he has the false doctrine of the immortality of the soul and you go to heaven. And pray tell, if that's the case, why the resurrection? You don't need a resurrection, your spirit is already there—correct? You are already in heaven looking down at your corpse while everyone is out there weeping and wailing that you have died. ***No! That's a counterfeit!*** When you're dead, you're dead all over. When you're dead, you know nothing. In the day that man dies his thoughts perish.

Death passed unto all men, and this made us even more imperfect than we were when we were originally created—if I could use *we* in the sense of Adam and Eve. God made them perfectly physical—didn't He? But ***they didn't have the character of God***; that's what was the missing ingredient. So therefore, He created them to be neutral; that is, when there were first created they were neither subject to death, nor were they subject to receiving eternal life, because it was going to be based upon the condition of whether they would believe God and obey Him. And that's the whole story of mankind:

- Do you believe God?
- Are you willing to obey Him?

Since God passed death unto all mankind, now man has a nature whereby he sins automatically.

The rest of verse 12: "...and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way, death passed into all mankind; ***and it is for this reason that all have sinned.***" In other words, some people misconstrue it to mean that little babies, when they are born, are not subject to death because they haven't sinned, yet. Well, you have already lost your premise, because do babies die having never sinned? ***Yes!*** Those who are successful in growing up—which is the greater portion of humanity, and God worked it out that way—we sin because we have an imperfect nature, because we have a nature which is subject to death. That's why all sin!

How is God going to solve this? How is God going to redeem man? ***He solves it!*** If you entered into a court of law and you hauled God before the court of law and someone there is sitting, judging God—which men judge God all the time, but God survives all the judgment of men—what would the judgment of men be concerning God doing this to mankind? ***'God, You're unfair!'*** All of these innocent people down through the centuries, You have given the sentence of death and they have done nothing.

You're unfair!' And that's what a lot of people say—isn't it?

**No! God is not unfair!** He has a way and a plan that He is going to do it. But He is not going to accomplish it until there are a sufficient number of human beings, according to the plan of God, that are going to eventually be in the Kingdom of God. There is the whole universe to take care of. That's going to require a lot sons of God—don't you think?

So then, rather than being judged by man and being condemned by man, and being accused by man that He is unfair, that He is not reasonable, why would He make man subject to death because of what Adam and Eve had done? After all, we weren't there. We didn't eat of the fruit. We didn't disobey God. We knew nothing about it. And furthermore, we didn't know anything about it until we read it in the Bible, or we heard a preacher preach it some time, and we often wonder: Why would God do that? After all, down deep inside of every one of us is what? *The desire to live forever!* So God's judgment is this: **The same judgment He put on His creation, He took upon Himself.** Now, in order to do that, **He had to be made like every other human being.**

Let's come to Romans 7 here for just a minute, and let's see what comes with death. There is another law that is working within your members. And it's automatic, called the pull of the flesh. And the pull of the flesh is called here in Rom. 7 *the law of sin and death.*

Romans 7:14: "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin."

- Who sold you under sin? *God did!*
- Who gave you a nature of death? *God did!*
- Who alone can rescue you from that? *God alone!*

That's why all the religions in the world are vain and empty and foolish. They cannot solve the problem of sin and death. They may be able to sublimate sin—by having discipline and rigor; by having a moral standard to live by—but they never are able to sublimate death because they all die. They never overcome it. That's why Paul said, 'sold under sin.'

And then he explains about the nature that human beings have in v 15: "Because what I am working out myself, I do not know..." [In other words, he really doesn't want to do what he's doing. Have you ever done something that you really didn't want to do, but you went ahead and did it anyway? *Yeah, lots of times, many things!*] ...For what I do not desire to do, this I do... [Everybody has good intentions—right? And what's the old cliché in the world? *The road to hell is paved with good*

*intentions—right? Yes!*] ...moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do. But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is good*" (vs 15-16). The Law defines right and wrong, good and evil.

"So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is dwelling within me*" (v 17)—meaning, it's part of your being. That's why even as Christians in overcoming we still have the *law of sin and death* still working in us; though we have God's Spirit to overcome it, it is still there. God put it in there. You inherit that very nature from your mother and father, and going all the way back to Adam and Eve.

So he says, v 18: "Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any good...*" That's a very profound statement, meaning this: ***Even the very, very best that a human being can do can never be perfect to the standard of God's perfection.*** Because something as imperfect as a human being can never make himself perfect. So even at your very best, you're still going to sin. That's why there's the grace of God. That's why Christ came.

Verse 18: "...For the desire to do good is present within me... [all human beings are that way 'I desire to do good.'] ...but how to work out that which is good, I do not find." In other words, you really don't find a way to do it. Have you ever tried to do something really wonderful, fine, and nice, and lovely, and try and help somebody, and have it just totally collapse on you and you then be accused of doing something evil, wrong, and something that was just absolutely despised by that person? *Yes! We all have!* That's the operation of human nature.

Verse 19: "For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is dwelling within me*" (vs 19-20). So he says it twice: sin is dwelling in me.

- Did he have God's Spirit? *Yes!*
- Was he an apostle? *Yes!*
- Was he headed toward eternal life? *Yes!*
- Was he teaching the Gentiles and the Israelites? *Yes!*

But his nature has to be changed, and the final change of the nature cannot come until the resurrection.

"Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of

my mind, and leading me captive to the **law of sin** that is within my own members” (vs 21-23). So you have in your members *the law of sin*.

Romans 8:2, he puts them together: “Because the **law of the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus has delivered [justified] me from **the law of sin and death**.” You are not released from it; you still have it. And that is the law that every person has within him, which we define as human nature or the downward pull of the flesh. That’s the law of sin and death. And because death has passed on to all men, so it’s *the law of sin and death*. The law of sin is within our members.

- How is God going to change that?
- How is He going to rescue mankind from that?

That’s what Heb. 2 gives us more understanding concerning.

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength... [Of course, without the Spirit of God we are totally without strength—are we not? *Yes, we are!*] ...at the appointed time... [that means in the Greek *in the set time*, the very set time that God had determined, which is the Passover Day, Nisan 14, 30<sub>A.D.</sub>] “...Christ died for *the* ungodly.” That’s quite a statement. That’s why it says that ***He tasted death for everyone***. Because everyone is what? *Ungodly!* Regardless of how good you may think you are, your very basic nature is ungodly. That’s just the way that it is. God made it that way.

When we really understand that and really understand that salvation only comes from God, then we don’t need to pull our bootstraps up over our head, and make ourselves stand so tall and have all the vanity and arrogance and authority of how great we are. Also, it shows you this: ***In order to die for the ungodly He had to be made lower than the angels***. He had to be made in every respect like a human being—which means what?

- *if* Christ came as a human being
- and to remove the judgment that He put upon mankind of *the law and sin and death* within them
- and He was made in every respect like unto them
- *if* He came and did not have *the law of sin and death* within Him

then His sacrifice could not cover the sins of all human beings.

There will be some people who *theologically* would fight against that. But God gave Himself this task into solving the judgment He gave to human beings, which is this: ***‘Since I put the law of sin and death in all human beings, I will take it***

***upon Myself and not sin, and live a perfect life, be tempted in every way***. He would have to have *the law of sin and death* in Him to be tempted in every way, otherwise, He couldn’t be tempted. If He did not take on the fullness of human nature where He would be subject to sin, if He so chose to do so, then His sacrifice could not be applied to all human beings, and that’s what he’s saying here so profoundly in Heb. 2.

So when we read in Heb. 2 that He was ‘tempted in all points like we are yet without sin’; the only way He could be tempted is if He had a nature where He could sin. But He rejected every temptation—did He not? He was filled with the Holy Spirit from conception—was He not?

Verse 7: “For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us because, **when we were still sinners, Christ died for us**” (vs 7-8). He had to die—didn’t He? *He had to be subject to death!* And if He was subject to death, He was subject to sin. If He was not subject to sin we could not have this said of Jesus Christ.

Let’s come to Hebrews 4:14 and let’s see it, since we referred to it several times let’s just look at it: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He was* without sin” (vs 14-15). The very fact that it is worded that way shows that He had the possibility to sin, but He didn’t. Some people would say, ‘You are denigrating the sacrifice and life of Christ.’ *No, I’m not!* That is magnifying it even more, because for God to do that makes it even greater. Neither of those verses could be if it were not the fact that He took upon Himself in being made human, to be fully human, to take *the law of sin and death* within His own members.

Now 2-Corinthians 5:21: “For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us...” To *know no sin* means that He did not sin. It says in 1-Peter 2 He was without sin.

Hebrews 4:15: “...*He was* without sin.”

2-Corinthians 5:21 “...so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him.” That’s how God is going to solve the problem.

It’s so very important to understand, brethren, what God has done. And this is what happens when people become very lethargic and they began slipping away from God. What happens is this: When you begin slipping away from God, you have all sorts of good intentions and

justifications in your own mind as to why you are still okay, even though you know you're slipping away. Have you ever had that process go on in your life? *Sure!* That's why the Apostle Paul is making it so clear, the very importance of what Christ has done. He wants us never to forget what He has done and how great this was that God did this.

Romans 5:8: "But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore... [so there's more beyond that] ...having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation" (vs 8-11).

That's what we need to remember. When everything about God or the Bible devolves down to a religion where you pick and choose what you will do, what you won't do, where then you set up your own standard of righteousness, then you begin to forget about what Christ has done, you begin to slip away from God. And we have seen the whole process take place, even within the Churches of God—haven't we? That's why these warnings are here.

After the warnings, then he gives the reason for why we really need to look to Jesus. And the whole point of all the book of Hebrews is to keep

- your mind
- your heart
- your affection
- everything

on Jesus Christ

- Never forget what He has done!
- Never forget Who He was!
- Never forget Who He now is!

That's what he is saying. We finished

Hebrews 2:9: "...He Himself might taste death for everyone... [to those who repent] ...because it was fitting for Him... [in other words, it was entirely proper for Him] ...for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing [leading]..." (vs 9-10).

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

Hebrews 2:10: "...in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Not that God was ever

not perfect. He always was perfect. But God never experienced being a human being until Christ came in the flesh—correct?

Now then, He was able to be perfected even much more. And He had to suffer because He gave up all the glory and honor of God to become a human being and take within His members *the law of sin and death*. And if you don't think that is suffering, then you have no clue as to what suffering is. And not only that, but to die the ignominious death that He did. {see series: *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*}. Go back and review it, and you can see all the prophecies that the One Who became Jesus Christ prophesied concerning Himself and the death that He would go through, and the crucifixion, and the agony, and all of the things that go with it. **God knew!** That's why it's so great. And He was made perfect *through sufferings*.

For what purpose? Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one..." You need to understand that even more. We're going to be at one with God, the fullness of being in the same glory that Jesus Christ is.

John 17 is one of the greatest chapters in the whole Bible, because it tells us

- what God is doing
- what Christ was and what He did
- the overall goal of being one

John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You.'" There are two ways that He was glorified.

1. Through the brutality of the crucifixion, because He took upon Him all the sins of the world. That glorified God because it paved the way to remove sin for all those who repent.
2. He would glorify God again at the resurrection when He would come and present Himself as the perfect sacrifice after the crucifixion.

Verse 2: "'Since You have **given Him authority over all flesh...**'" No human being is going to escape the authority of Jesus Christ. I do not care whether you are an atheist or an agnostic, or if you're a Muslim or a Buddhist, or whatever, ***you are not going to escape the authority of Jesus Christ over you—period!*** That's just an eternal fact of life.

- you can ignore Him
- you can reject Him
- you can despise Him
- you can hate Him

- you can fight against and kill those that He has called

***but you cannot escape Him!***

He has authority over all flesh. And it says in another place that ***every knee is going to bow to Christ! No one excepted!*** And if you won't bow the knee to Christ, you can see your fate by looking into any lava lake on any volcano, because that is a lake of fire, and when you are cast in there that is where you shall be burned up. So He has authority over all flesh. ***No one can escape that!***

“...in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him” (v 2). God the Father has to call those to eternal life. The work that God is doing is not a happenstance chance. It is determined! It is planned! God the Father is actively involved,

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...” He gives them to Christ!

John 17:3: “For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God... [And at the time Jesus was saying that, that was an absolutely true statement, because Christ was God manifest in the flesh, He was not wholly God at that time. So at that time God the Father was the only true God.] ...and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send... [referring to Him being in the flesh now at this time.] ...I have glorified You on the earth... [by His whole life; by His whole ministry] ...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do” (vs 3-4). And there is a finish and there is an end to the work that God is doing. He finished that part of it. When you come to Rev. 21, again He says, ‘It is done.’ So He finishes that part of the work.

Now also, there is a work that God is doing in every one of us. He is going to finish it in every one of us unto death and the resurrection. He finished it! He didn't come and say, ‘Well, God, I really tried...’ The New-Age Jesus: ‘I really tried?’ That's the excuse for everything: ‘Well if I try, you've got to accept it, and it is done. I put forth the effort.’ Like if you work in a factory and something goes wrong and you blow up the machine, and the boss comes around and says, ‘Why did this happen?’ *Well, I tried.* ‘Yeah, but the machine is blown up.’ *Well, I was well intended. I tried. No!* God is not doing a haphazard ‘I tried.’ ***He's going to do it! He's going to finish it!***

Verse 5: “And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.... [And that means before the world existed, showing that Jesus had glory because He was God, and He divested Himself of that glory and honor and became a human being.] ...I have manifested Your name to the men whom

You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours...” (vs 5-6).

Verse 14. “I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them... [We're going to learn that lesson, too, brethren. The world is going to hate us] ...because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one [Satan the devil]. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth” (vs 14-17).

And what do we find here back in Hebrews 2:11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified ***are all of one...***” And Christ is showing how that process is done, through the Word of God, through the Spirit of God. You can't have the Spirit of God without the Word of God. It's an impossibility. The two go together.

John 17:17: “Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself... [How is He going to sanctify Himself? *By marching to that trial and crucifixion after being arrested, and dying!* That's how He sanctified Himself] ...so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* Truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word” (vs 17-20). So there is a perpetual prayer that Jesus Christ gave to God the Father, which is taking place everyday for all of those that believe.

Verse 21: “That they ***all may be one*** ...[that's what we read back there in Heb. 2:11] ...even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also ***may be one in Us...*** [Which goes right back to what? *Gen. 1:26*—right? *Yes!*] ...in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one” (vs 21-22).

***That's the whole plan and purpose,*** brethren, of the firstfruits. A special, eternal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ through all eternity that none of the others entering into the Kingdom of God after that time will have. Now that's something. Now that's why he is so emphatic about when he says, “It is imperative that we give full attention to the things that we have heard.”

Verse 23: “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love

Me before *the* foundation of *the* world” (vs 23-24). And I’ll tell you what, brethren, the Kingdom of God will never succeed unless there is the love of God. That’s what God is basing the whole thing on.

Verse 25: “Righteous Father, the world has not known You... [Interesting statement—isn’t it?] ...but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” (vs 25-26). *That is how all are sanctified in one.*

Now let’s come back and we’ll finish Hebrews 2:11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” That’s why it’s important we remember this, brethren. ***It’s absolutely amazing what God has done!***

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

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- 1) Hebrews 2:1-5
- 2) Romans 8:14-23
- 3) Hebrews 2:6-18, 7-8
- 4) 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
- 5) Hebrews 2:8-9
- 6) Psalm 8:3-4
- 7) Hebrews 1:1
- 8) Psalm 8:5-9
- 9) Genesis 1:26-28
- 10) Genesis 11:1-6
- 11) Hebrews 2:9
- 12) Romans 5:12
- 13) Romans 7:14-23
- 14) Romans 8:2
- 15) Romans 5:6-8
- 16) Hebrews 4:14-15
- 17) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 18) Hebrews 4:15
- 19) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 20) Romans 5:8-11
- 21) Hebrews 2:9-10
- 22) Romans 8:14
- 23) Hebrews 2:10-11
- 24) John 17:1-2
- 25) John 6:44
- 26) John 17:3-6, 14-17
- 27) Hebrews 2:11
- 28) John 17:17-26
- 29) Hebrews 2:11

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 7; 13:8
- Genesis 3:15
- 1-Peter 2

- Revelation 21

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- *The Names of God*

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- *The Nature of God* by Carl Franklin
- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*

#### Books:

- *Josephus*
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Articles:

- Nature of God (*The Christian Passover*)
- Nature of Man (*The Christian Passover*)

Transcribed: 06/10/2004

MDS/cis

Re-formatted: bo—3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VII

Fred R. Coulter—October 27, 2001

We're here in Hebrews 2:9; we want to cover certain things here that are going to be important. "But we see Jesus... [Paul is emphasizing Jesus] ...Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death** ... [I translated it that way because it is *the* death, which then covers the sins of all the world.] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone." Of course, everyone there represents those who repent.

Verse 10: "Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author... [captain or champion] ...of their salvation perfect through sufferings." And then we covered some of the sufferings that Christ went through. {see sermon series: *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*} That was prophesied right from the beginning what He would go through, beginning in Gen. 3:16.

Now, let's cover how it was that He divested himself; in order to do this; in order to be able to taste death God manifested in the flesh. As God, He could not die, because He is eternal. If He lowered Himself to become an angel then He would not have lowered Himself to become a human being because humans are a little lower than the angels. So He had to divest Himself of His existence; of His glory; to reduce His existence from eternal to a pinpoint of life. He didn't lose His existence by doing that, but it was reduced to a pinpoint of life, and then impregnated in the virgin Mary so He could be born of the flesh; and have the same nature that all human beings have. He was tempted in every way but without sin. It was necessary that He do this to bring the judgment upon Himself for what He did as Creator to all mankind.

Verse 11: "For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one... [We're going to be one in the Family of God, and there's a special meaning to that as we saw last time for those who are in the first resurrection, or the firstfruits, or the Church of the Firstborn; and it has a very profound meaning. And the calling that God has given us is absolutely, just amazing!] ...for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Let's come to John 20. Remember Jesus said to the disciples on the Passover night, 'You are my friends.' We are called *brethren*; we have the same spiritual Father—don't we? Notice what He told Mary Magdalene on the day that He was to ascend and be accepted by God the Father as the perfect sacrifice; having been raised from the dead.

John 20:17: "Jesus said to her, 'Do not touch Me, because I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren... [We are all the brethren of Christ. Now that's something! He's not ashamed to call us brethren. That's quite a thing to understand.] ...and tell them that I am ascending to **My** Father and **your** Father... [We have access to God the Father as we saw last time to call him 'Abba Father'; a direct relationship with God the Father.] ...And **My** God and **your** God.'" That's really quite a tremendous and wonderful thing that Jesus has done, that He's not afraid to call us *brethren*.

Hebrews 2:12: "Saying, 'I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.'.... [That's something! When is He going to do this? *He does it every Sabbath*, if we could put it that way! But it's going to happen at the resurrection when the whole Church is resurrected together. He's going to sing praise to you.] ...And again, 'I will be trusting in Him.' And again, 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me'" (vs 12-13). So that's really quite a tremendous thing that we have that.

This is all part of the result of the crucifixion of Christ. Psalm 22 is a prophecy of that crucifixion and the prophecy of the suffering that Jesus would go through; and of the salvation that would be the result of it. I've often wondered what David thought when he was given this Psalm to write? I wonder what his feelings were? I also have wondered what Christ thought about this when He was in the flesh and knew that this was going to happen on the Passover Day that He was crucified on.

We have it right here, Psalm 22:22: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him; all of you, the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and stand in awe of Him all of you, the seed of Israel" (vs 22-23). That's quite a Psalm! The thing is, Christ calls us *His brethren*. When we get into the thing concerning 'church government' {see booklet: *The Ministry is not the Government of the Church*}

Let's come over here to Matthew 20—you will know why Jesus instructed the apostles the way He did concerning how to conduct their lives. This also shows why God does not want a hierarchy. Now this past Feast of Tabernacles was really a great lesson in how church groups can function without a hierarchy yet have someone who's in charge and oversees it.

Glenn Daniel, the coordinator for the Feast in Gulf Shores/Foley, Alabama, said this was the



best Feast he's ever had in *all* the years that he's been in the Church. I would have to vouch for the fact that it was a nearly perfect Feast. But he said there was no strife; there was no contention; everyone pitched in and helped, we didn't have to have a great list of things and people struggling to see who could climb up the ladder of the hierarchy to do whatever; everyone was loving, and peaceful, and happy, and joyful, and giving, and serving; and it just worked wonderfully. And that's the way Christ wants the Church to work.

Matthew 20:20: "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons... [She wanted to really make it special for her sons. Apparently she felt that her sons really had some great value for Christ.] ...worshiping Him and asking a certain thing from Him. And He said to her, 'What do you desire?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these my two sons may sit one at Your right hand and one at *Your left hand* in Your kingdom.'.... [that's a tall order; that's a tall request] ...But Jesus answered *and* said, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?' They [James & John] said to Him, 'We are able.'" (vs 20-22).

Now sometimes, when you say something to God or you say you're going to do something, He'll take you up on it. So, sure enough He did. "And He said to them, 'You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*, but to sit at My right hand and at My left hand is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father'" (v 23). Now this created a great furor, because here these two were trying to get a political *in* so they could get a better reward.

Verse 24: "And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers. But Jesus called them to *Him and* said, 'You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship over them.... [*dominion* here is 'katakuriueuo'—which is *lordship downward*; the hierarchy of a dictatorship.] ...And the great ones exercise authority over them'" (vs 24-25). This is 'katexousiazō' meaning *the authority comes down*.

The way Christ wants it is this: Here's God the Father and here are you. You have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above, and those who are the servants—the elders and teachers—they're the ones who are on the sidelines to help you and lead you, but to lead you and bring you to the full measure of the stature of Christ, because you are brethren. That's the way that God wants it run; and when we really understand that, and when we really comprehend that, then we're going to know why God does not want a hierarchy.

Verse 26: "However, it shall not be this way among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant... ['diakonos'] ...and whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave... [The Greek there is 'doulos'] (notice, how He finished this): ...just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life *as* a ransom for many'" (vs 26-28). So He is the example; that's Who we need to follow. That's why He's not ashamed to call us *brethren*, and the 'children whom God has given Me.'

Hebrews 2:14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood... [I went through and showed how that He took upon Himself the same *law as sin and death*.] ...in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul [destroy]... [That is to put down; that is not to bring Satan to a state of non-existence.] (But that): ...He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil. And *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren... [You can't call someone your brother unless you are like him.] ...be made like *His* brethren **in everything**..." (vs 14-17).

How did He do that? Come to Philippians the second chapter and we'll see how He did it; quite a thing that God did. {see sermon series *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*. You will see that there was a special covenant that God the Father and Jesus Christ had between them so that the One of *Elohim* became the Father, and the other of *Elohim* became the Son.} So they had

- perfect trust
- perfect faith
- perfect love

so that God could come down and become a human being to save His creation; to bring upon Himself the same judgment that He brought upon all human beings when He gave the sentence of death, and *the law of sin and death* in them, when Adam and Eve sinned; and has past for all human beings since them.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Showing again the humility that Christ had; and His death was in fact *the humiliation*—was it not? His resurrection was in fact *an exaltation*—was it not? *Yes, indeed!* So, before there is exaltation there needs to be humiliation. And God was humiliated, beaten, and killed, and scourged, and crucified by His own creation. That's something; now that's a tremendous mind to have—to go to that end; to that length—to save His creation.

Verse 6: “Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [existing as God] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.” Well, He was! If you have the same existence as the Father, you have the glory as the Father has; then you’re equal with Him. That is why when we’re resurrected, and receive the glory that is given to us, we’re going to have the same kind of existence that Jesus Christ has, so then we will be *spiritually* brethren forever. Now that’s something to contemplate. He came to this earth to become a human being so we can become His brethren *now*. And at the resurrection we will become like He is, so that we can be *spiritually* brethren forever.

Notice what He did, v 7: “But emptied Himself...” He gave up

- His glory
- His honor
- His power
- His position

He reduced His life down to a pinpoint of life, and then was impregnated in the womb of the virgin Mary, to be born of the flesh.

“...*and* was made in *the* like likeness of men... [the same likeness of human beings] ...*and* took the form of a servant [slave]” (v 7)—‘doulos’

That goes *all the way back*; let’s go back and review that, Genesis 1:26. It goes all the way back to the very beginning of the Bible and the creation of men. “God said, ‘Let Us... [the One Who became the Father and the One Who became the Son] ...make man in Our image, after Our likeness’...”

The *whole* New Covenant is how we can be made after the God kind, in the God Family; that’s why we’re called *brethren*. So we’re made after the likeness of God. God came and was made after the likeness of man—wasn’t He?

That’s what is says in Philippians 2:7: “...*and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man...” (vs 7-8). That means *every bodily function, everything that a human being does*, He did. And there’s even one humorous account that when Jesus was sleeping—Jesus needed to sleep—back there in the back of the ship when the storm came; the waves were coming and the disciples came to Him and said ‘Don’t You care for us? Wake up we’re drowning.’

Everything that a man does! “...He humbled Himself...” (v 8). How did He humble Himself? A lot of people think, ‘Well I won’t humble myself.’ Look what He humbled Himself to! Look what Jesus Christ did for you! And that’s the whole theme of the book of Hebrews. **Remember what Christ has**

***done so that you can take part in what He is doing!*** You want to summarize the whole of the book of Hebrews, that’s it. Remember what Christ has done, so you can be partakers of what God is doing.

“...He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death... [Not just an ordinary death] ...even *the* death of *the* cross” (v 8). Which is the cruelest of all deaths, because it is an execution designed for torture and for pain, and that is after He was scourged. Now, no one in the human realm even comes close to what Jesus did, because they did not start out as God, to become man. So therefore, only the sacrifice of Christ; and only the life of Christ can be given as the perfect sacrifice for human beings.

- no other means
- no other method
- no other religion
- no other thing

will do what Christ has done.

Notice what’s going to happen, v 9: “Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him... [by the power of the resurrection] ...and bestowed upon Him a name which *is* above every name.” Remember it says there in Rev. 19, that He has a name that only He Himself knows.

Everyone is going to have to come to this point, whether you’re atheist, agnostic, Jew, Gentile, professing Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Animist or any version or mixture of all the above said together. Here’s what you’re going to have to do—and this day *will* come and it is going to happen—because it is right here in the Scriptures:

Verse 10: “That **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to the glory of God the Father” (vs 10-11). That means *above all other* lords on this earth. In that day when that happens, there will be no more religions. *Christ and the way of God* the Father is going to supersede all of that.

Now, let me just pause here since everyone is all concerned about terrorists. We as human beings are not going to enforce that. Christ is coming! He’s going to return to the earth! ***He is going to enforce it!*** So people don’t need to look at us and say ‘Well that’s a terrorist statement.’ I mean, we need to qualify it today because that’s the way people are. ***That is an actual prophetic fact, which is going to take place!*** If that upsets you, don’t be concerned, you just wait. One day you will have to do this, because it says ***every knee shall bow, and every tongue will confess***. What does that mean to us? Here’s the same message that Paul gave in the book of Hebrews:

Verse 12: “So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but

now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

- it is your relationship with God that counts
- it is your standing with God
  - ✓ your heart
  - ✓ your mind
  - ✓ your soul
  - ✓ your being

with Him.

It's not a movement, it's not an organization, it's not a power thing that human beings have; and now this group of human beings is going to impose its will upon another group of humans. No, it's not going to work that way. Christ and the resurrected saints are coming, and Christ is going to impose it. Christ is going to make it work. And it's going to happen as we saw during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 13: “For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure.” This is the whole thing concerning

- salvation
- growing and overcoming
- being the kind of Christians that we need to be
- being the light to the world

—but believing firmly and absolutely in the Truth of God.

Let's come back here to Hebrews 2 and let's answer another question. There are some people who think that God is going to literally destroy Satan the devil. Is that true? Will it happen?

Hebrews 2:14: “Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might **annul** him who has the power of death—that is, the devil.” It could be translated *to render useless, to put down, or to make of no effect* or, as the *Interlinear* has it, *to annul*.

You can destroy a person by doing things to him, yet you don't take away his life. This sort of contradicts the Scripture back in Rev. 20. Let's read what is says concerning Satan the devil. Is it possible that God could convert Satan into a human being and then destroy him? Well, anything is possible, but does God reveal that that's what He's going to do? *No, it doesn't!* Unfortunately the word *destroy* in the English means more than to annihilate, taking away life.

Revelation 20:10 tells exactly Satan's fate: “And the Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *has been cast*, and they, *Satan and the demons*, shall be tormented day and night into

the ages of eternity.” Wherever Satan is, the demons are. Therefore, the Greek verb *shall be tormented*, is they. We know that *the beast* and the *false prophet*, being human beings—howbeit possessed of Satan the devil at one time or another—would be destroyed in the Lake of Fire; so they are not being tormented forever and ever. Here we have that Satan and the demons will be tormented forever and ever.

So, a proper translation of Heb. 2:14 would mean the kind of destruction that is *not annihilation of life*, but *a putting down; an annulling; a rendering useless or of no effect*.

Let's come to Ezekiel 28 and let's look at another one which talks about the ashes. And it seems to fit there with the one who was Lucifer, who was cast down, in this case called the *king of Tyrus*. We're going to see they're two personages here, and the reason there are two is because it's showing us, that the one who is the prince of Tyrus, or the prince of Tyre, is possessed of Satan the devil who is called the *king of Tyre*. Remember, Satan is called ‘the king.’ He's called *the king of the bottomless pit*—isn't he? (Rev. 9).

Ezekiel 28:1: “The Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre. “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Because your heart *is* lifted up, and you have said, “*I am a god*, I sit *in* the seat of God...” (vs 1-2). Now when a man does that, he is possessed of Satan the devil. And we have where that is again going to happen with the one who comes into the temple, which is going to be built, and proclaims that he is God. So here's a prophecy then, of 2-Thess. 2

Verse 2: ““...I sit *in* the seat of God, in the midst of the seas;” yet you *are* a man and not God...” [Can a man be turned to ashes? *Yes!* Satan, it shows, is going to be tormented forever.] ...though you set your heart as the heart of a god; behold, you *are* wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from you! With your wisdom and with your understanding you have made riches for yourselves, and have gotten gold and silver into your treasuries. By your great wisdom *and* by your trade you have multiplied your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches.’ Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god’” (vs 2-6). Now why would he do that? *It is of the influence of Satan the devil who has possessed him*.

Verse 7: “Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon you, the most ruthless *of* the nations. And they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they shall defile your brightness. They shall bring you down to the pit, and you shall die the death of those slain in the midst of the seas. Will you yet say before him who kills you, “*I am a god*”?.... [You going to stand up there and

say, 'Don't kill me, I am God.' You know it's kind of like the king with his new, invisible clothes, remember that story.] ...You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers. For I have spoken,' says the Lord GOD" (vs 7-10).

Then there's a break, v 11: "And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Son of man, lift up a lamentation over the king of Tyre...' (vs 11-12). This gets into being Satan the devil who possessed the prince of Tyrus, which God said was a man, who God said, 'You're going to die.'

Now of Satan (Rev. 20:10) is going to be tormented forever. Now how do we know that this is Satan the devil? Verse 12: "...Thus says the Lord GOD, 'You seal up the measure of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden the garden of God'"

Let's stop here for just a minute, and we'll ask: When God made the Garden of Eden, who did He put in the Garden of Eden?

- *Adam and Eve*, that's 2
- *God was there*; that is 3
- *Satan the devil was there*; that is 4

Those were the only four that were in the Garden of Eden. What happened when Adam and Eve sinned? *They were expelled from the garden*—weren't they? Satan was also cast out of the garden. So therefore, the king of Tyrus can only be Satan the devil.

Then it talks about all the beauty and glory that he had, v 13, "...in the day that you were created... [Then it defines what his position was in the Kingdom of God]: ...You *were* the anointed cherub that covers, and I set you so; you were upon the Holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.... [That is the glorified Sea of Glass, if you understand that.] ...You *were* perfect in your ways ...'" (vs 13-15). Now no man is perfect. So this cannot be talking about a man here, but about a spirit being who then fell; and he fell for the same reasons that he inspired the prince of Tyrus to set himself up as God.

Verse 15: "...You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created... [but the prince of Tyrus was born, he wasn't created. Notice, *he was perfect*] ...until iniquity was found in you By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled your midst *with* violence, and you have sinned....'" (vs 15-16). And this then would obviously have to do with what he did with the angels. We don't understand all that went on; we don't understand what happened with the third of the angels that fell with Satan to become the demons. But here is the process by which he did it.

"...Therefore, I will cast you as profane from the mountain of God... [Was the prince of Tyre

(Tyrus) in Tyre? *or* Was he in the mountain of God? *He wasn't in the mountain of God*, he was in Tyrus!]  
(He says here): ...and I will destroy you... [Or that is, expel you. This destruction is not unto death, but *will expel you!*] ...O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire'" (v 16). Was he expelled? *Yes, he was!* Jesus said 'I saw Satan fall from heaven as lightening.' And Rev. 12 says, 'His tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven' being the angels that fell with him.

"...I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I will cast you to the ground; I will lay you before kings, that they may behold you'" (vs 16-17).

Come here to Isaiah 14 and let's see here again it's talking about Satan. Notice he was cast down, he was going to exalt himself, set his throne above the stars of God, Isaiah 14:14: "'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit. Those who see you shall stare and watch you closely, *saying*, 'Is this the man who made the earth to tremble; who shook kingdoms'" (vs 14-16). So they're all going to come and see him; this indicates that he will be living.

Verse 17: "'Who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities; *who* did not allow his prisoners to go free?' All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave *like* a hateful branch, *and like* the clothing of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; like a dead body trampled under foot. You shall not be joined with them in burial because you destroyed your land *and* killed your people; the seed of evildoers shall never be famous" (vs 17-20). So then it goes on into the king of Babylon from there. So they're going to come and look at him.

Ezekiel 28:18: "'By the multitude of your iniquities, by the unrighteousness of your trade, you have profaned your sanctuaries; therefore I brought forth a fire from your midst; it shall devour you, and I will bring you to ashes upon the earth, before the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the people shall be astonished at you; you became a terror, and you *will not be* any more.'" (vs 18-19).

Here it comes back to the prince of Tyre, who is killed and burned into ashes. That's the best that we can do on explaining will Satan be destroyed, that is have his life annihilated, or will he live forever? I think if we follow Rev. 20:10 that he's going to be tormented forever and ever. That is a clear statement exclusively about Satan alone; the

statements here in Ezek. 28 and Isa. 14 are not quite as clear because it's involving the prince of Tyre, and also the king of Babylon, so it makes it a little difficult to put it all together. But nevertheless Heb. 2:14 says that he will destroy him, That means *render useless; to annul; to put down* him who has to power of death that is the devil.

Let's come back to Hebrews 2:17: "For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest... [this is the first time that High Priest is used] ...*in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people.... ['propitiation' means *a continual source of grace and mercy*, to propitiate or to forgive the sins of the people.] (here's why): ...For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (vs 17-18).

Let's just do a quick review, we had:

- a comparison of Jesus and the angels
- a comparison of Jesus and mankind
- what He's done for mankind
- what He has done for those who are being called
- the warning in the first part of Heb. 2 that we need to be careful that we don't slip away
- an explanation as to why we need to not let them slip away—because of what Christ has done
- how magnificent that it was that He gave the sacrifice
- that He gave His life

When we come to Heb. 3 there's another comparison that is made, which is really very profound and important.

We've compared Jesus with angels and with mankind; and Jesus with Satan the devil. Paul makes another comparison, which for the Hebrews is profound and very important; because now the Hebrews have to understand that Moses is *not* the top man. And we're going to see that indeed, it is a very difficult thing for some of them to understand.

Hebrews 3:1: "Because of this... [he's had the warning (Heb 2)] (then he has all this explanation): ...Holy brethren, partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ... [he's going to compare Him with Moses]: ...Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*. For every house is built by someone,

but He Who built all things *is* God. Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant, for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards" (vs 1-5). And that means spoken of afterwards by Christ, because that's what we're talking about there in the beginning of Heb. 1. Christ spoke.

"But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the end*" (v 6). Remember, ***he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.*** And there's a process of endurance that's very important for us to understand. Let's go back and consider some of the statements of John in the Gospel of John, concerning Moses, and concerning a comparison that was given here by Jesus.

I think that we're going to find it very interesting. You know, even to this day, it is so difficult to get Jews looking to Christ instead of Moses; even for those who believe in Jesus, like the Messianic Jews claim that they do. Still they have to go back to the tradition of the fathers, which they claim is Moses.

John 3:25: "Then there arose a question *between* the disciples of John and some of *the Jews* about purification. And they came to John and said to him, 'Rabbi, He Who was with you beyond Jordan, to Whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him.' John answered and said, 'No one is able to receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear witness to me that I said, "I am not the Christ," but that I am sent before Him. The one who has the bride is *the* bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands by and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom; *in* this then, my joy has been fulfilled'" (vs 25-29). He could hear what Jesus was doing.

John understood what he was to do, v 30: "'It is ordained that He [Christ] increase, and that I decrease. He Who comes from above it above all. The one who is of the earth is earthy, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all... [Showing the difference between Christ that He was sent from God.] ...and what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true'" (vs 30-32).

This is important because the Jews came there and they wanted to know about Jesus; and, of course, it has an awful lot to do concerning Moses and concerning their traditions; and concerning what they believed.

Verse 34: “For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God...” This is referring directly to Christ; but this is also a test that you can test everyone who says he’s a minister of God. Is he speaking the words of God?

- If he’s not speaking the words of God, *then God didn’t send him.*
- If he speaks the words of God and misapplies them and twists them, *then he’s not from God.*

Speaking of Christ, v 34: “...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him” (vs 34-36). John knew and understood what was going on.

We’ll see where then Moses enters into the formula here. Jesus was talking to the Jews who were after Him to kill Him because He healed the man who had the infirmity for 38 years. John 5:36, Jesus says: “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very* works that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father Himself, Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time” (vs 36-37). That’s why, this again, is another proof that when Moses saw God it was not God the Father but it was the One Who became Jesus Christ.

Verse 38—a very key important verse, though they rely on Moses, here’s something profound: “And you do not have His work dwelling in you, **for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent**. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves” (vs 38-40). Yes, that’s why it became such a hateful religion, because it’s not based on love.

Verse 43: “I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope.” (vs 43-45). But they didn’t know the Scripture. They trust in the name of Moses; but they didn’t believe Moses. Isn’t that interesting? Isn’t that the way a lot of Protestants are? *They trust in the name of Jesus but they don’t believe Him!* Same sin the Pharisees had.

Verse 46: “But **if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me**; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?” (vs 46-47). That also helps us understand why so many religions are off; because they really don’t believe Moses, and they really don’t believe the words of Christ. You’ve got to have both of them, “**If you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?**” So that was quite a confrontation.

John 9—this becomes really an interesting and very profound section here. Let’s see what they said of Jesus. Remember He healed the man who had been born blind so he could see. And what He did, He made some clay out of spittle, you know, He got some dust and put it on His hands, spit in it and made some clay; put it on his eyes and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam; he went and washed and he saw.

John 9:13: “They brought him who *was* once blind to the Pharisees. Now it was *the* Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Therefore, the Pharisees in turn also asked him how he has received sight. And he said to them, ‘He put clay on my eyes, and I washed; and *now* I see.’ .... [it was a simple matter] ...Then some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath’....” (vs 13-16). According to whose interpretation? *The Pharisees!*

Let’s see what they attribute to Moses; and this becomes important as to why Paul in Heb. 3 makes a comparison between Christ and Moses. Verse 16: “...Others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?’ And there was a division among them.... [They had a fight right there with the council of Sanhedrin, as to whether He was from God or not.] ...They said to the blind man again, ‘What do you say about Him since He opened your eyes?’ And he said, ‘He’s a prophet.’ However, the Jews did not believe *this* about him, that he was blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the one who had received sight. And they asked them, saying, ‘Is this your son, who you say was born blind?.... [They didn’t say, who was born blind, who you say was born blind.] ...How does he now see?’” (vs 16-19). Well his parents were stuck; here they are at the board of inquisition.

“His parents answered them and said, ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.’ His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves that if anyone confessed Him *to be the* Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. For this reason, his parents said, ‘He is of age; ask him.’ Therefore,

the called a second time *for* the man who had been born blind, and said to him, ‘Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.’ Then he answered and said, ‘Whether He is a sinner, I do not know. One *thing* I do know, that I was blind, *and* now I see.’ And they said to him again, ‘What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?’ He answered them, ‘I have already told you, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you desire to become disciples, too?’” (vs (20-27)).

That really got them upset. “Then they railed at him and said, ‘You are His disciples, but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this man, we do not know where He has come from’” (vs 28-29). Now you see it’s a hard thing to get the Jews to look to Christ as greater than Moses.

Let’s see that again with the Pharisees. We’ve covered this before in the past so I’m not going to go in great detail about it. The Pharisees could not get over the fact that they had to insist that the Gentiles proselytes would be required to have circumcision. {see sermons on the *Circumcision Wars*}

Acts 15:1: “Now certain men who had come down from Judea were teaching the brethren... [they came down from Judea to Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas and the Christians were there] ...*saying*, ‘Unless you are circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’” So that created a great furor. So they went on up to Jerusalem; they told the Church and the apostles what happened.

Verse 5: “But there stood up certain of those who believed, who were of the sect of the Pharisees... [Now here are those that believed; they believed in Christ, but they still insisted upon circumcision because that’s the way that they did with the proselytes and the synagogue before the advent of the Church.] ...*saying*, ‘It is obligatory to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.’”

In this case, the Law of Moses was not the Ten Commandments or the laws found in the Old Testament that we are to keep, this is *their interpretation* of the Law of Moses as fully expounded in the book called *The Code of Jewish Law*, which are all the traditions of the Jews compiled into one book—thousands and thousands of their laws and traditions—and it begins with circumcision, and they call all of it the Law of Moses, because they feel that in making these traditions and laws they sit in the *seat of Moses* and have been given by God the authority to do so.

So when they say here, “...Command *them* to keep the Law of Moses” that is as the Jews and the Pharisees kept it, which then—were what? *Vain*

*traditions! Rejected God!* So it was a difficult proposition to get the Jews, or in this case the Hebrews, to separate themselves, to look to Christ instead of Moses—a great, great problem. So this is why the comparison is made here. Moses was looked upon as *the* man, the *prophet par excellence*, if you want to put it that way. He makes the comparison by saying that Christ was faithful over the house, which He built, and we as the Christians are part of that house.

Hebrews 3:6: “Whose house we are... [Now this also shows that Christ is the Head of the Church.] ...Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end.”

Now let’s look at just a couple of things which are important here for us to understand. We are the house of God—those who have the Holy Spirit of God—part of the body of Christ that are growing in grace and knowledge. They are part of that which is being built up into a *spiritual temple*.

Ephesians 2:18: “For through Him we both have *direct* access... [Jews and Gentiles] ...by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of the household of God*.... [Christ is faithful over that house] ...You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone.... [Not headstone, but cornerstone] ...In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 18-22).

So this agrees that Christ is over His own house. Now we have exactly the same thing here concerning the body. So the analogy is concerning

- *the house*, which is the Church
- *the temple*, which is the Church
- *the body*, which is the Church

It tells the whole purpose of the ministry, Ephesians 4:12: “For the perfecting of the saints... [I think God is going to hold a lot of ministers accountable if they are not teaching with the view of perfecting the saints, because that’s what God wants.] ...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ.” Here it’s likened unto a body, but it all fits the same thing. And edifying is the building up, and this is the same thing that is used for a house or a household, only instead of a noun this is the verb:

- to build up
- edifying
  - ✓with love
  - ✓with service

- ✓with Truth
- ✓with grace
- ✓with correction

all the things that are to be brought.

“...edifying of the body of Christ. Until we all come into the unity of the faith... [Isn’t that interesting? Remember what we read, that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren, to my God and your God; go to my brethren. Now here we have Paul reflecting the same thing here; until we *all*—Paul included with all the saints]: ...come into the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man... [That means a full spiritually mature person] ...unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ.” (vs 12-13).

And that’s what we need to keep our focus and our mind on; and that’s what the book of Hebrews is warning as we’re going to see when we get back there, is one of the strongest warnings in of all the New Testament. And it’s given to the Hebrews, and it has all of these comparisons so that they’re going to have to understand that they’re dealing directly with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

“...stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we no longer be children... [He wants us to grow up in Christ] ...tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ from Whom all the body, fitly framed... [joined together] ...and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in the measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love” (vs 12-16). Now, that’s the whole work that Christ is doing as a faithful High Priest over the house that God has given Him.

We’re going to have to understand here that we’re going to have to hold this confidence firm unto the end. Just put in your notes Matt. 24:12—‘He that endures to the end the same shall be saved.’ ***It’s not how you start, it’s how you finish!*** And finish we must! And finish we will! *Because Christ will make sure that we can finish.*

Hebrews 3:7: “For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, **if you will hear His voice.**’” That’s the whole theme of this—isn’t it?

- God spoke to us
- we heard His words
- Christ came in the flesh
- He was God in the flesh
- He spoke the words of God

And remember those who won’t hear the words of

Christ, they don’t have eternal life.

Verse 7: “...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion... [You’ve got to listen! Regardless of the circumstances, Paul talks about persecution; he talks about difficulties; he talks about martyrdom. We will look at the rebellion in quite some detail a little later.] ...as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, ‘They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.’ So I swore in My wrath, ‘**If** they shall enter into My rest—’” (vs 7-11)—showing that there are qualifications for us, just like they are qualifications for entering into the Kingdom of God.

We’ll see a little later on, this baloney that ‘Christ is our Sabbath’ is just so much intellectual stupidity; trying to sound like you don’t have to keep anything that God has commanded you. If you don’t have to keep anything, why then does He talk about rebellion? Rebellion then is going against what you’re commanded to keep—correct? *Have to be, no doubt about it!*

Verse 12, he gives a strong warning. After all that we’ve covered through, now here is the strongest warning that he gives: **“Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.** Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today’...” (vs 12-13). Now that’s very important because *today*, not tomorrow:

- *today* you must hear His voice
- *today* you must yield to God
- *today* you must obey God
- *today* you must love God
- *today* you must apply yourselves

—because there may not be any tomorrow. And what’s the old saying? *The way to hell is paved with good intentions!* and good intentions are always done tomorrow. It says *today!*

“...so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.” (v 13). And that was the whole problem, and is the problem of the Laodeceans, and this you could say is really a letter to the Laodeceans to come out of their sin. Sin is deceptive. There is pleasure in sin for a season and sin becomes deceitful. And every time you sin you figure out a way why it’s okay that you do it. And pretty soon if God does not prick your conscience, or you do not allow your conscience to be pricked, then the hardness of the deceitfulness of sin will come upon you and you won’t be able to repent! That’s what he says when we get to the conclusion of this section coming into Hebrews the sixth chapter.



Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if**... [You might want to circle that] ...**If** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end.” What we might say is, you really need to grow in it, that you are going to have more confidence now than you had at the beginning; because if you do grow in grace and knowledge, you’re going to have more confidence, you’re going to have more faith, and you’re going to endure to the end, and it’s going to be stronger at the end rather than at the beginning. So he’s really trying to stir them up here. ‘Look, you need to get back to the beginning.’

Verse 15: “As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’ For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed?... [And the word there is *disobey*, not just disbelief. Now notice, **if you disobey you do not have belief**; they go hand-in-hand.] ...So we see that they were not able to enter in **because of unbelief**” (vs 15-19). So disobedience and unbelief go hand-in-hand.

Now then, he’s talking about the Sabbath and he’s quoting from Psa. 95, the lead in to Heb. 4 and Sabbath-keeping. Let’s go to Psalm 95 which is the Sabbath Psalm. And what is it that people *disbelieve* and *disobey*? *Both!* They don’t believe the commandment concerning the Sabbath, so they disobey and they harden their hearts and they rebel.

Psalm 95:1: “O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.” This is what we are to do on the Sabbath;

- praise God
- serve God
- study His Word
- learn to pray for each other
- encourage each other
- help each other

All of these things are important, and God knows we all have enough problems and difficulties that we all need the encouragement for everyone the best we can, isn’t that true?

Verse 2: “Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving...” [When? *On the Sabbath day!* “...and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods” (vs 2-3). Why would you be interested in any of the religions of this world if God *is* God, and Christ *is* His Son, and He’s a great God, and a great King? What attraction would there be to you of any

of these religions which are a counterfeit and substitute for the way if God? *It shouldn’t hold any attraction to you!*

Verse 4 shows that He is in control of everything: “In His hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are also His. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand” (vs 4-7). Now just put in your margin there John 10, Christ is the Shepherd. He brings him into the pasture—doesn’t He? This is talking about it.

Verse 7: “...Today, if you would but hearken to His voice: ‘Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, ‘It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways’—” (vs 7-10).

And that is in spite of the fact that God was there in the presence of the people, as shown by the cloud in the daytime, and the pillar of fire by night, and Moses could have direct contact with God, they still didn’t hear the voice of God and rebelled. So that’s why no one should say, ‘if I heard the voice of God,’ or ‘if God would reveal Himself to me then I would hear and then I would do. ‘No you wouldn’t; you’d be exactly the same as they were. So they had a penalty happen to them.

Verse 11: “‘To whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.’”

That’s quite a lesson for us! This, again, gets back to *today*; **if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!** So this is quite a strong section of correction that we have here in Hebrews the third chapter.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 2:9-11
- 2) John 20:17
- 3) Hebrews 2:12-13
- 4) Psalm 22:22-23
- 5) Matthew 20:20-28
- 6) Hebrews 2:14-17
- 7) Philippians 2:5-7
- 8) Genesis 1:26
- 9) Philippians 2:7-13
- 10) Hebrews 2:14
- 11) Revelation 20:10
- 12) Ezekiel 28:1-17
- 13) Isaiah 14:14-20

- 14) Ezekiel 28:18-19
- 15) Hebrews 2:17-18
- 16) Hebrews 3:1-6
- 17) John 3:25-36
- 18) John 5:36-47
- 19) John 9:13-29
- 20) Acts 15:1, 5
- 21) Hebrews 3:6
- 22) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 23) Ephesians 4:12-16
- 24) Hebrews 3:7-19
- 25) Psalm 95:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 3:16
- Revelation 19, 9
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Revelation 12
- Hebrews 1
- Matthew 24:12
- John 10

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *The Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*
- *Circumcision Wars*

Booklet: *The Ministry is not the Government of the Church*

Book: *The Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried and Hyman Goldin

Transcribed: 02/20/2007  
SAV  
Re-formatted: bo—3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews VIII

Fred R. Coulter—November 3, 2001

Last time we came to the first part of Hebrews 3. I just want to review a couple of things here which are important for us to realize; important for us to understand. Here Paul was making the comparison between Christ and Moses. And last time we saw how important it was to make that distinction because all of the Jews, especially, thought that Moses was the prophet of God par excellence, no greater prophet of God.

Hebrews 3:1: “Because of this, Holy brethren...” That is everything in all of chapters 1 & 2, which shows the pre-existence of Christ as God, which shows His resurrection back to being God, which shows the suffering that He went through for the sake of bringing salvation to mankind, and being the High Priest who makes propitiation for the sins of the people.

The reason he begins chapter 3 this way, and begins comparing with Moses is because Moses also, when he was dealing with God and the children of Israel *acted as a high priest to propitiate*. That is, *go to God and ask for mercy* for the sins of Israel, and God heard him—correct? *Yes, He did!*

“Because of this, Holy brethren, partakers of *the heavenly calling*...” (v 1). Not just a citizen of Israel, but *a heavenly calling*; God is the One Who has called you. That’s why joining a ‘religion’ cannot bring you close to God; it can bring you some knowledge of God; it can give you a discipline in life which is better than total lawlessness, but ‘religion’ in itself becomes lawless in its final analysis; but, *we have a heavenly calling*.

“...consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*. For every house is built by someone, but **He Who built all things is God**. Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant [a steward]...” (vs 1-5)—someone who is in charge and acts of behalf of the interest of the owner.

“...for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards.... [by Christ] ...But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as the Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the end*” (vs 5-6).

Now, let’s go back to look at some other comparisons concerning Moses, which we have

already covered before but let’s go ahead and cover it here. Let’s come back to Deuteronomy 18:15 because this is a powerful prophecy of Jesus Christ. And what is important here is *it was spoken by Moses*. So Moses was showing that there was coming, after him at a future time, One greater than he.

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me. To Him you shall hearken [listen] according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die’” (vs 15-16).

They wanted a man to speak to them. And it’s also interesting that all of the ‘religions’ of the Gentiles want God to speak to them. Isn’t that interesting? So, in sending Christ, God Who became Jesus Christ then fulfilled this prophecy for the Jews and the Israelites, and also, for the Gentiles;

- God did come in the flesh
- God did speak to His people
- God did make His Will known

through Jesus Christ who was God manifest in the flesh.

These are the words of God, v 18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth.... [That’s what Jesus said, ‘I don’t speak My words, but what the Father has commanded Me to speak, that’s what I speak.’ Whatever the Father does, the Son does. And He shows the Son all things because the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father.] ...And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him.” That’s the whole New Testament. So therefore, *those who reject the New Testament are without excuse*, especially if they hold the Old Testament in their hands and say Christ was not from God.

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass... [this is greater than Moses] ...whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him.... [And Jesus said ‘I didn’t come in my own name, I came in the name of the Father, and He sent Me.’] ...**But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die**” (vs 19-20).

It’s an awesome thing for anyone to set himself up as a preacher or a prophet—is it not?

*They presume to speak in the name of God, and give all kinds of false doctrines!* We don't have time to innumerate all the false doctrines and all the false Christianity of the world; all the way from prayers for the dead to snake handling.

Verse 21: "And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not follow nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You shall not be afraid of him." (21-22). This has happened to even all the true ministers of God, in relationship to prophecy, because they *presumed* that they understood the times, and they didn't. So therefore, they spoke presumptuously.

There's another category that goes even further than this, which follows up on v 20. Everyone wants to know: Why does God allow this? Why does God allow that? *God allows it so He can test us in trials!* We'll understand why Deut. 13 starts out the way it does because this is a comparison again between Moses and other prophets; and the Word of God and not the Word of God.

Deuteronomy 12:30: "Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?'"

- That's interesting!
- That's quaint!
- That's wonderful!
- That's nice!
- How thrilling!
- How exciting!
- It's just such fun!

We just recently had Halloween—didn't we? *The depths of the evil of Satan portrayed as fun and games for kids!* All the witches were happy because they had a full moon on Halloween the first time in 46 years. ***God says you shall not do so likewise!*** 'But it's for the kids. We do it for the kids.' You want to teach them demonism? Is that what you're doing? They don't even know what they're saying—do they? Same way with Christmas! I had one person say that 'your religion is really good and it would be even better if you kept Christmas, because it's for the kids.'

- You mean it's all right to lie to children?
- You mean it's all right to tell them fairy tales?
- You mean it's all right to say there is a Santa Claus?
- What happens?

*That helps set the children up that they receive 'good things' from a liar, and someone who doesn't exist, rather than their parents—and on and on and on!* You could take anything else: mias and pias when the Catholics pray and they do the rosary. You know, 15 'hail Marys' and 20 'our fathers.' And if you're real zealous make it 200 of each. Isn't it profound that the Muslims also have rosary? And they have special prayer beads, and so do the Buddhist, and Buddhist have prayer wheels. My, that's a handy way, you know you don't even have to pray. Just go along and roll a wheel and there's a prayer already written on it, and that rolls up to God. Why that's handy dandy. Just think how much time that'll save you, you know that's better than going to McDonald's for breakfast. You know we can get it done fast and in a hurry. Or whatever it may be. Now I'm being a little sarcastic because when you watch some of these documentaries on some of these other religions they're really stupid; just plain stupid and demonic.

Verse 30: "...and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?'.... [Well, that's a quaint thing, let's go ahead and put the name of Christ on it. That's all the Catholic's have done, wherever they have gone.] ...You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods" (vs 30-31). To Baal, the sun god, whose day of worship is Sunday. {see sermon series *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*}. I clearly show that Israel was sent into captivity for Sabbath-breaking and Sunday-keeping because they worship Baal and Asherah.

Verse 32: "Whatsoever thing that I command you... [and we can add, Deut. 18, that 'that Prophet' who was Christ like unto Moses, only of greater stature] ...be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it."

Deuteronomy 13:1 flows right along, compared to what God has said: "If a prophet rises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder which he foretold to you comes to pass, saying... [We have today a lot of magicians—don't we? I wonder how many magic shows there are on TV?] ...'Let us go after other gods...'" (vs 1-2). That is worship God in a different manner than God has said, or even go after other gods like we have today. When a President goes into the national cathedral—which is a gothic Catholic structure by the way, if you look at it—what does he have? *He has an ecumenical service*—doesn't he? He has a Protestant, he has a Jew, he has a Muslim, he has a Catholic, he has an Orthodox, and those are all priests of other gods.

Verse 2: "...Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them,' you shall not hearken to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, **for the LORD your God is testing you...**" (vs 2-3). Now that's why He lets it happen; *to prove you!* How are you going to know you believe the Truth unless you have proved it? and have lived it? and have substantiated it? And if some little trial comes along, and you listen to someone with some false prophesy, listen to someone with some false doctrine, and you believe it, then you have failed the test; rather than going back and proving it.

I'm reading the book by J. Michael Feazell, *The Restoration of the Worldwide Church of God*. That is how it supposedly came back in line with Protestantism. ***They failed the test!*** He says he thanks God for Mr. Roberts and the Easter bunny, and he worships Christ on Christmas because God says that He likens Himself unto a green pine tree. ***They failed the test!*** So God proves you. Why? *There are tests to know!*

Verse 3: "...is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Remember Gen. 22 and what Abraham was asked to do with Isaac. And remember that after all those years that Abraham followed God the angel gave the message from heaven where God said 'Now I know that you fear Me seeing you have not withheld your son, your only begotten son from Me.' All that time. God is going to test us through our whole lives—isn't He?

"...whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the LORD your God and **fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice,** and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. And that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death..." (vs 3-5). That was when they had the *administration of death*, {see sermon: *What is the Administration of Death*}, because Israel was not only one who had the laws of God, but was also a sovereign nation of this world. Therefore, He gave them the right of the penalty of death in these things. In the Church today we find that if someone does that, the greatest right we have is expelling or disfellowshipment. We do not have the right to take the sword in our hand to do away with the immediate enemy that is within our midst. We send them on their way. This is why Jesus is looked upon, and the comparison is given that *He is greater* than Moses.

Let's come down here to Hebrews 3:7, and we'll read to the end and read to the end of it here, and then we'll come back and we'll look at it, and most of this is taken from Ps. 95. And then we will

go through and we will see all of the things that Israel did in going against God.

Hebrews 3:7: "For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, **if** you will hear His voice... [Showing there is choice. Are you willing to listen to God?] ...Harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness... [So people have a choice—don't they?] ...Where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, "They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways." So I swore in My wrath, "**If** they shall enter into My rest—"'" (vs 7-11). {see sermon: *Is God's Love Conditional?*} So this is conditional. Every time you see **if** that is a condition.

Paul gives a warning, v 12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God." And the whole book of Hebrews is written to keep people from apostatizing from God, from falling away and committing the unpardonable sin.

Verse 13: "Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today'..." Every choice we make is *today*. It's always in the present. What you did yesterday—whether good or bad—if it's bad and you've repented of it, that's fine, *don't pollute today with the sin of yesterday*. And tomorrow when it becomes today, then everything you do in life is always lived in today. Do you understand that? *The future is not here, and the past is already done!* So therefore, here's another lesson, too, if you live in the past and don't learn the lessons of the past, then you're bound to make the same mistakes in the future; and make the same mistakes today. So, this is why it always refers to today, and the word *today* refers directly to the Sabbath. When is it that we hear the voice of God through the Word of God most of all? during the week? Is it not on the Sabbath? *Yes it is! That's when we hear to voice of God!*

Verse 13: "...so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin." Because there is pleasure in sin for a season; it's deceitful. If you don't believe that, just look at the world and in particular look at the so called 'fun cities' of the world; be they Las Vegas, or Reno, or Monte Carlo, or any of the gambling cities of the world, the deceitfulness of riches that come out of that, which is robbery really because they take it from everybody else, and the few that win are then held up as they've really done something. That's all *the deceitfulness of sin!* That's just an example of it. The deceitfulness of sin can also come in the way of false doctrine and false religion. So you can add that in there, too. The deceitfulness of sin in this case is the liberty to break the Sabbath.

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if**... [there again we have another condition—don’t we? If what?] ...**If** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end. As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’ For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was is* not with those who has sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear *that they* would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed?” (vs 14-18) They didn’t go in.

“So we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” (v 19) Now, v 18 says: “...to those who had disobeyed?... [v 19 says]: ...So we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” Let’s understand something: ***if you don’t believe you won’t obey***—correct? So disbelief is followed by disobedience. And that’s just the way it falls.

Now let’s look at some things here, let’s come to 1-Corinthians 10. We’re going to cover these things and go through them, not in a way that this is to be taken by anyone who hears this sermon who is loving God and keeping the Sabbath, and all these things, that this is correction for you. It is not correction for you. It may be for some who hear this that are disobeying God that it would be correction for them. If it is and they hear and they change, like it says, *today if you will hear His voice*, that these things are given to us for a purpose. And there are examples for us that we should not do even as they did. In other words, God also believes in the principle that if you do not learn the lessons of history, you’re bound to repeat them—correct?

1-Corinthians 10:1 tells us why we should not do these things: “Now I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (vs 1-2). We were baptized what? *Into the death of Jesus Christ, in a covenant relation*—correct? ***Yes! Our baptism is greater!***

Verse 3: “And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ.... [Here again is another proof that the Lord God of the Old Testament was the One Who became Jesus Christ. No question about it.] ...But with many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.’ Neither should we

commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day. Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents. Neither *should we* complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are coming.” (vs 3-11). Now, that’s quite thing—isn’t it?

In the end of the world, having all of the Word of God, and understanding the Word of God, are we more accountable than other people? ***No question about it! Absolutely no question about it!*** That’s why He gives v 12: “Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall.” Fall doing what? ***Doing some of the things they have here!***

Now let’s come back to Psalm 95, known as a Sabbath Psalm. And when the people would come to the temple, or when the people would come into the synagogues on the Sabbath Day, what would they hear? ***They would hear the Word of God!*** The Sabbath Day was for instruction to *hear the Word of God*, then to set your heart and mind and course to *obey the Word of God, to live by the Word of God!* And all of that takes place more on the Sabbath Day than anything else. Is it not also true that because we’re fleshly human beings, we need to be taught and taught, and repeat, and learn, and grow; and the Sabbath Day and the Holy Days become a focal point in all of that—doesn’t it?

For example, if you did not attend Sabbath services for a whole year, nor keep any of the Holy Days of God for a whole year, how far back into the world might you slip under those circumstances? ***Probably pretty far!*** How much faith would you loose? ***Probably an awful lot of faith, because faith comes by the hearing of the Word, and if you were not there on the Sabbath Day, you’re not hearing the Word of God!*** If you don’t study during the week on your own, you’re not hearing the Word of God by reading it, because then you read it and you hear it in your mind. So therefore, it becomes very easy not to obey the voice of God because the voice of God is way off, not even a still little whisper in your ear. So that’s why he always focuses on *today*.

Psalm 95:6, “O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.... [That we’re to do everyday, but in particularly on the Sabbath Day—correct? ***No doubt about it!***] ...He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand....” (vs 6-7)

Remember, Christ is the Chief Shepard. You can put in there John 10, that He is the *true* Shepard; He leads them in and out, and they find pasture.

What does this pasture mean? *This means the food from the Word of God to grow spiritually*

- in grace
- in knowledge
- in understanding
- to build the character of God!

Verse 7: "...**Today**, if you would but hearken to His voice: 'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as *in* the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work'." (vs 7-9).

Over and over again! What did they see everyday besides the Works of God? Besides the manna everyday? Besides having the Sabbath marked out every week for 40 years because manna was never sent on the Sabbath. What did they see everyday? ***The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night!*** As far as a physical carnal people, that's as close to God as you can get. The only time they were closer was when they were at Mount Sinai and God gave the Ten Commandments.

So this whole thing that people say, 'Well if God would tell me what to do then I would know and then I would do it.' *No you wouldn't because that's an excuse!* 'Well if I could just see God and be guaranteed it's God then I would do it.' *No you wouldn't because the children of Israel came as close to seeing God, and Moses saw God and they still didn't do it!* That's just an excuse because ***you don't want to obey!*** If you have a Bible, God has spoken to you; whether you open it, and read it, and listen to it or not, that is not God's problem, that's the individual's problem who has the Bible and never does anything with it.

They don't look at it that way because, 'God didn't give me the Bible, my grandma gave me it; aunt gave it to me; my mother gave it to me; my father gave it to me. God didn't give it to me.' *Yes, He did* because He caused it to be produced and printed and sent out into all the world, it just happens that God used the vehicle of your aunt, or your uncle, or your father, or your mother to deliver the Bible to you. Many people don't even consider that, but that's just the way it is. So, they saw the works forty years.

Verse 10: "'For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways'—to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest'" (vs 10-11). This is the lesson every Sabbath: that you come into the presence of God

- to hear the Word of God

- to obey the Word of God
  - to be instructed and encouraged in the Word of God
- today; while it is today.

Let's come back to Deuteronomy 9; let's look at a couple of things which are important. It's amazing how much God put up with. I mean, absolutely amazing! God loves Israel! He was grieved every time they sinned. He corrected them, they repented not from the heart, they flattered Him. Yet, God forgave them. God dealt with them. Why? *Because He remembered His covenant that He had with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!*

Deuteronomy 9:3: "Therefore, understand this day... [this just before they're going into the 'promised land'] ...that the LORD your God *is* He Who goes over before you. *Like* a consuming fire, He shall destroy them... [That is all the enemies of the land, and the giants and so forth.] ...and He shall bring them down before your face. So you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly as the LORD has said to you."

When God does great things for people, as He did for Israel, as He did for America, v 4: "Do not speak in your heart after the LORD your God has cast them out from before you, saying, 'For my righteousness... [In other words: because I'm good; because I'm industrious because I'm strong; because I have spirit; all the things *of self*.] ...the LORD has brought me in to possess this land'..." In other words because 'I'm so good' God was obligated to do it. We're saying the same things today in this war with the terrorist—are we not? Because we are so good God has to be on our side that we'll get the enemy. God says don't speak that way.

"...but for the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you. Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go to possess their land, but for the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you, so that He may perform the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (vs 4-5).

Before anyone in physical Israel or anyone even within the Church gets all up on their high horse by saying that 'God had to do this because of how great we are,' remember God has done it because of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We in the Church are what? *If you be Christ then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise! We are here because of Abraham—correct? Yes!* Not because of what we are as people, but because of what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have done, and what God has done. And if we always remember that, we'll never get lifted above other people to

think that we're greater than other people because God is the One Who's called those who are His.

Verse 6: "Therefore, understand that the LORD your God does not give you this good land, to possess it for your righteousness... [He said it three times! A principle in the Bible, and remember this concerning the Sabbath and every other thing. When it's *repeated* it is important. You don't possess it for your righteousness.]...for **you are a stiff-necked people**." You can put it another way: *fiercely independent and self-reliant!* That what? *My way is right!* That's the good ole' American/Israel spirit— isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* And because of that, God is bound to bless us because of what we do. **No!**

He said, v 7: "Remember, *and* do not forget... [Whenever God says *remember and forget not*—what happens? *We immediately don't remember and forget it as quick as we can!*] "...how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you departed out of the land of Egypt, until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD."

We're going to look at some of these provocations, and some of these rebellions so that we can learn the lesson that God wants us to because these are examples.

Verse 20: "And the LORD was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him. And I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.... [That's what it means when he was up before God.] ...And I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire, and stamped it, grinding *it* very small, until it was as fine as dust. And I threw the dust of it into the brook that descended out of the mountain. And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at the Graves of Lust, you provoked the LORD to anger. And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, 'Go up and possess the land which I have given you,' then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and you did not believe Him, nor hearkened to His voice. You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you" (vs 20-24). Now that was before they left Egypt—right? *Yes!*

Let's look at some of these things now. Let's just kind of take this in chronological order, let's come back and begin here at Exodus 15. Here's one of the first difficulties they have; this one here is not necessarily a provocation, but this is a murmuring and a complaint. And we will see when we get to Exo. 16, that the murmuring and complaint, even against Moses and Aaron was really truly against God because they were only doing what God said.

Exodus 15:23: "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah

because it *was* bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.... [which means *bitterness*] And the people murmured against Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?'" (vs 23-24).

Stop and think a minute what God had just done for them. Think of all the plagues that took place:

- the sparing of their first born
- the killing of the first born of Egypt
- taking them out of the land of Egypt
- taking them through the Red Sea saving them from Pharaoh and all the armies that came after them

—and they went just a few days journey away from the Red Sea and here they were already complaining rather than saying, 'Wow! This water is bitter, let's go to God and ask God to do something about the water because we know of all the mighty powerful miracles that He did, surely He came make bitter water sweet'—can't He? *No! They complained!*

Verse 24: "And the people murmured against Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?'" Moses was always caught between the people and God, which is worse than 'a rock and a hard spot'; because at least if you're between 'a rock and a hard spot' you have a chance of getting out of it. Here between God and the people, Moses always had the problem that when the people sinned they were Moses' people. God says, and the people *you* brought out of Egypt. When they did well, they were *His* people. So, if anyone thinks they want to be a high exulted prophet like Moses, you better stop and think there's an awful lot of responsibility that comes with it, an awful lot of accountability, and it's not all the glory and all of the glamour that you might think it is, and it was a pretty tough row to hoe.

Moses being caught between the people and God, v 25: "...cried to the LORD. And the LORD showed him a tree. And when he had cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet...."

This also shows the principle of using herbs; ties in with Psa. 104, that herbs are for the service of men, and so forth. There are quite a few things you can find in the Bible of how we should use those things and they're now finding that a lot of them are more preferable to some of the modern chemical medicine that they have.

Verse 25: "...There He made a decree and a law for them, and there He proved them." So look upon it this way: A lot of the trials and difficulties that you have come because *God wants to prove you*. Not necessarily to give you trouble; trouble is going to come, trials are going to come whether you're with God or without God, as far as the world is



concerned. Is there anybody in the world who does not have trials and difficulties and problems? *No, they all do!* But for us these things come upon us that God may prove us. Give us a test. Do we believe Him or not? Will we look to Him or not? *To prove them!*

“...and there he proved them. And he said...” (vs 25-26). Now, here we go right back to the beginning of Hebrews—right? Remember the first thing we started out with? ***Obey the voice of God!*** What do we have in Heb. 3? ***Today if you will hear His voice***—right? What do we have in Psa. 95? ***Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!*** So we have the same thing here, again *if*.

Everything we do brethren, is conditioned on v 26 “...‘If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear to His commandments, and keep all His laws...” Here’s a blessing! Here is something that you can come to God and claim! And by all means, with all the things we have now, with anthrax scare, with small pox scare; and I hear now they’re saying diphtheria scare, and all of this sort of thing to put hysteria in the people, and I tell you ***hysteria and fear comes because people don’t trust God!***. That’s why!

God gives a promise, v 26: “...**I** will put none of these diseases upon you, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I *am* the LORD Who heals you.” That is Jehovah your Healer; Jehovah Rapha.

We can claim those promises! We can look to those! Of course, ***we have to obey God***; we have to do the things that He says, and here in this case we have, with the waters being made sweet, that He used the tree or the herbs of the leaves from the tree and made the water sweet. So all of that combined together shows that God is going to fulfill His promises.

I’m just going to cover a little bit of the first part of Exodus 16 to show part of the situation here when we get to Heb. 4 and we get into the Sabbath: when the Sabbath was revealed, when the children of Israel began keeping it and so forth. Then we’ll get into chapter 16 in detail because that will explain to us about some of the particular Greek words which are in Heb. 4.

Exodus 16:1: “And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin [Zin]... [When I first read that I thought, why would God bring them into the wilderness of sin?] ...which is between Elim and Sinai. An on the fifteenth day of the second month *after* their departing out of the land of Egypt, then the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and

Aaron in the wilderness” (vs 1-2).

This is part of their rebellion against God. Now notice what they did: *They accused God, and they made up all kinds of excuses*. This is something to always remember:

- ***The carnal mind*** will look for any excuse possible to reject God and disobey God!
- ***A converted mind*** will look for every reason
  - ✓to serve God
  - ✓to love Him
  - ✓to keep His commandments

That’s the difference between them. So here as we have seen, that these examples are given for our admonition upon whom the ends of the earth have come; that we should not do as they did.

Verse 3: “And the children of Israel said to them, ‘O that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt... [No, that’s not what they said, they cried out to God so they could be released from Egypt.] ...when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger!’” Well now, God is the One Who brought them out there, *not Moses or Aaron*. They were just following God’s instruction. So then God reveals the Sabbath, He sends the manna, we’ll cover that next time when we get into a little more detail into the situation concerning the Sabbath.

Exodus 20 is the giving of the Ten Commandments, and we’re going to see that the rebellion against God mainly centered around violating the first three commandments; and then, after that, the Sabbath commandment; and then after that, committing fornication. All of those things provoke God. But when God gave the Ten Commandments we know that He thundered them from the top of Mount Sinai.

Exodus 20:18: “And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die’” (vs 18-19). So again, they have that excuse that they would rather have a human being do it. And, of course, we know the whole situation concerning Hebrews is that it explains that

- God did come in the flesh
- God did speak to them
- God did give them His Word.

So, *they provoked God there!*

Let’s see some other things where they provoked God. Let’s come to the book of Numbers

because most of the provoking is contained in Num. 11. Here is where the people were really against what Moses and Aaron were doing. And this is where then they complained about flesh again. They didn't remember the flesh that God had given them in Exo. 16. So God sent them lots of quail, but He also let them be consumed in their lust.

Now, let's look at this provocation, Numbers 11:1: "And the people complained about *their* distress, speaking evil in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD heard it, and His anger was kindled. And the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some in the outermost parts of the camp. And the people cried to Moses. And when Moses prayed to the LORD, the fire was quenched" (vs 1-2).

This is the way it is all the time with carnal Israel, when God gave them some punishment, when some of them were killed, just like we have with the terrorist attack today, then they came back to God; but not in truth, and not in repentance; they flattered God with their lips, and they feared God temporarily, and then continued right on their way. So this is all part of the way it is with the children of Israel.

Verse 3: "And he called the name of the place Taberah because the fire of the LORD burned among them. And the troublemakers in their midst lusted with *great* lust. And the children of Israel also turned and wept, and said, 'Who shall give us flesh to eat?'" (vs 3-4).

We have a situation here that they didn't believe God, though God was right there with them all the time:

- by the pillar of cloud by day
- by the fire by night
- by the manna six days a week and double on the sixth day, and none of the Sabbath, all the way down through the forty years.
- plus they had the experience that God sent the quail (Exo. 16)

So when they started complaining to God about this, what they should of done was go to Moses and say, 'Moses, let's all pray and ask God to provide for us.' And Moses could have gone to God, and God would have sent anything they needed. But notice what they were looking to, and here's the thing that a lot of people always do: *they live in the past.*

The whole thing that we saw concerning the word **today** if you will hear His voice, that means that not only just the Sabbath Day as we've explained, but it means today because we live in the present tense all the time. When you live in the past you bring the problems of the past to the present. And when you complain and do those things, then

you're likely to carry them forward into tomorrow, and tomorrow hasn't even come. Tomorrow is clean and pure because it hasn't arrived.

So notice what they said here, v 5: "We remember the fish... [Now if you get a good succulent fish and it's cooked just right, and you put it in your mouth it just sort of melts and tastes really good.] ...which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic. But now our soul *is* dried away. There is nothing at all besides this manna *before our eyes.*' And the manna *was* like coriander seed, and the color of it was like the color of bdellium. The people went around and gathered, and ground it in mills, or beat *it* in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it. And the taste of it was like the taste of fresh oil. And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it" (vs 5-9).

So God was providing! If they would have gone to Moses, and to God, and said, 'we remember the wonderful quail that you sent, God, and we know out here in the desert that you can't send us fish.' God could do that! He could just reach down there in the Red Sea and pick up a whole batch of fish and just bring them over and drop them on the camp, and they could have some fish there. That would not be an impossible thing for God to do. But when people come to God and demand of God, and complain to God, it really creates great problems for the people and for God.

Verse 10: "Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent.... [we have almost a riot going on here] ...And the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly. Moses also was displeased. And Moses said to the LORD, 'Why have You afflicted Your servant?....'" (vs 10-11). Poor Moses, he's caught between God and the people. When the people were bad they were the people that Moses brought out of Egypt, they were *his* people; when they did good they were *God's* people. So, here's Moses caught between the two of them. Even he's caught up in complaining to God.

"...And why have I not found favor [grace] in Your sight so that You lay the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? Did I bring them forth that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom like a nursing father carries the sucking child,' to the land which You swore to their fathers? From where should I get flesh to give to all this people? For they weep to me, saying, 'Give us flesh that we may eat.' I am not able to bear all this people alone because *it is* too heavy for me.... [then God said, after he further confessed and repented]: ...And if You are going to deal this way with me, I beg You to kill me... [In

other words, if you're going to keep this up with me God, just kill me.] ...at once... [just do it quickly, get it over with] ...or if I have found favor in Your sight, but let me not see my *own* wretchedness." (vs 11-15). So then God heard his prayer. Sometimes we can pray to God even in anger and God will hear our prayers. Even in despair and really being down like Moses was, and having almost 2-million people griping and complaining at you. Now, that's a *big* problem.

So then what God did, v 16: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel...'" And He gave them part of the Spirit that He gave to Moses, and then they helped govern the people.

After that was done, v 31: "And a wind went forth from the LORD. And it brought quails from the sea and let them fall by the camp, about a day's journey on this side, and about a day's journey on the other side..." This time, God made them go work for it. The first time they came right on in the camp (Exo. 16); it was right at the end of the Sabbath and God didn't want them going out at night. God said here, 'If you want them, you've got to go get it.'

"...all around the camp, and about two cubits *high* upon the face of the earth.... [A cubit's is 18 inches so it's about three feet; three feet high of quail that God just took and dumped them.] ...And the people rose up all that day and all night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails. And he that gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp" (vs 31-32).

They brought them, spread them; gave them to everybody. Because of their lust and because of their complaining God gave them a punishment here. This is part of the provocation. Verse 33: "And while the flesh *was* yet between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Graves of Lust because there they buried the people that lusted" (vs 33-34). And then they left there.

Now we have another problem; here's another provocation. This is why Paul had to make the comparison between Moses and Christ; to show that Christ was greater. Now let's read it here. This is a family struggle.

Numbers 12:1: "And Miriam and Aaron... [Miriam was Aaron's sister] ...against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had taken, for he had taken a Cushite woman." This is the one that *Josephus* records that he married as a political marriage to solidify the alliance between Ethiopia

and Egypt. And this was done before God even called him. So apparently when they left Egypt Moses also took his Ethiopian wife with him. He had a son by the Ethiopian wife, Gershom, who introduced idolatry into Israel a little later on after they went into the land. This did cause a problem, and the whole lesson here is that God would take care of Moses.

We can't use that excuse for us today because we're nowhere near in the category of Moses. But God taught a very good lesson here, and this was a provocation against God. Not by all of Israel in this particular case, but by Miriam and Aaron. Now notice, it puts her name first. We know the weakness of Aaron—don't we? Because when the people came and they brought the golden calf and so forth, and we'll get to that provocation here in just a minute when we get done with Num. 12. Then he gave in meekly to the people and built it.

Verse 2: "And they said, 'Has the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Has He not also spoken by us?' And the LORD heard *it*. (Now the man Moses *was* very meek, more than all the men on the face of the earth.)" (vs 2-3). This is an editorial comment inserted there by, probably, King Hezekiah when he did some canonization of the Old Testament or perhaps by Ezra when he finalized the canonization. We don't now exactly, but it's more than likely that is was Hezekiah.

Verse 4: "And the LORD spoke suddenly to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, 'You three come out to the tabernacle of the congregation.' And the three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both came forward. And He said, 'Hear now My words....'" (vs 4-6). This is why the Jews thought and understood—which was correct until Christ came—that Moses was the prophet par excellent of God.

"...Hear now my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known to him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream. **Not so with My servant Moses. He is faithful in all My house**" (vs 6-7). That ties right in with what Paul wrote back there in Heb. 3 that Moses was faithful as a servant, or that is a steward, over the household of God. Whereas Christ was the builder of the house, and the One Who is the builder has more honor than steward. And has more honor than the house itself.

Verse 8: "I will speak with him mouth to mouth, even clearly, and not in dark speeches. And he shall behold the likeness of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and He departed. And the cloud moved

from the tabernacle. And behold, Miriam *became* leprous as snow. And Aaron looked on Miriam, and behold, *she was* leprous. And Aaron said to Moses, ‘Oh, my lord, I beg you, do not lay upon us the sin in which we have done foolishly, and in which we have sinned. Let her not be like one dead...’” (vs 8-12)—because surely she would be dead in just a short time.

“...of whom the flesh is half gone when he comes out of his mother’s womb.’.... [In other words like a rotted fetus.] ... And Moses cried to the LORD saying, ‘Heal her now, O God, I beseech You.’ And the LORD said to Moses, ‘If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received’” (vs 12-14). So Miriam was shut out of the camp and the people didn’t journey again until Miriam was healed.

Let’s come back to Exodus 32; let’s see the major provocation. This is the most important one and this is the one which is *the* major provocation. Why is that? Remember, all you have to do is just look back at the last part of Exo. 31, where He told them about the Sabbath. So right after that, He gave the instructions concerning the Sabbath to the children of Israel, and He went back up on Mount Sinai.

Exodus 32:1: “And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, then the people gathered themselves to Aaron, and they said to him, ‘Up! Make us gods...’”

- This shows the weakness of Aaron  
As we already saw, Moses said he prayed for him; that God would not destroy him—and God heard Moses.

- This shows the rebellion of the people  
Everything that God had done up to that point was really fantastic, it was tremendous.

They should have known that Moses was going to come back down. They should have known because of the elders who were there. When the 70 elders went up with Moses, up to a level on the mountain when they confirmed the covenant, they were able to look up and see God walking on the Sea of Glass up there. And they actually had as it were a wedding feast right there on the mountain with God and Moses just above them, and they were down just below them.

So, all the elders could have said ‘Look, let’s trust God, we know he’s up there, and if he’s with God everything’s going to be fine. What he is doing is giving him instructions, and it’s very important for us. Now everybody just relax and calm down and have faith and believe God and wait for Moses.’ *No, they didn’t do that!* Aaron could have said so but apparently he was afraid of the people.

So, here we have *giving into the mob*. And political expediency of doing what they do based upon what Aaron said, ‘Well you know this people is given the sins, so you know, let’s just turn them over to sin.’

So they came to Aaron and said, “...‘Up! Make us gods which shall go before us, for this Moses, **the man** who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* to me.’ And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought *them* to Aaron. And he took *them* from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool...” (vs 1-4). Aaron personally handmade the idols!

In this case they broke the first two commandments—did they not? We’re going to see that they broke the third commandment. We’re going to see that they broke the fourth commandment. And that’s the provocation because

- the first commandment says, ‘*I am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’
- the second commandment is: ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* under the earth.’ Or in the sea. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to worship them; for I the LORD your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers unto the children of the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandment.’

So here they were breaking the first two right away. And Aaron, the high priest of God was right there in the middle of this provocation doing it. That is remarkable, to me.

Verse 4: “...and fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molten calf. And they said, ‘These *are* your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.’” Now you know why—when the kingdom was split during the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam—Jeroboam was able to make the golden calves and the people just said, ‘oh yes, that is true.’ And they went head long into idolatry again.

- the third commandment, taking the name of God in vain
- the fourth commandment; they were having a feast which was not of God.

Now, on those golden calves, if you’ve seen the movie *The Ten Commandments*, they have it just

right. Where the horns come up and there is a round sun-disc right between the horns, which is symbolizing sun-worship. So, I would have to say, although it doesn't say it directly, I would be surprised if they were not doing this on a Sunday.

Verse 5, let's see the rest of the account here: "And when Aaron saw *the calf*, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, 'Tomorrow is a Feast to the LORD.'" Isn't that amazing? I wonder if that was from being the Sabbath and tomorrow as Sunday. I don't know, it doesn't say, so let's not go beyond just saying it's possible.

"And they rose up early on the next morning... [Yes! For their gods they would get up early on the morning, but for the true God all they would do was squawk and complain.] ...and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (v 6). Now that means they had a pagan sex orgy before the golden calves. If you've seen the movie *The Ten Commandments* I think that they show a very good depiction of what went on with that scene where it says and they rose up to play. Now, let's see the rest of the story; and *see how they provoke God!*

"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go! Get you down, for your people... [So he's stuck between the people and God.] ...whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, 'These *are* your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'" And the LORD said to Moses, 'I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may burn hot against them and that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.'" (vs 7-10).

I mean, this is really quite a thing. God said, look, I can fulfill my promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through you. Let Me destroy all these people of Israel because they are so rebellious.

"And Moses prayed to the LORD his God, and said, 'LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?... [this is putting the burden back on God] .... Why should the Egyptians speak and say, 'He brought them out with an evil intent... [Notice how he was able to *talk* with God; notice how he was able to *reason* with God. There are times when we can reason with God, and Moses is doing it here, and he's doing it properly, and he's doing it rightly.] (He says): ...with an evil intent, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the

earth"? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Your people.'" (vs 11-12). Those are pretty strong words—aren't they?

"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit *it* forever.'" And the LORD repented of the evil which He spoke of doing to His people" (vs 13-14).

Can prayer make a difference? *Not only is this intercessory prayer!* When you have intercessory prayer, what do you do? *You claim the promises of God!* Notice how he did it; he went back to where God swore by Himself to Abraham, and to Isaac, that He would do it. Now God bound himself, He said okay, *I'll repent!* So then Moses turned and came down the mountain, and he saw the golden calf.

Verse 19: "And it came to pass, as soon as he came near to the camp and saw the calf and dancing, then Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands... [Which had the Ten Commandments, and broke them at the base of the mountain] (it says): ...and broke them at the bottom of the mountain.... [That means at the base of the mountain.] ...And he took the calf which they had made and burned *it* in the fire, and pulverized *it* to powder, and scattered *it* upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink *of it*. And Moses said to Aaron, 'What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?'" (vs 19-21). *Quite a thing!* Can those who are to be the leaders and teachers bring sin upon people? *Yes!*

With what has happened to the largest Church of God in this era, great sin has been brought upon God, and the people because they have rejected the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the Truth of God, and have gone right back out into this world, and said, 'Behold, Protestantism is the true religion.' That's almost the same as this. So, Aaron being weak as he was:

"And Aaron said, 'Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they *are set* on mischief, for they said to me, 'Make us gods who shall go before us; as for this Moses... [It's your fault Moses, it's your fault!] ... the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break *it* off.' And they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and there came out this calf'" (vs 22-24). Wooop! Boom! Automatic idolatry! That's really something! *This was the greatest provocation against God!*

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 3:1-6
- 2) Deuteronomy 18:15-16, 18-22
- 3) Deuteronomy 12:30-32
- 4) Deuteronomy 13:1-5
- 5) Hebrews 3:7-19, 18, 19
- 6) 1 Corinthians 10:1-12
- 7) Psalm 95:6-11
- 8) Deuteronomy 9:3-7, 20-24
- 9) Exodus 15:23-26
- 10) Exodus 16:1-3
- 11) Exodus 20:18-19
- 12) Numbers 11:1-16, 31-34
- 13) Numbers 12:1-14
- 14) Exodus 32:1-14, 19-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 22
- John 10
- Psalm 104
- Hebrews 4
- Exodus 31

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Restoration of the World Wide Church of God* by J. Michael Feazell
- *Josephus*

Sermons/Series:

- *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*
- *What is the Administration of Death*
- *Is God's Love Conditional?*

Transcribed: 01/28/08

SAV

Re-formatted: bo—2-27-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews IX

Fred R. Coulter—November 3, 2001

Let's come to where we were in Exodus 32 and let's just continue the rest of the story of the great provocation, where they broke the first commandment, the second commandment, the third commandment and undoubtedly the fourth commandment when they had the golden calf. Then you also have the *breaking of the trust with God* by Aaron that he would lead the people into so great a sin.

Exodus 32:25: "And when Moses saw that the people were naked (for Aaron had made them naked to *their* shame among their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, 'Who *is* on the LORD'S side? *Come* to me.' And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him. And he said to them, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Each man put his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and kill each one his brother, and each one his companion, and each one his neighbor."' And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men; for Moses had said, 'Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD—even though it has been at the cost of a son or a brother—in order that *He* may give you a blessing today'" (vs 25-29).

Verse 30: "And it came to pass on the next day, Moses said to the people, 'You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD. Perhaps I shall make an atonement for your sin.' And Moses returned to the LORD, and said, 'Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold! And now if You would only forgive their sin!... [We're not told what it was that he spoke] ...And if not, I pray You, blot me out of Your book which You have written.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. And now go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My angel shall go before you. And in the day of My visitation I will visit their sin upon them.' And the LORD plagued the people because they made the calf, which Aaron made" (vs 30-35). It showed that they were responsible for it. That is the 'great provocation'!

God said that these people were rebellious from the day that they left Egypt. And Moses said to them that they were rebellious from the very day that he knew them. So, it's really quite a thing that the children of Israel were doing.

Let's come back to Numbers 14, because this is where they got the sentence for their sin, having to wander for a total of 40 years. They had sent in the 12 spies to spy out the land. Moses had to pray for

the people all the time—it's something! Numbers 14:17: Moses said, "And now, I beseech You, let the power of my LORD be great, according as You have spoken, saying, 'The LORD *is* long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth *generation*.' I beseech You... [Moses said to the Lord] ...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 17-19).

"And the LORD said, 'I have pardoned according to your word. 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 and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, 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... [We also know that it was Joshua, too.] ...I will bring him into the land into which he went. And his children shall possess it.'" (vs 17-24).

Verse 26: "And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, 'How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation which murmurs against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel which they murmur against Me. Say to them, "*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... [What you accused Me of bringing out here in the wilderness to kill.] ...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'" (vs 26-32).

"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.” And the men whom Moses sent to scout out the land, who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up an evil report upon the land, even those men that brought up the evil report upon the land died by the plague before the LORD” (vs 33-37). **They really provoked God!** What an amazing thing it is that God still dealt with them, because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Numbers 16—here we have those wanting to become of the priesthood, which were not a part of Aaron. *And that provoked the Lord!* It was Korah and the princes of the men and they came and they said, ‘Moses and Aaron, you take too much yourselves. Seeing that all the people are Holy, let’s make this equal here and let’s go ahead and we’re going to take over the priesthood.’ Well, you know what happened there! God said, ‘All right, let them bring their sensors; let them come in; God showed His business—didn’t He? **They provoked the Lord!**’

Numbers 16:30: “...then you shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.’ And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who *were* for Korah, and all *their* goods. They and all that they had went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. And they perished from among the congregation” (vs 30-33). I tell you, that’s something! What a sight that would have been! God really had to deal with these people—didn’t He?

Out of this we can get the lesson: God is going to have some harsh words to say to the false prophets—isn’t He? He’s going to have a harsh punishment for them—isn’t He? Let me just stop and mention here: Since these things were given to us as examples, that we learn not to do the same thing, I think that all those men and women who run around trying to be prophets, trying to be teachers and leaders, when God never sent them, they better stop and look and listen, and **hear, fear and repent!** James said, ‘Not many of you should desire to be teachers, because you know that those who are teachers are going to receive the sterner judgment.’

And look at the judgment that came upon them immediately, because they assumed to usurp the priesthood and the Levitical priests that were with Moses and Aaron, and *look what God did!* He just opened up the earth and took care of them! We’ve got to understand we’re dealing with a God Who is:

- merciful

- kind
- generous
- gracious

And all of those things! Look at how many times He forgave them—over and over and over again! But this provocation went on for 40 years! Quite a situation! We can be thankful that God keeps His promises.

Not content with that, v 41: “But on the next day all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron saying, ‘You have killed the people of the LORD.’ And it came to pass when the congregation was gathered together against Moses and against Aaron; they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation. And behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared” (vs 41-42). Utt-oh! We’re in great trouble!

“And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Get away from this congregation so that I may consume them as in a moment.’ And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said to Aaron, ‘Take a censer, and put fire in it from the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly into the congregation and make an atonement for them. For wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun.’ And Aaron did as Moses commanded and ran into the midst of the congregation. And behold, the plague had begun among the people.... [We don’t know what the plague was, but they were just dying on the spot.] ...And he put on incense and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed. And those who died in the plague were fourteen thousand, seven hundred, besides the ones who died about the matter of Korah” (vs 43-49).

Wow! Listen, let this be a lesson to be learned very deeply just in case we might happen to be blessed to get to a ‘place of safety’: *Once you are there*—regardless of how harsh it is—**don’t whisper a peep!**

Let’s see something concerning Moses and why Jesus Christ is greater than Moses. Jesus never sinned! But, in this case Moses sinned! It was not a great sin, but nevertheless, it was a *lack of faith*. This tells us that we better be careful *how we hear* what God says. God gave Moses some very specific instructions, and it brought a great penalty upon Moses.

The people were at Kadesh and the people were complaining again and wondering where they were going to get water: Numbers 20:7 “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and **speak** to the rock before their eyes....’” (vs 7-8



In other words, while they are there watching the rock, you tell them to look at the rock and you *speak*.

“...And it shall give forth its water, and you shall bring forth to them water out of the rock. So you shall give the congregation and their animals *water to drink*.’ And Moses took the rod from before the presence of the LORD as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, ‘Hear now, you rebels.... [Moses got angry here] ...Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ And Moses lifted up his hand and with his rod **he struck the rock twice**. And the water came out plentifully, and the congregation and their animals drank” (vs 7-11).

You’d think that that would be just a *little violation*—wouldn’t you? After all, if we would do a little psychoanalysis we would say that Moses was under great stress—was he not? *Yes!* Did he not lose his temper? *Yes, he did!* All of those things God put up with. But to use that as an excuse *to not believe God* cost him dearly! That shows you how important it is to believe God.

Verse 12: “And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not believe Me, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.... [**Both** Moses and Aaron died and didn’t go into the land.] ...These *are* the Waters of Strife because the children of Israel contended against the LORD, but He showed Himself Holy among them” (vs 12-13). I tell you, what a thing! Going on and on and on!

The book of Numbers is a *heavy* book, but there are a lot of lessons in here for us *that we don’t provoke*. We are given the warning that if we want to enter into His rest, *that we should not sin as the people sinned*. As an example to us, it was done and recorded that look at what we have today within the Church of God. Look at all the people that complain, that gripe, instead of *coming to God* and:

- learning of His love
- repenting
- asking for a right attitude

They stand up and carp and complain and just come after people. I tell you, it’s something! Then, when those people come after me with some of their silly doctrines and I won’t accept them, or someone sends me some sort of silly paper that they expect me to answer with a great long dissertation, and I ignore it and throw it away because it’s worthless, then someone gets mad at me because I don’t want to waste my time on their stupidity. In a small sense, that’s my being caught between God and the people and it’s called *being pushed together*

*with paper*.

Numbers 21:4: “And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom....” They asked the children of Edom if they could pass by, just by the highway. We won’t take any of you cattle, we won’t even touch your land, we won’t walk through a field, just let us go on the highway. And Edom came down with swords and said, ‘No, you won’t do it.’ Edom was the son of Esau!

“...And the soul of the people was very discouraged because of the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?.... [Yes, for all of *you who rebel*, that’s true! All of those who accuse God that their children were brought out there to be killed, the children are going into the land.] ...For *there is* no bread, neither is there any water. And our soul hates this light bread.’.... [angel’s food] ...And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people. And many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, ‘We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you.... [Well, it’s about time that you learn the lesson!] ...Pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.’ And Moses prayed for the people.” (vs 4-7).

“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole. And it shall be when everyone who is bitten looks upon it, he shall live.’ And Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole. And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked upon the serpent of brass, he lived” (vs 8-9).

You know what happened later? This was to be an historical relic of the children of Israel. But, during the days of the kings *they worshipped it as an idol!* So, I tell you what a thing this is! This is something! This just goes on and on. You would think that sooner or later they would learn a lesson; sooner or later they would get the point, but they never did. Here again, we have *another provocation* and this time by the very leaders and princes:

Numbers 25:1: “And Israel dwelt in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.” This was by the council of Balak. Baalim came and he could not curse because God said, ‘No, I’m not going to curse the people of Israel. Here’s the point. God can take care of and correct His own people, *and He will!* But He’s not going to let some pagan priest come and curse them. So He made poor old Baalim bless seven times and Balak went out of his gourd because he said, ‘Didn’t I hire you? Didn’t I give you all this money to come here and curse the people, and all you do is bless. What’s the matter with you?’

What he did he said, 'Look, I can't go against what God said. Here's what you do. You have a feast. You have all your beautiful women, and you have them allure and come over and commit fornication and God will punish them.' That's the doctrine of Baalim. That's what they did.

Verse 2: "And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods.... [Come and enjoy a nice meal, you haven't had any good flesh for a long time—have you? Look, we even have bread over here.] Remember, they weren't to eat bread until the Wave Sheaf was offered after they came into the land.] ...And the people ate and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself to Baal Peor.... [I wonder if this was Sunday? *Baal is sun-worship!* I wonder if this may have been Christmas? *Who knows! The nativity of the sun—right? Yes!*] ...And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said to Moses, 'Take all the heads of the people and impale them before the LORD facing the sun, so that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.' And Moses said to the judges of Israel, 'Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal Peor.'" (vs 2-5).

And to show how brazen this was; this is worst than Bill Clinton and the Lewinsky affair, v 6: "And behold, a man of the children of Israel came and brought to his brethren a woman of Midian, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." You talk about gall! Wow!

"And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose up from among the congregation and took a spear in his hand. And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and pierced both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman, through her belly.... [It doesn't take very much imagination to understand what was occurring here when that was done.] ...So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand" (vs 7-9).

"And the LORD spoke to Moses saying... [Once in a while someone will stand up for God and Phinehas did. So here he has a blessing from God.] ...'Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel in that he was zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel in My jealousy. Therefore say, "Behold, I give him My covenant of peace.... [Here's another special covenant {see sermon series: *Covenants of God*}] ...And he shall have it, and his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood... [Somewhere today there is someone of the line of Eleazar—who was a Levite—serving God

somewhere in the Church of God.] ...because he was zealous for his God and made an atonement for the children of Israel.'" And the name of the Israelite who was killed, he who was struck with the woman of Midian, *was* Zimri, the son of Salu, leader of a chief house of the Simeonites.... [one of the leaders] ...And the Midianite woman's name who was killed *was* Cozbi, the daughter of Zur. He was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian" (vs 10-15).

What a provocation! ***The children of Israel never learned the lesson!*** Even after they came into the land—those that came—they never did wholly follow after God. Isn't it interesting that they had to be *forced* to follow God? Well, with carnal people you have to do that! *Carnal people look for ways to disobey God*, whereas ***converted people seek every way to obey God*** and do the things that please Him. The *carnal people seek every justification* in their mind as to why they are right and given license to do this thing. Just like the Protestants today. They come to one verse—Rom. 10:4—where it says 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness,' and they take that and throw out all the laws of God and bring in a whole system of lawlessness. Amazing—*isn't it?* Absolutely amazing! That should read the 'Christ is the end of the *works of law* for righteousness'—not terminating the law. It is forever, done in Spirit and in Truth!

Let's see what they did. God told them what to do, Judges 2:1: "And the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, 'I made you go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I swore to your fathers. And I said, "I will never break My covenant with you. And you shall make no treaty with those who live in this land. You shall throw down their altars."' **But you have not obeyed My voice.** What *is* this that you have done? And I also said, "I will not drive them out from before you, but they shall be thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you"'" (vs 1-3).

Notice again how with the book of Hebrews we tie in the theme ***to obey the voice of God*** or *not obey the voice of God* as we see here in v 2. So, He says, 'Okay, I'm going to give you an ongoing penalty or a thorn in the flesh that is always going to needle you, because you are just intent on doing wrong.'

Verse 4: "And it came to pass when the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept.... [They don't like to hear bad news. 'Oh, God, we tried our best, why are You doing this to us?'] ...And they called the name of that place The Place of Weeping. And they sacrificed there to the LORD. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel left, each man to his inheritance, to possess the land. **And the people served the LORD**

**all the days of Joshua...** [That means they kept the Sabbath, the Holy Days; they did what God said.] ...and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that He did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him on the border of his inheritance... And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers....” (vs 4-10).

In America we are reaching a generational change that is going to be profound. This generational change is being fed by the likes of things like *Harry Potter* and witchcraft. This generation is going to go whoring after other gods like no other generation as this older generation of us passes. You wait and see! No question about it!

“And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor even the works which He had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served Baalim” (vs 10-11).

- they went back to Sunday-worship
  - they went back to the golden calf worship
  - they went back to the pagan worship
- immediately; as soon as they could!

“And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, even the gods of the people who were around them, and bowed themselves to them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD and served Baal and Ashtaroth” (vs 12-13). So God sent them off into captivity. Guess what’s eventually going to come to America? *The same thing!*

Let’s review a little bit about the background here in Hebrews. The things we come to are

- *slipping, away*
- *apostasy*
- *disobedience*
- *leaving God*

This is quite a problem at that time because there were many who were saying—because of the disappointment that Christ didn’t return at that time the way the people and many of the apostles had thought—and it was only at this time, right after the writing of the book of Hebrews that that the apostles were given a revelation that Christ would not return for many, many years, perhaps even for centuries.

Let’s see that in 2-Peter 3, and let’s see what Peter said. And there were a lot of people saying this, and it really caused a lot of difficulties and problems because people began to give up on God. Especially those in Jerusalem, and especially the

Jews who were going back to the traditions; going back to the rituals; going back to the temple service. And yet, the temple was soon to be destroyed as Paul showed here in the book of Hebrews, and they didn’t realize it, but ***God was preparing them for the superior covenant of the New Covenant*** and the things that would be accomplished that way. Where you have the temple in heaven above and the High Priest in heaven above.

As we are seeing, all the things that are here beginning in the first part of Hebrews and leading right on up to chapter five. The first part talks about the qualities of Christ as God and then the qualities of Christ as a human being, with the sacrifice that He had, and then how He was faithful, more faithful than Moses, because He was the Builder of the house. We’re going to see that Paul in writing Hebrews compares the faithfulness of Christ to the lack of faithfulness that the people were having then and then also compares that to the problems of those who were rebelling in the wilderness, in whose bodies were strewn in the desert because of their sin.

2-Peter 3:1: “Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you... [He warned them that he was writing it and promised them that he would have a written remembrance of the things that they were taught. So this is also a part of the canonization of the New Testament.] ...in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds by causing *you* to remember *in order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the Holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles” (vs 1-2).

This does not mean that the ‘Holy prophets’ are those that give a forecast of future events. Prophets in the New Testament have to do and refer mostly to those who give inspired preaching. That is called *prophesy*; it is a telling forth of the Word of God rather than a foretelling of future events. He’s talking about those

- who spoke to them
- who inspired them
- who uplifted them
- who taught them the Word of God

and of the commandment of ‘*us*,’ the apostles of the Lord and Savior. So, he’s including all of the apostles in this statement.

Verse 3: “Knowing this first, that in the last days *there* will come mockers, walking according to their own personal lusts.” And that is precisely what happened before the fall of Jerusalem and the total upset in the Church, and the apostasy that occurred. We will see in chapter three Paul was trying to warn them so they would not apostatize; that they would look at the example and not follow the things of disobedience as the children of Israel did when they

were coming out of Egypt and wandering in the wilderness before they went into the ‘promised land.’ Even after they went into the ‘promised land’ they were not faithful—were they? So they’re walking after their own lusts.

This is the same thing we’re going to be confronted with today. How many times have we heard Christ is returning? How many times have we set down a presumed date and made the Scriptures fit around the presumed date when we know that Christ said, ‘no man knows the day or the hour, no not even the angels in heaven above, but My Father only.’ And when the apostles, before they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 1), asked the Lord, ‘Will You, at this time, restore the kingdom to Israel.’ And He said, ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons that the Father has put in His own authority.’ This is the mistake that everybody has made concerning the return of Jesus Christ.

When it happens and it doesn’t work out the way that we suppose, then we start saying this, v 4: “...‘Where is the promise of His coming?... [In other words, we begin to accuse God. We begin to say that something is wrong with God. And, of course, at that time there were so many saying that.] (Here’s what they say.): ...Forever since the forefathers died... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...everything has remained the same as from the beginning of creation.’ But this *fact* is hidden from them—they themselves choosing *to ignore it*—that by the Word of God *the* heavens existed of old, and *the* earth came forth out of water and amid water, by which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, had itself been destroyed” (vs 4-6).

What he’s saying is, ‘Look, just like the people at the Flood, they ridiculed Noah, they didn’t think it was going to happen, they didn’t think that the rain was going flood the earth or the world, and lo and behold, it did! So then Peter uses that and steps forward to the end-time and says:

Verse 7: “But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, *and* are being reserved for fire in *the* day of judgment and destruction of *the* ungodly. Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you: that with *the* Lord, one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (vs 7-8). He’s telling us, at the time that he wrote this, very clearly here that it may be thousands of years before Christ returns. And that was a revelation that was given to him and to all of the other apostles when God made known the *mystery of God* in its fullness, that we would become, literally, the very sons of God.

Verse 9: “The Lord is not delaying the promise of *His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay...” Let’s understand concerning the return of Christ: ***Everything is right on time! Just as***

***the Father has planned it!*** So there’s something that we need to do because God has planned it that way so that we can be in the Kingdom of God, rather than saying, ‘Look, Christ isn’t returning, let’s eat and drink and play, just like they did in the wilderness.’ And as they did in the wilderness, ‘Let’s go after other gods.’ So, God is not slack concerning His promises, as men count slackness.

“...rather, He is long-suffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (v 9). God wants more people in the Kingdom of God than we, in our selfish end-time plans have devised in our own minds to bring the return of Christ real soon. God wants more people in His Kingdom. He wants as many as possible to repent, if they will listen and hear and repent and obey. That’s one of the reasons that they didn’t know, that they didn’t understand. Let’s understand something here as we go through this. What we need to do is this—here is the key thing in all of this as we go through it:

- when we hear the warnings
- when we see these things
- when there are pronouncements
- when there are warnings against falling away
- when there are warnings of becoming lukewarm
- when there are warnings because you’re dull of hearing

What we need to do is go back to the greatest thing that God has given us and that is ***to understand***

- That God loves us!
- That God gave His Son for us!

That’s what Paul is teaching us here in the book of Hebrews, and that we are to respond and ***love God with all our heart, mind, soul and all of our being.***

- Then we can make it through these dark times.
- Then we can make it through the things that we face.
- Then it doesn’t matter what the circumstances in the world are.

But we are to continue to watch and we are not to start slacking off, and we are not to become apostatizing. Human nature is all the same—mine, yours and everybody else’s—if it’s not urgent to do then we put it off, and *we put it off*. And that’s what happens *spiritually*: we put it off, *we put it off!* and *we grow lukewarm!* We do live in a Laodicean age. Our apostatizing could follow right along with the rest of them; we just go along the way that *we think* we should.

Let’s come to 2-Peter 1:8, and let’s see what

Peter said we need to do. After saying that love and the steps of coming to Godliness, he says: “For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind... [What does God say of the Laodiceans? *They are blind!*] ...—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure... [that’s what we have to be about doing] ...because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, **to stir you up by causing you to remember these things**” (vs 8-13).

That’s the whole purpose of the book of Hebrews, too. To stir them up! To have them look at themselves! To not let themselves slip away!

Hebrews 2—let’s just review a little bit, some of the important things and the warnings that are given. Let’s understand that these things apply to us today, because we are in very much the same situation as they were then. There were a lot of people back then who were turning from God, just like there are today.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason, it is **imperative** that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*” (vs 1-3).

Hebrews 3—let’s review this again, and let’s look at some of the IF clauses from this point forward. There is no question whatsoever about God.

- God is eternal
- God is always consistent
- God never lies
- God is never lazy
- God never slacks down
- God’s love is always there—if we yield ourselves to it; it is always conditional to us if we don’t

We’re going to see that there are a lot of conditions which are given to human beings which,

when you stop and analyze it, goes all the way back to Adam and Eve and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and being in the Garden of Eden and so forth.

Hebrews 3:5: “Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant, for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards. But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as the Son...” (vs 5-6). We’re going to see that just as he compares the faithfulness of Moses with the faithfulness of the children of Israel—or the lack of faithfulness—so he is drawing the parallel with the faithfulness of Christ in relationship to us as compared to the children of Israel in relationship to Moses. “...over His own house; Whose house we are...” (v 6).

- we’re the *temple* of God
- we’re the *building* of God
- we have the *Holy Spirit* of God

but notice, *there is a condition!* “...**if** we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end.... [We’re not to slip away. We are to hold it firm until the end.] (then he begins drawing the comparison): ...For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, **if you will hear His voice**’” (vs 6-7).

Verse 11—because of their disobedience: “So I swore in My wrath, “**If** they shall enter into My rest—” Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God” (vs 11-12). We’ll come back to that and ask what are some of the steps of apostasy.

Verse 14: “For we are companions of Christ, **if** we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end.” He’s repeating himself here, so it’s very important for us to understand that God inspired him to say that in vs 6 & 14. We’ve got to hold steadfastly! He repeated himself, so it’s got to be very important.

Matthew 24:13<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.”

Hebrews 3:15: “As it is being said, ‘Today, **if you will hear His voice**...’” So, the question is:

- Do we hear the voice of God?
- Are we doing the things that God wants us to?

The condition is upon us! “...do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion” (v 15).

Hebrews 4:3: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, ‘So I swore in My wrath, “**If** they shall enter into My rest—”’...” Entering into the Kingdom of

God is dependent upon—not God’s part, because He is firmly and fully committed to that, and there is no turning back on God’s part—

- We are the ones who have been given free moral agency.
- We are the ones who have to choose.
- We are the ones who have to listen.
- We are the ones who have to be diligent and stirring ourselves up.

Verse 5: “And again concerning this: **‘If** they shall enter into My rest’—” Of course, that’s all tied around the Sabbath, and the Sabbath Day is the first thing that people begin to reject or never accept and *harden their hearts and will not listen*, though it is right in front of their faces! It’s amazing how people do. They say, ‘God knows my heart; I go to church every Sunday; I’m a good person; God knows my heart.’

That’s just a nice carnal excuse for hardheartedness. Yes, God does know your heart! Yes, God does know that you go to church on Sunday, if you do. I had one man tell me that, and it was quite shocking just to hear him, but it was really quite a justification in carnal reasoning and how people think. Most people think of themselves as good. Most people think of themselves as doing right. Even in the criminal acts when they go against the law, and even know that they do, they justify it in their mind that there is a right and proper reason why they did it, so therefore, they give themselves an allowance to do it and they should not be held accountable. ***That’s not how God looks at it!***

Verse 7: “...‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’” Paul is talking to those who know the Word of God, and it all centers around the Sabbath—doesn’t it?

Verse 11 shows a very important thing which we should do: “We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest... [resting on the Sabbath] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.” This whole book of Hebrews is filled with warnings and admonitions and encouragement. Some of the warnings get very blunt and very to the point.

Hebrews 10:23: “Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess... [see how many times he repeats himself] ...for He Who promised *is* faithful... [the One Who is always faithful is God] ...and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together... [Here again we have the Sabbath issue—don’t we?] ...even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*...” (vs 23-25).

- to be faithful
- to not fall away
- to hear the voice of God
- to love one another
- to do the good works of God

“...and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near” (v 25). And that is prophecy for us today at the end-time, as it says, ‘upon whom the ends of the world have come.’ All the way through the book of Hebrews we are going to see

- teaching
- admonition
- correction
- warning

and here, v 26, we have a warning: “For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins... [then here is a real warning]: ...but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*” (vs 26-27). Quite a warning—Isn’t it? Who is the responsibility upon *but us!*

Verse 28: “*Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the* testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace? For we know Him Who has said, “Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!” says *the* Lord.’ And again, ‘*The* Lord will judge His people.’ ***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God***” (vs 26-31). You talk about the admonitions; it’s something!

Then he reminds them again—here’s an exhortation or encouragement: “But remember the earlier days when, after you were enlightened, you endured much conflict in *your* sufferings” (v 12). So, we need to remember when we were first called. We need to remember when we were baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God, and started keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the joy and our zeal and drive and our understanding. ***We need to have that again in a mature way***, and to really develop the perfection of these things through the power of God’s Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 12:7 talks about correction, and there will be correction along the way: “**‘If**... [there’s the condition again] ...you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But **if** you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons” (vs 7-8). Quite a warning!

Here is encouragement, and what we need to look forward to. Here's where we need to focus the long-range thoughts and vision and understanding of the purpose of our calling, which is the resurrection, which is to come to the resurrection on the Sea of Glass.

Verse 22: "But you have come to Mount Zion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering... [which it will be in that day of resurrection] ...and to *the* Church of *the* Firstborn... [that's us, brethren] ...registered in *the* book of *Life* in heaven; and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that* of Abel" (vs 22-24). You have

- the encouragement
- the vision
- the explanation

Now, v 25: "**Beware** that you do not refuse to *hear* Him Who is speaking! For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused to *hear* the One Who was on the earth divinely instructing *them*, how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven."

Let's see the warning about apostatizing. Apostatizing means *going away from God! Leaving God!* But, also leaving God in a *hostile* and *rebellious* and *angry* way. That's what the people did when they came out of the land of Egypt, when they apostatized.

Hebrews 3:12: "Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God. Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin" (vs 12-13). Sin is deceitful because there is a 'pleasure in sin for a season.' How does one begin apostatizing?

- they begin taking things for granted
- they get lazy
- they don't do the things that God says
- they turn their back on God

And rather than keeping the focus on the love of God, their focus becomes on themselves and they lose the love of God. Let's see the beginning of apostatizing, because it's very important for us to realize it.

Let's see what God told the Church at Ephesus and their sin. Remember, the apostasy set in before the apostles died. By time we come to the Church, about 125<sub>A.D.</sub> and history pulls back the veil,

it is a totally different church from what it was when Christ founded it and the apostles taught and raised it up under the power of the Holy Spirit of God. This is why the Church at Ephesus is the apostolic church.

Revelation 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars; and *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that **you have left your first love**" (vs 2-4). That is the first step of apostasy: **you lose your love of God!** This comes from the Greek 'protos.' And the primary love, the first and greatest commandment is **to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength and being!** That's what they lost. That's the first step in apostasy.

Verse 5: "Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent." So, it's the same thing for us today, exactly the same thing.

Let's look at another aspect of apostasy. Matthew 24:42: "Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming.... [If we don't watch, that is another step in apostasy— isn't it? *Yes, it is!*] ...But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think" (vs 42-44).

There are two ways that the Day of the Lord is going to come upon us:

1. we die in the faith and are put in the grave
2. we die in apostasy and are put in the grave

God has come upon you, and the next moment will either be that you're resurrected unto life, or you're resurrected unto the Lake of Fire.

Let's look at the next category, because it has to do with those who are servants and teachers. Verse 45: "Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord has set over his household, to give them food in due season?... [this is talking about ministers and overseers] ...Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing.... [Every elder and every teacher better read, study and live by 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, Titus and all the words of Christ, Paul and the apostles concerning how to conduct your ministry and serve and teach the

brethren.] ...Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his property” (vs 45-47).

Here is another thing in apostasy, because what happens is when those people creep in unaware, as Paul said. Acts 20—let’s see the warning the Apostle Paul gave to those that he ordained, that God raised up as elders and overseers in the Church at Ephesus. Here it all ties together.

Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God... [That is the responsibility of the elders and ministers—**to feed the Church of God!**]

- they are to *know* the Word of God
- they are to *teach* the Word of God
  - ✓ to *perfect* the saints
  - ✓ to *uplift* them
  - ✓ to *help* them
  - ✓ to *exhort* them
  - ✓ to *encourage* them
  - ✓ to *inspire* them
  - ✓ to *correct* them
  - ✓ to *lead* them in the way

—because God, through the Holy Spirit, has made them overseers for that purpose! It is the Church of God “...which He has purchased with His own blood” (vs 28). And there is the profound and deep responsibility. It’s not a political organization, a hierarchy, and it is not to serve the ministers and have the brethren as lackeys to do the minister’s bidding. It’s the other way around. The ministers, elders and teachers are to serve the brethren, to teach them.

Notice how this fits in with Hebrews, with 1-Peter, with Matt. 24. Notice the warning, v 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up... [Why? How?] ...speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves” (vs 29-30).

Remember, Christ gave the warning and He said that there will be many false prophets who will deceive many, and the majority of the people will follow them. That’s just the way it is. Here is an apostasy of an elder, a teacher or anyone who is a servant of God:

Matthew 24:48: “But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, ‘My lord delays *his* coming,’” How many warnings do we have about that? It’s unreal— isn’t it?

Notice, he changes his behavior. Instead of serving them, he beats them. Instead of giving them meat in due season, instead of encouraging and correcting and uplifting and always pointing them to Jesus Christ and God the Father, v 49: “And shall

begin to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken” (vs 48-49). What does it mean to eat and drink with the drunken? Does that mean to just go out and become debauching alcoholics? *No!* They begin to get *familiar with the world* and they begin to bring in the world’s ways of doing things into the Church, and the world’s philosophies and the world’s religion and they drink out of the cup which the great Babylon, the whore, has: ‘all the inhabitants of the world have drunk of the wrath of her fornication.’ That’s what it refers to here.

It’s not just the return of Christ, because Christ can come upon anyone at anytime to do His will—and we’ve seen this happen, v 50: “The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know. And he shall cut him asunder and shall appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vs 50-51).

Those are the steps of apostasy. Let’s tie this in and see the warning given by God in Deut. 12. When it comes to eating and drinking with the drunken, and it comes to going out and bringing in the world’s religion—whether it be the carnal ‘Christianity’ of this world or Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam or any of the other religions of the world—God gave specific commands. This is always the thing that happens. This is the cycle that has taken place over and over again, as we have seen in Heb. 3 with the children of Israel going after Baalim and Ashtaro. ***He gave the warning!***

Deuteronomy 12:30: “Take heed to yourself...” We need to realize, brethren, ***we always have to be on guard!*** We always have to be motivated by the Spirit of God. We can never ever be satisfied wherever we are in our Christian growth. What we do today is fine, but that only counts for tomorrow if we do well tomorrow. Remember the old say—the old Laodiceans’ saying—***the road to hell is paved with good intentions!*** “Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared...”

- These things are interesting!
- These things look like fun!
- These things look like wonderful goodness and beauty and everything like that!

I saw Larry King interviewing Laura Bush and it was so beautiful with the Christmas trees and, I thought, as the interview was going on, here is a lovely woman—sincere and dedicated in what she’s doing, and probably one of the best first ladies we’ve had in the White House for a long time—and Larry King (who’s a Jew) interviewing her and talking about Christmas and the beautiful decorations. They don’t even know what is happening, because, to them, it is a good thing. That’s why it comes as a snare.



Satan has cleverly taken the paganism of Christmas and has wrapped it around the things of family gatherings, giving of gifts, being with your children, having wonderful and beautiful decorations, lights and all of those things, which appeal to *the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life*. He says it's a snare!

Verse 30: "Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed from before you... [God is the One Who destroyed them—right? *Yes!*] ...and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?'" 'I'll do them in the same manner. I'll do it unto the Lord. If I do it unto the Lord, that makes it right, because I'm good and God knows my heart.' God says *you're not to judge by what you see; you're not to judge by what you hear. You are to judge by the Spirit of God and the Word of God!*

God gives a warning again, v 31: "You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it" (vs 31-32).

Let's go back and see, is there any difference between that warning and the warning in Rev. 22:14: "Blessed *are* those who **keep** His commandments... [the Greek word 'poieo'—meaning *practice*.] ...that they may have the right to *eat of* the tree of life..." Going all the way back to the beginning with Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden and the tree of life, you cannot have access to it unless you are keeping the commandments of God and loving God. This is not much different that what we read in Deut.—right?

"...and may enter by the gates into the city. But excluded *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and everyone who loves and devises a lie. I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches.... [This is summing up the whole Word of God. Christ has given this so that it should be testified in the churches—wherever they are.] ...I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.' And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely" (vs 14-17). That's what God says to us. We have to do it, but there are conditions: *that we remain faithful*.

"For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book... [This is the summary of the whole Bible. The Apostle John in canonizing and finishing off the New Testament to

be placed alongside the Old Testament as the complete instruction book for those that God deals with.] ...*that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book" (v 18). As a witness and warning to all the world because He's put the Bible out there for everyone to have, for everyone to know. How many really read it and know it, and understand it and want to love God and do His will? So He gives this warning! Again, we're back to hearing the words—aren't we? Remember what we've read: ***Today, if you will hear His voice!***

Verse 18: "For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, *that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy... [the inspired writings of God; not just the prophecies of the book of Revelation.] ...God shall take away his part from *the* book of Life, and from the Holy City, and from the things **that are written in this book**" (vs 18-19). That's quite profound!

Verse 20: "He Who testifies these things says, 'Surely, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen" (vs 20-21). That's quite a thing! We need to understand what a tremendous thing it is that God has done for us in giving us these warning through the book of Hebrews and how He was preparing the people of God for that time. We need to use the book of Hebrews to prepare us for this time, because we are entering into a time of trouble that is really going to be very desperate, and it increases and multiplies as we go down through the time before Christ returns. We have to be ready at any time!

- Let's be faithful!
- Let's obey!
- Let's hear His voice!
- Let's love and serve one another!
- Let's encourage and exhort one another!

—while it is called today and ***we hear His voice and do the things that are pleasing in His sight***.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 32:25-35
- 2) Numbers 14:17-24, 26-37
- 3) Numbers 16:30-33, 41-49
- 4) Numbers 20:7-13
- 5) Numbers 21:4-9
- 6) Numbers 25:1-15
- 7) Judges 2:1-13
- 8) 2 Peter 3:1-9
- 9) 2 Peter 1:8-13

- 10) Hebrews 2:1-3
- 11) Hebrews 3:5-7, 11-12, 14
- 12) Matthew 24:13
- 13) Hebrews 3:15
- 14) Hebrews 4:3, 5, 7, 11-12
- 15) Hebrews 10: 23-31
- 16) Hebrews 12:7-8, 22-25
- 17) Hebrews 3:12-13
- 18) Revelation 2:2-5
- 19) Matthew 24:42-47
- 20) Acts 20:28-30
- 21) Matthew 24:48-51
- 22) Deuteronomy 12:30-32
- 23) Revelation 22:14-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 10:4
- Acts 1

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Covenants of God*

FRC:bo  
Transcribed: 3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews X

## Hebrews 4:1-9

Fred R. Coulter—January 5, 2002

I think Hebrews is really fitting for our day, because it's reaching a time very similar in our day that when what they were going through in the time when Paul wrote this epistle—which is really a sermon, which I'm sure, he really perfected by preaching many, many times. We need to understand that the section from Hebrews 3:1 thru 5:10 all fits together and is a continuous thing.

Let's come to Hebrews, the fourth chapter, and let's begin right here. Hebrews 3:7 thru 4:13 is a subsection that is sandwiched in-between about the faithfulness as Christ as the Builder of the house and then when we come to the last part of chapter four and into five, we are talking about the High Priest Melchisedec. All of the things from the beginning of Heb. 1 clear up to 5:10 are leading the brethren to point them to looking to Christ Who is the High Priest in heaven above, how He got there:

- through His sacrifice
- through participating in human flesh
- by being faithful to God
- by dying on the cross
- by being resurrected
- by building His Church
- He is the Head Apostle over everything

Then we come to Heb. 3, and we've gone through it, where today the theme is **today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart!** This carries over into Heb. 4. There are some very important things for us to understand. Hebrews 4 is completely misunderstood by the theologians of the world when they say that *Christ is our 'rest'* and *Christ is our 'Sabbath,'* therefore, 'we do not have to keep the Sabbath Day'—which goes absolutely contradictory to the meaning of the Greek text here in Heb. 4.

Principles to always remember:

- **Christ died for our sins**—which is true!
- **Christ was resurrected!**
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit, and God the Father sending it, **we are called**—which is true!
- We have the **forgiveness of sin** through the sacrifice and belief **in the blood of Christ**—which is true!
- Christ did not keep any commandment in our stead!

Meaning:

- In Christ keeping the Sabbath *does not relieve us* from keeping the Sabbath!

- In Christ being obedient does not mean that we are relieved from obedience!

That is the implication that is given in the lawless religions of this world, which proclaim that Christ is our 'rest' and if we 'rest in Christ' we have nothing to do! **That is absolutely a false doctrine,** and why they use Heb. 4:9 is only because of the translation in the *King James*.

Let's start by going to Hebrews 4:9 and then we'll do like we should in the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study* and read the verse before and the verses after. Because this is a convenient translation, which we will show is entirely and utterly wrong. Hebrews 4:9 (KJV): "There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God." They all know that this was translated from the Greek word 'sabbatismos.'

Let's read it the way it should have been translated, and we will see the vast difference in it. What they are doing, they are making 'sabbatismos'—which means *Sabbath-keeping* to assume the equivalency of 'katapausis'—which means *rest*. It does not assume that meaning.

Hebrews 4:9 (FV): "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God." While it is true we are to rest on the Sabbath from our work as it commands, it is not true that we are relieved from Sabbath-keeping because we rest in Christ.

Let's read the verses before and after. We'll just read it through so we get the context and then go back and analyze it and we will see that there is a connection between *faith and obedience* and *unbelief and disobedience*. This is what we are talking about and it is all centered on Sabbath-keeping.

Verse 1: "Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into **His rest**, any of you might seem to come short. For truly, we have had the Gospel preached *to us*, even as they also *did*; but the preaching of the Word did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith in those who heard. For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into **the rest**, as He has said, 'So I swore in My wrath, "If they shall enter into **My rest**—"...' (vs 1-3). Which actually shows that entering into the 'promised land' is conditional and also entering into the Kingdom of God is conditional. That's why it is left hanging.

"...although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He spoke in a certain place about **the seventh day** in this manner:

‘And God **rested** on the seventh day from all His works’; and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into **My rest**’—consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience, again He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’ For if Joshua... [not Jesus (*KJV*)—that contradicts the statement that if you ‘rest in Jesus’ you have rest.] (So, if you read it as ‘Jesus’): ...had given them rest...” (vs 3-8) it would make no sense. That’s a contradictory statement.

“For if Joshua had given them **rest** He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day. There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. For the one who has entered into **His rest**, he also has ceased from his works, just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that **rest**, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience” (vs 8-11).

Let’s go back and analyze this—*Hebrews Study Heb. 4:1-9* (guide with this series):

“For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day*...”

Why talk about the seventh day if you’re not talking about the Sabbath?

...in this manner: ‘And God rested on the seventh day from all His works’...”

Why did God do that?

1. To show that the Sabbath was to be perpetually a day of rest and part of the commandments of God *by creation!*
2. To show His presence in the Sabbath Day and the Holy Days—not in any of the other days that other religions keep!

I was talking to a man who was in Jerusalem for a while and he said that it’s a real circus from fighting through Sunday. He said that because certain parts of Jerusalem the Muslims have there is no work done on Friday. In certain parts where the Jews are, there’s no work done on Saturday, and certain parts where the Catholics and Orthodox are, there’s no work done on Sunday. So essentially you have four days for shopping. That shows you why God did not leave it to the choice of men.

Now then, there is a connection between Sabbath observance and entering into the ‘promised land’ for the Israelites. And a connection between Sabbath observance and entering into the Kingdom of God for those who are Christ’s. The Gospel that was preached to them was the Gospel of the good news of entering into the ‘promised land’ to receive

the physical blessings given to the seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. The promise of ‘rest’ that we have is the promise of entering into the Kingdom of God. However, in both cases, the same Sabbath Day was the key point of obedience necessary.

“...and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest.’ Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience...”

What did they do? As we saw, we went through all the points of disobedience—didn’t we? They made the golden calf, and the golden calf is a picture of the sun-god, because right between the horns of the golden calf is a big sun-disk. What did they do? *Those rebels in the wilderness obeyed Sunday-keeping!*

Let’s look at a couple of Scriptures of that to put it into the record here, to show the connection between the Gospel then—as preached under the Israelites and entering into the ‘promised land’ and the Sunday-worship that they had right under the nose of God—and the Gospel being preached to us and the Sabbath Day in relationship to obedience to God.

Acts 7:37: “This is the Moses who said to the children of Israel, ‘A Prophet shall *the* Lord your God raise up for you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear.’.... [prophecy of Christ, just like we saw in the first part of Heb. 3. between Moses and Christ] ...This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the Angel Who... [Christ Who was leading them] ...spoke to him [Moses] in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob]; who received *the* living oracles to give to us; to whom our fathers would not be subject, but thrust *him* away, and turned their hearts back to Egypt” (vs 37-39).

Where does this belief come from? *From within! From the heart!* Remember what the Eunuch said to Philip? ‘What prevents me from being baptized?’ Philip said, *If you believe with all your heart that Jesus is Lord and Savior, it is permitted for you be baptized!* He said, **‘I believe!’**

“...their hearts turned back to Egypt” (v 39). We read all that how they wanted the fleshpots, the onions, the leeks, garlic, fish and all those good things. Yea, the day is going to come—in our day—when it’s going to happen; you won’t have the supermarket and you can’t get everything from all around the world to fill your table with a great delight.

Verse 40: “Saying to Aaron, ‘Make us gods who shall go before us... [This tells you a little bit of something about Aaron; he was kind of a wishy-

washy person—wasn't he? But nevertheless, because God chose him He stuck with him; nevertheless Aaron was penalized.] ...for this Moses who brought us out from *the* land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands" (vs 40-41). A little more we know from the context in 1-Cor. 10 and that it was in their celebration a sex orgy. Or you might say in modern parlance today, 'a rock concert.'

Verse 42: "Then God turned and delivered them over to serve the host of heaven... [Please understand, this is true: If you don't want to obey God and you want your own way, God will let you have it. But don't be surprised when the judgment of God comes upon you.] ...as it is written in *the* book of the prophets, 'Did you offer slain beasts and sacrifices to Me *those* forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?'"

We need to understand that in the wilderness there were two services always going. That's why God removed Himself from the middle of the congregation and put the tent outside the camp. Moses had to go out there and the faithful had to go there, and they left the rest of them worship the 'host of heaven' right in the presence of God because they already had the death sentence put upon them, that all of those over 20 would die. That's what it says here. They did it for 40 years in the wilderness.

Verse 43: "'But you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, *even* the images that you had made to worship them; and so I will remove you beyond Babylon.'" Now he's talking about the whole space of time:

- what happened to them in the 40 years; when they came into the 'promised land'
- when they rebelled against God in the 'promised land'
- when the Jews were sent off into Babylon.

That's a condensing of history—isn't it? Where it's all based on the same thing: Sunday-worship. Beginning in the wilderness there was Sabbath worship for those who believed God and were faithful, and there was Sunday worship for the disobedient and unbelieving, *and they all died* as a lesson that if you don't obey God you're not going to *enter into the rest*, be it the 'promised land' as with the Israelites or the Kingdom of God in our case.

Verse 44: "The tabernacle of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness, as He Who spoke to Moses had commanded, to make it according to the pattern which he had seen; which also our fathers, who received it by succession, brought in with Joshua, when they took possession

of *the land from* the nations whom God drove out before *the* face our fathers, until the days of David" (vs 44-45). That is what it is talking about. We see the connection between belief, obedience and Sabbath-keeping *and* disobedience, rebellion and Sunday-keeping. This escapes most people. They don't understand that. What is the solution?

Let's come back here to the *Hebrews Study 4:1-9*:

(v 6): "Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of disobedience, again He marks out a certain day, 'Today,' saying in David...

So, we came down to the same time in Acts 7—didn't we? We came down to David, a man after God's own heart.

...after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted above), 'Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day.... (vs 7-8).

Referring to another day in which the ultimate fulfillment of the Kingdom of God would be. Because entering into the 'promised land' was not the finalization of the plan of God.

...Therefore, ***there remains Sabbath-keeping for the people of God***" (v 9).

We need to also understand that with

- the Spirit of God
- loving and serving God
- believing and obeying God

that ***He gives us protection*** from the forces of this world and Satan the devil! That's why in the model prayer, it says, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one'—Satan the devil! I truly believe that in keeping the Sabbath in faith, we are then given added blessing and protection, because we believe and obey God. Just think on that!

Paul did not write, "There remains Sabbath-keeping for the Jews."

Which is what the Protestants and other religionists say. Not true!

He clearly declared, "There remains Sabbath-keeping for the people of God." The people of God include the Gentiles, as well as the Jews (1-Pet. 2:10; Eph. 2:11-19).

I'll leave it to you to read those. In both cases it says, who were not a people, but who are now the people of God. Who were cut off from the covenants and

promises of God and were without God in this world.’ They are the people of God today.

Now, let’s get into a little technical study of the words:

The word translated “Sabbath-keeping” in the English is from the Greek word ‘sabbatismos.’ In the New Testament, ‘sabbatismos’ is only used in Hebrews 4:9....

Not any other Scripture. It is the only place! There’s a peculiar Greek word to describe that, and that is called ‘hapax legomenon’ which means *a one time use*.

...It is a noun meaning *Sabbath-keeping*. It is entirely incorrect to translate ‘sabbatismos’ as *rest* as it has been translated in the *KJV* and other versions. However, it is apparent that those who keep Sunday have theological and political reasons to translate it as *rest*, so they may avoid the seventh day Sabbath question and continue to keep Sunday.

That is precisely why the *King James* translators did it that way. And they *knew*; no question about it! That was the seed which has led to the failure of the Protestant Reformation. Instead of coming out of the world and repenting and becoming God’s people, they became no more than reformed Catholics. If you don’t believe that, go back and re-read *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants*. That will tell you.

When the entire context of these verse leading up to verse nine are analyzed, it is apparent that the main subject is the “Seventh Day” and its relationship to entering into the rest of God [receiving salvation]...

Which ultimately then is the Kingdom of God

...and entering into the *weekly* Seventh Day Sabbath as a day of rest.

The Greek word that is used in Heb. 4:9 is ‘sabbatismos,’ which means *Sabbath rest, Sabbath observance* (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). This definition of the Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ is confirmed by other historical works: “The words ‘sabbath rest’ translate the Greek noun ‘sabbatismos,’ a unique word in the New Testament. This term appears also in Plutarch (*Superset .3 [Moralia 166a]*) for Sabbath observance, and in four post-canonical Christian writings which are not dependent on Heb. 4:9” (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, p. 856).

So, there are some honest scholars out there. There are some who are honestly seeking the Truth. And lo and behold, when they honestly seek the Truth—guess what? *They find it!*

The Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ is a noun. The verb form of the word is ‘sabbatizo,’ which means “to keep the Sabbath” (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). The meaning of ‘sabbatizo’ is confirmed by its use in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament which dates from the third century B.C. It is called the Septuagint.

All of the quotes in Hebrews—every single Scriptural quote—comes from the Septuagint, Greek translation of the Old Testament.

The Apostle Paul quotes exclusively from the Septuagint in his Epistle to the Hebrews. When Paul used the Greek word ‘sabbatismos’ in Heb. 4:9, he knew that the meaning of this word was well known to the Greek-speaking believers of that day. The verb form ‘sabbatizo’ was used in Septuagint, which was as familiar to the believers of New Testament times as the *King James* Bible is to Christians today.

Let’s go to Exodus 16:23 (*KJV*): “And he said unto them, ‘This *is that* which the LORD has said, “tomorrow *is* the rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the LORD. Bake *that* which you will bake *today*, and seethe that you will seethe; and that which remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.’ And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm in it” (vs 23-24). God showed by miracle that that’s proof. You know the old saying, ‘seeing is believing.’

Verse 25 (*KJV*): “And Moses said, ‘Eat that today; for today *is* a Sabbath [‘shabot’] unto the LORD. Today you shall not find it in the field.... [That’s the sermon message for the Sabbath—right? *Yes!*] ...Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the Sabbath, in it there shall be none.’ And it came to pass *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day to gather *it* and they found none” (vs 25-27).

Stop and think: If you were there and the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night were there, and you saw all these miracles and you were delivered from Egypt and you walked through the Red Sea, that you would believe God enough—through Moses—that if He said don’t go out on the Sabbath and look for any because it’s not there, you would say, ‘Well, yeah, let’s not go out.’ But NO! that’s the hardness of the heart; they didn’t listen! It’s like telling a child: ‘Don’t touch the stove, it’s

hot! I told you not to touch it, it's hot!' There's a penalty; same thing here. So, they went out and "...found none." Surprise! God said there wouldn't be any.

Verse 28 (KJV): "And the LORD said unto Moses, 'How long refuse you to keep My commandments and My laws?... [We have here the unbelief and the disobedience tied together—right? *Yes!*] ...See, the LORD has given you the Sabbath... [always remember, *the Sabbath is a gift of God!*] ...therefore He gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days. Abide every man in his place, let no man go out on the seventh day.' So, the people rested on the seventh day" (vs 28-30). The word *rest* here is 'sabbatizo.' They sabbathized! That is a different *rest* than the other *rest*. To sabbathize means *to keep it in a way that God intended*. The other word 'katapausis' means *to rest*, which is also connected with the Sabbath Day. Here you have 'sabbatizo.'

Back to the *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:1-9*:

...The use of the verb 'sabbatizo' in Lev. 23:32 in the Septuagint leaves no room to mistake its meaning. Here is the English translation of this verse in the Septuagint: "It [the Day of Atonement] shall be a Holy Sabbath [literally, a Sabbath of Sabbaths:] to you; and ye shall humble your souls, from the ninth day of the month: from evening to evening **shall ye keep your Sabbaths**" (*The Septuagint with the Apocrypha*, Brenton).

The clause "shall ye keep your Sabbaths" is translated from the Greek words 'sabbatieite ta sabbata,' which literally mean, "You shall sabbathize the Sabbaths."....

I want you to look at the second and third word: 'ta sabbata'—that is plural, *Sabbaths*. Sabbath alone is 'ta sabbato'; whereas, this is 'ta sabbata.' The other is singular. Which tells us what? *All the Holy Days are Sabbaths*. So, if there 'remain Sabbath-keeping for the people of God' that includes the Holy Days; no question about it!

...The Greek verb 'sabbatieite,' which means *ye shall keep*, is the second person plural form of the verb 'sabbatizo.' Since the verb 'sabbatizo' means *to keep the Sabbath*, this verb applies not only to the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths of God, but also to God's command for the seventh-year rest from farming the land [Jubilee year]. Throughout the Septuagint, the verb 'sabbatizo' is used in relation to Sabbath keeping and Sabbath rest only.

The use of the Greek word 'sabbatismos' in Heb. 4:9 contradicts the teaching that the fourth commandment has been abolished. As the context of this verse shows... [which we'll go through step-by-step] ...the observance of the seventh day as a day of rest and worship is as binding for the people of God today as it was for Israel of old. In addition to the weekly Sabbath, the annual Holy Days that God commanded, which are also called Sabbaths, are included in the fourth commandment....

That's why Lev. 23 starts out with the weekly Sabbath and followed by all the annual Holy Days.

...The early New Testament churches kept the Holy Days of God, as determined by the calculated Hebrew calendar. The Apostle Paul kept the Holy Days and commanded Gentile converts to keep them (1-Cor. 5:7-8). None of the apostles or the early converts to Christianity observe the pagan holidays that are now called Christmas and Easter. These holidays, which originated in sun-worship, were later adopted into Christianity through the influence of the Roman Church. They became false substitutes for the annual Holy Days that are commanded by God, just as Sunday has become a false substitute for the weekly Sabbath.

Now, we're ready to start looking at the other words for 'rest.'

There are four other Greek words that have been translated into the English as the verb 'to rest; and the noun 'rest.'

- 1) The Greek verb 'katapauo' means *to cause to stop, bring to an end, to bring to rest, to stop to rest*—
- 2) The Greek noun 'katapausis' means *rest* and when used with 'sabbatizo' it means *a Sabbath rest*, the weekly Sabbath, an annual Sabbath or the land Sabbath

Now, let's look at 'katapauo' which is the verb *to rest*. It has the meaning and connection with *resting from your enemies; entering into the rest* that God had given in the land that He promised.

Acts 14:18: "And *even* by saying these things, they could hardly keep [restrain]... ['katapauo' means *to cause to cease*.] ...the multitudes from sacrificing to them."

Hebrews 3:11: "So I swore in My wrath, 'If they shall enter into My **rest** [katapausis]—" In the

Greek it has an ‘n’ or ‘u’ at the end of it because there’s action to it—*enter into*. That is referring to *entering into the ‘promised land.’*

Then he gives a warning, v 12: “Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.... [Apostasy begins with unbelief.] ...Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called ‘today,’ so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin” (vs 12-13).

Verse 18: And to whom did He swear *that* they would not enter into His **rest** [katapausis], except to those who had disobeyed?... [We saw that—didn’t we? *They disobeyed!*] ...So we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief” (vs 18-19). Notice the connection between unbelief, disobedience and apostatizing. Also, “disobeyed,” v 18—last word. So, unbelief and disobedience go hand-in-hand.

If you don’t believe God, will you obey Him? *No!* That’s precisely why Protestants feel free to keep Sunday, because they don’t believe God. ***Every act of disobedience really is that you don’t believe God.*** Maybe temporary unbelief. Remember the man whose son was possessed with demons and the disciples couldn’t cast them out? He came to Christ and said, ‘Your disciples couldn’t cast them out; if there’s anything You can do, please do it.’ Christ said, ‘Do you believe?’ and he said, ‘Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief.’ Every time you disobey it’s because you don’t believe, or your carnal nature puts you in a state of unbelief. <sup>1</sup>

Hebrews 4:1: “Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into **His rest**, any of you might seem to come short.” We’re going to see ‘His rest’ is different from having rest from sin, because there’s an entirely different word that is used for that. It is not ‘katapausis.’

Verse 3<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “For we who have believed, we ourselves are **entering into the rest**...”—‘katapausis’—what sort of rest are you entering into? This is present tense; we are *entering into*. Are you entering into the Kingdom of God? *No!* Will you enter into the Kingdom of God? *Yes!* But it doesn’t say *will*; it says we *are entering into the rest*. What ‘katapausis’ or ceasing do you enter into? *The Sabbath!*

Verse 4: “For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘And God rested [katapauo] on the seventh day from all His works.’” Very interesting! Very profound!

Let’s look at some words, which in the Septuagint are translated ‘katapauo’ from the

Hebrew—meaning *to rest, to cease*.

Genesis 2:2: “And by *the beginning* of the seventh day God finished His work...” that means the seventh day was beginning. I mentioned before, on the sixth day, the Septuagint says that on the sixth day and the in *Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament* by George Ricker Berry, has sixth day.] ...which He had made. And He **rested** [katapauo] the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He **rested** [katapauo] from all His work which God had created and made” (vs 2-3).

Exodus 20—here again we have the seventh day and ‘katapauo’; when it’s talking about *we are entering into that rest*, we are entering into the Sabbath Day. Not some sort of lawless licentiousness, that if we enter into an ethereal emotional rest in accepting Jesus, that we don’t have to keep the commandments of God.

Exodus 20:8: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, nor the stranger within your gates. For *in* six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth... [it goes right back to creation] ...the sea, and all that *is* in them, and **rested** [katapauo] the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.”

We’re going to look at another Greek word here which is called ‘phulasso’ which means *to keep*. From the *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:1-9*:

5) The Greek verb ‘phulasso’ is another Greek verb that is used in connection with keeping the Sabbath and means *to watch, guard, defend, protect, stand guard, keep*—as in keeping the law—to *follow* or *observe* a law. (Arndt & Gingrich)

Exodus 31:13: “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, ‘Truly you shall keep My Sabbaths...’” In the Hebrew and the Greek it is plural—‘ta sabbata’ from the Greek Septuagint—Sabbaths; *you shall keep*—‘phulasso’ meaning *to observe as a law*, but also *to guard and keep*, which ties in with *remember*—right? *Yes!*

“...for it *is* a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you. You **shall keep** [phulasso] the Sabbath...” (vs 13-14).

Deuteronomy 5:12—we have the same thing. Remember in the command that we find of the



Sabbath Day (Exo. 20) is that God rested. Here we have a little different emphasis. “**Keep**... [‘phulasso’—a command, which means *to watch, guard, defend, protect, stand guard, keep*—as in keeping a law] ...the Sabbath day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you.” If you disbelieve God, you will disobey God and won’t keep it—correct? *Yes!*

- In today’s world, will you have trials and troubles because of keeping the Sabbath?  
*Yes, there are going to be times that you will!*
- Does God know that? *Yes, He does!*
- Is He there to help you? *Yes, He is!*

But, maybe it’s going to be kind of like Tyndale said—and I always like this one, and he’s absolutely correct in it—‘If God bid you to go across the sea in a ship, He will send a tempest to test you whether you believe Him or no.’ So likewise with the Sabbath! Today, in this world—and, of course, in every society—we’re also going to be confronted with, ‘How shall I live if I can’t work on Saturday?’ The answer is, *by faith in God!* He will provide! What if it’s long in coming? *Don’t worry, it’ll come!* Not every test lasts forever! Sometimes it will be like that song on Hee-Haw when they stand up and say, ‘Agony!’ Well, God will see you through it. Just trust in God.

We have to look at Abraham’s example: He came to **hope in hope!** There was nothing else left to do. What happens when you get down to that point? Should you just get discouraged? *No!* You’re right where God wants you!

- *Look* to Him!
- *Trust* Him!
- *Believe* Him!
- *Obey* Him!

Verse 12: “Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger within your gates, so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt...” (vs 12-15).

What is this society likened today? *Sodom and Egypt!* If you don’t believe it, just go visit San Francisco or Los Angeles, or New York, or anyplace where there is a Sodom and Gomorrah community called ‘a gay community’ in any city—and you will see! Remember that you are slaves to this society, too. That’s why we keep the Sabbath, because we come out of this world on the Sabbath Day—don’t

we? *Yes! We do!*

“...and the LORD your God brought you out from there... [Remember, God has called you!] ...with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to **keep** [phulasso] the Sabbath Day” (v 15).

- ‘phulasso’ is used in reference to *keeping*—that is *to keep*
- ‘katapauo’ is used in reference to *keeping*
- ‘katapausis’ is used to signify *rest*

Hebrews 4:4: “For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘And God rested [katapauo] on the seventh day from all His works’; and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest’—” (vs 4-5). Remember, we covered those who rebelled in the wilderness did not keep the Sabbath—correct? Therefore, they didn’t enter into the ‘promised land’ because their bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Today we have the same thing. If we’re going to enter into the Kingdom of God we must rest on the Sabbath [katapauo] to enter into the [katapausis]. We will see that.

Verse 5: “And again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest’—consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of **disobedience**... [To what? What are we talking about here? *The Sabbath Day!* What about today?] ...again He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David... [That’s what the whole 95<sup>th</sup> Psalm is all about—a call to the people of Israel to keep the Sabbath Day. It was a Sabbath Psalm, to be read in the synagogue and to be read at the temple for all the children of Israel.] ...after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts’” (vs 5-7).

When you talk to a staunch Sunday-keeper, even though they say they believe in God and Jesus Christ. Do you come upon a hardness of heart? *Yea! Verily yea!* That’s why they’re called ‘hard-shelled’ Baptists. Do they disobey God because they don’t believe God? *Yes! They keep Sunday*—don’t they? Are they going to enter into the Kingdom of God? *No! They’re disobeying!* It says here, “...those who had previously heard the Gospel did not enter in because of **disobedience**” (v 6).

Verse 8: “For if Joshua had given them rest... [If they entered into the ‘promised land’ under Joshua and they entered into the finality of the Kingdom of God and that was the total sum of salvation]: ...**He would not have spoken long afterwards of another day.**” Because then once they conquered the land, God would conquer the world and bring in the Kingdom of God to the whole world. But it didn’t happen; *that’s why He spoke of another day.* That’s why it says, ‘Today.’

Because it hasn't been fulfilled, v 9: "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God." Why? *To rest from your work on the Sabbath and keep the Sabbath as God has commanded, and to give you the blessing of looking forward to entering into the Kingdom of God!*

Stop and think for just a minute. I know, in talking to people who have given up on the Sabbath—some people do give up on the Sabbath and God still works with them and they come and repent and come back—and they say, almost universally, once they stopped keeping the Sabbath, they forgot about the Kingdom of God. Why? *Because on the Sabbath Day, that's why we are here!* The Sabbath Day you're taught about God, About Christ, about the Kingdom of God; you're looking forward to the coming Kingdom of God and the thousand-year reign of Christ—correct? And it is true, in type, the Sabbath Day does picture the Millennial reign of Christ and the saints on the earth—that is true. That is the *rest* of God.

Let's see what it talks about concerning the Kingdom of God and the reign of Christ on earth in relationship to *rest*, which is also 'katapausis' in the Septuagint. Isaiah 11:10: "And in that day... [What day? *The return of Jesus Christ!* This ties right in with Heb. 4—doesn't it? *Today!* Which is looking forward to that day and there is 'katapausis' or 'katapauo' involved with us as well as with God.] ...there shall be the Root of Jesse [Christ] standing as a banner for the people; to Him the nations [Gentiles] shall seek... [that is when the knowledge ('as the waters cover the earth' v 9) ...and His rest [katapausis] shall be glorious." That's what we are looking to.

Hebrews 4:10: "For the one who has entered into **His rest** [katapausis] he also has **ceased** [katapauo] from his works... [Here we have 'katapausis' the noun and 'katapauo' the verb—has ceased from Him works.] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*." When did God cease from His work? *On the seventh day*—didn't He? *After He made everything!* The one who's going to enter into the Kingdom of God has to cease from his own works on the Sabbath Day, just as God did from His own works.

There are those who say this: He has entered into us—that is the *rest of Christ*—and God has done everything for you, has ceased from His works, so therefore there's nothing for you to do. **Which is a totally twisting of the Scriptures.** That is not what it means. A comparison is made here, just as God did from his. What did God do the first six days? *Worked!*

Verse 11—very key thing: "We should be diligent therefore to enter into that **rest**..."

['katapausis'—which is the *rest* of the Sabbath] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience." Now, rather than doing away with the Sabbath, this reinforces it very powerfully.

Let's understand something: Because of unbelief and disobedience they were not able to enter into the 'promised land.' After they entered into the 'promised land,' when they sinned—because they didn't believe God—they were punished by war, foreign domination and exile and final destruction of the temple—through the whole book of Hebrews. We have the same thing for us today.

Remember this: ***The human heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? There is a way that seems right to a man and the ends thereof are the ways of death.*** It seems right while you're on the way. But we can't fool God, and we can't fool the Word of God. We can trick ourselves, and Satan can trick us, but when you know the Truth and you know better and we're sort of fighting our conscience and putting it down and avoiding God and trying to get away from God so that we won't have to squirm and squeal. Just wait, God's not done yet.

Verse 12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword..." This is why people don't like the Bible. That's pretty sharp! Always reminds me of this movie I saw. This guy had a sword that was so sharp that he took it and he whacked the guy's head off and the knife went through that person's spine and neck and didn't even move the head. There was just a little line. He didn't realize it for a few seconds until his head fell off. That sword was sharp! When I read this, I think of that.

"For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow... [Marrow is very important because marrow gives you physical life. That's where your blood cells are made. When your blood cells are no longer produced, you die! So it goes right down to the substance of life.] ...and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart" (v 12). No other book is able to do that.

He's saying in relationship to kidding yourselves and not keeping the Sabbath and entering into the *rest* of the Sabbath, the seventh day, think on this, v 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account." The word 'must' means it's necessary. Remember, the judgment is on the house of God today.

Let's cover something here that is important, *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:19*:

- 4) The Greek noun 'anapausis' means *rest, a stopping, a ceasing, a resting place.*
- 3) The Greek verb 'anapauo' means *to cause to rest, to give (someone) rest, refresh*

Notice: the Greek verb 'anapauo' and the Greek noun 'anapausis' are never used with the Sabbath, or ceasing from work on the Sabbath....

Let's see where it's used. Let's come to Matthew 11:28—this is where they like to spiritualize the way keeping the Sabbath. They come to this and say that you *rest in Christ*. Here it says that you *rest in Christ*. Christ even said it. However, it is not 'katapausis' or katapauo.' It's 'anapausis' and 'anapauo.'

Matthew 11:28: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest." 'See, Jesus is our rest.' NO! He *gives* rest, which is 'anapausis' the noun. What is that *rest* from? *From sin!* Why do you have rest from sin? *If you believe Jesus and obey Him you're not going to be living in sin!*

- He brings to you
- He causes you to rest
- He refreshes you
- He gives you spiritual refreshing

Right? Not used in relationship to the Sabbath at all.

Verse 29: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart..." If you follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ:

- Will you find rest? *Yes!*
- Will you find rest from sin? *Yes, you will!*
- Will you be refreshed with His Spirit? *Yes!*

That ties right in with the renewing of the mind that we covered earlier—right? *Yes, indeed!* "...and you shall find rest for your souls." You're not going to be driven to and fro with sin pulling you here and there. But 'anapauo' or 'anapausis' is a *rest from sin*.

If you *rest in Christ* and do not keep the Sabbath, do you have rest from sin? *No! You're still breaking the fourth commandment*—the seventh day Sabbath—and transgression of the law is sin—correct? You can't take that and apply it to the Sabbath Day and say Christ has given me rest. I rest in Christ and there's nothing for me to do. That is a twisting of the Scripture and a lie!

Verse 30: "For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden *is* light." Why is it? *Because He'll fight your battles for you!*

There we have it! That is the meaning of

Heb. 4. For Israel, it was a rest for Israel, with a connection of the Sabbath and entering into the 'promised land.' For the Church of God, the people of God, it is entering into the Kingdom of God in connection with the Sabbath. It does not mean a *rest from sin!*

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 4:9, 1-11
- 2) Acts 7:37-45
- 3) Exodus 16:23-30
- 4) Acts 14:18
- 5) Hebrews 3:11-13, 18-19
- 6) Hebrews 4:1, 3-4
- 7) Genesis 2:2-3
- 8) Exodus 20:8-11
- 9) Exodus 31:13-14
- 10) Deuteronomy 5:12-15
- 11) Hebrews 4:4-7, 6, 8-9
- 12) Isaiah 11:10
- 13) Hebrews 4:10-13
- 14) Matthew 11:28-30

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-Corinthians 10
- 1 Peter 2:10
- Ephesians 2:11-19
- 1-Corinthians 5:7-8
- Psalm 95
- Isaiah 11:9

#### Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- Booklet: *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*
- Study Paper: *Hebrews Study, Hebrews 4:1-9*
- Article: *Rome's Challenge to Protestants* (Appendix N in *The Holy Bible in its Original Order*)
- Book: *Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament* by George Ricker Berry

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Transcribed: 3-7-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XI

## Signs of God's People

Fred R. Coulter—January 5, 2002

We want to review just a little bit, just so we understand very profoundly concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a sign of God's people—always is. We'll see that again. However in addition to that, there are other signs that God gives which are important; in fact, take precedence over it.

### I. First Sign—Keep the Commandments

Mark 12:29: “‘Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (vs 29-31). Matt. 22 said that ‘on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

- If you have the Sabbath without love, you don't have God.
- If you have the Sabbath without understanding the grace of God, you do not have it right.
- If you have the Sabbath and you use it as a means of *salvation by works* through your Sabbath-keeping, you have it wrong.

Sabbath-keeping is required, so we don't want to put Sabbath-keeping as the #1 thing. Jesus also said, in John 14:15: “If you love Me, **keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.**” The condition is on us, not on God. Never does it say *if God loves the world, or if God loves you.*

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.”

Therefore, God's love for us will be constant **IF** we love Him and keep His commandments. If we do not, the wrath of God abides upon us. The wrath of God does not necessarily come with death and destruction and immediately.

### II. Second Sign—Love One Another

I think within the Churches of God this is a great failing because we get caught up in the doctrinal wars. It is true we do need to have correct understanding of doctrine. False doctrine will lead you astray—will it not? But please understand this:

- if you love God—according to the first commandment, with all your heart, mind, soul and being

- if you love your neighbor as yourself—as Jesus said
- if you love Christ and keep His commandments

then you will come to the correct understanding of doctrine—not necessarily of prophecy, but of doctrine unto salvation.

John 13:34: “A new commandment... [This was not given before; and Jesus gave this to them on the Passover night, because He knew that instituting the New Covenant that things were going to change. This new commandment, please understand, does not wipe away all other commandments.] ...I give to you: **that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that is how you are to love one another.**”

This makes it especially difficult in the Church of God. God has given us a difficult proposition in it. It is easy to have camaraderie and join a club of like-minded people, and you become a Rotary, an Elk, whatever it is and so forth. *The hardest thing to do is to love someone not like you!*

### III. Third Sign—Love Your Enemies

Always remember this; this is also one of the signs of God's people, in addition to the Sabbath, in addition to these other things:

Matthew 5:43: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’” Then He gives the hardest, hardest thing to do—which He knows is contrary to human nature.

- this takes the Spirit of God
- this takes understanding the plan of God
- this takes understanding of human nature to realize that many people do things that they don't even know what they are doing—even your enemies

“But I say to you, **love your enemies...**” (v 44). Stephen did that—didn't he? After he gave a tremendous witness before the Sanhedrin. They were so angry that they were gnashing their teeth, probably had broken teeth in their mouth as they took Stephen out and stoned him. What did he do? *He blessed them and said, ‘Lord, lay not this to their charge.’* Then he died. So he literally fulfilled it.

“...**bless those who curse you...**” (v 44). Why? *Vengeance belongs to God*, and He'll take care of it in the final analysis. Besides, maybe they're just filled with hate themselves that that is

part of the curse that is upon them and you should pity them for the way that they are. It doesn't mean you have to be friends with them. It just means you don't hate them.

What about the 9/11 episode? God has the civil authorities that He says He's raised up and given the sword. He will use those to execute His vengeance. We can hate the deed, but truly, we ought to really feel sorry for those Arabs who have such a hateful religion that they live by the sword. Remember in *Fiddler on the Roof* when the young man came to the rabbi and he said, 'Rabbi, is there a blessing for the Czar?' He stroked his beard and thought a little while, and he said, 'Yes, my son, may the Lord bless him and keep him *far away* from us!' That's still loving your enemy.

To love your enemy means that you don't take up the sword and fight him. God will take care of it—He will! This is a tough one—isn't it?

**"...do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you"** (v 44). That's hard to do—isn't it? The truth is being a true Christian is really a difficult proposition. Without the Holy Spirit of God and you growing in it, it's an impossible thing to do.

I would have to say that just like it was said of the kings of old when the enemies came up against them. 'We'll surrender to them, because the kings of Israel are compassionate.' That is true even of modern Israel today—right? We go in an we bomb Afghanistan—parts of it—to near oblivion, and those who say, 'we're on your side' we come in and 'hug and kiss them' and say we'll rebuild the whole place. The movie, *The Mouse that Roared*—a little island government about ready to go into bankruptcy and they didn't know where they were going to get the money, so they came up with a great idea: let's declare war on the United States. Let them invade and we'll repent and they'll come in and rebuild us and we'll have a great economy.

This is also a built-in, natural trait that God has given to most Israelites! Not Levi and Simeon, because they had the sword, but most Israelites, especially Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—and because of that we get 'simple-headed' and stupid at times and get taken advantage of. However, God would rather have you be kind and compassionate and be taken advantage of, then to be mean and hostile and curmudgeon and overbearing.

Verse 45: "So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven... [Then He gives a statement to help us to understand lest we get caught up in: God has called us and 'tu tu' to the rest of the world.] ...for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust. For if you love those

who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors... [He uses that because you know that all tax collectors are the most despised, hated, of any in the world; always, since the beginning of taxation.] ...practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect" (vs 45-48).

- That's the whole goal of overcoming and striving against sin.
- That's the whole goal of the reason that God has called us, that we can practice this new commandment.

Let's come to 1-Corinthians 1, and understand why it is more difficult within the Church of God. When we were in the world we could select our friends. What is the old saying, and you saw it from the time you entered into the sandbox: 'Birds of feather flock together and they love their own.' You have little clichés and little gangs and so forth. I saw it when I was growing up.

I remember when I was in the third grade. I wanted to be one of those safety patrolmen and I could have on one of these little white harnesses that they had, and you have a badge on it and you stand in the corner and you've got a flag that you put out there to stop. And they announced at school that they're going to choose the student patrol kids who could get out there and do that. Oh, I wanted that so bad! But, I wasn't one of the 'birds that flocked together.' So, it was a political thing. The son of the mayor got one. The son of the leading banker got another. The son of the principal of the high school got one. So, I got a real early lesson in partiality.

When we come into the Church of God, we do not have the selectivity or the sense of choosing our own, and we have the partiality of saying 'I like this person. I don't like that person.' We get a whole different mix, and yet, we have the commandment that we are to love each other as Christ has loved us—right? Here's why it's difficult within the Church of God, and it's more of a challenge to do so, and that's why we need the Spirit of God to do so.

1-Corinthians 1:26: "For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh [are called]..." So, what happens? *We have a lot of people who just are not well educated!* Those of us who have become well educated have had to work at it.

You've probably heard me tell the story of how I had to learn English. It goes back to 1953 when I made the 'wise decision' three months before graduation of high school to join the army. I joined

for three years. Later I found out that I could have volunteered for the draft and only done two, but you see how smart I was. I wanted to be patriotic! I was RA [regular army] and even remember my number. They said to remember that serial number and never forget it.

In high school math and science were my strong forte. Of course, with sibling rivalry with my sister who was a year and half older than I, she was good in English and not good in mathematics. I determined I would be good in math and just sloughed along with English. Well, after I got out of the service and I decided the only way I could do anything was go to college, so I had the GI plan. I went to the College of San Mateo; it was a junior college at that time. I knew that I was very bad in reading, and I knew I was very bad in English. When I started going to San Mateo Jr. College I started at night. I knew I needed a running start and I was about 24-25 at the time.

I took public speaking, speed-reading, and when I started I could only read about 75 wpm—how's that for speed—huh? I finally got it up to where I could read 250 wpm, so that improved. Then the next semester I decided I knew I could not qualify for English 101, so I signed up for 'bone-head' English. They gave assignments: write a page on this and I would go home and I couldn't think of a thing. I'd walk back and forth, I didn't know how to write anything. Then they had a test that you would take. After six weeks of that I was hauled before Dr. Sharp—a German professor—and you talk about 'steely' eyes. You'd just tremble.

He looked at me with those eyes and said, 'How did you get in this class?' *I just signed up for it!* 'Your test scores are so bad that you do not even qualify for the English for the foreign born!' That's true! *What must I do?* 'You can stay in the class, but you know... [He gave me a courtesy D-minus the first six weeks] ...you have to pass with a B-minus or you cannot continue in college.' I said *okay*. So a woman (can't remember her name) ran a private school right close to where I lived. I went over to her school and said I've got a problem. She took me down to the teacher who taught 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

She wanted where was I in English, so she made me to do the thing I hated to do. She said to stand at the blackboard and write this sentence. I wrote it out. She said to diagram it. Started out in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. Couldn't do it. We went down to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. Wrote another sentence. Diagram it. Which is subject and which is verb? Where's the preposition? What's the object of the preposition? BLANK! 4<sup>th</sup> grade—let's make this simple! Sure enough, I couldn't even do 4<sup>th</sup> grade. All right, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Here I am at 25, starting out English in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. I took private tutoring everyday after school

and doing it before I went to work, too. I worked at night.

Needless to say, I got everything up. I got an A on my final exam in the writing and ended up with a B-minus for the course and passed. I can tell you, from experience, any education that I've had, has come the hard way! If you still see some typos in my letters or some misspellings, you will know that my English today may have improved a great deal. I remember when I first got my computer up and running. I think we had about 35-40 people on the mailing list and I brought the letter up and had Belinda read it, and it was so bad she said, 'Do you have 'spell check' on your computer?' I said, 'What's that?' I went home and sure enough it was there. What do you know! Lo and behold, spell check! That's why we need to understand. We don't very many PhDs, we don't very many experts in language and so forth. God intended that!

Verse 26: "...not many who are powerful... [political people. 'Would you do me a favor?' *Yes, I'll go talk to the City Council... Board of Supervisors... the Governor personally for you!*] ...not many who are high-born *among you*.... [No princes! No kings!] ...Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world..." (vs 26-27). Brethren, that's us! I have to admit it's hard to accept, but it's true. Now you know why we make such foolish mistakes, sometimes more than just time-to-time. This also makes it difficult because we are in the Church together. And wherever you are this would be true:

If you were in the world and you had your choice, you would not choose that person to be your friend to love. So God has given us a great project—hasn't He? It becomes more important that we learn to love each other and to love God than to just bang the hammer on the Sabbath, though the Sabbath is very important. I think if you just look at Judaism and see that they are very lacking in love, and that you can have all the words of God in your hand—which they don't; they only have the Old Testament; but nevertheless those commandments are there—without love you have nothing. I mean, look at Islam. That's a big problem. Everything they do is by *works of law*. When God calls us together and we assemble on the Sabbath, yes we are to keep the Sabbath—no doubt about it!

Brethren, if we don't have these other things, then we're going to be as futile as they—are we not? That's why when we come together to meet in Sabbath services we have to love each other. We have to love each other and be concerned for each other when we're not assembled together. We have to set aside our own carnal, peculiarities and our own carnal choices as to whom our friends are, because God says *He has called all these people* and

they are the *friends of Christ*—correct? Though we're foolish! Though we're weak!

"...so that He might put to shame those who are wise..." (v 27). With it He's going to do a marvelous thing, because if you went out to world rulers today and brought all the people of God together and said, 'Here we are we're going to rule the world.' He'd look out there at our motley crew and say, 'Where did you get these people? What school did you attend? What experience do you have, that you would presume to rule the world?' God is going to make it happen.

"...and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are... [Always remember this: The tiniest virus can take down the strongest, most virulent person in the world.] ...so that no flesh might glory in His presence" (vs 27-29).

We're not going to go to God and say, 'God, I'm sure glad you recognize my talent. I know that You had to call me. How could You escape not calling me, God.' That's why Job went through what he went through. So that Job could not go up and say, 'God, I was perfect in the flesh and You were indebted to me to give me eternal life.' **NO! God is not indebted to any man!** That's why these are the things that are most important for us.

"But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—... [If you have the Word of God you know the true wisdom.] ...even righteousness... [right standing with God the Father in heaven above; direct access to God the Father through the blood of Christ into the Holy of Holies of the throne room in heaven above.] ...and sanctification... [You're set aside as Holy for God.] ...and redemption... [through the power of the resurrection] ...so that, as it is written, 'The one who glories, let him glory in *the Lord*.'" (vs 30-31).

This is why God has called us from everywhere, all different ages—young and old and in-between—weak and strong. Most of us today are weak, especially the 'rust belt' crew. Aging is not the problem, it's the rusting out. This will help you understand this commandment even more:

John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you... [It's not a suggestion! It is not an idea! It is not something that's just good for you to do so that you would like to do it! *It's a commandment!*] ...**that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you**, that *is how* you are to love one another. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another" (vs 34-35).

While we emphasize the Sabbath, and the book of Hebrews, chapter four, makes it absolutely crystal clear concerning the Sabbath—and we're here emphasizing it—let us not lose sight of the important things that need to be.

John 15:7: "If you dwell in Me..." Conditional! How do you dwell and remain in Christ?

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments."

John 15:7: "If you dwell in Me and My words dwell in you..." In reference to the Sabbath, what does it say? *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath!* Therefore, *the Son of man is even Lord of the Sabbath!* Those are part of the words of Christ, as well as all His other words—you have to add all of them.

"...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you" (v 7). We know other Scriptures which say

- in God's time
- in His will
- in His way

Verse 8: "In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit..."

- of love
- of knowledge
- of understanding

"...so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you" (vs 8-12). He said it twice—didn't He? *Yes, He did!*

"No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you" (vs 13-14). When it's all said and done, when we get together as brethren, remember, everyone that is together and has the Spirit of God is a *friend of Christ!* He loves each one. We are to love each other and view each other as the very friends of Christ *in spite of our*

- weaknesses
- faults
- difficulties
- obnoxiousness

But then it gives a challenge to each person to grow and overcome, and overcome the difficulties

and failings that they have in their own lives, through Christ.

#### IV. Fourth sign—Live by Every Word of God

The final thing that shows that you are Christ's, is Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4—'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God shall man live.' All of those are signs.

Now, we're going to look at the sign of the Sabbath. We have the Sabbath in its proper perspective—don't we? However, Satan likes to come along and say: 'If you have all of these things that I have just now covered, you don't need to keep the Sabbath.' *Nonsense!* The truth is, you cannot have all of the above unless you keep the Sabbath.

#### V. Fifth Sign—Keep the Sabbaths

I want to cover something very important, and this is in the way of a little review about 'katapausis' and the Sabbath and *rest* and *ceasing* and things like this.

Exodus 31:12<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, 'Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, "Truly you shall keep My Sabbaths..."'" (vs 12-13). In the Hebrew and the Greek it is both plural—'My Sabbaths.' The Greek being the Septuagint; the Hebrew being the received official Masoretic text. The word 'keep' here in both Hebrews and Greek means *to keep, to observe, to guard, to protect!* This gives a responsibility of something that is a result of the first things that we covered as the signs of the people of God. This is what we are to do. Satan is there to attack that as the first thing.

I was talking with someone the other day and they said that it's so sad to see people who kept the Sabbath for years, and you go up to them and they say, 'we don't have to do that anymore.' Remember the example of two plus two plus two. If you only have two plus two, you have four, but the real equation will be six. If you have the things that I enumerated the first time and you don't have the Sabbath and the Holy Days, then you're still deficient—are you not? *Yes!* So, here's he given a responsibility *to keep, to guard, to protect!*

"...for it... [*keeping, guarding and protecting*] ...is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you" (v 13). Here's another key: ***You cannot really know the Lord unless you keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days!***

Then He goes on reiterating about the weekly Sabbath. Let's come to Deuteronomy 5. The Sabbath commandment here is just a little bit different than the one in Exo. 20. Because they're a

little different, does not mean that one cancels out the other. It means that they both go together. Remember, in understanding the Scripture, the principle of addition: The Scriptures go together and multiply. The theology of the world and their hatred toward the laws of God is that they have the principle of subtraction. They come along and say, 'Since this commandment is not the same as the one in Exo. 20, therefore, which one is right?' Since we don't know which one is right, are we really under obligation to do anything? That's the carnal reasoning!

Deuteronomy 5:12: "Keep... [In both Hebrew and Greek it means *to keep, to observe, to guard, to protect!* The Spanish is 'guard.'] ...the Sabbath day to sanctify it as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God...." (vs 12-14). God owns it! God has a great purpose for it:

- to put His presence in it
- to fellowship with you
  - ✓ through His Spirit
  - ✓ through His Word

When you read and study the Word of God, God is communicating to you. If you read the Word of God—which God has spoken—God has spoken to you. A lot of people say, 'If God would speak to me, I'd listen.' *He did!* That's important to understand. It belongs to God for a great and a marvelous purpose. That's what it's all about in Heb. 4:9, about entering into His *rest*.

"...*In it* you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger within your gates... [Notice it does not say 'automobile.'] ...so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. And remember... [We're to remember this, too, because we have the spiritual application of it.] ...that you were a slave in the land of Egypt..." (vs 14-15).

Today we are to remember when we were out there in the world. As well intended as we may have been, or as bad and evil as we may have been, we were slaves to sin and Satan the devil. (Eph. 2—how that we are saved by God's grace—because He loves us—from our sins and trespasses in which we were dead, in which we were held in bondage in slavery.

"...and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm.... [Likewise, the calling of God to understand the Truth and to receive the Holy Spirit of God is as much a miracle as coming out of Egypt with a strong hand. Even more so because God had



to work in your mind to do something, which is the hardest place to work.] ...**Therefore, the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath Day.**" (v 15).

Remember the Scripture that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." In *A Harmony of the Gospels* you can read the commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. {Also see booklet: *How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?*

Notice Paul whom people say was an advocate of doing away with the laws and commandments of God. Here he is called to task. He was in Caesarea in prison, and Felix was the one who was the Roman curator at the time. Caesarea was one of those regional capitals which was part of the Roman Empire. They were to have the Jews come down from Jerusalem to bring the charges against Paul, and Paul gave his defense.

Acts 24:12: "...And neither did anyone find me disputing with anyone in the temple, nor inciting a tumult among the people—neither in the synagogues, nor in the city; neither can they prove *the things* of which they now accuse me. But I confess to you that according to the way which they call heresy... [believing in Christ as Savior; believing in forgiveness of sin through the blood of Christ, the grace of God.] ...so I serve the God of my fathers... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...believing **all things** that are written in the Law and the Prophets" (vs 12-14).

We're going to look at something in the Prophets—Ezekiel 20. Paul said he believed this. There's a great message here. Ezekiel 20:1: "And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth *month*, the tenth day of the month... [This is the seventh year of the Babylonian captivity of the Jews.] ...that some of the elders of Israel came to ask of the LORD, and sat before me."

So, they came to Ezekiel and they're going to ask him, 'Why are we here?' How many sermons have we heard that started out with 'Why are you here?' When you've lost your home; you've lost your land; you've lost all that you possessed; and now you're a prisoner of war in a prisoner of war camp. He had a little bit of freedom, so he came and sat before them.

"And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying... [These are not the words of Ezekiel; these are the words of God! Like I've said before, If God said it and you read it, then God has spoken to you.] ...'Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'Have you come to inquire of Me?... [Isn't that what people do? The

biggest mistake that people do is go to God and have Him approve their actions.] ...As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I will not be inquired of by you.'"" (vs 2-3). Why do you come and question ME? God *is* God!

"Will you judge *them*, son of man, will you judge them? Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers.' And say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD; "In the day that I chose Israel, and lifted up My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob, and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt; when I lifted up My hand to them, saying, 'I *am* the LORD your God'"" (vs 4-5).

This ties right in with the first commandment—doesn't it? Which is: *I AM the Lord your God which brought you out of the land of Egypt!* That is the first commandment; everything else flows from that. If you don't believe the first one, then you're picking and choosing of which ones you will observe, and that amounts to thievery and lawlessness, that you would create a religious system using the Scriptures partially and excluding the rest of the words of God. That's why it talks about in 2-Thess. that the 'mystery of iniquity or lawlessness does already work.' **Remember:**

- there is prosperity in sin, and pleasure in sin for a season.
- Satan would like to deceive you and have you happy and believing in your deception that you are right

What better condition?

- Satan told Jesus, 'If you bow down and worship me, I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world, for they're delivered unto me and I give it to whomsoever I will.'

Therefore—I won't say all—many of the surface blessings which come from a lawless religion, do not come from God! That's rather shocking! You need to understand that not all 'good' comes from God. There is a 'good' which comes from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—correct? Which then is the good which *seems right to a man, but the ends thereof are the way of death*—correct? Yes!

He made it clear, v 6: "In the day *that* I lifted up My hand to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them... [and He blessed them] ...flowing *with* milk and honey, which *is* the glory of all lands"" At that time

- it was forested
- it was beautiful
- it was fertile
- it had streams
- it had valleys
- it had the best climate in the whole world

Down in what is called the Jordan Valley, that climate being anywhere from 1200 feet below sea level clear down to the Dead Sea, you have the best climate in the winter to where you can even grow melons. Wonderful land!

Verse 7: “Then I said to them, ‘Let each man throw away the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt...’” Which then are other religions and other gods—right? And today, what is the greatest fascination of archeology; one of the greatest fascinations? *Egyptology!* The Egyptian pyramids, temples, mummies. They found out a lot about it. I just saw one the other day. Two of the most common diseases of Egypt were arthritis and hardening of the arteries. Nothing’s new under the sun, and they had organic food!

Revelation 11:8: “And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” That is Jerusalem! The long and the short of it is, nothing very much has changed since the exodus—right?

Ezekiel 20:7: “Then I said to them, ‘Let each man throw away the abominations of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I *am* the LORD your God.’.... [Again, emphatically, the same as the first commandment.] ...But they rebelled against Me and would not hearken to Me. They did not each man throw away the abominations of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. And I said, ‘I will pour out My fury against them to fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.’ But I worked for My name’s sake...” (vs 7-9).

Because He promised Abraham, God would not pollute His name. If God promises, He cannot lie, and He told Abraham that it would be so, which was not conditioned upon the behavior of his descendants. Therefore, since it was not conditioned on the behavior of his descendants, He promised He would do it, and He did it, but He also then punished the descendants for their behavior. He did not deprive them of the blessing that He promised, but when they didn’t do as He commanded then He punished them.

“But I worked for My name’s sake that it should not be profaned before the heathen...” (v 9). Moses said it to the Lord. Remember when they rebelled in making the golden calves? Remember the weakness of Aaron? What did Moses say? After God said, ‘Leave Me alone and I’ll destroy them all and raise up a great nation of you and fulfill My promise.’ Moses said to God, ‘Lord, the heathen will say that You brought them out here in the wilderness to kill them.’ God repented of that judgment. So God said, ‘All right, I won’t do it.’

Verse 9: “But I worked for My name’s sake that it should not be profaned before the heathen among whom they *were*, *for* I made Myself known to them in their eyes, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.” This was a world-known thing! Egypt lay in such desolation and ruin that it was 400 years before they recovered from that. It was known! Remember when they were on the other side of the Jordan and ready to cross? All the heathen were afraid and they remembered what was done in Egypt and they said, ‘Oh, it’s going to happen to us.’ That’s what it’s talking about here.

Verse 10: “And I caused them to go out from the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them My statutes and showed them My ordinances, which *if* a man do, he shall even live in them. And also **I gave them My Sabbaths...**” (vs 10-12)—plural—so the Sabbath and Holy Days are gifts from God!

In the New Testament a ‘gift’ is called *grace*. Comes from the word *grace*. A lot of people don’t like to say *grace* and *Sabbath* go together, but they do! If it is a gift that God has given, and in that day God puts His presence to fellowship with you—which is a gift; and you have the Holy Spirit of God—which is a gift; and it’s all grace, the way that you fulfill the Sabbath is through the *grace of God while you keep it!* They’re not contradictory one to another. Paul said, ‘Do we, through grace, abolish the law? GOD FORBID! We establish the law.’ So likewise, with the Sabbath, *you establish the Sabbath through the grace of God because it is His gift!* Remember: *He rested on the Sabbath and was refreshed!*

That’s so that when we rest on the Sabbath and we become before God to learn of His Word, to learn of His way—and I’ll tell you what, if we don’t keep the Sabbath every week, we’re all just carnal enough that we begin losing it a little bit, a little bit every Sabbath—don’t we? *Yes!* That’s why we have the Sabbath! If we come to God on the Sabbath Day:

- knowing it’s a gift
- knowing that we have His Holy Spirit
- knowing that He wants to fellowship with us
- knowing that He wants to bless us
- knowing that He wants to give us the way of salvation on this day so we can understand it

Therefore, it becomes one of the most important tools of God

- to keep us in the faith
- to keep us in the love of God
- to keep us focused on His plan and purpose

That's why it says in Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, **Sabbath-keeping** for the people of God." When they cease doing that and cease looking to Christ—what happens? He warned them that they were committing the *unpardonable sin* (Heb. 6).

Ezekiel 20:12: "And also I gave them My Sabbaths **to be a sign between Me and them**... [We already covered the other signs that were in addition to it for the New Testament/New Covenant.] ...that *they* might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them."

A very important thing to understand. Howbeit in 1-John they may not have been all the way into Sunday-keeping, but starting into it, therefore, he gives this warning. Remember, even there it says you're going to know the Lord, because of the Sabbath.

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard* **we know** that **we know** Him..." You know it! That's why in the process of conversion and in the process of knowing and overcoming and the process of the trials that we go through—which we all go through—that we come **to know that we know!** It's one thing to say, 'I know' and still maybe have a doubt. It's another thing to say that **you know that you know**—no doubt! Total conviction! Total truth, because you *believe God* and *believe in God*.

"And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him" (vs 3-5). Which goes right back to where we started.

Verse 6: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him **is obligating** himself also to walk even as He Himself walked."

- Did Jesus ever break the Sabbath? *No!*
- Did He ever sin? *No!*
- What is sin?
- *Sin is the transgression of the law!*

New Testament doctrine, written by John, agrees perfectly with this concerning the Sabbath:

Ezekiel 20:12: "...that *they* might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them. But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness... [We covered all of that in Heb. 3] ...they did not walk in My statutes... [right under the very nose of God] ...and they despised My ordinances, which *if* a man does, he shall even live in them. And they greatly polluted My Sabbaths. And I said, 'I will pour out My fury on them in the wilderness to destroy them'" (vs 12-13). God had an obligation to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and an obligation for His

name's sake to the rest of the world.

Just like I brought out at the beginning with us. As brethren within the Church, what we are as a people, we're to love each other and we're stuck with each other—right? So likewise—O God, because of His promises, was stuck with Israel in their rebellion—which Moses said, 'You were rebelling from the day that I knew you.' That's quite a relationship—isn't it? Does God love His people in spite of everything? *Yes!* But, will He correct them for their sins? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "But I worked for My name's sake, so that it should not be profaned before the heathen in whose sight I brought them out. And also I lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, *and swore* that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*—flowing *with* milk and honey, the glory of all lands—because they despised My judgments and walked not in My statutes; and they polluted My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless My eye spared them—from destroying them; nor did I make an end of them in the wilderness. But I said to their children in the wilderness..." (vs 14-18).

Remember, they wandered in the wilderness 40 years and their carcasses were strewn all over the desert and buried. The ones 20-years-old and downward were able to live and go into the 'promised land.' So here He is telling them in the wilderness, "...Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols'" (v 18).

God had to put up with an awful lot; He puts up with an awful lot—doesn't He? I don't remember the exact time-setting of the division of the ten tribes of Israel after Solomon died, during the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, but God put up with the paganism of the ten tribes for well over 200 years before He sent them off into captivity. He put up with their paganism right in the wilderness.

Amos 5:21: "'I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies... [Why? *Because they're not solemnized to God!* God didn't call for them. Those are not the ones that God authorized. These are by 'do-gooders' who are going to do their thing and try and force it down God's throat—which He won't do] ...Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, **I will not accept them.** Nor will I regard the peace offerings of your fat animals'" (vs 21-22).

If the heart was not right, if it was not according to the way that God said, then it was unacceptable! It fits into the same category as the sacrifice between Abel and Cain. Cain did it his way, to say, 'God, You must accept it; look how good I am.' And God said, 'No, sin lies at the door.'

Abel did it according to the way that God said and he was righteous. Likewise, here, He says, ‘No, I’m not going to listen to it.’

Verse 23: “‘Take the noise of your songs away from Me; for I will not hear the melody of your harps. But let judgment roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream. Have you offered sacrifices and offerings to Me **forty years in the wilderness**, O house of Israel?’” (vs 23-25).

Remember how I said in going through Stephen’s statement that the tabernacle had to be removed out of the camp because of the sins of the people. And that there were Sabbath services with Moses and those who worshipped God, and there were these services with those people who rebelled. Listen, here it is right here. Do we have 40 years? *Yes, in the wilderness!* That’s what it says, in the wilderness for 40 years.

“But now you have carried the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves.... [which they never gave up] ...So I will cause you to go into exile beyond Damascus,’ says the LORD, Whose name is the God of hosts” (vs 23-27).

We have, likewise, the same thing here in Ezek. 20 in the seventh year of their captivity—right? In the fifth month on the tenth day, they came before Ezekiel to find out: ‘What’s the Word of the Lord? When are we going to get out of this captivity?’ They don’t like it. So, this is what He said:

Ezekiel 20:19: “*I am* the LORD your God.... [again relating to the first commandment] ...Walk in My statutes, and keep My ordinances, and **do them**, and keep My Sabbaths Holy; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that *I am* the LORD your God.... [The Bible talks about He held out His hand to a gainsaying people.] ...But the children rebelled against Me....” (vs 19-21).

There are certain events that happen that become so mind-impressing that you wouldn’t forget, such as when we had the earthquake here in 1988. Well, there was an earthquake that took place after the golden calf, and all of those that were on God’s side came over to Moses and the earth opened up and swallowed them, for their golden calf and religious activities that they had of which Aaron was greatly to be blamed in it. You would think that if you were standing there and you witnessed that, that that would be enough for you to hear and fear that God means what He says. But it didn’t impress them.

Verse 21: “But the children rebelled against Me. They did not walk in My statutes, nor keep My ordinances to do them—the ordinances which, *if* a

man do, he shall even live in them. And they polluted My Sabbaths... [Listen, when you pollute the Sabbath it is an abomination and you pollute God’s name.] ...and I said I would pour out My fury on them, to fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness.” You talk about long-suffering!

Since you have trials, and some of them are pretty tough to go through, we’ve never asked: Does God have trials? Was this not a trial for God in dealing with the children of Israel. Was it not as frustrating to Him as some of your trials are to you? They had His presence there in the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night and they still didn’t believe. Seeing is not believing! When God gets mad, listen! God says, ‘Vengeance belongs to Me.’

Verse 22: “Nevertheless, I withdrew My hand and worked for My name’s sake, that it should not be polluted in the eyes of the heathen, in whose eyes I brought them out. I also lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, *swearing* that I would scatter them among the heathen and scatter them throughout the lands” (vs 22-23). Which He eventually did; and it is true to this day, especially for the Jews who are hissing and cursing to this day—until they repent and accept Jesus Christ—yes, Jesus Christ!—that shall continue. And I think the final holocaust is going to be worst than what Hitler had. In that we know they will repent!

Verse 24—this is a very key, important verse to understand, because this is where Sunday-keepers go to say *we don’t have to keep the Sabbath*. “Because they had not done My ordinances, but had despised My statutes and had polluted My Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers’ idols.” Today, that’s this way:

- Once a Catholic always a Catholic. My mother and father were Catholics and it’s good enough for them, it’s good enough for me.
- Once a Buddhist always a Buddhist. My mother and father were Buddhists, therefore, it’s good enough for me.
- Once a Muslim always a Muslim, and my mother and father were Muslim and it’s good enough for me.
- Once a Protestant; my mother and father were Protestants and it’s good enough for me.

Went after their idols!

Verse 25: “Wherefore I also gave them **over to their own** statutes that were not good, and *their own* ordinances which they could not live. And I defiled them in their own gifts... [Meaning *He gave them up to their pagan religions* and let them suffer the consequences of it. That’s what He did. This does not mean that He forsook His Sabbath as those

who believe in Sunday-keeping try and twist and turn it.] ...in that they caused all that opened the womb to pass through *the fire*... [They went so far as to worshipping Molech and passing their children through the fire. In other words, the firstborn were sacrificed as a burnt offering.] ...that I *might* make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I *am* the LORD” (vs 25-26). This is meaning: Through the experience of this horrible sin, they will come to absolutely abhor it so much that they would repent! In that repentance they might know and understand that God’s way is supreme and not their way.

Verse 27: “Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Yet in this your fathers have blasphemed Me, in that they have acted treacherously against Me. When I had brought them into the land which I lifted up My hand to give to them, then they saw every high hill, and all the thick trees, and they offered their sacrifices there. And there they provoked *Me* with their offerings. There also they made their sweet savor, and poured out their drink offerings.... [that is to other gods] ...And I said to them, ‘What *is* the high place to which you go?’ And its name is called High Place to this day.” Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Are you defiled in the same way as your fathers? And do you commit whoredoms after their abominations? For when you offer your gifts, when you make your sons to pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols, even to *this* day. And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I will not be inquired of by you”’” (vs 27-31).

- You’re not going to come and question Me!
- I’ve done all of this!
- I’ve been gracious!
- I’ve been good!
- I’ve been kind!
- I forebear!

Verse 32: ““And what comes into your mind shall not come to pass at all—in that you say, “We will be like the heathen, like the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.”.... [And that is a prophecy we can carry unto this day, that we’ll have a great one-world religion where we all get along.] ...As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, I will reign over you’” (vs 32-33). Eventually it’s going to be. Finally they will repent.

Verse 43: ““And there... [When He finally brings them out of captivity] ...you shall remember your ways and all your doings in which you have been defiled. And you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils which you have committed. And **you shall know that I *am* the**

**LORD** when I deal with you for My name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD.” (vs 43-44). They’re going to know then!

We’ve covered enough of Hebrews 4:1-9. Go back through the study paper. Why do we have so much Sunday-keeping? I was talking to a man who said he spent some time in Israel and Jerusalem and he says that Jerusalem is a terrible city. He says to think of this: Friday the Muslims take off, so this section of the city has no business. Saturday the Jews take off and they close everything down in their section of the city. On Sunday the Catholics and Orthodox have their day and they close down their shops and businesses. So the truth is in Jerusalem you really have only four good shopping days of the week. When you come to Friday, if you’re in the Jewish section you’ve got about a half a day.

Ezekiel 22:25: “There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst, like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they made many widows in her midst. Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My Holy things. They have put no difference between the Holy and the profane... [all days are the same! What day do you worship on? *I worship every day*. What Sabbath is for you? *Everyday is a Sabbath for me; my Sabbath is in the Lord*. Not so!] ...and have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and **they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them**” (vs 25-26). That’s what happens.

Someone comes up in a Sunday-keeping church and says, ‘I’ve been reading the Bible, what about the Sabbath?’ *Don’t worry about it! Christ did away with it! We are in the Sabbath-rest of God* and Christ has kept all the commandments for you. All you have to do is love God and be good. Whatever you feel is good, *that’s good*. Whatever you feel is right, because you love God, *that’s got to be right*.

Well, that’s not what Hebrews 4:9 says: **“There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.** For the one who has entered into His rest... [Sabbath-keeping] ...he also has ceased from his works... [on the Sabbath] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest... [Weekly Sabbath, and also can pertain to the Kingdom of God ultimately. But if you don’t diligently enter into the rest of the Sabbath, you aren’t going to be in the Kingdom of God!] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience” (vs 9-11)—which we just read of in Ezek. 20.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 12:29-31
- 2) John 14:15
- 3) John 3:16
- 4) John 13:34
- 5) Matthew 5:43-48
- 6) 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
- 7) John 13:34-35
- 8) John 15:7
- 9) John 14:15
- 10) John 15:7-14
- 11) Exodus 31:12-13
- 12) Deuteronomy 5:12-15
- 13) Matthew 5:17
- 14) Acts 24:12-14
- 15) Ezekiel 20:1-7
- 16) Revelation 11:8
- 17) Ezekiel 20:7-12
- 18) Hebrews 4:9
- 19) Ezekiel 20:12
- 20) 1 John 2:3-6
- 21) Ezekiel 20:12-18
- 22) Amos 5:21-27
- 23) Ezekiel 20:19-33, 43-44
- 24) Ezekiel 22:25-26
- 25) Hebrews 4:9-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 22
- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 4:4
- Exodus 20
- Ephesians 2
- 2 Thessalonians
- Hebrews 6

Also referenced:

- Book: *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- Booklet: *How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets*
- Reference Paper: *Hebrews Study, Hebrews*

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# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XII

Fred R. Coulter—February 2, 2002

We just finished a special study on Hebrews 4:9-10, and I just want to mention some things concerning the Sabbath and grace, and the Sabbath and faith. It's very important for us to understand. Protestants believe in a form of grace which leads to lawlessness. God has a form of grace which leads to love and obedience. There's a vast difference. You cannot love God if you don't keep His commandments. Therefore, what makes the Protestants think that you cannot have Sabbath-keeping and grace at the same time? The truth is, Sabbath-keeping and grace go hand-in-hand.

Let's go to Romans, the third chapter, and here's why, and this is what's important for us to understand. Here is something that we need to realize and emphasize in everything that we do. Romans 3:31: "Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Rather, we are establishing law." Why do you establish law through grace? *Then you understand the full purpose of the law.*

Let's use the example of the Sabbath. The command is 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy, for in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth and all things that are therein, and He rested on the seventh day and blessed and sanctified the seventh day. Therefore, you shall rest and not do any work in it.'

Keeping the Sabbath from sundown to sundown is a physical aspect of the law of Sabbath-keeping. Resting on the Sabbath is a physical aspect of keeping the Sabbath. Everything else is an operation of grace. Why is that? What is grace? *Grace is the first expression of God's love toward us through the things that He has provided for us!* He gave the Sabbath Day as a gift, which means that a gift is grace. He made the operation of the Sabbath Day to be an *operation of grace*. The only operation of law is from sundown to sundown and to rest. The rest of it is the *operation of God's grace*.

We will see why it is an *operation of grace* and what it is that God has done, and what it is that He wants us to do today. Just like all the rest of creation that is enumerated there in Gen. 1 that God did—everything that He created on each different day was to be perpetuated in its kind, after its kind from that time down through however long it is until God completes His plan and New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven to the earth. All the animals were to reproduce after their kind; all the birds after their kind; the fish after their kind; human beings after their kind—and human beings were made in the image of God!

The reason that God made us in His image is so that we can enter into His family, as we know. I'm just summarizing some of these things right now. God wants to have a special day where He would put His presence. Originally, the presence of God with Adam and Eve was direct, together. You cannot say that they were not in the gracious presence of God—right? God made Himself in a form—not with His glory, not with His power, not with His splendor—which Adam and Eve could see Him and talk to Him and they did (Gen. 2-3). He especially created the Sabbath Day for that operation of grace, that God can fellowship with His creation—mainly man!

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.... [All the physical creation was done. By the way, they all operate by law—don't they? *Yes, they do!*] ...And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day..." (vs 1-2).

This blessing was to be a continuous blessing through all time, just like the creation of everything that He did and He said, and He blessed them and told them to be fruitful and multiply was to be for all time as long as the creation in this form existed. He blessed the seventh day and in blessing it and sanctifying it—that is making it Holy—He made it Holy with His bodily presence for Adam and Eve when He set aside the time that is Holy. And in effect, created it! This then was for the act of grace that He could fellowship with mankind whom He had made.

"...and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (v 2). Does God need to rest in the sense that He's worn out from doing His work as compared to human beings? If you put in a heavy day's labor, you're tired; you're worn out. You want to rest; you want to sleep—right? ***God never wears out! God is spiritual!*** So, even though He rested, and even though it said He was refreshed (in another place) *God created the Sabbath for man*. Jesus said, 'The Sabbath was made **for** man'—meaning *mankind* from that time all the way through—'and not man for the Sabbath.' Therefore, 'the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath Day.'

Look at all the things that Jesus did on the Sabbath Day:

- to heal
- to teach
- to bring them the Word of God

All of these were an act of grace on the Sabbath Day:

- to bring them the Truth of God
- to bring them the love of God
- to heal them
- to forgive them their sins
- to show them God's way
- to bring salvation to them

All of that is an ***act of grace!***

So, when we keep the Sabbath Day today, it is literally fulfilling the grace portion of the Sabbath. Remember, if anyone says that you keep the Sabbath because the law says, in the fourth commandment: 'remember the Sabbath, to keep it Holy'; the function after the Sabbath, after it's defined as law is an *operation of grace!* You can apply the same thing to all the commandments of God—can't you? *Yes, you can!* 'You shall have no other gods before Me.' And, if you have no other gods before the true God then God's grace comes upon you. 'You shall not make any graven image of any likeness of any kind, of anything in heaven above or in the earth beneath, and shall not bow down to worship them; because God is a jealous God.'

*If He's the Creator, then anything that He has created cannot represent God.* So then there's a penalty that comes from breaking the law, and you are *exiled from grace*, because God is a jealous God and brings a 'punishment to the third and fourth generation of those that hate Him. But unto thousands who love Me and keep My commandments.'

***Love and commandment-keeping are also an extension of grace!*** Can you keep the commandments of God through the grace of God? *Yes, you can!* You can keep them in a way that is spiritual. You can keep them in a way that is with understanding. Are you not blessed for honoring father and mother, as He says, 'that your days may be long on the earth'? Is that not a blessing? If it is a blessing, is it not grace from God? *No question about it!* How about 'you shall not commit murder.' Is that not a blessing and grace to the society? Look at the societies where they have nothing but murder.

Chicago, Illinois, had the highest rate of murder of any city in the United States—that's a hodge-podge of Babylon, and predominately Catholic, by the way. It's also the home of Louis Farrakhan and the Islamic nation. It was also the place where they had the Parliament of the World's Religions. It's also heavily laced with a lot of Mafia. Because they have more murders, is Chicago a gracious place to live in? *NO!* Certain sections you wouldn't even want to venture into. You can apply that to any city, anywhere, any society, any people, anytime in history down through time.

You can go right on with the rest of the commandments and you come to the tenth commandment: 'You shall not covet.' When there is not covetousness, then you have honesty and truth, respect of private property, which then is a gracious blessing from God. When God said in Deut. 28 that if you will 'listen to keep all My commandments you will be blessed.'

- *A blessing comes* from the grace of God—we need to understand that.
- *A cursing comes* because we do not keep the commandments of God.

Let's apply this to the Sabbath Day.

Let's see the real reason why God, now today, wants us to keep the Sabbath with the operation of grace, through His Spirit. To worship Him ***in Spirit and in Truth*** is an *operation of grace*. We need to understand that. It's interesting how John starts 1-John, and this is really profound for us to understand.

1-John 1:1: "That which was from *the* beginning... [there are three places where it talks about the beginning of the creation: Genesis, Gospel of John and 1-John; then Mark talks about the beginning of Jesus Christ.] (Here we're talking): ...from *the* beginning that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves... [Seeing Him; and, of course, John was one of the three that saw Him in the transfiguration on the mount.] ...and our own hands handled... [after He was resurrected] ...concerning the Word of life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (vs 1-3).

Fellowship becomes an *operation of grace*. The only problem is, too many churches turn it into an operation of socializing. If you put getting together with people, your friends and those that you know, before worshipping God and serving God and keeping the Sabbath and doing it in grace, then your fellowship can become in vain because the true fellowship doesn't come just with each other. The true fellowship comes first from God the Father and Jesus Christ and then each other.

"...indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ" (v 3). So, when you keep the Sabbath as an operation of grace, because God has put His presence in it with His Spirit, that's why it becomes very important that on



the Sabbath Day that you *pray*, that you *study*, that you use this day as a *day of*

- grace
- forgiveness
- thanksgiving
- drawing close to God

That's why God gave the Sabbath Day. Also, you can apply it to the Holy Days, because the Holy Days show the operation of God beginning with the Church and clear on into the salvation of the whole world as you come clear on down to the Last Great Day. It's really quite a thing that you understand it.

Let's remember what it says: 'If you're Christ's then you're Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.' Remember when God called Abraham out of the land of Ur and told him to go into the land where he would go, and God blessed him and 'in you shall all the nations of the world be blessed. Those that bless you I will bless and those that curse you I will curse.' So God gave grace to Abraham to begin with. We know that Abraham obeyed God. We know that he kept His commandments, His statutes, His laws. He obeyed His voice and His charge. Grace does not in any way imply a lawlessness. It implies a complete *spiritual* understanding of the laws of God. You establish the law because you desire to do it rather than the children of Israel who were disobedient and gainsaying or contradicting. That's exactly what Israel does to this very day. They read the Scriptures and they contradict God.

Let's see about Abraham, Romans 4:1: "What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect to *the* flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God" (vs 1-2). Please understand this, it's very important to realize: ***Justification only comes by believing in Christ and believing God!***

When it says there in Gen. 15 that Abraham believed God and it was counted as righteousness for him, that does not mean it's a substitute for keeping the commandments of God. That righteousness is the right standing of God, which is called *justification*. If you don't keep the Sabbath *spiritually* from the point of view of grace, as we're covering today, then all your Sabbath-keeping can be in vain, because you're missing the purpose of Sabbath-keeping. If you don't believe that just get the *Code of Jewish Law* and read all of their laws concerning *their* laws for Sabbath-keeping.

Verse 3: "For what does the Scripture say? 'And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness.' Now to the one who works, the reward is not reckoned according to grace; rather, *it is reckoned* as a debt" (vs 3-4). This is very easy to understand, very simple. If you are hired by

someone to work and they say, 'If you work for me I will pay you \$10/hr. Fair enough?' *Fair enough*. 'You work 8-5 with an hour off for lunch.' *Fair enough*. Then at the end of the week he owes you, as a debt, \$400 for your work—correct? *Yes, he does!* Now, if he doesn't pay you, you can take him to court and get your \$400, provided he doesn't declare bankruptcy between now and then.

When you have belief in God—notice it said that 'he believed God'—there's a vast difference in believing that there is a God—because even the demons do and tremble—and believing God! If you believe God you're going to do what God says! It was counted to him for righteousness. In other words, by believing God, you're put in right standing with Him, and this applies to the sacrifice of Christ. You believe that your sins are forgiven upon repentance and the application of the blood of Christ for the remission of your sins—correct? You believe that! That is an operation of grace, because it is the work of the Spirit by repentance. It's the work of belief by the heart and mind and you are justified by that.

Verse 6 also shows repentance: "Even as David also declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness **separate from** works... ['without' in the *King James* and is a very improper translation] ...'Blessed are *those* whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed *is the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin.'" (vs 6-8). This shows the operation of grace and forgiveness, and then in believing God a desire to love and serve God and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. All of that is *an operation of grace*, and that's what God wants the Sabbath to be.

So, all of those that say that if you keep the Sabbath you have fallen from grace, that is a false statement! If you keep the Sabbath and worship God in Spirit and Truth and believe God and are justified by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Sabbath Day—through the Spirit of God and the Word of God—becomes an *operation of grace!*

- God created the day for that!
- He fellowships with us on that day!
- He puts His presence in that day!
- He gives us understanding of His Word on that day!

In many cases we learn more on the Sabbath than we do studying the Bible during the week. That comes about because of God's presence and God's Spirit because He's fellowshipping with us. If we approach the Sabbath from that point of view,

- the whole keeping of the Sabbath
- the whole benefit of the Sabbath
- the whole understanding of the Sabbath

becomes so much greater.

Let's go to Isaiah and let's see it shows something very important. Here, in describing on how to keep the Sabbath, God is really describing the operation of keeping the Sabbath as an *operation of grace*. There are a few things we need to do: Keep it from sundown to sundown and rest. There are other things we need to do to keep the Sabbath Holy:

Isaiah 58:13: "If you turn your foot away from the Sabbath... [from trampling on it. In other words, using it for your own means.] ...*from* doing your own desires on My Holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the Holy of the LORD, honorable; and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor pursuing your own desires... [business—after all, the Sabbath should be a pleasure] ...nor speaking *your own* words."

- You speak the words of Christ.
- You encourage and fellowship with each other in the Word of God.
- Talk about how your days in the week have gone and how God has helped you.
- Encourage one another to love God
- Be loving and forgiving.

All of these things are very important in Sabbath-keeping.

Here's the key. When you do that and keep the Sabbath as an *operation of grace*. Remember as we started, grace establishes law! Then, v 14 comes in: "Then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; and I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it."

In other words, you will have your inheritance with God and with Christ. That's what it's talking about—Sunday-keeping {see sermon series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping* and *Holy Sabbath*}. Since we're here in Hebrews and we're just about concluded with *Sabbath-keeping for the people of God* we want to finish it up with the *operation of the Sabbath*, which is really an *operation of grace*.

God promises that He will bring you into that inheritance. Let's look at another thing that happens when you worship God in *Spirit and in Truth* on the Sabbath Day. Let's see what happens. I tell you what, I've experienced this over and over again through the years, and especially on the Sabbath Day. There are many times when I have sermon prepared and I've spent a lot of time doing it, that I would come to Sabbath services and something will come up and then God will inspire me to speak on something entirely different, I have not even prepared. Also, give us an understanding of things that we have never understood before. I

remember in particularly the series on Revelation where I did the chart. The first time I did the chart I just did it on a blackboard at services. It didn't dawn on me until the Sabbath Day driving to services. Here is what God will do. Here's the important thing that is a function of the Sabbath. This functions all the time, but on the Sabbath particularly so, because God puts His presence in the Sabbath and His Spirit in the Sabbath, so then on the Sabbath Day we get the teaching and the inspiration and the edification that God wants us to have.

1-Corinthians 2:7: "Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery... [which the world can't understand] ...*even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory, which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); but according as it is written, 'The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, *the* things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'.... [Loving God truly and keeping His commandments is also an *operation of grace*.] ...But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit..." (vs 7-10). This is what God's Spirit does:

- when we study God's Word on the Sabbath
- when we come together and ask for God's blessing
- when we ask God to open our minds
- when we come together and ask God to give us understanding of 'Your Word'

Like David said in Psalm 119:18: "Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law.

God reveals them in particularly on the Sabbath Day, and He reveals them to those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth on any day of the week; at any time.

"But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God.... [and that's what God wants us to be perfected in today; the deeper things of God, to understand the things of God] ...For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God" (vs 10-12). Which is clearly this:

If you have the spirit of the world you cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, because they're contrary one to another. But, if you have the Spirit of God *you can understand*. And here's the reason: ***that we might know the things that are given freely to us of God!*** Everything that is given freely is an *operation of grace!* The understanding of

God's Word is *an operation of grace*, not an operation of intellect. We read in Rom. 1, the *wise* say, 'we know better, there is no God, so they become fools!' It's not an operation of philosophy or logic; it's an *operation of conversion* of the heart and the Spirit of God. Then God's Spirit teaching you through the grace of God that you can grow in it.

Verse 13: "...not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because **they are spiritually discerned**" (vs 13-14). That's how you understand the Scriptures; how I understand the Scriptures: **by the Spirit of God and not by the self; not by the wisdom and the impotent.**

Hebrews 4:12-13—let's see some very important things and why we come to the point that we do and why these things are given this way. Let's review:

Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. For the one who has entered into His rest..." (vs 9-10)—the *rest of God*—'katapausis' is the Sabbath. You have not yet entered into the Kingdom of God, yet, because that hasn't come. And you don't enter into any ethereal spiritual rest where you have nothing to do because Christ did it for you. *That is a satanic, lawless lie!*

You "...enter into His rest, he also has ceased from his works... [Gen. 2—and that was on the seventh day] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest..." (vs 10-11). This applies two ways:

1. We need to be diligent to enter into the rest of the weekly Sabbath as it comes to us.
2. We need to be diligent to keep our eyes on the goal of the Kingdom of God so that we can enter into the Kingdom of God.

"...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience." (v 11). Disobedience and disbelief go hand-in-hand. If you don't believe God you won't obey God—it's that simple!

Verse 12: "For the Word of God **is living**... [It's the only kind of word in the world.] ...*is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.... [That's why people don't like it.] ...And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things **are naked and laid bare** before the eyes of Him to Whom we must

give account" (vs 12-13). Those two verses are very powerful, and it's very interesting that it follows in sequence right after the Sabbath Day—correct? You go back and read: "...the Word of God *is* living and powerful..." for those who refuse to keep the Sabbath when God gave it to Israel. *Oh, absolutely!* Sent them into captivity.

There is something else important concerning the Word of God that is *living* and *powerful*. God has inspired that it be written down so that we will know. And there are a lot of people who have Bibles in their homes, which they never, never read but it is there. I call your attention to a witness that Jeremiah gave. He gave it, wrote it down, and he sent a messenger to Babylon and he was told when he gets to Babylon to 'read the message, put a rock around it and throw it in the river of Babylon.' Just stop and think, from a practical point of view: How many people in Babylon really heard that? Was the whole population of the city of Babylon standing there watching him while he gave that witness? *No!* But everything that God said in that witness to Babylon took place.

Let's apply the same thing to those who have Bibles at home that never read them. You have a witness sent from God right in your own home. If you don't read it—if you don't find out about it—you are ignoring the witness of God and you are liable! Granted, as it says in another place, 'he that knew to do his Lord's will would be beaten with many stripes, and he who knew not to do his lord's will, will be beaten with few stripes.' So therefore, it is still a witness! It is living.

Now, let's understand something concerning *living* and *powerful*. Even for those who don't know the Word of God, or have ignored it, thrown it out, discounted it or rejected it, the laws contained in the Word of God, **the operation in the Word of God is living and powerful and works in their lives**. Let's take for example: All of those who have a 'religion'—which is a rejection of God's Truth—have another god before the true God. Do they have understanding and love that comes from the Word of God? *No!* Do they have penalties that come upon them? What about these societies that are so led by demons?

Let's just take a real base society, the basest in the whole world—New Guinea. God put them there and, unfortunately, they have gone after demons. Granted, missionaries have gone in there to try and convert them. Only some of the missionaries have had their heads become 'brain soup.' But you watch on the documentaries that you see, maybe on Discovery Channel or something like that, and you see those societies, how wretched and how evil that they are because they do not have the blessing of the

laws of God. But, nevertheless *the laws of God still work*—don't they?

- If they murder and commit cannibalism, do they not have brain disease and die? *Yes!*
- If they follow demons and superstitions and idols, do they not have their mentality demented and are superstitious? *Yes!*
- If they constantly war and fight, do they constantly have a diminishing of the population by their own hand? *Yes!*

So, whether anyone knows it or not, it's still operates in their lives. For example: How about all of the young people that dishonor their fathers and mothers and die because they don't obey their fathers and mothers when they say: 'If you take the car don't speed; don't drink.' They disobey and what happens? *You can read about it many times*—a whole carload of teenagers die because they dishonored father and mother. Is the Word of God living and powerful and dividing asunder? Even of people in the world? *Absolutely! No question about it!*

That's why in the very first part of Hebrews 1, let's understand the Word of God and how powerful it is. Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds [ages]; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power..." (vs 1-3). The whole universe stays together because of the Word of the power of God! That's quite something!

I find it very profound; false doctrines come in cycles. There's another false doctrine of the oneness of God, which is there is only one God—period! Christ was not God, and that the first verses in the Gospel of John are a personification of the Word. Well, they're not a personification of the Word in the exact inspired account of the Word of God. Remember, it says, 'Christ upholds all things by the Word of His power. He has the power, and upholds the universe and everything that there is!'

This also shows the Word of God. This is not a personification such as in Prov. 8 where it says, 'I wisdom am like.' That is a personification. This is a statement of fact that John wrote, and in all probability—when you examine the way that the Gospel of John is written; the first part and the last part—that when they did the final canonization of the New Testament—maybe even before that—this was added to the beginning of it because of the problems we have in 1-John 4, that anyone who says that Christ did not come in the flesh is an antichrist. This is an answer to it.

John 1:1 "In *the* beginning was the Word... [That is not a personification; that's a statement of fact. 'en'—which means, can actually have the connotation *before the beginning* of what we see as the creation] ...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Granted, there is no definite article in the Greek before *God*, where it says "was God." That is also very profound.

It reads this way in the Greek: 'Theos en ho logos.' Why does it not have any definite article before 'Theos'? *It is showing that the Word was God*, and without the definite article it means *everything that God is the Word was*.

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him... [Did He create Himself? *Of course not!*] ... In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (vs 2-4). That's how *powerful and living* the Word of God is!

Verse 10 also becomes very profound; this shows the absolute rejection of God by His creation. Yet, He is there as the Savior—correct? "He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him... [How can you get around that? In order to have the world made by Him, He had to have existed before the world existed—correct? *Yes!*] ...but the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him" (vs 10-11). They rejected Him! 'Receive' here means *to welcome* like you would bring someone into a bosom hug.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority [power] to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name; who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of *the* flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but by *the* will of God.... [So, God is the One who does the calling so there are no mistakes.] ...And the Word... [Who was God, and God is spirit] ...became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth." (vs 12-14).

When we talk about the Word of God is *living and powerful*, and we talk about that in relationship to Jesus Christ, there is no question whatsoever that He *was* God—before He became a human being. And, please understand this: ***Nothing is impossible for God!*** The Jews say that Christ could not have been God and to become a human being, because 'we don't believe that.' You need to *listen* to that statement, because just because they don't believe it doesn't make their disbelief correct—does it? ***Nothing is impossible for God!***

Not only was He the incarnate of the Word of God

- He spoke the Word of God
- He brought the living Truth of God

And it exists always, at all times, everywhere in the universe, and there is no variance to that whatsoever!

Psalm 138:2—let's see how powerful that God places His Word: "I will worship toward Your Holy temple, and praise Your name for Your loving kindness, and for Your Truth; for You have magnified Your Word above all Your name." Let's understand something about the Word of God:

- why it's living
- why it's powerful
- why it's sharper than any two-edged sword

Whatever God says is Truth! God cannot lie! It exists everywhere at all times and is so powerful. This is why people do not like the Bible.

It says here in Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart." No other book does that—only the Word of God!

Let's look at some of the things that people do not like; they don't like to hear it, but this is the way that life is with human beings: Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death." They don't like to be told that. That's repeated in Prov. 16:25.

Jer. 17—this is what people really don't like, especially for those people who consider themselves good, honest, sincere and upstanding—so much so that they don't even need God. Remember this: Any moral standard that someone has, that they believe—which is good and they follow—though they reject God, it still comes back to the Word of God. If they would say

- *I would never commit adultery.* Where did they get that from?
- *I would never steal.* Where did they get that from?
- *I always take care of my neighbor in need.* Where did that come from?

Even if they have all of this—*all of this*—they still have a heart described here in Jer. 17. There's a book out and I talked to Wayne Stenhouse and he said they're using it for Bible study on Friday night up there in Canada—*The Lies We Believe*. If we do not live in a lying, deceptive society today, where everything is an elusion and delusion and just the reality of things are not what you really see, and it's because of this. Why do people believe it? The same reason that people taunt.

Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" There's no other book on the face of the earth that really tells you that. When people read that and think that they're really good, honest, upright and they're moral, they don't like to hear that they're deceptive. But they all like to have their 'little' lies—don't they? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." That's just the way that life is.

Job 42—this will be very instructive for us. Remember, Job, in the letter of the law, was a perfect man—wasn't he? God said to Satan, 'Behold Job My servant, no man like him; perfect and upright.' Let's notice what he said after he went through everything and he figured that he was so righteous that he had a righteousness that he could match up to God, where he could say, 'God, You come down here and look at my righteousness and I will hold it up to You and You will have to declare that, yes, I am righteous.' So, when God finally revealed Himself, He said, 'Job, I want to speak to you.' Job said, 'Oop! I'll put my hand on my mouth.' God said, 'Will you disannul My judgment that you may be righteous.'

Part of the judgment of God is the heart of man that He's given man because of sin. It goes all the way back to Adam and Eve. We are born with human nature, with 'a heart that is deceitful above all things'; whether we consider ourselves righteous or whether we know that we are wicked and evil. The heart is still 'deceitful above all things.' After God got done with Job, here's what Job said:

Job 42:1: "And Job answered the LORD and said, 'I know that You can do all things, and **that no thought can be withheld from You**'" (vs 1-2). No other book has the power of judging the thoughts except the Word of God. No other book has the power—with the Holy Spirit of God—to convict people of sin and lead them to repentance than the words of God.

Verse 3: "You asked, 'Who *is* he who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have spoken that which I did not understand; *things* too wonderful for me; yea, which I did not know.... [That's another part of human nature—'vanity of vanities, all is vanity' says the preacher. And 'man at his very best states is altogether vanity.'] (Now Job begins repenting): ...Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak; *You said*, "I will ask of you, and you will declare to Me." I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (vs 3-6). That's why the Word of God is *living and powerful* and cuts to the dividing asunder.' So that men will

repent! So that women will repent! So that they will come to God! And also for us to know that there is **nothing** that is not open to God.

**God's Word convicts that way!** Let me just add that when you have the Holy Spirit of God and you begin fighting sin in your mind, it is God's Spirit revealing the sin to you in your mind, because that's where sin begins and God reveals it to you so you can repent, which is a tremendous operation of the grace of God

- to help cleanse your mind
- to help purge your mind
- to grow in grace and knowledge
- to bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ

Hebrews 4:13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account."

Psalms 139:1—here David shows this very profoundly: "O LORD, You have searched me and have known me." God knows—doesn't He? How much does God know? If God's Spirit is in you and Christ is in you all these things take place. If you are the temple of the Holy Spirit—which you are—and Christ is in you, then everything you do Christ does with you. That's why you only receive a portion of the Spirit of God, a begettal, because you have to wait for the resurrection in order to receive the full measure of the Holy Spirit of God. That's why the Holy Spirit of God within you convicts you of sin in your mind; that you can repent!

Verse 2: "You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts afar off. You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways... [Of course! God made every human being. He knows how human beings are going to act—doesn't He? *Yes, He does!*] ...for there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have enclosed me behind and in front, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (vs 2-6). It shows the silliness of men when they say, 'Where is God?' It shows the foolishness of atheist that say 'there is no God.'

Verse 7: "Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I go up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the furthest parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me shall be night'" (vs 7-11). That reminds me of a little boy or girl when they got caught doing something

and mommy said to them, 'God sees everything.' *How can God see, there's a ceiling up there? How can God see?* God can know everything!

Verse 12: "Even the darkness does not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; as is the darkness, so is the light to You, for You have possessed my reins; You have knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for **I am awesomely and wonderfully made**; Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well. My substance was not hidden from You... [That's what they call a newly begotten life within the mother's womb—*substance*—until it forms an embryo. So, this is very scientific and up-to-date—isn't it?] ...when I was made in secret and intricately formed in the lowest parts of the earth" (vs 12-15). That's talking about the womb.

"Your eyes did see my substance, yet being unformed; and in Your book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them" (v 16). Quite a thing—isn't it? They call that today, with all of our scientific knowledge and everything, *the human genome*. In other words, from the time of conception you are who you are, and you develop in your mother's womb according to the things that God has put in, by number, the DNA and RNA so that when it comes time for you to be born, voila! there you are! God knows all of it. God is so great that no two human beings—not even identical twins—are the same. That's something!

Verse 17: "How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!.... [that's why God's Word is *living and powerful*, always working] ...If I should count them, they are more than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You" (vs 17-18). That's quite a thing! That's how powerful it is! That is why there is not a created thing that is not laid bare before God. God knows everything—doesn't He?

That's why we are to confess our sins to God; *to no man!* I remember watching something on TV and it had to do with a Catholic priest. The first thing they ask you, if you go to confession, is when was your last confession. That already puts you under fear—doesn't it? When people confess to a man they really don't tell the truth. That's why when God says, 'When you pray, go to a private place and pray to your Father which is in secret.'

We'll see how we are to pray to God. That's directly between you and God. And what we are going to see is that we have the greatest and most fantastic High Priest that could ever, ever be. No system of 'religion' on earth can substitute for the High Priesthood of God being Jesus Christ. That's why there is not to be a priesthood over the people of God. Why does there have to be a priesthood when Christ is the High Priest over all? *There*

*doesn't need to be one!* God never intended it to be! The whole thing of the Catholic Church, with its priesthood, is antichrist—using the name of Christ in the place of Christ.

Here's why, and this is put here deliberately, because when we go through everything that is stated up to this point—Heb. 4:13—there's a reason why we come to the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and that He—and He alone—qualifies. This is going to be quite a thing, and this also sets the stage for all the rest of the book of Hebrews.

Let's take the next section: Hebrews 4:14: "Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

Hebrews 5:1: "For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... [This is talking about the Levitical priesthood or Aaronic priesthood, and then we begin to compare that with the Priesthood of Christ.] ...and he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people" (vs 1-3).

"Now no man takes the honor *of the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*. In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.' Even as He also says in another *place*, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec'; Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared *God*. Although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 4-10).

Let's go back and we'll begin going through verse-by-verse. He interjects right here that we have such a High Priest as Christ, but let's review the buildup to that point. All of this is laying the

groundwork for the greatest High Priesthood, the superior covenant of the New Covenant with Jesus Christ Who is superior to the angels (Heb. 1:1-9). Who also came in the flesh (Heb. 2). This is important for us to understand why Jesus Christ is High Priest, and why God has given all those that He calls direct access to God the Father through Him. That's why it's so important, brethren, that we understand this. Let's also realize, too, that just as Paul was writing the book of Hebrews to prepare the people for the troubled times ahead. Actually, the troubles had already begun.

The troubles where we see that they were on the verge of committing the unpardonable sin was because they began to refocus on the priesthood of Aaron and the physical priests. And they began to focus on the physical things that they could do. They began to focus in on the Pascal lamb and the sacrifice of Judaism, rather than the Lamb of God being Jesus Christ. And were on the verge, because Christ did not return in the time that they figured, of going right back into Judaism and rejecting the priesthood of Christ for the physical priesthood of men that they could see. Paul was preparing them for the destruction of that priesthood. He is building this up to show the greatness of Christ and His priesthood. Compared to the priesthood of Aaron—which was the old priesthood—to the priesthood of Christ, no priest of Aaron could have done what Jesus did. Jesus was God before He became human and then He suffered these things for the very purpose of making Him the kind of High Priest that we need to have.

Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death... [the very death for all the sins of all mankind] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs 9-10). Even God in the flesh—Jesus Christ—was perfected by the things that He suffered. That's quite a thing to understand, brethren. No priesthood of the order of Aaron could ever have done this!

Verse 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely... [See how Paul is building up here to where we come to Heb. 4:14] ...He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made

like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted” (vs 14-18).

Then he goes one step further, Heb. 3, he compares Christ to Moses. Then he builds all the way through Heb. 4:14, ‘having a great High Priest who has passed into the heavens.’

Hebrews 4:15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize... [This actually means *to share in compassionate feeling*] ...with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He was without sin.*” What we need to understand is this: I’ve read where some men say that Jesus had to sin in order that He could understand. But it says here that ‘He was without sin.’ So that’s a contradiction. How is it that Jesus understands:

1. He was made flesh
2. He took on human nature

Let’s look at these things—Philippians 2. It says there in Hebrews that it was *obligatory, mandatory*, that He be made like His brethren. He partook of flesh and blood. That means He took on all the humanness that all human beings have. In other words, He took on human nature. This is a very profound thought:

God is Creator; He created all things through Jesus Christ—correct? *Yes!* Because of sin, man was given the *law of sin and death*. Now, who sentenced man to that but God—didn’t He? *Yes!* We’re going to see that Christ too that same nature upon Himself. That’s how He knows what it’s like to be tempted. If He didn’t have that same nature, yet being filled with the Spirit of God to give Him the power to not sin, Satan the devil’s temptations would have been nothing.

Let me give you an example: Suppose that you were behind a clear, visible barrier, but it was absolutely impenetrable to any weapon whatsoever that man could devise. Someone came up with whatever kind of weapon you want to say—machine guns, howitzers, recoilers, rifles, atomic bombs—whatever, and you could sit back there behind this visible barrier and nothing would touch you. Would you be fearful? Would you worry about whether you could be touched by any of these things or not? *No!* So likewise, if Christ did not take on human nature the way we have human nature, He could not be tempted in the same way that we are. How could it be the same temptation as we have if He did not have complete human nature as we do? *Could not have been!* Read that section in *The Christian Passover—The Nature of Man* and *The Nature of*

God.

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God... [existing as God] ...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but **emptied Himself**... [divested Himself of being a spirit being, God. Can God do that? *Yes, He can! Nothing is impossible for God!*] ...and was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant... [Quite a profound thing—isn’t it? How did God make us? *God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness,’* for the very purpose that Christ could do this.] ...and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross.*” (vs 5-8). If He did not have the law of death in Him, He could not have died—correct?

“Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name which *is* above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to *the* glory of God *the* Father” (vs 9-11).

Let’s see what kind of flesh He came in. It was in the likeness of human flesh. Some people say His flesh was not like our flesh. Even the Catholics have the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary, so she would not have the stain on her soul of Adam’s sin. So, therefore, Christ could be born without the stain of human nature upon His soul. Well, that’s not what the Bible says!

After Paul talks about the *law of sin and death* within our members, Romans 8:3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in ***the likeness of sinful flesh...***” That means in the exact, complete sameness. That’s why He could be tempted. He had all of these pulls. That’s why He’s able to help us in our temptations and can have sympathetic compassion, because He partook in the same temptations.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 3:31
- 2) Genesis 2:1-2
- 3) 1 John 1:1-3
- 4) Romans 4:1-4, 6-8
- 5) Isaiah 58:13-14
- 6) 1 Corinthians 2:7-10
- 7) Psalm 119:18
- 8) 1 Corinthians 2:10-14
- 9) Hebrews 4:9-13
- 10) Hebrews 1:1-3



- 11) John 1:1-4, 10-14
- 12) Psalm 138:2
- 13) Hebrews 4:12
- 14) Proverbs 14:12
- 15) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 16) Job 42:1-6
- 17) Hebrews 4:13
- 18) Psalm 139:1-18
- 19) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 20) Hebrews 5:1-10
- 21) Hebrews 2:9-10, 14-18
- 22) Hebrews 4:15
- 23) Philippians 2:5-11
- 24) Romans 8:3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1, 3
- Deuteronomy 28
- Genesis 15
- Romans 1
- Proverbs 8
- 1 John 4
- Proverbs 16:25
- Hebrews 1:1-9; 3

Also referenced:

Books:

- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman Goldin
- *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry
- *The Lies We Believe* by Dr. Chris Thurman
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter (articles: Nature of Man and Nature of God)

Sermon Series:

- *Refuting Sunday Keeping*
- *The Holy Sabbath*
- *Revelation*

FRC: bo

Transcribed: 4-1-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIII

Fred R. Coulter—February 16, 2002

Let's understand that the book of Hebrews was written at a time when the Church was beginning to fall apart. That's happened many, many times in history. The reason that God does this—like we've seen in our day—is to scatter the Church. In scattering the Church, God does several things that are very important:

1. those who are false brethren go their way
2. it tests the true brethren whether they believe God or not
3. whether they will stick with God through thick and thin

So, it's quite a thing when you understand how God does that. It's not a matter that God is weak or impotent, or that God is not able to hold His Church together. Christ is doing it deliberately for the purpose of perfecting the brethren. and that's why the book of Hebrews is so important. There's one thing that's going to really help you

- through thick and thin
- through every trial
- through every apparent contradiction
- through everything that you would go through

***is to know and understand that you have a High Priest like Jesus Christ!*** The whole theme of the book of Hebrews from here on in is about

- the greatness of Christ
- the superiority of the New Covenant
- how that God's way is so profound

Now, we're here in Hebrews, the fourth chapter, and we just finished the section that there is no person that 'is not laid bare before God.' God is a heart-knowing God and knows everything about us. He's the One Who has created us! He's the One Who has made us! We can't fool God! I suppose we could take Abraham Lincoln's saying: *you can fool some of the people all of the time; you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.* We can say this: ***You can never fool God at any time!***

- God knows
- God is merciful
- God is kind
- God desires that you come to Him and that you pray to Him

Let's understand how this fits in with what Jesus preached. God uses all of these things to His advantage, to further His plan, because He knows those who are His.

Luke 12:1: "During this time, an

innumerable multitude was gathering, *crowding* so close together that they were stepping on one another. First of all He began to speak to His disciples, *saying*, 'Guard yourselves from the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.'"

The parallel account in Matt. 16 shows it was their doctrine or their teachings. This has been a problem that has had to be purged out of the Church of God time and time again—false religious views creeping into the Church. You can see that as you read the accounts of the seven churches (Rev. 2-3). How that at various times they are confronted with those who deliberately come in

- to destroy
- to tear down
- to confuse
- to bring false doctrine
- to take away faith.

All of those people are the *agents of Satan the devil to draw people away from God*. That's why he gave the warning here. 'and the Pharisees in this case represent all the 'religious' factions of the world down in prophecy, because they're really not much different.

Verse 2: "'For there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, nor hidden that shall not be known. Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and what you have spoken in the ear in closed rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops'" (vs 2-3)

Enron should have read this before they did what they did, because it is being proclaimed from the housetops—isn't it?—likewise, everything else! That's why we have such things as the *Vatican Assassin* and *My 50 Years in the Church of Rome*. That's why we have the histories—though they try to be suppressed by the agents of Satan the devil—show the hatefulness that they have toward God. They don't want to admit that what Christ has is greater than anything that can do or produce. Therefore, there is that hatred.

There is another hatred that is there, because now there needs to be *no man* as a high priest between you and Christ. Christ is our High Priest; you need *no man!* You need someone to teach you how to have contact with God, to teach you the Scriptures. But your spiritual relationship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It's not dependent upon a man.

Verse 4: "'But I tell you, My friends, you should not be afraid of those who kill the body, and

after that are not able to do anything more.” If you die in the faith—whether peacefully in old age or you’re martyred—there’s no more that any man can do to you at all; you have it made! The promise of God is sure! What this does, this takes away the grip of fear that ‘religionists’ hold over people. God doesn’t want us to be fearful of a hierarchical system that holds power over us. The power over us is Christ and God the Father—there is none greater! We do not have to fear. That’s why the Psalm says, ‘I will not fear what man can do to me.’ You may have pain or suffering for a while if you’re martyred. Or if you’re coming close to the end of your life, you may have pain and suffering and struggle.

- God knows that
  - He designed it to bring you to that point
  - it’s no surprise to God
  - God understands it
  - God knows it
  - He’s purposed it
- We don’t have to be afraid.

Verse 5: “But I will show you Whom you should fear. Fear Him Who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into the *fire of Gehenna*.... [the second death] ...Yes, I tell you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are of greater value than many sparrows” (vs 5-7). When we come before God—God knows everything! God understands everything! He wants us to come before Him realizing that, because God is ‘heart-knowing’ God.

“And I tell you, everyone who shall confess Me before men shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but the one who has denied Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.... [This is the whole basis of what the book of Hebrews is for, so that they do not commit the unpardonable sin. There were some powerful forces going on.] ...And everyone who shall say a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but the one who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven. But when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should reply in defense, or what you should say; for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that same hour what needs to be said” (vs 8-12).

God knows that when we come before God in prayer, it is a tremendous and fantastic thing, brethren. You can truly confess your sins to God, because He knows and understands. Many times we don’t like to admit, even to ourselves, what we have done or how we are as human beings. *But God knows!*

Hebrews 4:14—this is the whole key of the rest of the book of Hebrews: “Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens...”

- where no man can do anything
- where no man can corrupt
- where no man can take away
- where no man can defeat

“...Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*.” You stop and think how many times in Heb. 2-3 where it says:

- hold fast
- don’t give up
- don’t rebel
- believe
- obey

So, we should hold fast; here’s the reason why, v 15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” This means not only to sympathize, but have compassion; have the understanding. No human being can do the same as Christ. Why? *Too many times we will have the attitude of the Pharisees!* Remember the Pharisee that prayed?

I just wonder what it is like for a Catholic priest to sit there in the confessional booth and there is this little screen and the person comes in and the priest says, ‘When was the last time you confessed?’ It already puts them on the defensive, puts them in a position of shame. Then they tell it to a man! I wonder how many of them really hold the people in contempt when they confess their sins. I’m sure they don’t fully confess all of them, because no man wants to tell another man. No woman wants to tell another woman or man everything that are the secrets of her or his carnal nature. Just does not want to do it. Why? *Because you’re fearful that it will be used against you!* That’s why! And, yea, when you read *Vatican Assassin* they do use it against you, especially political people, to get them to do the will of the Catholic Church. ***We don’t go before a man,*** because too many would be like the Pharisee. I wonder how many Catholic priests, when they hear a confession, are like this Pharisee here:

Luke 18:9: “And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, He also spoke this parable.” That’s the way human beings do. Even when you see somebody in trouble or see a problem that they have, or see a difficulty that they are going through, it is very easy to despise that person— isn’t it? It is very easy to say, ‘Thank you, God, I’m not like that person.’ Well, that’s what the Pharisee was doing.

Verse 10: “Two men went up into the temple to pray... [That is coming right into the presence of God. Today we have access to the

temple in heaven above, and we come before God the Father and Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and everyone who comes before Him it is open and laid bare.] ...the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner... [He wasn't really praying to God, he was bragging on himself to God. This is no prayer to God. This is a way of relating to God of 'how good I am.'] ...“God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector...” (vs 10-11). The thing is, God expects everyone to obey the commandments of God. So,

- if you're not an extortioner, you haven't done anything special
- if you're not unjust, *you haven't done anything special*
- if you're not an adulterer or adulteress, *you've done nothing special*

*God expects that!* Or even as this publican. The publican is a tax collector. Of course, the IRS are the most despised to this day—are they not? You love to get your tax bill in the mail? When the tax bill comes you say, ‘Oh thank you, tax man, you are so good.’ Then you read it and you think THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! What are they doing with all the money? Tax collectors are the most easy to hate and the most invariably being hated down through the centuries.

Notice, he's still bragging on himself, v 12: ““I fast twice in the week... [Hooray! Give him another merit badge!] ...and I give a tithe of everything that I gain.”... [which he should] (now the publican): ...And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on the chest, saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”... [Before God, in his own eyes, he was THE sinner! Not there was only one sinner in the world, but he viewed himself from that point of view.] ...I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled... [God does not want anyone to take the Word of God, *create* a ‘religion’ and exalt yourself over other people. Or, to make a ‘religion’ where *you exalt yourself* over other people. The whole basis of hierarchical churches is that—is it not? *Yes, it is!*] (the one who is abased, his day is coming; remember, it may come in a way that you would never expect): ...and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.” (vs 12-14).

Who was one man—a boxer—who went around and said, ‘I’m the greatest!’ they even made a movie about him. *Muhammad Ali!* How was he abased? Was he struck down and killed? *No! God just allowed the punishment of his sport*—where he had his head beaten to a pulp so many times—that

now he has Parkinson’s disease so bad that it’s hard for him to even function. I really feel sorry for him. I don’t say that in a way of condemnation. I say that in a way of observation that the Word of God is true and those who do so will be taken care of.

Was not Adolph Hitler taken care of? Did he not exalt himself? Remember when he came to Paris and signed the peace treaty and he jumped up and clicked his heels just before he went into the railcar where they signed the Armistice of 1918? What was his death? *Ignominious! Alone!*

So, you can take this verse and apply it many, many different ways—can’t you? Remember, what does the Scripture say, that you receive back into yourself the things that you’ve done in your life! Those things happen! Those things are automatic! God is there! God’s Word is true!

But, “...the one who humbles himself shall be exalted” (v 14). That’s why what’s so important, brethren, in this day an age is this: because we live in an age where we have everything physical that we could ever want, and you stop and think, we are deprived of nothing! As you probably have commented and others have commented, we truly live in a Laodicean age—don’t we? We’re rich and increased with goods. If you don’t believe that, compare your living standards with Afghanistan, and you’ll have a good comparison.

Also, concerning the Word of God, we have more knowledge and understanding of the Word of God than at any time in the entire history of the Church. We are living a time where, at the end of the age (Dan. 12) that even Daniel was not given the blessing to understand the things that he prophesied. He was told, ‘Go your way. At the time of the end, the wise shall understand, the wicked shall do wickedly and shall not understand.’ We’re living in that age. We’re living in that time. We have so much of the understanding of the Word of God that we need to be very, very careful that we do not treat it in the same way that we do the physical blessings that we have—that we just take them for course, we take them for granted—because there will be a greater penalty for doing that than putting physical things before God.

That’s why the book of Hebrews was written; to inspire you to want to maintain your relationship with God the Father, through Jesus Christ, because you have the greatest gift of High Priest and relationship with God the Father. There is nothing in this life *anywhere* that can be compared to it. That’s the whole purpose of it!

When we come to Christ, we have One Who knows. He knows everything about us, even the hairs on our head. He knows every thought if He needs to know it. Every thought that we’ve ever

thought is recorded somewhere in our brain—is it not? *Yes, it is!* God knows!

- This is why Christ came!
- This is why God divested Himself of being God to become a human being!

Not only could He be the perfect sacrifice, but also He could experience the full range of human existence. Therefore,

- He took upon Himself human nature.
- He took upon Himself the *law of sin and death!*
- He took upon Himself and subjected Himself to the temptations of Satan the devil

—did He not? *Yes!*

- and even the cruelty of the death of the cross inflicted by Satan the devil

—yes *He did!* Not only can He sympathize with our weaknesses, He can have compassion and understanding of our weaknesses.

Hebrews 4:15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” The *King James* says ‘infirmities’; but that sounds like ‘sickness’ today. It really means ‘weaknesses.’ Human nature has a lot of weaknesses. You end up doing a lot of things that you really don’t want to do. Every one of us has to do like Colombo does when he forgets something, he hits the top of his forehead with his hand. We all do our little Colombo’s—don’t we? *Yes!*

“...but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He was without sin*” (v 15). That wasn’t because He could not sin. That was because *He yielded to God!*

Hebrews 5:7: “Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*. Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience **from the things that He suffered**” (vs 7-8). Christ was without sin with great difficulty, but

- by the power of God’s Holy Spirit!
- by determination of serving God in the right way!
  - ✓ knowing His purpose
  - ✓ knowing why He was here
  - ✓ knowing that He was the Creator and Savior of mankind

*He was able to be without sin!* That’s really quite a thing. And the whole operation is summarized in 2-Cor. 5. God thinks the opposite of the way human beings think. God does things differently. No one would think that God would do this, and that’s why He did it.

2-Corinthians 5:21: “For He [God the Father] made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him.” He did become the spiritual personification of sin—did He not? *Have to have been!* He knew no sin!

Job certainly was not willing to admit that he was a sinner—was he? No! He looked at his behavior—how good he was compared to other men, and indeed, in the flesh he was righteous—but wasn’t willing to admit that he was a sinner. Do you think that Job would have taken the sins—he wouldn’t have anyway—of his three friends who were just sitting there and say, ‘I’m a miserable mess, go ahead and heap it on me. I’ll take all your sins’? *NO!* But *Christ did for the whole world!* So He was literally made sin, “...Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him” (v 21).

That’s a profound statement! That’s why we have the time to grow, to overcome, that we might be *made the righteousness of Him!* It’s a process, so that when God looks at us, when we come before Him, we need to always acknowledge that *we have nothing we didn’t receive!* Every single thing that we have—and this, brethren, is the key—

- to where we don’t get lifted up
- to where we don’t get lukewarm
- to where we don’t get complacent

—is when we realize that *everything we have has come from God!*

- everything physical
- everything spiritual

and yes, in the trials and difficulties that we go through

- that He might test us
- that He might prove us
- that He might give us the conflict so that we can overcome.

Christ had that conflict within Him, too; much more profoundly than we do. Then He was without sin!

Here’s how we are to approach God. Hebrews 4:16: “Therefore, we should come **with boldness** to the throne of grace...” Don’t be afraid! Don’t be fearful! If you have sinned, immediately run to the throne of God and repent! This also has the meaning of *being very frank with God*: coming to God, asking Him to hear, asking Him to help, and claim the promises of God. In claiming the promises of God it’s very important, if God has given the promise, on whom then does it depend for the fulfillment of that promise, according to His will? *It depends upon God to do it, and you to believe it!* That’s why we have to come to the point of really knowing and understanding and believing. That’s

they whole purpose of overcoming. When we doubt, we're like James said, 'just like the water tossed to and fro with the wind.' And water is very volatile

When I do my water therapy I get in the pool, no one has been there for a while and it's just perfectly still. The only thing that gives you a hint that there's some motions is when the heater pumps in the warm water. Then you get in and you start making waves and the water is completely subject to whatever force there is against it. Whether it's the wind, or whether it's the motion of something, it has no stability of itself unless it's frozen solid. It's so temporary that even that will melt and it's so temporary that it can evaporate and be missed in the air.

Can you imagine what kind of faith that people would have if they had faith like water? One time they'd be frozen cold, not believe God at all. Other times they'd be driven to and fro like the waves. Other times it would just sort of disappear like a mist. *No!* We have to come with **boldness!** Remember this: *If you know, God knows!* Never forget that! If Christ is in you, *He does know* when you sin! Yes, He does! That's why you have a portion of the Holy Spirit. He does know.

That's why we need to come frank "...boldness to the throne of grace..." [It is a gift! You don't deserve it! You don't come like the Pharisee and say, 'God, here I am, I'm so good.' Watch out! Job's punishment may be coming upon you!] ...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (v 16).

Let's see how this operates. We do have the things that we need to be doing, no question about it! No one can have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ unless they keep the commandments of God as Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments.' And the relationship that we have with God is a love relationship, a one-to-one relationship.

1-John 1:3: "That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ." That is a relationship.

I know that it is a tremendous and fantastic thing, brethren, but in the book of Hebrews God wants us to understand how great this is. Remember this: ***You have been given the blessing of the greatest thing that you can receive in this life with the Holy Spirit and access to God the Father and Jesus Christ!*** There is nothing greater! That means you have passed from death unto life. You have the gift of eternal life. You will live forever. There is no money; there is no position; there is no power on

this earth that can do that! Witness all the mummies of the Pharaohs, but they're still dead. Though they stowed it away in their pyramids, they didn't take it with them. Like the old saying when they're at the funeral: How much did he leave? they ask of the rich man they were burying, Someone says, *All of it!*

God has called us the 'lowly' of the world—which we are, lest we get exalted and think we're not—to give us this great blessing. He does it in such a way that He wants us to have fellowship with Him. He wants us to be in right standing with Him. He wants us to be in instant communication with Him at any time. That's our relationship and fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 4-6). Showing here that you cannot have part of the world and part of the Word of God. You cannot fellowship at the table of demons and the table of the Lord. That's walking in darkness.

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the light... [The commandments are a light and a lamp, His Word is a light, and Christ is the Light. Christ is the Word] ...as He is in the light..." How can we walk in the light as He is in the light? *That means we are coming to Christ continually!* Then we will be in the light as He is in the light. If we're walking in the light and we're covered by the grace of God and have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, are we not walking in the way that Christ walked? *Yes! No doubt about it!*

John 3:18: "The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged... [How many times have you heard people say, 'I don't believe in Christ.' Or the Muslims say they don't believe in Christ the Son of God. The Jews say they don't believe in Christ as the Son of God. They've already condemned themselves—haven't they? *Yes!*] ...because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." That's how powerful this is that we're dealing with here.

Verse 19: "And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil." They want to keep their own evil deeds. They want to have as much Christ as they can to make them feel good. Or, as much religion as they can to make them feel good, so that they can have a life which appears before men, to be righteous—which it's not. If it's righteousness before men it's

not righteous before God. "...their works were evil."

Verse 20: "For everyone who practices evil hates the light... [They don't like the light shining in on them—like going down into a dark sewer and you don't know that it's full of rats and rotten putrefaction until you turn the light on and they all scatter away.] ...and does not come to the light... [they don't want to come to Christ] ...so that his works may not be exposed; **but the one who practices the Truth...** [this is how you walk in the light as He is in the light—if we're practicing the Truth. What is Truth? *The Word of God is Truth!* We're to live by what? *Every Word of God!*] **...comes to the light...** [constantly coming to Christ; constantly coming to God on an ongoing basis—*everyday!*—constantly coming to the light.] **...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by the power of God"** (vs 20-21).

That's how we walk in the light as He is in the light. It's quite a marvelous thing! Therefore, let's understand how God wants us to come to Him with boldness. Here's how we are to do it.

1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [with God the Father and Jesus Christ and each other as brethren] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin." Not some of them, *ALL of them!* You have to understand, your individual sins. Christ died for you individually—did He not? *Yes, He did!* He didn't come to just forgive *some* of your sins and then will throw you into purgatory and will let your relatives pay the high cost of masses until the priest determines that you're out of purgatory. The question is, how does he know? Or, does he declare it after he produces enough money? No!

Christ came to forgive you *ALL* your sins, every one of them! ***Not one is left unforgiven!*** There's a way you can have all your sins put back upon you, but you don't want that to happen. Christ "...cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin... [that means we have not done sin or we don't have a sinful nature] ...we are deceiving ourselves... [Who is the only one without sin? *Christ!*] ...and the Truth is not in us." (vs 7-8).

Like most people say, 'Well, God knows my heart; I'm a good person; I go to church every Sunday.' Mention to them about the Sabbath and they get angry. When a little light is brought on them they're exposed, they don't like it. Or with the Muslims: 'I pray five times in the day; I bow to Mecca and I go to the mosque on Friday; aren't I good and righteous?' Or the Jews who reject Christ would say—even the Jew who is devout. What is a 'devout' Jew? *A non-believer!* We need to understand these things, brethren.

Here is how we come to the throne of God, v 9: "If we confess our own sins... [We have to do that; it doesn't say to a priest, because we're going to see that we have a High Priest Who is greater than any man could possibly be on this earth.] **...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**" That is a tremendous, marvelous blessing! We stand before God that way! Not because of what we do.

Let me just mention here something that is important: ***No law of any kind can make you justified before God!*** Because the function of law—in relationship to God—is to show what righteousness and sin is. The law of itself has absolutely no power to do anything except define for you the transgression of the law and sin. The law cannot forgive sin! The law cannot justify you from sin! No religion, no work of law, that any man can do can substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ! You are justified by Christ—His sacrifice, His blood and His alone—***but***, He requires your obedience.

"If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v 9). No Catholic priest, no Protestant minister, no imam of the Muslims or Buddhist priest or Hindu priest or shaman of any religion anywhere in the world can forgive your sins. Sin is against God and only God can forgive sins—through Christ—and that is the only means of forgiveness. People go through a confessional and the priest says your sins are forgiven, after you've done a hundred 'hail Marys' and two hundred 'our fathers.' You see how men do it? *They do it with a condition so they can hold you in their control.* Christ says they're all forgiven! But like He told the woman caught in the act of adultery—when no one came forth to condemn her because they didn't bring the man as well as the woman—'Where are those who condemn you? Does no man condemn you?' *No man, Lord.* 'Neither do I, go and sin no more.'

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." That's a pretty powerful thing if you make God a liar. How many people do that with the Word of God? How is that Protestants make God a liar? *By misinterpreting the Scriptures!*

Romans 9:30—there's a very instructive lesson here: "What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the* righteousness that *is* by faith. But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why? ***Because they did not seek it by faith, but by works of law...***" (vs 30-32). That becomes very important in interpreting Rom. 10:4. Also note that in the *King James* the insertion of the

definite article of *the works of the law* is not correct. Those two definite articles are not there in the Greek. Not having to do with the Ten Commandments, because God requires that we keep those. And even though we keep them, that doesn't forgive sin!

How many times have I mentioned the *Code of Jewish Law* where they have *works of law*? One of the works of law of Catholicism is after you confess your sins you do 'hail Mary' and 'our fathers' or you do other charitable works. Those are *works of law*. I don't know what *works of law* that the Muslims have, but I also know that they use beads for their prayers and things like this.

"...for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling [Christ]" (v 32). What happens? When you come to Christ you give up all your works, all of your works of righteousness. Even if they did follow everything that God said in the Old Testament, and of the rituals to be performed at the temple—even if they did all of those—they still cannot substitute for the sacrifice of Christ. That didn't get them beyond being justified in the flesh to the temple. Here we're talking about being justified to God the Father in heaven above. Remember the phrase: *works of law*.

Verse 33: "Exactly as it is written: 'Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.'"

Romans 10:1: "Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." That applies to all Israel—whether they are Jewish, of the ten tribes—which most of them are Protestant and Catholic. "...they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." We saw that happen with the 9/11 event—didn't we? *Yes!* They go on their way, but as soon as trouble comes they come back and they *mouth* the name of God. Yes, "...they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." They didn't repent! They didn't change! They came back and said how *good* they are. How much they deserve 'You help us, God.' "...not according to knowledge"—and that means not according to the knowledge of God and not according to the knowledge of Christ.

Verse 3: "For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness... [as we saw by *works of law*] ...have not submitted to the righteousness of God."

Now, the *King James Version* of v 4, is the biggest violation of the Protestants. Here's where they go to bring in a lawless grace: "For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes." Therefore, they proclaim there is no law

that you have to keep. All you have to do is believe in Christ and you are saved and anything you do after that time, as long as you feel good about it, that's just fine.

- That is making Christ a minister of sin!
- That is making the grace of God lawlessness!

That is not what that verse means. What is the subject? *Rom. 9:32, works of law*. And by extension, since it goes right on, v 4 should read:

Verse 4 (FV): "For Christ *is* the end of *works of law* for righteousness to everyone who believes." He ended the *works of law*. Everything else that we have covered in the *Code of Jewish Law*, all the human traditions which the Jews follow, all the human traditions of the Catholics, the Orthodox, the Protestants, the Muslims, the Hindus and the Buddhists. Because we live in a diverse society, we've got to include all of them. God's controversy is not just with the Protestants and Catholics, it's with the whole human race and all of their religions. And it is with the harlot Babylon, the mother of harlots and all of her daughters. They're all the religions of this world.

You have to include all of them. If a person comes to Christ who has been in the steep of satanic superstition and religion and the darkness of whatever country they may live in—whether it be in the rain forest of Brazil or Africa or Southeast Asia, whatever it may be—they have to give up their *works of law* or their own righteousness or superstition.

Let me give you an example of how some people do today: People are superstitious so they have little idols and crucifixes. They used to have the so-called St. Christopher, because he was to protect you. Then the Vatican declared that Christopher was not a saint. What's going to happen to all those people who were dependent on him. So, if you have a little statue or idol or cross on the front of your car, on the dashboard, thinking that God is going to protect you because you have it, that's a *work of law*. That is a superstition. That is an idol and it doesn't come from God.

Rather, if you want to be protected while you're traveling, pray in belief to God the Father and Jesus Christ that They will place the angels about you when you travel, and have faith when you drive and you'll be fine. The idol isn't going to do anything. Is the idol going to stop a car that comes smashing into you? Is your rosary, hung around the rearview mirror, going to give you any greater protection because there's superstition there? NO! Those are *works of law*! Just like the Hindu men who wear turbans; they have long hair and that's one of their *works of law*. God says it's 'a shame for men



to have long hair.’ Look what happened when some people retaliated against someone with a turban after 9/11. Boy! Indignation and wrath—right? Because it’s against one of their *works of law*. Listen, all the stupid religious practices by men are nothing more than *works of law*. People walk into a Catholic cathedral and they have to genuflect before the idol because ‘Christ is in the bread.’ NO! Christ is in heaven! Christ didn’t come to do away with the laws and commandments of God! No way!

What did He say, Matthew 5:17: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.” So, every Protestant minister, or every minister who goes here to Rom. 10:4 and proclaims that Christ ended the law and we don’t have to keep the commandments is a liar! That’s not what it means. It means that Christ brought an end to the *works of law* for righteousness. What were they doing? *They weren’t seeking the righteousness of God* and being ignorant of that through Christ. If you don’t believe in Christ you have to have some religion, so you create your own.

Romans 10:3: “For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” That’s a very profound thing, brethren. You need to understand that. The only way you have forgiveness of sin is through Christ—that’s it!

- Will He forgive you over and over again? *Yes! As many times as you repent and ask Him to forgive you!*
- What if you have weakness that just drags you down?
- Will He forgive you? *Yes!*
- Does He understand the weakness? *Yes!*
- Does He know it’s a temptation? *Yes!*
- Does He throw you out, or kick you out, because of it? *No!*
- Does He want to punish you because of it? *No, if you repent and Sincerely ask God to give you the strength, through His Holy Spirit, to overcome!*

If you do that continually, lo, I guarantee you the day will come that you will say to yourself: ‘Thank you, God, I have overcome it.’ You can be guaranteed that will happen.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [No, we don’t want to sin!] ...And yet, if anyone does sin... [which we will] ...we have an Advocate... [Our great High Priest that is passed into heaven is *advocating*. Not condemning! Not finger-pointing! *Advocating!*] ...with the Father... [the Sovereign God of the whole universe] ...—Jesus Christ *the*

Righteous—and He is *the* propitiation... [meaning the *continual* Source of forgiveness or mercy seat] ...for our sins... [now, lest we get conceited he writes the following]: ...and not for our sins only, **but also for the sins of the whole world**” (vs 1-2).

And of course then, we know in God’s plan, as it unfolds through the Holy Days, how He’s going to bring it to the world. It’s a marvelous plan, brethren. Just realize how few really understand it. It’s the most precious, greatest knowledge you can have.

He makes it very clear, v 3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him... [God wants you *to know* that you know Him; He doesn’t want you to be in doubt. He wants you *to know* that you know. If you really have doubts then what you need to do is take it to God and say, ‘God, I believe, but help my unbelief.’ He will help you.] ...**if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4). It sure shows there are a lot of liars out there—right? *Yes, indeed!*

Here’s our obligation, v 5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [Live by every Word of God! Live by every Word of Christ!] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected....” That’s the whole goal, brethren, of:

- growing
- overcoming
- confessing sin
- being cleansed from all unrighteousness

“...By this *means*... [by the process of perfection] ...we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 5-6).

Now, *show me one place* in the New Testament or in the Gospels

- where Christ broke one command
- where Christ broke the Sabbath
- where Christ broke the Holy Days
- where Christ transgressed any commandment of God

He didn’t, did He? *No!* So therefore, what is our obligation? He is obligated! The Greek means it is ‘*obligatory* for you to walk as He walked.’ We do that! That’s why we have to have the throne of grace. That’s why we have to go before the throne of grace, receive the mercy, forgiveness and kindness that comes from God. That’s how you maintain your relationship with Him.

Get out your concordance and go through the Psalms and look up all things where the word ‘hear’ is: ‘hear Me’; come to God—and sometimes in coming in boldness toward God you just have to say,

‘God, hear me’—like David did. Just look up all of those in the Psalms and I think that will really help you understand how you need to come to God to pray, to understand the things that are there.

Here is the comparison, Hebrews 5. We have the comparison which is really quite profound, quite good. We’re talking about the old office of the high priest. Hebrews 5:1: “For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance... [*gently* in an understanding way, but not as compared to Christ Who sympathizes and has compassion with us.] ...and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly *as he does* for the people” (vs 1-3).

And you can read of that in the books of Leviticus, Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. You can see that he has to give those sacrifices, especially on the Day of Atonement. He has to offer all those sacrifices before he can dare enter into the Holy of Holies.

Verse 4: “Now no man takes the honor *of the high priesthood* upon himself... [We have combined with this the high priesthood. He’s to act on behalf of the people. And because he has weaknesses and sins, he has his own humility—doesn’t he? *Yes!*] ...but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*.”

That’s why God put it by bloodline; to end all arguments. Remember Numb. 12 where they had the rebellion of Korah. They said, ‘Who are you to set yourself up, Moses and Aaron, to be rulers over us?’ *Well, God set it up by bloodline to end the dispute!* Any man that would come in there would be encompassed with his own weaknesses and sin—wouldn’t he? So, God ended the debate! There was no oath that was given; it was by appointment.

Christ we look at and it starts out here, v 5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’.... [In other words, God did it by proclamation; by begetting.] ...Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’... [Now we have for the very first time the introduction of Christ as High Priest] ...according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 5-6) The order of Melchisedec’s priesthood was so much greater, and the whole purpose of the rest of the book of Hebrews is to show how much greater the priesthood of Christ in the order of Melchisedec was than the order of Aaron.

Verse 7 shows Christ humiliation; Christ Who gave up being God to become a human being to suffer these things. No priest on earth ever suffered these things. That’s why we have a greater High Priest. “Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*. Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered” (vs 7-8). He understands how hard and difficult it was for human beings.

Verse 9: “And having been perfected...” As a human being, then He was perfected as High Priest; fighting off all the sins; overcoming all the flesh; overcoming Satan the devil. You go back and you read in the Old Testament, even David—who was a man after God’s own heart—who provoked him to number Israel? *Satan did!* Was he subject weakness and sin? *Yes, he was!* Was he a bloody man? *Yes, he was!* Christ then, “...having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 9-10). That’s really quite a thing—isn’t it?

Let’s go back to Psalm 110:1, and let’s see where this is given. It’s really quite a very interesting Psalm: “The LORD said unto my Lord... [Jehovah says to Adonai—there’s only one vowel point difference between Jehovah and Adonai, so it would not be wrong to say, ‘the Lord [Jehovah] said to my Jehovah] ...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’” Here we have the revelation of the Father. There are very few revelations of the Father in the Old Testament. Here’s one of them.

Remember when the Pharisees were confronting Jesus and Jesus said, ‘I want to ask you a question: Who is the Christ?’ *The Son of David!* ‘Tell Me, how is it then that David calls Him *LORD* if He is the Son?’ They couldn’t figure it out, because they didn’t understand the Scriptures. This is a prophecy. The first LORD is the Father; the second one is the Son.’ Let’s also ask, Who was David’s Lord? Was it another man? *NO!* It was God! “...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’”

We have a reference of this in 1-Corinthians 15:23, and here we have this spoken of by Christ: “But each in his own order: Christ *the* firstfruit; then, those who are Christ’s at His coming. Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet....

[That's taken right from Psa. 110—isn't it? *Yes!*] ...*The last enemy to be destroyed is death.* For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who put all things in subjection under Him. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him, so that God may be all in all" (vs 23-28).

That's why the New Testament greater than the Old Testament. You need both of them, no question about it, but the New Testament is greater than the Old testament because the New Testament interprets the Old Testament, and shows the fulfillment of the things in the Old Testament.

Psalm 110:4: "The LORD has sworn and will not repent, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.'.... [a prophecy of Christ] ...The LORD at Your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.... [the second coming of Christ] ...He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill them with dead bodies... [the seven last plagues] ...He shall shatter chief men over the broad earth. He shall drink of the brook by the way; therefore He shall lift up the head" (vs 4-7). Showing the fulfillment of the coming Kingdom of God. That's quite a thing—isn't it? After the order of Melchisedec. This is the first place that that is mentioned.

It's important for us, brethren, to understand and realize that that's the kind of Priest that we have. Let's also see something else that's important, that Christ did not glorify Himself to make Himself a priest. He didn't come to do His own will, but the *will of the Father* that sent Him.

John 5:19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself... [He didn't do one thing contrary to the *will and purpose and leading* of the Holy Spirit of God the Father.] ...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder'" (vs 19-20).

Verse 30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself... [That's a profound statement—isn't it? *Yes, it is!*] ...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me. If I bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true" (vs 30-31). He didn't come to glorify Himself. He asked the Father to glorify Him with the glory that He had with Him before the world was. That means *before the world existed!* John 17:4: "I have glorified You on the

earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed" (vs 4-5). So, He didn't seek to glorify Himself. He didn't seek to exalt Himself.

You read of all the other mythical gods of the Greeks and the other pagans, and every one of those counterfeit, 'divine' births as it were, were of men who bragged on their abilities because they were conceived of god.

- Christ did not!
- He didn't glorify Himself!
- He did not exalt Himself!
- But, He did the will of God!

***That's why He is designated as a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 12:1-12
- 2) Hebrews 4:14-15
- 3) Luke 18:9-14
- 4) Hebrews 4:15
- 5) Hebrews 5:7-8
- 6) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 7) Hebrews 4:16
- 8) 1 John 1:3-7
- 9) John 3:18-21
- 10) 1 John 1:7-10
- 11) Romans 9:30-33
- 12) Romans 10:1-4
- 13) Matthew 5:17
- 14) Romans 10:3
- 15) 1 John 2:1-6
- 16) Hebrews 5:1-10
- 17) Psalm 110:1
- 18) 1 Corinthians 15:23-28
- 19) Psalm 110:4-7
- 20) John 5:19-20, 30-31
- 21) John 17:4-5

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 16
- Revelation 2, 3
- Job 31:1
- Numbers 12

#### Also referenced: Books:

- Vatican Assassin by Mike Luoma
- My 50 Years in the Church of Rome by Charles Chiniqy
- Code of Jewish Law by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman Goldin

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# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIV

Fred R. Coulter—May 11, 2002

Hebrews is one the most important books in the New Testament. Let me just review a couple of things here that are very important for us to realize. Let's cover concerning the Sabbath:

- The Sabbath is a point of belief
- The Sabbath is a point of turning from false Christianity to true Christianity

That is the seventh day of the week called 'Saturday' today.

Hebrews 4:9: "There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping ['Sabbatismos'] for the people of God." We went into great detail concerning that. Let's understand something: It does not say Sabbath-keeping for the Jews. The Jews today claim that Sabbath is only for the Jews not for anyone else. Yet, we find in the Bible that that is not true. We find that the Bible tells us and shows us that the Sabbath, beginning in Genesis, *was made for man*, according to what Christ said there in Mark 2:27.

The Sabbath commandment itself does include the 'stranger.' Exodus 20:8: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy." Let's just reiterate and review a few things here that are very important for us to understand.

1. Only God can make something Holy; man cannot declare anything Holy
2. Once it is made Holy it is to be kept Holy

Verse 9: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, **nor the stranger** within your gates.... [The whole reason for it is so that we understand]: ...for *in* six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it" (vs 9-11). Those who refuse to keep the Sabbath are rejecting what God has blessed.

Let's come to the book of Isaiah and let's see something very important also concerning 'strangers.' This is an important verse because this is a prophecy of the return of Christ. This tells us what God desires at the time that Christ returns. Isaiah 56:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'Keep justice and do righteousness; for My salvation *is* near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed *is* the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it... [The Protestants would say, cursed is the one who keeps the Sabbath; but that is not true! God says blessed—who are you going to believe? God?

or man?]: ...who keeps the Sabbath from profaning it; and keeps his hand from doing any evil.' And do not let the son of the stranger, who has joined himself to the LORD..." (vs 1-3).

The reason that I'm covering this is because you could say that Exo. 20—within your gate—could mean within your house, if you're talking about an individual, or within your country if you're talking about a country. Here, in Isa. 56, there is no restriction to it.

Verse 3: "...the stranger, who has joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, 'The LORD has utterly separated me from His people.' And do not let the eunuch say, 'Behold, I *am* a dry tree.'" Why would a stranger say you've "...utterly separated me from His people...."? *Because the Sabbath separates from the practices of the Gentiles!*

Verse 4: "For thus says the LORD, 'To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; even to them will I give within My house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, who join themselves to the LORD to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, everyone who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and takes hold of My covenant'" (vs 4-6). That's very important. We have two things here:

1. This talks about the Sabbath at the end-time, just before Christ returns.
2. It talks about the 'strangers' who join themselves to the Lord, not having to do with becoming a proselyte citizen of Israel, or a proselyte citizen of Judaism.

There's something else we need to understand concerning the Sabbath. The Sabbath's function, though it is a law—you shall remember the Sabbath to keep it—is of grace and faith. It takes *faith* to keep the Sabbath, and God blesses you with *His grace* for keeping the Sabbath. How does He bless you with His grace?

1. by His presence
2. by His Spirit
3. by His blessings

Any blessings you get from God are then graces, because they are a gift. As I mentioned before, it takes no faith to keep Sunday. It takes no grace to keep Sunday. You can go anytime you choose. You can go to any church you want to. You can follow any 'religion' you want to that keeps Sunday, and *it*

*requires no faith!* It requires *faith* to not work on the Sabbath! That's what's so important. *You have to believe God!*

Hebrews 4:10: "For the one who has entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his works... [You enter into the *rest of the Sabbath*] ...just as God *did* from His own *works*.... [when He rested on the Sabbath] ...We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest... [*The rest of the Sabbath*. Some people would like to say that means 'entering into the Kingdom of God.' Well, let me just tell you, you're not going to get into the Kingdom of God at the return of Christ if you're not keeping the Sabbath.] ...lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience [disbelief]" (vs 10-11). What was it that they disbelieved? *The Sabbath!* What was it that they did not follow? *The ways of God!* So they fell.

Today we are in what you would call the 'opinion' mode and the 'discussion' mode. Remember that every single individual's opinion is equal in belief and force to everybody else's opinion. That's why you have talk radio, discussion panels on television and so forth. However, when it comes to the Word of God, it is not an opinion. That's what's important to remember. People can have all the opinions they want to about the Word of God and it means nothing to God. All their opinions notwithstanding, the Word of God is not going to change for them, and *God is not going to change His laws or His commandments for them!* Here's what Hebrews says the Word of God is:

Verse 12: "For the Word of God *is* living..." That's what Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.' That's what's so important. That means that in any age and at any time, as long as the earth exists—Jesus said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. Think not that I've come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I've come to fulfill. For verily, heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the Law shall pass away.' Therefore,

- it is living
- it is spiritually based
- it applies to all human beings

—at all times, everywhere in the world. That's the power behind the Law of God. Whenever you watch any of these documentaries on forgotten or lost civilizations of the world where they go out into the Amazon or into the deep, dark jungles of the various countries of the world, and they show how these people live. If you watch any of those—any documentary about any country or religion—do this: Analyze it from the point of view of how many of the commandments of God do they keep.

God will judge all the nations of the world

based upon how they keep the commandments of God. Obviously, since they are cut off from God, then He is going to look to the inner relations of human relations as a primary thing. When we come to the case of the Jews, we are dealing in an entirely different proposition; that is this: Those Jews who have rejected Christ also have put themselves into a position that they are adversaries of Christ. Their keeping of the commandments for them has very little affect. The truth is they do not keep the commandments of God, rather they keep the traditions. So, they have a double, two-edged sword against them. Jesus said, 'The one who believes Me, believes in the One Who sent Me. And the one who rejects Me, rejects the One Who sent Me.'

When you come to that, that's another thing that needs to be understood, and that's why all down through history, the Jews had always had problems getting along with anybody else in the world. That's why they do not have the blessing of God upon them. All you need to do is look at the situation in the Middle East today and understand that that is true. They are blinded and hard-hearted, both the Palestinians and the Jews, and they are at each other's throats and it isn't going to stop until there's more killing and death. That's because both of them live by the sword and they're going to die by the sword. That's exactly what the Word of God says.

The Word of God has another aspect of it, which is very important for us to understand, v 12: "...is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart." Only book in the world that does that. When we understand that the Word of God also means Christ. 'In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God...' This doubly compounds everything.

Verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight... [no one's going to hide anything from God] ...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account." Everyone is going to come before the judgment seat of God—correct? We're going to have to give an account. Not only that, this means that when we are confronted with the fact of sin and death and the human condition, it also tells us the only way out of this is through Christ. God has not given His Word just to condemn. God has given His Word, also, to show that there is a way out through Christ for grace.

That's why right after this point, it begins from here on a whole new phase in the book of Hebrews, which is it begins to introduce Christ as High Priest. He was a unique High Priest Who also fulfills not only the priesthood, but also being

King—which is a very important thing to understand.

Verse 14: “Having therefore a **great High Priest**... [not just an ordinary high priest; not like a man] ...*Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 14-16).

This tells us an awful lot here. Let’s first of all understand very profound in v 15: “For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” In the Greek this is a double negative. When you have a double negative, it is very emphatic, meaning that we have a High Priest Who does sympathize/empathize with our weaknesses—and we will see why, because of what He did.

To sympathize means more than just empathy or compassion. It means experiential; He experienced everything that all human beings go through. That’s why it’s so profound and important that we understand that and that we realize that now God has the absolute best system in place with Christ being the High Priest at the right hand of God. “...but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness...” (v 15).

Let’s go to Romans 8:1; let’s see something very important. This also ties in with our relationship with God through Jesus Christ: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit.” That’s important to really grasp. There is no condemnation. If you have God’s Spirit and if you are walking in the way of God, God knows you’re going to sin, because you have the *law of sin and death* within you. But God does not condemn you for that because of the grace that He has given, which does not mean it gives us license to go out and sin because we have this available to us. It means that it helps us draw close to God so we can

- change
- grow
- overcome
- walk in the Spirit

Verse 2: “Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death.” Which Paul says in Heb. 7 is ‘in his members.’ In other words, conversion becomes a *work*. Conversion is a change, which is also a process. That’s why we are to grow and overcome

and it takes time to do it. So, here’s what God did, v 3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do...”

1. No law can forgive sin!
2. No law can justify!

Justify means to be put in right standing with God the Father in heaven above. The function of law is to show what sin is and to show, by obedience to *the* Law, how we are to walk. It does not do any forgiving; it does not do any justifying, because that

- is the operation of Christ Who is our High Priest
- it is the operation of forgiveness, which is a judgment by God
- it is an operation of grace, which does not come by law
- it is an operation of the Spirit

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh... [all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God—so what did God do?] ...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh... [You can read in *the Christian Passover* book The Nature of God and The Nature of Man, and the sermon: *What Kind of Human Nature Did Jesus Have?* If He did not have the exact same kind of human nature that we have, His temptations would have been meaningless.] (so God)...sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh... [the Greek is very unusual, it says ‘in the likeness of sin of flesh.’ It’s very unusual the way it’s put there.] ...and for sin... [this can also mean a *sacrifice* for sin] ...condemned sin in the flesh.”

That’s why we have a High Priest Who can sympathize with every one of our feelings, because He was tempted in every way that we are, yet, without sin. Therefore, this is the whole operation of Christ as High Priest. When we go to God, then we confess our weaknesses. When we say this temptation has come upon us, He knows, He understands—He’s been through it. And that is necessary for Him to be High Priest. Not only can He sympathize with our weaknesses, but this means He has a shared experience in it.

- He knows what it’s like to be tempted
- He knows what it’s like to be confronted with sin
- He knows what it’s like to have the *law of sin and death* within Him
- He had to fight that all of His life

Another thing that is important in the relationship concerning Christ being High Priest, with Him being in heaven. You don’t have to go to a temple. You don’t have to wait to go to Jerusalem. You don’t have to wait to go to Mecca. You don’t have to wait to go to wherever the Hindus have or the Buddhist have. You can have contact with God and receive

forgiveness immediately upon repentance. That's why He is there! That's why He was made in the same likeness and so forth.

Let's understand that the whole book of Hebrews is showing the greatness of Christ. Remember how it started out? Christ was the Son of God and He spoke to us. We've got all those words recorded. That's why we have the New Testament. Not just a prophet, not just a man, but the Son of God, Who was God! Then we find out where it talks about in John 1 that the Word was made flesh, we find it here in Heb. 2.

Let's see what Jesus went through. Let's understand that God came to the earth as a human being, not as God; talked to His creation. We have the essential words of salvation in the New Testament. But here is the whole point of understanding why we have a High Priest Who can sympathize and feel and understand the things that we go through.

Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death**... [that's what it is in the Greek, meaning it was a profound, one death for all] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*... [showing the magnitude of what God has done. This is why rejecting Christ becomes such a terrible, terrible sin and brings, automatically, curses upon anyone who does.] ...in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs 9-10). All the sufferings that Jesus went through! He *knew* that He was going to go through them! He *knew* what He was going to suffer!

Verse 14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels... [He was made lower than the angels] ...but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham" (vs 14-16). Of course, that is if you are Christ's then you are the seed of Abraham.

"For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything... [Therefore, you cannot have God coming down here, appearing to be in the flesh, but not be in the flesh. You cannot have Docetism, where it's just a spirit apparition that looks like flesh. That's what John was writing about in 1-John 4. He says, that 'if any confess not that Jesus has come in the flesh, he is

antichrist.' It was so profound what God did. So, in *everything* He was made like His brethren.] ...that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest..." (vs 17). This is the first time that Paul mentions 'High Priest' in the book of Hebrews. When we get into finishing chapter four and on in to chapter five clear up to the end of chapter ten, we are talking about the function of the Priesthood of Christ.

"...that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people.... ['propitiation' means *continual atoning; continually coming to God as a Source of help, forgiveness and grace!*] ...For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (vs 17-18).

As we saw in Heb. 3, we have the comparison between Christ and Moses, and how much greater Christ was than Moses. Those who reject Christ, as the Jews have said, 'We follow Moses.' Well, that creates problems. Moses was not God in the flesh. It's very interesting, those who do not believe that Jesus was God before He came to the earth, but He was just an ordinary human being, then Moses could have been the man when you stop and think of it—but he wasn't!

Hebrews 4:16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace... [Don't be afraid! God loves you. He has called you! Mercy and grace are functions of God's love, and that's why we have to understand: Not only in our loving God, but God loves us and gave Himself up for us! We should come with boldness! It also means there that we should come with frankness. In other words, knowing Christ *knows everything* and we're laid bare before Him and we come before God in that way.] ...so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Of course, all of these things are reflective upon how much we need Christ and how much we need Him in everything that we do. Here's the important thing concerning it, and why it is absolutely the best system that can be. Man cannot devise a better system. God devised the best system. You come before the throne of grace. How do you do that? Understand this: We have immediate access to God! **Immediate access!** Anyone who will repent to God will receive forgiveness upon that repentance. We need to understand that. Even people in the world that don't know Christ, IF they repent, God will forgive them in the letter. But for those who have the Spirit of God, here is what we have:

Hebrews 10:14: "For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.... [It is a process—being sanctified or being made Holy] ...And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said..."

(vs 14-15). This is the covenant that we are in;

- this is why our relationship with God is so profound and important
- this is why there is no turning back on it
- this is why when we enter into the baptismal covenant, we are immersed in water because it is symbolic of death

Verse 16: “‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the* Lord. ‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds...’” So the whole process of growing and overcoming is to have the laws written into our hearts and inscribed into our minds. That, through the Spirit of God, produces the mind of Christ, as Paul said, ‘Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.’ So this then is how conversion takes place. This is why we need to come boldly before the throne. This is why we need the help of the Holy Spirit continuously, because this is what God is doing.

Now then, here’s another promise, when your repent your sins are forgiven. You get up off your knees and you say, ‘I wonder if God has forgiven me.’ Well then, you’re doubting God. Here’s a promise, v 17: “‘...their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.’” That’s profound.

God does not want us to abuse it by going out and willfully sinning; obviously not. But this is the best system; this is the greatest system short of the rule of the Kingdom of God on earth with Christ and all the saints. We have direct access to God the Father at any time—immediate access by saying, ‘Our Father.’ You don’t get a busy signal. No one has come and told me: ‘I’ve tried praying, but I got a busy signal.’ No! And the phone can’t be disconnected. You’re not relying on an orbiting satellite like the cell phone that can be knocked out. You have direct access to God who lives forever; Christ at His right hand Who’s our High Priest.

Verse 18: “Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin.” That means animal sacrifices. What greater thing could man do? *Nothing!* If God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in heaven above forgives your sin, or sins, then what good is an animal sacrifice? *None! It’s worthless!* It accomplishes nothing!

Verse 19: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus... [It has to be through Christ, His blood, His priesthood, His suffering and all of that.] ... by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having a great High Priest* over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a

wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (vs 19-23).

This reminds me of the incident where the disciples couldn’t cast the demon out of the young son, and the father said, ‘I came to Your disciples, they couldn’t cast them out.’ And Jesus said, ‘Come here. How long will I have to deal with a faithless and perverse generation? All things are possible to him who believes.’ The man said, ‘I believe, help my unbelief!’ This is why it’s very important that “...He Who promised *is* faithful” (v 23).

- His faithfulness never waivers, because He is God!
- It never fails, because He’s our High Priest!

If we go to God and we have a lack of faith, the first thing to do is confess our faithlessness and say, ‘God, help my unbelief.’ This is why faith comes by the ‘hearing of the Word’; that’s why we need Sabbath services. So:

- you can *hear* the Word
- you can *read* the Word
- you can *study* the Word
- you can *believe and know* the Word

Therefore, when we come to God, we can have the faith, and we are to have the faith of Christ. So, *if* He is faithful, and we are to have Christ’s faith, that’s a tremendous thing!

Let’s come to Galatians, the second chapter, and let’s see how this operation works. This was the whole basis of Galatians 2:12: “For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party.” Following a law of Judaism—it was not a Law of God—a manmade law. It was not a law to be written in their hearts and minds, as the laws and commandments of God are to be in ours. It was something that Christ came to break. That’s why it is put here, and I don’t think we understand how much in jeopardy that Peter and those from James put the ministry of Paul in, by coming down and doing this; then the other preachers out there going to the churches in Galatia and doing the same thing.

It’s quite a thing. So, Galatians 2 tells an awful lot here. Verse 15: “We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by **works of law**... [the Jews felt that by separating themselves from Gentiles—because they considered Gentiles unclean or common—therefore, they were in better standing, or justified before God by that action of separating



themselves. That is a *work of law!*] ...man is not justified by **works of law**, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order **that we might be justified by the faith of Christ...** [that's what justifies us] ...and not by works of law; **because by works of law shall no flesh be justified**" (vs 15-16).

Any work of any law cannot substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sin. If you keep Sunday—which is a work of law—you are not justified before God! That doesn't make you better. Most Protestants believe it does. You are not justified if you keep the Sabbath—even though the Sabbath is required—because the Sabbath is not the sacrifice of Christ. So, **no work of any law can justify you to God!** It is an action that is spiritual. It is an action by done by

1. you repenting
2. God forgiving

That is not a law! That is *an operation of faith* and *an operation of the heart!*

Verse 17: "Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ..."—which we all are; this is very profound and very interesting, and we can just put in there: 'at a different way to it'—which then becomes a *work of law*, of example:

- confessing to a priest, doing 'hail Marys' or 'our fathers'
- as the Buddhists going to the sacred city in Tibet and on the way they take so many steps and pray, then they fall down on their knees and prostrate themselves flat on the ground, get up and say a prayer, take so many steps and fall down on their knees and flat on their face and stretch themselves out on the pavement and say a prayer and get up do this all the way to the Buddha temple.

That is a *work of law!* Anything that you add to the process of justification as defined in the Bible, you are creating a *work of law!* When you create a *work of law* then you are sinning. Why are you sinning? *Because you say that what you've added to it makes it better than what God has provided!*

That's why Paul says, v 17: "...and we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!.... [Any sin that we do. *God is not the minister of sin!*] ...For if I build again those things that I destroyed... [Paul is talking about Judaism] ...I am making myself a transgressor" (vs 17-18).

- God has nothing to do with it.
- Christ is not compelling it.
- He is not requiring it.

Verse 19: "For I, through law... [the wages of sin is death] ...died to law... [seeking to do it on his own] ...in order that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live.... [That's how we need to look at our lives before God—*jointly crucified with Christ*] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me...." (vs 19-20). That is why the whole process of the New Covenant and New Testament is so profound and important. It is not an exterior religion out here that has nothing to do with God. It is Christ in you. It is interior with the Holy Spirit, and it is of the heart and it is of your whole being.

"I have been [jointly] crucified with Christ, yet I live. For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, **I live by faith**—that *very faith* of the Son of God.... [It is Christ's own faith. Why is that? What are some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. *Faith, love, hope, joy—all the fruits of the Holy Spirit!* Faith is something that is given by Christ. You live by that faith which comes from the Son of God.] ...Who loved me... [this ties right in with what we are dealing with in Heb. 4-5.] ...and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if **righteousness** is through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain" (vs 20-21). Righteous means the *ultimate* righteousness. The *ultimate* righteousness is right standing with God; counted righteous before God. You can't have any greater righteousness in this life than being in *right standing with God!*

Commandment-keeping without the Holy Spirit of God, without the justification of Christ, is not as great as righteousness as the ultimate righteousness of being put in right standing with God. It says in Palm 119:172: "...all Your commandments are righteousness." That is true. There is a righteousness of the law. That is true! But this is not the righteousness that we are talking about. We're talking about the righteousness which puts you in right standing with God the Father in heaven above

- through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- by the forgiveness of sin
- through the operation of grace.

That's what we're talking about here in Gal. 2 and in Heb. 4. Let's understand something here that is really important for us to realize. This is why Heb. 4:16 is so profound and important. Since God has done this:

- Christ has died for your sins
- He's the *ultimate* sacrifice
- He's the *ultimate* High Priest in heaven right now
- He is there as the *propitiation* for our sins
- He is there to *intercede* for us
- He is there to *bring forgiveness* from God

the Father

That's why we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, and that's why we should do so immediately. We have direct access!

Hebrews 5 begins by showing the comparison between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood which is now going to be called *of the order of Melchisedec*.

Hebrews 5:1-6: "For... [because it connects, meaning a comparison] ...every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God... [talking about the temple service and everything that God ordered] ...in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people. Now no man takes the honor *of the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*. In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.' Even as He also says in another *place*, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec'" (vs 1-6).

Now we have the first place in the book of Hebrews where the priesthood of Christ is connected with Melchisedec. Let's go back and look again at the verses leading up to this.

Verse 2: "...he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance..." He [the ordinary high priest (v 1)] is not required, nor does He have the capacity to sympathize on an experiential way the same way that Christ did. It's impossible! He is only required to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance. Those who sin deliberately, willfully, what was the penalty for them? *Death!* There was no sacrifice for blood guiltiness. The actual sacrifice was the death of the person. Their blood was required. It's completely different here. You have two categories of sin:

1. those in ignorance
2. those who have been led astray

We do the same thing today, but now we have a High Priest who understands. The human high priest, since he himself also has many weaknesses. This, in a sense, is to bring a humility to the high priest, that he also is human and encompassed with weaknesses. Also the same thing for those who are ministers today. They are encompassed with weaknesses, but their function is

different than a priest. They do not offer sacrifices. They offer prayers. They do not stand between God and the people, they point people to the High Priest in heaven above—Christ and God.

Whereas the high priest, under the system that God gave of the Old Covenant, stood between the people and God. We won't get into a great detail concerning this because we'll cover that in later chapters. What was the humility of Christ? Christ's humility was entirely different. The humility of the human high priest was that he had human weaknesses like everyone else. So therefore, he was not exalting himself over the people. He also had to offer the same sacrifices—and this is especially noted on the Day of Atonement.

Let's come back to Leviticus 16, let's see what he had to do before he could go in and make any sacrifice for the people. Also, they had a lot of rules that they had to follow. To show the complete difference between the priesthood of the Old Testament and the priesthood of the New Testament. Leviticus 16:2: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Speak to Aaron your brother, that he does not come at all times into the sanctuary within the veil before the mercy seat, which is on the ark, so that he does not die, for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.'"

What do we have today? We can, at any time, immediately have access to God the Father through Jesus Christ in heaven above—any time! So, here's a restriction. Common people could not even have a clue as to what was on the inside of the temple, except what they were told. They couldn't go into the Holy part; they couldn't go into the Holy of Holies; they couldn't offer sacrifices, and so forth.

Verse 3: "'Aaron shall come into the sanctuary this way... [Here's what he was to do, because of his weakness, because of his human nature, because of the limitation that he is encompassed with he shall come]: ...with a young bull, for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. He shall put on the Holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches on his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen miter he shall be dressed. *These are* Holy garments. And he shall wash his flesh in water and put them on. And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering'" (vs 3-5). Then it goes on to show what he should do with all of the offerings that he was to offer.

Verse 11: "'And Aaron shall bring the young bull of the sin offering which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the young bull of the sin offering which is for himself. And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar before

the LORD, and his hands full of fragrant incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil” (vs 11-12). Then what he was to do was to put in the incense on the coals.

When he went into the Holy of Holies, it was absolutely pitched dark, couldn’t see anything. This must have been quite a profound experience. Later they had this: The Jews tied a rope around the waist of the high priest. Since only the high priest could go in there, the question was: What if he died? How are we going to get him out? So they tied this rope around him, so if he didn’t come out they could pull him out. This also illustrated something very profound: They had very limited access to God. Only one day of the year—the Day of Atonement—could the high priest go into the Holy of Holies. It was pitch black and he had to take in the censor of coals and incense and he had to sprinkle the incense on there. So, you had the smoke, you had the smell, you had all of this so it was absolutely impossible to see anything in there.

Spiritually, God put His presence there! But they couldn’t see God, because no man has seen God. That’s why Christ was sent. When it talks about that he had to offer sacrifices for himself and for his own weaknesses, this is what it’s talking about, and in particularly concerning the Day of Atonement. See the difference? Paul is going through this to help us establish the superiority of Christ as our High Priest and help pave the way for the kind of worship that God wanted when the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed.

Hebrews 5:4: “Now no man takes the honor of the high priesthood...” Remember what happened. I tell you, that’s quite an account back in Num. 16] ...upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*.” This shows us what happened when Korah and different ones wanted to take over the priesthood. They came upon it with the same reason that human beings do with each other: *you’re no better than me*.

Numbers 16:1: “Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi... [so he was a Levite] ...took both Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben; even they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the assembly, chosen men of the congregation, men who were well-known.... [Here we have an official committee.] ...And they gathered themselves against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, ‘*You take too much upon you since all the congregation are Holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you lift yourselves up above the congregation of the LORD?*’” (vs 1-3). Of course, this is absolutely not true. God is the One Who *appointed* Moses. Moses didn’t really want to

go—did he? *No!* He didn’t even want to speak. He said, ‘Okay, I’m going to send your brother Aaron.’ In Exo. 21 we find that Aaron was selected as the high priest. God did the selecting!

Verse 4: “And when Moses heard *this*, he fell on his face.... [In other words, just fell over in praying to God.] ...And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, ‘Even at daybreak the LORD will show *who is* His, and who is Holy, and will cause him to come near to Him; even him whom He has chosen will He cause to come near to Him. Do this. Take censers... [I like the way that God inspired Moses to do this: *let’s have you go ahead and try!*] ...Korah and all your company, and put fire in them, and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow. And it shall be the man whom the LORD chooses, he *shall be* Holy. You take too much upon you, sons of Levi!’” (vs 4-7). The Levites were the ones who were to assist the priests. The Reubenites had nothing to do with it whatsoever. So, we have both cases.

Verse 8: “And Moses said to Korah, ‘Hear now you sons of Levi: *Is it* too little a thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? And He has brought you near, and all your brothers the sons of Levi with you. And do you seek the priesthood as well?.... [You want to get promoted above that?] ...Therefore, you and all your company *are* gathered against the LORD. And what is Aaron, that you murmur against him?’ And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. And they said, ‘We will not come up.... [We’re not even going to do that, Moses.] ...*Is it* too little a thing that you have brought us up out of a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, but must you *also make* yourself a prince over us?’ (vs 8-13).

So they said they’re not going to do it. The rest of the story is this—you can read it: They all came together the next day and God said, ‘Separate yourselves.’ What happened? *God opened up the earth!*

Verse 28: “And Moses said, ‘By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, *and that I have not done them* from my own heart. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they are visited according to the fate of all men, the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD creates a new creation, and the earth opens her mouth and swallows them up with all that they have, and they go down alive into the pit, then you shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD’” (vs 28-30).

So, what happened? *As soon as Moses finished saying that*, v 31: “And it came to pass, as

he had made an end of speaking all these words, the ground under them split apart. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who *were* for Korah, and all *their* goods. They and all that they had went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. And they perished from among the congregation” (vs 31-34). Think what it is going to be to the *one who claims* to be God.

Let’s come back to 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter. Not only are we talking about the priesthood, but Moses was the ‘general.’ He was a priest, but Aaron was the high priest. So, we have a similar setup with *the beast* and the *false prophet* at the end of the age—don’t we? What do you suppose is going to happen to this man?

2-Thessalonians 2:3—he is called: “...and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God... [we saw what happened to Korah and his crew there] ...or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God” (vs 3-4). He’s going to go right into the Lake of Fire. No man is going to set himself up and say he is God and get away with it. Look at all these false prophets who have come along to proclaim different things. Look at what happened to Jimmy Jones down in this area of San Francisco. Now we have another one rising up and calling himself an apostle.

Whenever anyone exalts himself to take an office of God, or a prerogative of God, then God is going to deal with them. This is why Christ did not exalt Himself. Rather, though He was the Son of God, He had His own humiliation to go through.

Hebrews 5:5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself... [It’s interesting that the Greek has *the Christ*, meaning *the anointed One of God*.] ...to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’” The whole purpose of Christ coming into the world was to be the High Priest and the King. It’s interesting where this is taken from. I think it’s profound that they’re beginning with the introduction of Melchisedec as High Priest.

Psalms 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. ‘Yea, I have set My King... [Here we have the beginning of the introduction of Christ and Melchisedec as King and Priest] ...upon Zion, My

Holy mountain.’ I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’” (vs 1-7).

As we explained in *The Christian Passover* book, there was a time when the two of Elohim were neither the Father nor the Son. But the One Who became the Son then became the Son at the point that He was begotten in the virgin Mary. He was not perpetually the Son forever up to that point. Then the One of Elohim Who remained in heaven was the Father. He has begotten Him. We see two things here:

### 1. For a King

When Pilate asked: Are you a king? Jesus said, ‘For this end was I born; for this reason I came into the world.’ So now we have “...set as a King...” Also, on the day that He was begotten it was determined also that He would be

### 2. High Priest

Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.’” We have the Son Who is *the King*; now we have *High Priest* after the “...order of Melchisedec.”

Psalms 110:1—this is a very interesting Psalm: “The LORD [Jehovah] said unto my Lord [Adonai]... [The Rabbinic text says ‘Adoni’ meaning like you would say of an ordinary man *my lord*. Who gave this Psalm? Who wrote this? *David did!*] ...The LORD said unto my Lord... [Who was the Lord of David besides God? Was there another man over David? Was there another king over David that you would call ‘Adoni’—or another man? *No!* So this is actually the first LORD [Jehovah]—and that’s why the booklet *The Two Jehovah’s of the Psalms; the Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*. That is actually the Father saying to the One Who became the Son (Adoni): ...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’”

And you can go through the New Testament and see over and over again that that means that Christ is the One Who is going to give it all back to God the Father. Could this not be God the Father in glory in heaven saying to Christ on earth, the Son of God? *Yes, it could be!*

We also find, v 4: “The LORD has sworn and will not repent, ‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.’” This has to be the Father saying to the Son.

That’s what we have in Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.’” This has got to be the One Who became the Father saying to the One Who became the Son, “...‘You

are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.”

- Was David ever a priest? *No!* So He could not be saying it to David.
- Was He saying it to any of the sons of Aaron? *No, He was not!*

This is a distinct thing in the Old Testament, which is a prophecy fulfilled in Hebrews 5:6.

Matthew 22:41: “While the Pharisees were assembled together, Jesus questioned them, saying, ‘What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘*The Son of David.*’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’”? Therefore, if David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?’” (vs 41-45)

This was very perplexing to them, because they understood at this time that ‘The LORD said to My Lord’ they’re talking about the One Who became Christ Who also was God before He became Christ. They could not understand ‘the LORD said to My Lord.’ They could not understand that He could be the son of David, because they knew that this conversation, this swearing, had to do with God telling another One Who was God what He was going to do. And they didn’t answer back, did they? So, it shows they understood the Scriptures a little better after the rabbis got done with them 200 years after Christ. That left them very perplexed.

The whole point of it here is that we see that ***Christ is destined to be King and High Priest!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 4:9
- 2) Exodus 20:8-11
- 3) Isaiah 56:1-6
- 4) Hebrews 4:10-16, 15
- 5) Romans 8:1-3
- 6) Hebrews 2:9-10, 14-18
- 7) Hebrews 4:16
- 8) Hebrews 10:14-23
- 9) Galatians 2:12, 15-21
- 10) Psalm 119:172
- 11) Hebrews 5:1-6, 2
- 12) Leviticus 16:2-5, 11-12
- 13) Hebrews 5:4
- 14) Numbers 16:1-13, 28-33
- 15) 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- 16) Hebrews 5:5
- 17) Psalm 2:1-7
- 18) Hebrews 5:6
- 19) Psalm 110:1, 4

- 20) Hebrews 5:6
- 21) Mathew 22:41-45

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 2:27
- Hebrews 7
- 1 John 4
- Hebrews 3
- Exodus 21

#### Also referenced:

Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Articles: [Nature of God](#) and [Nature of Man](#)

#### Booklets:

- *Two Jehovahs of the Psalms*
- *Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*

Sermons: *What Kind of Human Nature Did Jesus Have?*

FRC: bo

Transcribed: 5-1-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XV

Fred R. Coulter—June 15, 2002

We're here in Hebrews 5 and from Heb. 4:15 all the way to Heb. 10:22 has to do with our High Priest Jesus Christ Who is a priest after the order of Melchisedec. What Jesus did to be our High Priest is really a fantastic thing. With the religions of the world, there are various myths of heroes and sufferers, but none of them compare to what Jesus did.

Hebrews 5:1: "For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; *and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses" (vs 1-2).

This is a different kind of humility that a physical priest would have, but now we're dealing with a spiritual priest, Jesus Christ Who is at the right hand of God in heaven above at the throne of grace where we can come at all times. Never forget that! ***You can come before God at all times, any time, any place, anywhere!***

Jesus had a different humiliation. He is able not only to deal tenderly, or gently with those who sin, but He is able to fully understand and empathize and have experiential compassion with them, because He was tempted in every point like all human beings, and yet, *without sin!*

Verse 3: "And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people." We will see the concluding remarks in Heb. 10, that all these sacrifices never really took away sin before God the Father in heaven above. It only justified them to the temple.

Verse 4: "Now, no man takes the honor of the *high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*." You can go through and see when the priesthood was challenged by those, how God deal with them. We have a principle today that is really being abused by many people: ***You don't appoint yourself to an honor such as this, or to appoint yourself as a teacher!***

I don't know how many of you get *The Journal*, but it is a hodge-podge of all kinds of doctrines and teachings by many, many different men who purport to be teachers in the Church of God. Today, with the convenience of the computer and the convenience of setting up an e-mail site—voila!—you can have a teacher, a website, all of those things instantly. So, as a result, false teachings

and heresies spread very far, very quickly and affects a lot of people.

This thing was actually beginning to occur before Paul died. Here is the big problem, and it's rooted in human nature. That's why in order to control ***carnal people***, various churches—in particularly the Catholic Church as well as many of the sister churches of the Catholic Church—have created a hierarchy to run and govern the people. Instead of having false teachers out here running all over, you've got them within the hierarchy and you've got them with aberrant behavior, as you see within the hierarchy. You have that evil on one hand, then you have the evil on the other hand—which is from those who perhaps may be converted, or perhaps think they are converted, or have a certain knowledge of the Word of God—because of one thing or another, they decide to appoint themselves as teachers.

So, whoever sets himself up as a teacher, God has several ways of handling it in what is called 'judgment.' James 3:1: "My brethren, do not many of you become teachers, knowing that we will receive more severe judgment." That happens on a day-to-day basis because *judgment is now on the house of God*. Those who are teachers put themselves under a stricter and higher condemnation of judgment when they do wrong than the average brethren they're trying to serve. They assume to speak for God! That's quite an assumption—isn't it? In doing so, if they do not know the Scriptures or handle the Word of God deceitfully—as we've seen so many times—what happens? You can take the Truth of the Word of God and you can handle it deceitfully, and you can create

- error
- heresy
- false doctrine

Also, if they do not understand the true grace of God and the love of God and commandment-keeping, and they get enamored with Jewish ritual and tradition, then they end up making Christ *Moses* and the Gospel *the law*. All of these problems are out there. If you have *The Journal* all you have to do is go through it and look at it and you can see all of these things are an ongoing problem. And not only do we have men doing it, we also have women preachers within the Church of God—did you know that?

The fascination of the lust of being a teacher, to be in authority, strikes a lot of people. That's why we have the example of Christ and the humiliation that He went through, lest anyone assume to take upon themselves being a priest. That's why there are

no priests today.

Verse 2: “Because we frequently offend, everyone of us. If anyone does not offend in what he says, this one *is* a perfect man *and is* able also to hold in check the whole body.” We’ve seen that, too. In a hierarchy, when sins and troubles and difficulties occur, what do they do? *They always cover it up*—don’t they? No question about it! The hierarchy assumes a position of God. The Catholic hierarchy has the pope as the ‘vicar of Christ,’ which is antichrist. The cardinals are the princes of the church designed to support the pope to the point of death. The bishops are the presence of God in the church. All of those things are very blasphemous, the end result when people take upon themselves something that God never gave them.

The presence of God in the Church is the Holy Spirit in everyone that God has called, is converted and has given the Holy Spirit to. That’s the presence of God in the Church, within the individual. Then the presence of God within the Church when we assemble together is that Spirit of God in us and the Spirit of God that He sends to be with us to help us fellowship with Him, to fellowship with each other and to learn and study His Word.

We’ve gone over this many times, but I tell you what, after watching some of these sessions on television—CSPAN—about the bishop’s conference concerning pedophilia in the Roman Catholic Church priesthood, what they have done is voted God out of any part of what they are doing, because they have set their own standard, their own word, their own agenda, and they do not follow the Bible. They give it lip-service, but they don’t preach it, they don’t teach it, and that’s generally what ends up happening with almost every false prophet—whatever degree: greater or lesser. So that’s why Paul gave this charge to Timothy.

2-Timothy 4:1: “I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word!... [That is what is to be taught. To preach it honestly and to preach it truly, because these are the words of God.] ...Be urgent in season and out of season... [Showing they kept the Holy Days, without a doubt. There’s no use saying that unless it were true.] ...convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine” (vs 1-2). That is ‘rightly dividing’ the Word of God (2-Tim. 2:15) to come up with the right doctrine.

For example: We constantly get a question similar to this: If Jesus said that ‘not one jot or tittle shall in any way pass from the law till all be fulfilled,’ why should we not put blue threads in the borders of our garments? That’s in the book of

Moses—isn’t it? *Yes, it is! It’s in the law!* They don’t read any further, because it says, ‘so that when you see it you will remember the commandments and statutes of the Lord. Jesus fulfilled that and gave us a higher standard—didn’t He? And that higher standard is they’re to be written in our hearts and our minds. We don’t need blue threads to remind us. We have it within us.

Not being able to discern the physical from the spiritual, there are false teachers who say that we have to have all of our garments with blue threads. The reason that happens is because they don’t ‘rightly divide the Word of God.’ They don’t understand the doctrine. A lot think they do; they think they’re experts in it. Like one of the latest rages we have today with the calendar is everybody goes to the Holy Land and they look for the right barley. They don’t have the wit to understand that the climate is not the same that it was when they did that. That’s why God gave the calculated Hebrews calendar.

They get all enamored with this and they get their minds off Christ, they get their mind off the Word of God, and they get caught up in these little silly things. Here’s the reason:

- Do they have people that will listen to them? *Of course!*
- Do they have people who will follow them? *Yes!*

Even P.T. Barnum of Barnum & Bailey said, ‘A sucker is born every minute.’

Verse 3: “For there shall come **a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine**... [they want to have their own] ...but according to their own lusts... [that’s where all of this is conceived, in personal lust] ...they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching to *hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths” (vs 3-4). Whenever someone takes to himself that kind of thing to be a teacher or to be a priest then great trouble happens. We have seen it; the judgment’s going to come!

- Let’s understand about Christ!
- Let’s understand what He went through!

Hebrews 5:5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’ Even as He also says in another place, ‘You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’; Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared God. Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned

obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him,. after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 5-10).

This quote is taken, v 5: “...‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You,’” from Psalm 2. A very interesting Psalm and a very interesting translation of one particular verse in the *Geneva Bible*. Psalm 2:1: “Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?... [This is an end-time prophecy, right here. This is what is happening today.] ...The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and **against His Christ** [the Anointed]... [Who is the ‘Anointed One’? *Christ!*] ...saying, ‘Let us break Their bands asunder and cast away Their cords from us.’” (vs 1-3). We are free, we have moral agency, we can do whatever we want to do. Is that not the philosophy of today? *No doubt about it!*

Verse 4: “He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. ‘Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain.’ I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’” (vs 4-7). And that is the day that He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary.

Then it goes on showing how Christ is going to come and take over the world, v 8: “‘Ask of Me... [Here we have the Lord being the Father, the Anointed One or the Christ being Christ] ...and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’” (vs 8-9). We find that in Rev. 2—don’t we? About Shepherding the nations; He shares that with the saints.

Verse 10: “Now therefore be wise, O kings; be admonished, O judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for His wrath can flame up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him” (vs 10-12). Here we have a prophecy of Christ being appointed. We have the work that He is going to do, not only as a Priest, but also as a King. That becomes very important because under the Old Covenant no king could become a priest, and no priest could become a king. There was a division. But under the order of Melchisedec we will see—especially in Heb. 7—that it is ONE.

Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.’” We find this in Psalms 110. {see booklets: *The Two Jehovahs of the Psalms* and *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*} This

establishes very important things here in the book of Psalms. I might just mention concerning the text of the Old Testament, that there is a rabbinical text called *A Masoretic Text* and there is a Levitical text called *A Masoretic Text*. The rabbinic text used a lot of juggling through the vowel points. They did so here in Psalms 110. There are two words in the Old Testament for Lord:

1. YHVH—Jehovah
2. Adonai—‘adon’ can apply to a man, ‘my lord’—the only difference is a vowel pointing

What has been done in last couple hundred years with the Hebrew text is the rabbis have gone through and have systematically eliminated any reference to anything other than one God. So when a person goes back and looks into the Old Testament, they will say, ‘Oh, there’s only one God.’ But, it is not numerically one single God. It is the One Who became Christ, and the One Who became the Father—two of Elohim. There are two. They, as Jesus said, are ONE! Not meaning one person, but

- one is spirit
- one in mind
- one in heart
- one in purpose
- one in work
- one in family

—and we are to become one with them! So, years ago when I did the series *Who was Jesus?* and I came to Psalms 110:1, I actually said it right the first time, which is:

Psalm 110:1 “The LORD said unto my Lord... [I said both of these meant YHVH or Jehovah, and at that time we were still using the term Yahweh. So, here’s the whole plan of God revealed right here, a prophecy of Christ. This was used by the apostles in preaching Christ more than any other section of the Old Testament to begin with] ...‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’” Notice how closely that ties in with Psalms 2; 1-Cor. 15

Verse 2: “The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies.’” Isn’t that true? Does Christ rule in the midst of His enemies though they don’t understand it? *Yes, He does!* Simply because every time you transgress a commandment of God His judgment is ruling over you. Let’s take it one step further. He rules over everyone—doesn’t He? He’s Creator—right? So, whether men and women want to admit it or not, God is ruling over them—whether just through the physical creation that He has created in which they live and exist or whether they are called to repentance and come to God and let Christ be in them and rule over them, God is ruling! In the



midst of the enemies, God will make it profound. What is the greatest example of that happening? *The book of Esther!* In the example of Esther and Mordecai and the proposed annihilation of the Jews, God turned that completely around because *He* rules “...in the midst of your enemies.”

Verse 3: “Your people will offer themselves in the day of Your power, in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth. The LORD has sworn and will not repent... [there is no changing this]: **...‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec’**” (vs 3-4). In chapter seven of the book of Hebrews we will cover more on Melchisedec. That is our priesthood today. That’s why any other priesthood is contrary to the will of God, and they have placed themselves in place of God.

Hebrews 5:7—this is a very key and central verse: “Who, in the days of His flesh... [This tells us that there was also a time when He was a *spirit being*—correct? John 1:14: ‘and the Word became flesh’] **...offered up** both prayers and supplications... [the Greek word here is the same as ‘to offer up sacrifices.’] ...with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God.*”

We’ve got a whole chapter in *The Christian Passover* book about the nature of Christ in the flesh {Chpt. 26 The Meaning of the Body of Jesus Christ}. There were two things of death that He was saved from:

1. He would not sin and incur the death penalty
2. Having died for the sins of the world, He would be resurrected from the dead

He did it with prayers and supplications and strong crying and tears. This was a great and a mammoth, profound struggle, fight—however you want to put it. For Christ to go through everything that He did and qualify to be a High Priest forever after the order Melchisedec, and He took upon Himself all of these things. This is why when we come through the book of Hebrews we find:

- chapter 1—Paul talks about the function of Christ, Who was the Son of God, purged our sins
- chapter 2—Paul talks about the suffering of Christ; being made like us
- chapter 3—Paul shows that Christ is greater than Moses
- chapter 5—What Christ went through because He now is our High Priest

Then, in this section, it brings it out in such a way to show that everything that He did was part of the sacrifice, meaning more than just the time when He was crucified on the cross and beaten with a scourge

prior to that.

Let’s look at some things in the New Testament and let’s see part of the things of death that He was saved from. Matthew 2—the account of Herod wanting to know where the Christ was born. The wise men came and he talked to them; he asked where He was born. He called all the priests and scribes together and they said, ‘In Bethlehem.’ You know the story. They went down and they found the Christ, they gave the offerings that they had brought.

Matthew 2:11: “And when they had come into the house, they found the little child with Mary His mother, and they bowed down and worshiped Him... [***You only worship God!*** You understand that—don’t you?] ...then they opened their treasures *and* presented their gifts to Him—gold and frankincense and myrrh.” God had to intervene and send the wise men home a different way and not go back to Herod. And He had to intervene and tell Joseph that Herod was going to come and try and kill the child. Here we find that God saved Him from death before He could even utter a prayer—correct? They went on down to Egypt and then came back.

Part of what Jesus went through, and one of the most important things as far as a living sacrificial effort was the temptation that He went through enduring with Satan the devil and overcoming him. We will cover this at a later time, but needless to say that that was quite a thing, and He had to overcome Satan the devil while He was in the flesh as a human being; not God confronting Satan; not another angel confronting Satan, but God—as a *man*—overcoming Satan the devil.

Then we find this: Jesus came into Nazareth on the Sabbath Day and stood up to read and He read, Luke 4:21: “Then He began to say to them, ‘Today, this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears.’” And they wondered who this was (v 22), and then He told them the truth:

Verse 24: “But He said, ‘Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his *own* country. For in truth, I say to you, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up for three years and six months, and there was great famine upon all the land; and Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only to a widow in Sarepta, a city of Sidonia. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.’ Now all in the synagogue who heard these things were filled with indignation” (vs 24-28)—not getting the point. The difficulty that we see here and Jesus had to endure, He came unto His own and His own didn’t receive Him—right?

Verse 29: “And they rose up *and* cast Him

out of *the* city, and led Him to the edge of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to throw Him down headlong, but He passed *safely* through their midst *and* departed” (vs 29-30). He escaped; there again He was saved from death. He was not to die until *the time*; yet, He had to be saved from death.

We will see that Christ had to always be weary of men. This is after He came to the temple, cast out the moneychangers and so forth, John 2:23: “Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast, many believed on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing. But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all *men*; and He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man” (vs 23-25). You can just plug in there all the things we know of human nature (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:7).

When He did another miracle, what did they want to do? And all the way through Jesus had to escape death. This is the account of the man who had the infirmity for 38 years; Jesus healed him. John 5:14: “After these things, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, ‘Behold, you have been made whole. Sin no more, so that something worse does not happen to you.’.... [That’s a very profound Scripture for us all to understand—isn’t it?] ...The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus Who had made him whole. And for this cause, the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on a Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I work.’ So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath, but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God” (vs 14-18).

They knew and they understood that He was the Son of God. Every time this came up they wanted to lay hands on Him and kill Him. Let’s see this again in John 8:52: “Then the Jews said to Him, ‘Now we know that You have a demon.... [Not only did He suffer the persecution and false accusation and everything like that, remember what Jesus told the disciples: ‘If they call Me Baalzebub, think of what they’re going to call you.’ Now is not the time for salvation of the world, and that’s the whole point of the Day of Atonement.] ...Abraham and the prophets died; yet You say, “If anyone keeps My words, he shall not taste of death forever.”.... [It doesn’t say that a person can’t die, but he won’t]: ...taste of death forever... [pointing to the resurrection—correct? *Yes, indeed!*] ...Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, *who* died? Whom do You make Yourself *to be*?’ Jesus answered, ‘If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me,

*of* Whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him... [very interesting—isn’t it? Remember that Scripture whenever you’re confronted by someone who says that the God of the Old Testament was the Father.] ...but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I know Him, and I keep His Word. Abraham your father was overjoyed to see My day; and he saw *it*, and rejoiced.” (vs 52-56)

“Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not even fifty years *old*, and You have seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘**Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.**’.... [Now, we’ll get a little Greek here: ‘genesthai’—which means an aorist past tense infinitive *to be*. ‘before Abraham came to be, I AM’—‘ego-emi’ {see sermon: *I AM*} and this is a name of God. He was clearly revealing to them that He was God.

Here again He was saved from death, v 59: “Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed.”

Here we’ve got the same thing. They came to Jesus and said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ He said, *The One I’ve told you all along*. ‘If You’re the Son of God, tell us.’ *I have, but you didn’t believe Me!* John 10:27: “**My sheep hear My voice...**” Go back to the first part of John 10, *the sheep do not hear the voice of a stranger*. So, when you truly have the Spirit of God and you understand the Word of God sufficiently, what is it you are able to do? *You’re able to discern whether a preacher is teaching Truth or not!* Whether it is really the words of Christ or not! What has to happen is that in your relationship with God, which is with God the Father and Jesus Christ, you have God’s Spirit in you. You have a relationship based upon prayer and study and living God’s way. When anything comes along from a teacher who is not teaching the Word of God, you recognize it immediately.

Another thing that is profound is this: We have the written Word, we have it recorded here—don’t we? These were once spoken—weren’t they? So, if you read these words and you understand these words and you live by these words, ***then you are hearing the voice of Christ***—are you not? *Yes, you are!* That’s why He said, “My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me” (v 27). Very important! You follow Christ! Paul said, ‘Follow me as I follow Christ.’ He also said, ‘Be followers of God as dear children.’

We are to follow Christ. This way then no man, no organization can presume to take eternal life from you—period! Regardless of what they may do to you, they cannot take that away. We’re living in a time right now where now is the time to be building

that up and storing that up and using that, because we're going to be confronted—however long down the road it's going to take, we don't know—with the most horrific events in the entirety of the history of the world. We'd better be following Christ! ***We'd better be filled with the Spirit of God and know the Truth of God!***

Verse 28: “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish... [This always got under the skin of the Jews. This really got them!] ...and no one shall take them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand. I and the Father are one” (vs 28-30).

Here's a case when again He had to be saved from death, v 31: “Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law... [which you never study] ...“I said, ‘You are gods’”? If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)’” (vs 31-35). And that does not mean *judges* because the word there is Elohim in the Hebrews, showing the destiny of what human beings are to become.

Verse 35: “‘If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken)... [How about that! New Testament Scripture!] ...*why* do you say *of Him* Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, “You are blaspheming,” because I said, “I am *the* Son of God”? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me. But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him.’ Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands” (vs 35-39). And we know that He was then given over into their hands all the suffering and everything that Jesus went through.

Let's look at a couple of Psalms which then helps bring about these things and expand it for us even more. We're going to get into the things that He suffered leading up to His physical death. This shows us the kind of mind, heart and attitude that we need to have.

Psalms 116:1: “I love the LORD because He hears my voice and my prayers.” It said He was heard. What did Jesus say when He was asking God to raise Lazarus from the dead? *Father, I thank You that You have heard Me, for You always hear Me!* We need to have that confidence in our prayers, too, brethren. God always hears us! He gives according to His will! This is a direct prophecy of what we are

reading the fulfillment of in Heb. 5.

Verse 2: “Because He has bowed down His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death hemmed me in, and the pains of the grave took hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the LORD: ‘O LORD, I beseech You, deliver my soul.’.... [Of course, God did! ] ...Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me” (vs 2-6). In other words, helped him up. Yes, God heard him!

All of this then becomes part of the sacrifice of Christ. Not just the physical things that happened to Him, but His state of mind, His prayers, His yielding to God—everything that He went through was part of that sacrifice.

Psalms 55:1: “Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not Yourself from my supplication. Attend to me, and answer me; I am distraught in my trouble and moan in my complaint, because of the voice of the enemy; because of the oppression of the wicked—for they cast mischief upon me, and in anger they hate me.... [Of course, Jesus had to live with hatred all His life.] ...My heart is pained within me; and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me” (vs 1-5). I'm sure that these are some of the thoughts that He had while He was going through scourging. Scourging was meant also to kill. As a matter of fact, most of those who were scourged died of the scourging. They didn't have to crucify them. So, what happened with Jesus, he took two things of death:

1. the scourging
2. the crucifixion

That's all a part of why Christ is the High Priest that He is. That's all a part of why we can go to God at any time, through Christ, and know that He

- hears us
  - understands us
- and with His Spirit in us:
- is living in us and experiencing those things yet again within us
- that we can have full confidence and trust and faith in Christ as our High Priest.

With that, you don't need a man for a high priest. You don't need a man to go confess your sins to. What can he forgive that God cannot already forgive? *Nothing!* Let's see what Jesus experienced when He went through this. Of course,

- He did this for us!
  - He did this to be our Savior!
  - He experienced this to be our High Priest!
- This is why Christ is so great, and the New

Testament and New Covenant are so supreme! It is the greatest thing that God could do.

Psalm 69:1: “Save me, O God, for the waters have come in upon my soul! I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, where the floods overwhelm me” (vs 1-2). This is the feelings of emotions, just completely overcoming. He wasn’t in some river. He wasn’t in some mud-bog. This is how He felt on the inside as He was experiencing these things.

I saw a special on people who have panic attacks. There are a lot of people who have such insecure things and panic attacks. They’re afraid of everything. Christ died and experienced those things similar to what those who have panic attacks go through so that He can save those who have that from it. That’s why the place to turn in all of these things is to Christ. That’s why it says

- He knows!
- He experienced!
- He lived it!

Verse 3: “I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched... [Remember when He was on the cross? He said, ‘I thirst!’] ... my eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would cut me off are mighty being wrongfully my enemies. Should I restore what I did not take away?” (vs 3-4).

Now it blends back down into David’s prayer, v 5: “O God, You know my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from You.” Who took all that upon Himself? *Christ did!* Though He never sinned, He never was foolish, He took all of that upon Himself—all the foolishness and stupidity of men. Isn’t that something? *Yes, it is!* Christ also had to experience something that many, many people go through, and that is they don’t know where God is. Though they cry out to God, He doesn’t hear, He doesn’t answer, so therefore they feel as though God has forsaken them.

I think one of the most tragic things that I recall is a true story of a man who was in combat and he was praying, ‘Oh, God, deliver me out of this mess, don’t let me die, and within a few seconds a bullet went right through his head.’ I imagine that he felt, while he was praying, desperate, that he was alone. And some of the men who saw him praying and then die a few seconds after he prayed, they didn’t believe God. ‘God didn’t hear him. Where is God?’ Christ also had to take that upon Himself. That’s why He had to, as it is prophesied here in Psa. 22, and this is what He said when He was on the cross:

Psalm 22:1: “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me...” And there will be times in the

lives of every human being that they will feel that God has forsaken them. But God hasn’t! God won’t! But when you are at this point like Christ was:

- Will you still trust in God?
- Will you still believe God?
- Will you still hold fast to the Truth?

—even though the whole world is against you! That’s what Christ had to go through. “...and *why are You* so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?” (v 1).

I tell you, that’s something! It got so bad, v 6: “But I am a worm, and no man...” That’s how low Christ got! You talk about a humiliation. And all of these things, brethren, qualified Him to be our High Priest. Everything that He went through and endured and suffered His whole life then all culminated in the crucifixion and that’s why He’s our High Priest.

I heard of a man who some years ago renounced Christ and now he’s on his deathbed. A friend of mine called me and asked me if I would call him. I called and he wouldn’t even answer. I don’t know yet if I can get a hold of him or not, but I tell you what, ***we need to trust God at all times!*** That’s why it’s so important, brethren, to know and understand the Word of God and live by it and believe it. ***Don’t let any man, don’t let anyone, don’t let anything come between you and God!***

Though you get down as low as feeling like you are a worm, and the “...reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see Me mock Me... [There He was on the cross and they came by taunting Him.] ...they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying” (vs 6-7). And you will be taunted this way; Christ was taunted this way, yet, He was faithful. That’s all a part of the suffering and things that He went through. This is how Christ was perfected. God Who is up here as a Spirit Being. I don’t know how God experiences suffering of people when He’s viewing it, or knowing that it’s happening, but it is an entirely different thing for God to become a man and to suffer all of these things in the flesh, and to do so at the hands of His own creation.

Verse 8—despite everything that was going on, they taunted Him and said, “He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!” And they said, ‘Look, if you be the Christ, prove it right now; come down off the cross, then we will believe You.’ Then He would be disobeying God. So, what did Christ do? *He thought clear back to the time of when He was made a human being!*

Verse 9: “For You are He who took Me out

of the womb, causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb" (vs 9-10). Remembering the whole experience. Our lives are such that we have virtually no conscience memory of anything beyond going back to two-years-old—do we?—if that much. But here Christ had the conscience memory of when He was begotten. So that strengthened Him.

Verse 11: "Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help. Many bulls have encircled around Me..." (vs 11-12). This is referring to all the demons. I imagine that Satan and the demons were out there circling around the cross with all of their hideousness and all of their laughing. It reminds me of when I hear a hyenas. That's what I have in mind when I think of this time when they were out there circling. Of course, the people couldn't see them, but they were there circling the cross thinking that, yes, if He dies 'We've got Him! We've killed the Messiah! We have done Him in!' This is what it's talking about here.

Verse 12: "Many bulls have encircled around Me; strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me. They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion.... [this has got to be the demons out this doing this] ...I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels" (vs 12-14). He could just feel life coming right out of Him. Quite a thing, brethren, what Christ did. This is all a part of *why* He is our High Priest. Of *why* you can have full faith and confidence always in Him!

Verse 15: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death. I can count all My bones... [He could look down and the flesh was off His ribcage and He could look down and see His ribs.] ...they look and gloat over Me. They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture. But You, O LORD, be not far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver My soul from the sword, My precious *life* from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth; yea, and from the wild ox's horns. You have answered Me" (vs 15-21). Right from the altar of God!

Then because of this, v 22: "I will declare Your name to My brethren..." You are the brothers of Christ! Christ came down and did this:

- He emptied Himself of being God
  - became a human being
  - lived a perfect life
- though He was tempted in every way such as we

are—

- then was crucified in this horrendous way
- died this horrible death

and God heard His prayers; God resurrected Him from the dead. That's why He is such a great, marvelous and supreme High Priest! That's why He's greater than any priesthood of a man. No human being can understand that! No human being can empathize with that! But Christ can, because He went through it.

Hebrews 5:7: "...[He] offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared *God*." This Godly fear means that He always understood and recognized the will of God and the sovereignty of God and everything that has to do with the power and love and being of God.

Luke 22:39—this was a prayer, but it was also conversation with God. This shows His yieldedness to God, His fear of God, and why He was heard. "Then He left *the house* and went, as He was accustomed, to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, 'Pray *that you* do not enter into temptation.' And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed, saying, 'Father, if You are willing to take away this cup from Me... [In other word, if this is not it, save Me from it] (but if this is it): **...nevertheless, not My will, but Your will be done.**'" (vs 39-42).

Isn't that the way it is when we get in a tight bind? We always look to our own will—don't we? Too many times we look to our own devices, our own schemes, rather than trusting God; rather than yielding ourselves to the will of God. He knew this was it!

Verse 43: "Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.... [He had the weakness of flesh—didn't He?] ...And being in agony... [That's part of what it's talking about here: strong crying and tears, in agony, because He knew all the prophecies that He had given in the Old Testament showing how He would die. All of these things were flooding into His mind at this time, I'm sure. That's why He was in agony.] ...He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And after rising up from prayer, He came to *His* disciples *and* found them sleeping for grief" (vs 43-45).

Isn't that always true? Somehow it's a quirk of human nature, because the trouble is so bad, what human beings try to do is block it out of their minds. Part of the way of doing that is becoming sleepy. That's what happens to these people who have these

panic attacks. It gets so much upon them that they just stay in their houses. Then they withdraw in depression so much that all they do is sleep. Not just for a physical reason because they're tired—that may happen to some people who have physical problems—but because they are so wrapped up in fear that it puts them to sleep.

Here are the disciples—and remember, this happened three times—‘can’t you even watch for an hour.’ v 46: “Then He said to them, ‘Why are you sleeping? Arise and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation.’” I think that when we come to the disasters at the end, I wonder how many people are going to be sleeping at the switch. Just makes you wonder, because that’s a weakness of human nature. But not of Christ!

Hebrews 5:8: “Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered.” This doesn’t mean that He ever transgressed or was disobedient. This means all of the different situations where He was confronted with saving His own neck, or trusting God to keep Him from death. He had different situations of *how* to be obedient. That’s what it’s really talking about. So, “...He learned obedience from the things that He suffered”—everything He went through!

Likewise, we go through similar things—don’t we? How are we obedient? In what circumstances? And in this circumstance, how do we obey God? In another circumstance, how do we obey God? We learn obedience that way! That’s why Christ also learned.

Verse 9: “And having been perfected...” That’s a profound statement, because God is perfect—is He not? *Yes, He is!* And Christ coming in the flesh had perfect obedience—didn’t He? *Yes, He did!* How was it then that He was perfected? *By being in the flesh and going through all of these circumstances and going through the scourging and crucifixion and everything that means!* That perfected Him

- in His love for His creation
- in His love for God the Father
- in His love for human beings

He had to go through this to be perfected in this way: *that He might save us!* Therefore, v 9: “...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him.”

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 5:1-4
- 2) James 3:1-2
- 3) 2 Timothy 4:1-4

- 4) Hebrews 5:5-10, 5
- 5) Psalm 2:1-12
- 6) Hebrews 5:6
- 7) Psalm 110:1-4
- 8) Hebrews 5:7
- 9) Mathew 2:11
- 10) Luke 4:21, 24-30
- 11) John 2:23-25
- 12) John 5:14-18
- 13) John 8:52-59
- 14) John 10:27-39
- 15) Psalm 116:1-6
- 16) Psalm 55:1-5
- 17) Psalm 69:1-5
- 18) Psalm 22:1, 6-22
- 19) Hebrews 5:7
- 20) Luke 22:39-46
- 21) Hebrews 5:8-9

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Timothy 2:15
- Revelation 2
- 1 Corinthians 15
- John 1:14
- Luke 4:22
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Romans 8:7

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- Sermon: *I AM*

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Transcribed: 4-22-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVI

Fred R. Coulter—June 29, 2002

Let's go back and review just little bit here. I think this is really something that we need to understand of God and Christ. Hebrews 5:8: "Although He was a Son, yet He **learned** obedience..." There is a difference between being God in spirit—you are righteous, righteous by nature—and you give that up and become a human being, take on human nature. He learned how it is for human beings to be obedient. That is all a very important part of being a High Priest Who can understand and have compassion and sympathize with those that He is High Priest for—us! That's quite a thing!

- Does God have all knowledge? *Of course!*
- With all that knowledge can He still learn?
- Why not?
- Does that mean that He's deficient because He learns? *No!*

Verse 9: "And having been perfected..." In spirit, as a spirit being, God is perfect—isn't He? *No question about it!* But when He gave up being a spirit being to become a human being, He was *spiritually perfected* by the things that He did. Though God is perfect, can He become more perfect? *Yes!* It's the same with us, and this is given to us as an example that since Christ learned—and He was God—and in the flesh He was perfected—

- that helps us to understand that we can be perfected
- that helps us to understand that God wants us to become one as Christ was

Let's see where this is carried through, Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection..." Christ is the example. That's why we have the Gospels telling all about His life, what He did, how He did it and so forth. All of this then relates to our salvation.

Hebrews 5:9: "And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him." Let's just plug some Scriptures in here for this:

John 14—here we find exactly the same thing; it reiterates that Jesus is the Author of salvation and it also reiterates obedience to Christ. Here's a basic, fundamental Scripture in which the whole New Testament is built upon, John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, **'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.'**" As we've seen in the past, that's a very exclusive statement.

- It excludes everything else.

- It excludes all other religions.
- It excludes all other beliefs.
- It excludes all of those who use the name of Christ, but preach lawlessness.

When we put these verses together with Heb. 5:9, then it has even more power and understanding. As we go through here, what we are learning is that the reason that they became sluggish in understanding and dull of hearing is because they were not doing the things in Isa. 28—"precept upon precept; line upon line."

Verse 15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments." That is basic and fundamental. People can talk about love all they want, but lawless love is *you love the Lord and whatever you do is okay!* He understands and you have grace and forgiveness. That's not what He's saying. Then other people will say, 'Keep My commandments.' Those are the commandments of Jesus. Those are not the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament.

When they don't know that Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament, they don't understand that He's the One Who gave the Ten Commandments. Let's just give them the benefit of doubt and say, 'All right, Jesus' commandments.' Which commandment did Jesus give which is contrary to any of the Ten Commandments? *Not a one!* That's very important for us to understand and realize, especially when we come to a couple more verses later where it says the time ought to be that you be teachers. Now, that doesn't mean that you're going to be teachers in a pulpit or anything like that necessarily. But it means all of those who are the disciples of Christ or the believers in Christ for salvation. They ought to be able to explain the Scriptures to other people; to 'give an answer to the hope that lies within them.' These things are very important.

Now we come down here to the real nitty-gritty, v 21: "The one who has My commandments... [Not only do you know them, but you have them, indicating that you understand that it's a way to live.] ...and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me..." 1-John 2:3-4—hereby we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments; and he that says that he knows Him and keeps not His commandments is a liar.' When we put all the Scriptures together then it agrees completely.

"...and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.' Judas (not Iscariot)... [did not understand that] ...said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to

us, and not to the world?” (vs 21-22). It’s a spiritual process.

- by the Spirit of God
- by the Word of God

—and the world doesn’t know it or understand it. It’s not that He’s going to appear in vision, or He’s going to appear in person. He’s going to manifest Himself through the Spirit of God, and through the love and commandments of God. Notice how He answers:

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word... [That’s everything that Jesus said, *every* word.] ...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” (vs 23-24). He gave commandment to Christ, what He should say and what He should do. If you reject the New Testament as well as the Old Testament, Who are you really rejecting? *You’re rejecting God the Father, the Sovereign of the universe; the greatest being that there is!* This shows that He gives eternal salvation to those who obey Him and then obedience and love go hand-in-hand.

Matthew 7 is another basic Scripture. If you don’t understand these basic Scriptures, then it’s impossible for you to go on to perfection as Paul says in Heb. 6:1. You will be hung up on ‘should I’ or ‘shouldn’t I’ and which commandment and which commandment not. Then when you’re hung up on that and you don’t have enough spiritual understanding, then you end up being just like the one’s noted here who became false prophets.

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. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord... [and we’re going to see this more and more] ...did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness” (vs 21-23). This tells us that there is no salvation without obedience (Heb. 5:9). There is no salvation with lawlessness.

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock... [Christ is the Rock. 1-Cor. 3:9-12 building on the foundation of Christ. We’re all going to have difficulties. I don’t think a one of us who’s been converted would raise a hand or say ‘since I’ve

been baptized I haven’t had a single trial and that’s been 20 years. *No!*] ...and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house...” (vs 24-25). This is likened to everything in the world. What does Satan send out after those who were escaping he sends out water; He sends out a flood (Rev. 12). This is likened to the trial. Who is the ‘prince of the power of the air’? So, we have wind.

“...and beat upon that house... [There are times when you feel *beat upon!* There are trials and difficulties that you will go through and you will feel that way. Sometimes they will come one after another just like a gust of wind, in waves!] ...but... [if you’re built on the Rock] ...it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock” (v 25). That’s what all of the book of Hebrews is about; that you stay founded on Christ all the way through. You understand that He is a great and fantastic and marvelous High Priest Who is interceding for us, Who is our propitiation. He sends the Holy Spirit to comfort us in all circumstances and He is there concerned for us day and night. That’s what’s important. That’s why we have the Sabbath and study the Word of God on the Sabbath. When we come to Sabbath services we can be

- strengthened spiritually
- reinforced with the Word of God
- go out and beat upon this next week and make it back here next Sabbath

It happens to every single one of us! I don’t say much of the trials and difficulties that I go through, but I go through plenty. Maybe of a little different nature than yours; many of the them maybe of the same kind of nature as yours. And it involves not just myself, but other people. We’re all together; that’s why we’re brethren and we can be rest assured that’s why Christ went through everything that He went through and suffered.

Hebrews 5:10: “After... [these things that He had gone through] ...He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec.” Nearly all the rest of Hebrews thru chapter 10 has to do with the priesthood of Melchisedec. And it has to do with showing a very important thing: that the New Covenant is *superior* to the Old Covenant. The priesthood of Christ is *superior*; you can’t get anything greater or better than the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ after the order of Melchisedec. Can a man, as high priest, be as effective as God as High Priest? Maybe put in those terms it’s easier to understand. *Of course not!*

Verse 11: “Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing.... [understanding or dull] ...For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you



again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* word of righteousness because he is an infant. But solid food is for those who are fully grown... [spiritually mature] ...who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil” (vs 11-14).

Hebrews 6:1: “Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection...” Let me give you an example of what it is to stay with the beginning principles, and I’ll use the example of the Baptist Church: Every Sunday when they get together, what do they have? *An altar call*—don’t they? Everything stays at that elementary level. Then they keep themselves at that elementary level because they have a licentious, lawless grace. Therefore, once they’ve ‘given their heart to the Lord’—as they have it; and once they have come forward to confess Christ, publicly, then it’s a *completed work*. Everything is done, and from that time forward all you have to do is have a ‘good feeling’ in your heart, and that tells you that what you’re doing is right. So they have just entered into the sandbox and haven’t even gotten down to play in the sand.

Can you learn how to be a full, mature human being—even in the world—if you stay in grades one, two and three. You go to school 12 years and four times you go 1, 2, 3. By time you have gone through it, what happens? You know what’s going to be said—right? And if you know what’s going to be said, what happens? *You’ve heard it before so you don’t listen*—right? Isn’t that true? *Yes!*

Just like when I travel on a plane, what do the stewardesses instruct the passengers all the time? Just look around and you can see all the ‘seasoned’ travelers. The stewardess is up there explaining it and demonstrating—they have it now on a little video projected screen—and they tell you about the basics of the plane. Here is the plane and here are the emergency exits, the lights, the white lights lead to red lights and the red lights lead to the exits and look at the exits in front and look at the exits behind and find out where it is in case of air pressure loss; the masks will come down and put it on yourself first, and even though the bag is not blown up there is oxygen flowing and then you put it on someone else who is in need of you. And in case of an accident, you bend over and grab your knees and hold on tight. If you need to have a flotation device, there’s one under the seat and you can pull the cord and blow it up and all of us know that.

All of those who are travelers who have heard this over and over again, what do we do? *We’re sitting there reading or writing or doing something*

*else!* Likewise, when it comes to ‘religion,’ and if they hear the same thing over and over again, it’s just like I reiterated with what the stewardesses do. They also show you how to put on the seatbelt. I tell you, that’s elementary. How did we get there? *Most people drove in a car!* What did we wear? *A seatbelt!* Listen, at 68-years-old, if we don’t know how to put on seatbelts... But, what happens? I’ll give you another example: Driving in the car you get so use to the seatbelts that many times you don’t even use it. Why? *Because it’s there!*

This is what happened to those that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews to. They just stayed with the basics and got so dull of hearing that in chapter two it says, ‘you’re in danger of slipping away.’ And then all the warnings, now into chapter five he’s explaining how it came about. They’re “...dull of hearing” (v 11). What happens when that occurs? If you’re not constantly learning and growing and maturing, what happens? What happens if you become dull or sluggish of hearing? *You begin to lose it!* That’s what happens, and then:

Matthew 13:14: “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, ‘In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand... [They’re sluggish in hearing—right?] ...and in seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive.’” Isn’t that true with the Word of God; *especially* with the Word of God. Many people have the Bible—the Word of God—but they don’t perceive what it is, or understand what it is. And it’s the greatest book in the world, which tells you about eternal life!

Yet, isn’t it incongruous that the same people who have closed their eyes and their ears to it and don’t understand it—what do they want? *They want peace, God’s blessing!* You know they do because they don’t want God’s cursing—do they? I have yet to hear anyone say, ‘Oh, God, please curse me.’ Of course, that’s incongruous! Yet, they have the Word of God, and because they won’t read it—and more particularly because they won’t obey it—and if they’re a religious person and then they hear the same thing over and over again, they just become dull of hearing and they shut their ears and close their eyes just like this:

Verse 15: “‘For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing... [Just like it is right back there in Heb. 5] ...and their eyes they have closed... [Isn’t that interesting, it’s something *they do!*] ...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’”

If you are in the category then of sluggish of hearing and ‘dull of hearing’ and so forth, then pretty soon you’re going to get to the point that you just even forget that. I wonder how many millions of

‘marginal Baptists’ are out there who have gone to church so many times and they’ve heard the same thing over and over again that they could pay very little attention to it and don’t even go to church, even on Sunday, likewise with the people in the Church of God. And this is where it’s very important in knowing and understanding the Word of God. That if the one who is doing the teaching does not increase in his knowledge and understanding, how can he increase the knowledge and understanding of the brethren?

Here’s a very profound principle for those who are teachers, because we have to be learning all the time, too. When we teach and when we preach, we should also be doing so to ourselves. Not only can the hearers become dull of hearing and dull of understanding and sluggish, mentally, but also those who are teaching. They get themselves so busy in doing so many activities that they have no time for prayer or study, no time for really thinking, no time for preparation. What do you think they’re going to give to the congregations that they teach? *Milk-toast!* And if they get milk-toast what’s going to happen? *They will stay babes forever!*

How would like to have a diet of just milk and pabulum your whole life? *You talk about dull and uninteresting!* You could never have a nice juicy steak, never have a nice breakfast of eggs. No, just milk and pabulum! If you had that everyday, you’d be bored stiff, plus you’d be malnourished!

Romans 2:17—Paul is chiding the Jews because they thought themselves to be teachers, but they were the ones who were violating the ways of God, because they weren’t teaching and they weren’t doing: “Behold, you are called a Jew...”

Verse 29: Rather, he *is* a Jew who *is* one inwardly... [We can apply this to ourselves—right? If we are converted and we have the Spirit of God] ...and circumcision *is* of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter...” If we have received the Holy Spirit and have had our hearts circumcised by that, then when come back to v 17 and we read it, this applies to us—right?

Verse 17: “Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of the blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the law” (vs 17-20). That’s all well and good. We find another principle here, which we already covered back in Matt. 7—*why call Me, ‘Lord Lord’ and do not the things which I say*. Likewise, Paul is taking that principle and expanding it here even more, and applying it to those who are teachers.

Verse 21: “You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also?....” That’s very important, very profound. A teacher—whether a minister, elder—if he doesn’t teach himself. In other words, if he says one thing to the congregation or brethren and does something opposite himself, he falls into the same category of hypocrisy as the scribes and Pharisees—right? *Because they say and do not!* Sooner or later that’s going to take a toll on

- his understanding
- his relationship with God
- on those who listen, because they are not activating the Spirit of God
  - ✓ to know
  - ✓ to study
  - ✓ to realize the things that need to be.

You become dull and bored! He really gets them, v 21: “...You who preach, ‘Do not steal,’ are you stealing? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law?” (vs 21-23). That’s quite a thing! Paul was in the category of one who did what?

- taught himself
- let Christ teach him
- studied
- grew in grace and knowledge and understanding

—so he could teach the brethren! I’m sure as did all the other apostles. So, that’s an example for any of us who are teaching. Here’s what happens when you find hypocrisy among teachers:

Verse 24: “For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written.” I tell you what, the movies written today really depict all of the Protestant ministers as stupid, sinning oafs! What does it do? *It turns people off toward finding out anything about God the Father and Jesus Christ!* I don’t know about you, but when I was a youngster, my few encounters with religious people did that to me. It turned me off and I wanted to run the other way as fast as I could.

As a matter of fact, when my folks wanted me to—at that time they started attending the Lutheran Church for a while—take confirmation. Well, you have to go to the minister’s house and study. I think I was about ten or eleven and my mom would drive me up and drop me off. I’d wave goodbye and start walking up toward the porch, making sure she had already left, and I’d walk up on the porch, jump down on the side and I’d run off and go play someplace. I was so turned off by these sickly, sweet ministers that it was unreal! So, the conduct of many of those ministers in the world—and would have to include at least some within the

Churches of God today in what they have done in throwing away doctrine and Truth—that they are causing the rest of the world to blaspheming against God because of their conduct and their lack of teaching.

Let's put it this way: If you're going to be a teacher, then you cannot be living on milk yourself. It won't work! Let's talk about those who then are in need of milk. Who needs milk? A lot of the things that we teach here, and learn here, would be like giving a newborn babe an un-ground piece of meat. Who needs the milk? *These are the ones who are beginning!*

1-Peter 2:1: "Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes... [We're not to stay that way, because Heb. 5 tells us that we're to grow up and become mature.] ...yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow" (vs 1-2).

That is to start you out, and it is the milk of the Word, not the teachings of men. We can liken the milk of the Word to mother's milk. If babies are breast fed with mother's milk they are more intelligent, more healthy, become stronger, have a greater immune system. And we can liken the other—the formula and Similac and all of those artificial things—to *insincere* milk of the manufacturers. What happens to children reared on that? *Well, I think the jury is still out, but I think a lot of the evidence is in:* the babies are not as healthy. They also know that they're not as intelligent. They also know it creates havoc with their digestive system because it's too hard for their little systems to digest. Mother's milk is the perfect formula, because God made it. You don't have to have any great knowledge to do that—do you? *No!* We can liken to it, but you are to grow.

Verse 3: "If you yourselves have indeed tasted that the Lord *is* gracious." We have to grow beyond that, so we have the admonishment by Peter. He's talking about the Epistles of Paul:

2-Peter 3:16: "As *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand... [That doesn't mean they can't be understood, but you have to apply yourself to them.] ...which the ignorant and unstable are... [as they do the other Scriptures] ...*twisting and distorting*, as *they also twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness; rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity.

Amen" (vs 16-18). We are to grow!

Let's see the process from milk to growth. This is not only for growth for individuals, but it is also growth for those who are teaching, because it says, 'the time that you ought to be teachers.' We could look at some of the ministers that we knew in the Church of God and we could also look at what happened to them as teachers. They did not apply themselves in all these things, too. It's quite an interesting process that God has. This whole process that we are talking about works two ways:

1. for the good for those who love God and keep His commandments, that they can grow and understand
2. the opposite way for those who reject God's way or are the spiritually drunk

We can tie that in with Rev. 17—right? *Drinking out of the goblet or cup of Mother Babylon.*

Isaiah 28:7: "But they also stagger through wine, and reel through strong drink... [talking about *spiritually*] ...The priest and the prophet... [they've gotten off of the Word of God and gotten into 'religion.'] ...stagger through drink; they are confused by wine; they reel through strong drink... [What is the way? *The way of the Lord*—correct? They're out of it! They don't know it! They're not teaching it!] ...they err in vision, they stumble in judgment, for all tables are full of vomit *and* filthiness; no place *is clean*" (vs 7-8). If that does not describe the Roman Catholic Church! That's something else—isn't it? *Yes!*

Verse 9—God asks the question in the midst of all of this drunkenness and vomit and spiritual confusion: "'Whom shall He teach knowledge?.... [How is anyone going to learn anything in this kind of environment?] ...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts.'" That's why He says in Heb. 6:1 we're going to advance beyond the beginning principles of Christ. In other words, we're going to go beyond the milk. You have to come to the point that you are weaned from the milk, and when you're weaned from the milk you can begin to eat solid food.

Here is how you put together the Truth of the Bible, v 10: "'For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little.'.... [That's how you understand it. (on the other hand): ...for with stammering lips... [drunken spiritual stupor we just read about; they don't understand] ...and foreign tongue He will speak to this people" (vs 10-11). And that's the way they view it.

Verse 12: "To whom He said, 'This *is* the rest He gives to the weary' and 'This *is* the refreshing,'... [In other words, if you are drawn

from the breast and weaned, if you learn ‘precept upon precept and line upon line’ then it will cause the *weary to rest* in the Word of God and it is a *refreshing* because it renews you and converts you.] ...yet **they were not willing to hear.**” Just like we’re talking about in Heb. 5 and Matt. 13.

Then what happens? Just like we’ve been discussing, v 13: “So then the Word of the LORD was to them... [in the same way] ...precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken.”

The Word of God being a two-edged sword works both ways. You can grow to spiritual maturity by using it properly. You can end up in spiritual destruction if you are in a spiritual drunken stupor and misuse the Word of God. Pray tell, what other book in the world could do that? *No other book! None whatsoever!* This also tells us that only the mind of God and the Spirit of God could have inspired and put together the Bible this way, through the Holy men moved of the Holy Spirit, to write it the way that He wanted it written, so that it would have the effect that God designed it to do. Which then is another miracle, indeed—*isn’t it? Yes, it is!* Which tells us then that the longer we’ve been in the Church and the more that we understand, the more awesome and fantastic the Word of God becomes. And the more that we can approach God in this way, the more that He is going to lead is in understanding and Truth!

Let’s come to John 16 and let’s see that. What we just read here is a *spiritual* operation. It cannot be accomplished without the Spirit of God. John 16:13: “However, when that one has come, *even the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth...* [How? *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little as you put the Word of God together!*] ...because it shall not speak from itself... [Because it’s going to convey the words of God through the power of the Holy Spirit; it’s going to convey His thoughts and His Truth to those who have the Holy Spirit.] ...but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you” (vs 13-15).

2-Timothy 2—this applies not only to brethren, but this also applies to anyone who is a teacher. When it says that ‘they are not skilled in the word of righteousness’—why? *Because they’re not doing it the way that we just read!*

2-Timothy 2:11: “This is a faithful saying: If

we have died together with *Him...* [through baptism (Rom. 6)] ...we shall also live together with *Him...* [by the power of the resurrection] ...if we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us; if we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself... [because God is!] ...See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way...” (vs 11-14). If you want an example about striving about words to know profit, take a look at *The Journal*.

Let me give you an example: An evangelist in the Church of God who said that after he studied it, anointed cloths are not Scriptural; shouldn’t use them. It’s the striving over words, “...*but which lead to the subverting of those who hear*” (v 14). He says now that when someone is sick that he doesn’t send out anointed cloths, he just has them call and they pray for them. Well, pray tell, why did Paul send out ‘anointed cloths or handkerchiefs’ to those that were sick or had demons? And they were healed! Some people have said, ‘Well, that’s not just for healing, that’s for a special miracle.’ Of course! Is there anything wrong with anointing a cloth and asking God to perform a special miracle because you can’t be there? *Of course not!* But it’s subverting a lot of people! And ‘striving of words’; boy, I tell you, *The Journal* is full of it!

Here’s what we need to do, v 15: “Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God... [How do you do that?] ...a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of the Truth...** [How? As we’ve already covered: *precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, there a little!* Properly put together] ...**rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**” Because, if you don’t *rightly divide the Word of Truth*—if you wrongly divide it—then you can make it say something that it really doesn’t say, and yet, claim that you’re using the Scriptures. Isn’t that what most of the ministers of the world do with the Word of God?

Verse 16: “But avoid profane and vain babblings because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness... [That is self-evident and we have seen that through the years—right?] ...and their words will eat away at the body like gangrene...” (vs 16-17)—like a cancer. It is will come in unknown, unawares and begin to eat away. Then what happens? *You get into a spirit of criticizing the Word of God!* Rather than looking into it to see what it says that you ought to do and you ought to teach and how you ought to live, you take the Bible as a task or a project to tear it apart, to pull it down, to make it say something that it doesn’t say!

Here’s an example here, v 17: “...of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus, who have gone astray

from the Truth, claiming that the resurrection has already taken place, and are destroying the faith of some” (vs 17-18). So what do we have here? *We have the first beginnings of preaching of going to heaven!* It’s always incongruous to go to some of these funerals where there’s a Protestant or Catholic minister and they give the nice purring words: ‘Well now, so-and-so is up in heaven looking down on us and then you go out to the gravesite and he mentions something about the resurrection. It’s incongruous, because if you go to heaven, why is that you need a resurrection?’

If you want to read a contorted doctrinal discussion on that, read that in the Catholic catechism sometime. This fits in with ‘let the dead bury the dead.’ That means let the *spiritually dead leaders* bury the *spiritually dead* people.

Verse 19: “Nevertheless... [In spite of all this that men can do] ...the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal... [That in spite of all of this; think of this with the scattering of the Church of God]: ...‘The Lord knows those who are His,’... [All of those who have the Holy Spirit of God, **God knows where they are!** And He knows them! No doubt about it!] ...and, ‘Let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness.’” So there we have the solution.

2-Timothy 3:16: “All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness... [we’ll see how righteousness, what the problem is there (Heb. 5) because they are not doing the things that we have just covered] ...so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17). This has two applications:

1. to the one who is a teacher
  2. to anyone who is of God
- because it says over here in 2-Tim. 2:19 that the Lord knows who are His.

Hebrews 5:12: “For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers... [Being able to fully explain the Word of God to someone. Haven’t we see this with the breakup of the Church? *Yes!* It is amazing the people that really didn’t know anything that you thought really knew something—right? *Yes! Absolutely amazing!*] ...*but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness because he is an infant” (vs 12-13).

- Doesn’t know how to use the Word of God!
- Doesn’t know how to study the Word of

God!

That’s what happens. Remember, Paul is writing this to those who were baptized for a long time. The reason that we’re going over this is because in Heb. 6 he talks about the *unpardonable sin*. I know what’s going to happen when we get to Heb. 6. Those people who are conscientious and want to serve and love God are going to be worried that they have committed the *unpardonable sin* when they haven’t.

The only unfortunate part of that is that the ones who ought to hear what Heb. 6 has about the *unpardonable sin* are not around to hear it! When I get there and I’m preaching on the *unpardonable sin* and you’re loving God and trying with all your heart, mind, soul and being to overcome your sins and human nature, and you’re very sensitive that you don’t want to sin and you want to walk in God’s way, ***you are not a candidate for the unpardonable sin!*** But he is leading up to it by showing the process of how a person comes to that state.

- by not hearing
- by not reading
- by not studying

They regress and become an infant!

Verse 14: But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through **repeated practice**... [This is where we have the trials and difficulties that we go through. You constantly go God’s way.] ...have had their senses trained to discern both good and evil.” That’s so when you read something you can see where it is good or you can see where it is evil. You can see the things that are right. You can see the things that are wrong.

Let me give you an example of something of how Satan can use a *hook of Truth* to further deceive people. Sometime back I went to a conspiracy conference. We know that Satan is the great conspirator of the world. We know that he is doing everything he can to deceive the governments of the world. We know that he’s trying to form a one-world government. We know what is happening because of the changes in the law. And now with the mammoth reorganization of the federal government under George W. Bush, it is going to create a police state if they get everything enacted that they want and the United States will be changed from a republic to a dictatorship. The only thing that will be needed will be a dictator! Many people in the world understand that. They write books and articles and they speak about it. They pointed out and those things are true.

When I was there I heard the host get up and say, ‘Our next meeting is going to be in Santa Cruz and if all of you want to know how those like Shirley MacClaine and the other have succeeded where others have not, come to this very spiritual

meeting.’ That’s a good example that you can’t have part of the Truth. Satan can use a *hook of Truth*, get these people by exposing what he’s doing to ensnare them into something else that he is doing to get them into spiritism and the occult.

I sat there and it about blew me away! Well, the point is, many of those people sitting there, not knowing the Word of God, not understanding that they need to exercise their senses to discern *both* good and evil, couldn’t understand that. So, what were they doing? *They were going up and signing up for the event!* Satan’s famous saying: *Gotcha!* Get you one way or the other.

Let’s see what happens if you don’t have your senses exercised to discern good from evil. You will end up thinking that evil is good. It’s a progressive thing that takes place. Let’s see the progression. Lot’s of times we do not connect things that are taking place in the world such as this are resulting in spiritual problems. All you have to do is examine the cities of the world and you will see that that’s true.

Isaiah 5:8: “Woe to those who join house to house, *that* lay field to field, until *there is* no place left, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!” In other words, there’s no place you can get away from it all. If you go to Yosemite to get away from it, half the world is there touring it because they’re wanting to get away from it. This is what we’re talking about. Look at the cities.

I marvel, even here in Fairfield you have over 100,000 people in Fairfield, and I think you have 200,000 cars on the road. You get people all jammed up together. What does that cause? *That makes sin easy to take place*: kidnapping, sexual abuse, adultery, stealing, breaking and entering—all of those things, doesn’t it? To say nothing of being so jammed in and then have your mind’s jammed with all of the things that come in the air: radio, television and all that sort of thing. I tell you what, we’re living in an age that we have more things against us than perhaps any other people down through history. We ought to be the ones to have our senses exercised to discern good from evil. Here you see it starts.

Verse 11: Woe to those who rise up early in the morning to go after strong drink; who continue late into the night *while* wine inflames them!.... [This is literally physical and spiritual.] ...And the lyre, and the harp, the drum, and pipe, and wine, are *at* their feasts...” (vs 11-12). We can just say rock concerts—how’s that? And instead of just wine and strong drink, we can say heroin, cocaine, speed, and methamphetamine. Just this last week some supposed famous base guitar player for the group that is called ‘Who’ died at 57-years-old in Las Vegas. Why is that all of these rock stars who just

absolutely destroy their lives with the music and the drugs and their absolutely lawless living, die at a young age? What does the world say? *Oh, what a shame! What a loss!* I say, too bad it didn’t happen sooner and to more, so that more people would get the point that that way leads to death.

“...but they do not regard the work of the LORD.... [No! God isn’t in their thoughts at all.] ...Yea, they do not see the work of His hands.... [because God’s judgment is coming] ...Therefore, My people are gone into exile because *they have* no knowledge... [See how that ties in with Heb. 5? *You’re dull of hearing!* You can’t discern right and wrong, and people are going to go into captivity because of that—aren’t they? *Yes!*] ...and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude is dried up with thirst. Therefore, the grave has enlarged its appetite, and opened its mouth without limit; and down goes her glory and multitude and brawlers, and he who rejoices in her, shall go down into it. And man is bowed down, and men are brought low, and the eyes of the lofty are humbled. But the LORD of hosts is exalted in judgment, and God, the Holy One, is sanctified in righteousness” (vs 12-16). In the long run God’s way is going to happen—isn’t it? The truth is, *you can’t get away from God anywhere!* People may think that they can. People may think like Adam and Eve and become their own gods.

Verse 18: “**Woe to those** who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with cart ropes; who say, ‘Let Him hurry *and* hasten His work, so that we may see it; and let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, so that we may know!’” (vs 18-19). But they’ve already rejected it. They challenge God! Sooner or later God takes you up on the challenge. Sooner or later God’s judgment comes.

Here’s the thing that’s important; here’s the lesson here: Those that challenge God, because God doesn’t answer immediately—with a thunderbolt or something like that—they think they’re getting away with it. But the truth is, it’s going to come! ***Sooner or later, it will come!***

Here’s what happens when you no longer discern good and evil, v 20: “**Woe to those** who call evil good and good evil... [This all from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—right? *Yes!*] ...who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!.... [So when we talk about the world that is upside down, that’s exactly what we’re seeing—isn’t it? *No doubt about it!*] ...**Woe unto them** that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! **Woe unto them** that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink, who justify the wicked for a bribe...” (vs 20-23). Hello, Wall Street! Hello, Washington, D.C.!

Yet, they can put a man away on the ‘three-term’ for stealing a piece of pizza. Imagine that! Actually that is double jeopardy because they’re going back and taking past convictions so they can upgrade a misdemeanor to a felony, and actually go in the past and upgrade a past and paid-for crime as a felony and then you have three strikes and you’re in prison for 25 years for stealing of piece of pizza.

And yet, look at all the executives of these corporations that are finally admitting, ‘Well, we fudged a little on our books’—about \$3.5-billion! Now they’re laying off 17,000, so ‘we can balance the books. We’ll do it over the backs of these people and can their jobs.’ Yet, the executives get their golden parachute and leave with millions. It’s amazing!

Verse 24: “Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff... [If you’ve ever seen that, it goes up POOF!] ...their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.” They rejected knowledge! They didn’t exercise their senses to discern both good and evil.

Verse 25: “Therefore, the anger of the LORD is kindled against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against them, and has stricken them; and the hills trembled, and their dead bodies *were* as filth in the midst of the streets. In all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand *is* stretched out still.” Very important thing!

What a shame that a Church of God could get in that state—which it did; and have to suffer those things—which it did.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 5:8-9
- 2) Hebrews 6:1
- 3) Hebrews 5:9
- 4) John 14:6, 15, 21-24
- 5) Matthew 7:21-25
- 6) Hebrews 5:10-14
- 7) Hebrews 6:1
- 8) Matthew 13:14-15
- 9) Romans 2:17, 29, 17-24
- 10) 1 Peter 2:1-3
- 11) 2 Peter 3:16-18
- 12) Isaiah 28:7-13
- 13) John 16:13-15
- 14) 2 Timothy 2:11-19
- 15) 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 16) Hebrews 5:12-14
- 17) Isaiah 5:8, 11-16, 18-25

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-John 2:3-4
- 1 Corinthians 3:9-12
- Revelation 17
- Romans 6

Also referenced: Publication: *The Journal*

FRC: bo  
Transcribed: 4-22-11  
Corrected: 6-24-11

## The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVII The Law of Sin and Death (Unpardonable Sin)

Fred R. Coulter—July 27, 2002

We're ready to begin Hebrews 6. Chapter six has some very important things after we covered how people are sluggish; they had gone backward spiritually, had need of milk; weren't skilled in using the Word of Righteousness. They hadn't trained their senses to discern good and evil. That's the whole purpose of using the Spirit of God and growing in grace and knowledge and understanding the things of the Word of God, and understanding how to live in the world while it is evil. Yet, at the same time, you are able to live righteously.

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and *of* faith in God." Let's just take that one verse and we'll add a few Scriptures to it and expand on it a little bit more.

Here's the way that you grow into perfection, Ephesians 4. Growing in perfection is a joint operation of each individual Christian and the ministry. Those that are teaching should also teach themselves. In other words, if the Word of God and the Holy Spirit is able to help each individual Christian grow in grace and knowledge—which it is—then every minister or elder has to diligently apply himself to 'rightly divide the Word of God' and know the Word of God and grow in grace and knowledge himself, and to teach himself so that he can also teach the brethren. The ultimate of what Jesus said is, 'It's sufficient that the disciples become as the teacher.' Since we are all disciples of Christ, what God expects us to do is to grow into the perfection of Christ, Who is the One Who is doing the teaching.

You need a human teacher to teach you, but the One Who is actually doing the teaching is Christ—through His Word and through His Spirit. Therefore, that is why it is a joint operation. If the teachers are not growing in grace and knowledge and teaching the brethren, and also themselves, then you end up in a sandbox situation, and you always stay with just the basics. You can never graduate out of third grade, or never get out of the sandbox!

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets... [Not necessarily foretelling future events. This means they are telling, under inspiration, the Word of God.] ...and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers... [here's the only reason for it]: ...for the perfecting of the saints... [that ties right in with Heb. 6:1—go on

to perfection.] ...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ..." for the up-building; from the same Greek word as *to build*, as in build a building. That's why in Heb. 6 that Paul is using the foundation, the beginning foundations. If you lay the foundation of a house, you only have the foundation. You've got to go on. You've got to frame it, plumb it, wire it, do the interior, the exterior, and put on the roof. Then after you get it done, as you all know, through the years what do you have? *Maintenance! Rebuilding! Remodeling!* All of those things go along with it. All of that is likened unto the edifying of the Body of Christ—

- it has to be built
- it has to be modified
- it has to be proved
- it has to be perfected

Verse 13: "Until we **all**... [I love that, because that shows that the ministers and the brethren are all brethren, and Christ is our older brother] ...come **into**... [it is a process] ...the unity of the faith... [It's a process, because you don't have unity of faith all at once.] ...and of the knowledge of the Son of God... [and you grow in that] ...unto a perfect man... [a perfectly spiritually mature individual] ...unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ." This one verse tells us that growing in Christian grace and knowledge and understanding—and all of the things that are defined there—is a lifelong project. Since it is, God has given us His Word, which is a lifelong study book to understand how we come to eternal life.

This ties in with Heb. 6:1, that we go beyond the basic principles, v 14: "So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men..." Let me just say, today we've got more of that than ever before. You've really got to be careful. You have to know! Remember, Jesus said that in the end there would be many false prophets arise, deceive many and even do great signs and wonders insomuch that even the elect might be deceived. That's their whole idea. If you've got the whole world deceived, who does Satan want to go after that he doesn't have deceived?

- Those that have the Spirit of God!
- Those that know the Word of God!
- Those who are not deceived!

Those are the ones he's going to go after. That's why it has to be a constant diligence.



“...in *cunning* craftiness... [They always figure out a new way to do it.] (they lie in wait to deceive [KJV]): ...with a view to the systematizing of the error” (v 14). They don’t think they’re lying in wait to deceive, but they are. They’re trying to bring new doctrine and so forth. But if it doesn’t square up with the Word of God and if we don’t do like the Bereans and ‘search the Scriptures whether these things are so,’ then deception can creep in, and we’ve already seen how that has happened—right?

It’s interesting in the Greek—“...with a view to the systematizing of the error” or the deception—which is actually a prophecy of the Christian religious system of this world. Is it not systematized? Is the error not canonized in their own writings and so forth? *Yes, indeed!* This is actually a prophecy of it.

Here’s the solution, v 15: “But holding the Truth in love, may **in all things grow up into Him...**”

- to have the mind of Christ
- to think with the words of Christ
- to judge things
  - ✓ by the Holy Spirit of God in you,
  - ✓ the Word of God in you and so forth

“...Who is the Head, *even* Christ from Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that* which every joint supplies...” (vs 15-16).

We all have a part to put in it, every single one of us! If you don’t think the smallest part needs care, just break your little toe one time and you’ll find out. You’ll find out that what you consider the smallest or least is really a problem if you don’t have it. Or what if you get a little canker sore in the inside of your mouth and every time you speak you bite down on it and pain shoots up and down the side of your mouth. So it’s the same way with the Body of Christ. I would have to say a lot of it is in bad shape today. I don’t know what we can do to help them. I don’t know how we can reach out to them to show them the right way, but God will have to open the door and make that possible.

Here’s the substance of the whole thing, v 16: “...according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love.”

We can see where Christ laid the groundwork for this right in the Sermon on the Mount, which talks about going on to perfection. This shows the goal not only of Christ, but also of God the Father. Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” That’s a tall order—isn’t it? *Yes, it is!* It’s not achievable by your own works, but by

- the Spirit of God
- the grace of God
- the mercy of God
- the love of God

That’s a perfection that we are to reach to.

Paul is telling us back here in Heb. 6 that unless we go beyond the foundation, the beginning principles of Christ, we can’t do it. The Apostle Peter in 2-Pet. 1 shows the steps of doing it. I’m not going to expound it because we have the in the sermon series on *The Epistles of Peter*—how we are to grow into perfection. That perfection is stated here by Peter as the Divine nature. We all have human nature. The goal for perfection is to have the Divine nature, which will not be accomplished fully, obviously, until the resurrection.

2-Peter 1:1: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” That’s how it is accomplished. That righteousness comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ through

- repentance
- growing and overcoming
- studying the Word of God

That righteousness then is imputed to us as *a gift!* We will see how important that is when we come to what is committing the *unpardonable sin*. God in dealing with us in His graciousness, mercy and love, giving of this righteousness is a fantastic thing! That’s why it’s very, very important that in dealing with each other we need to *forgive and forget* just like God does. If you remember past sins and offenses that have been committed against you and the person has changed, then you haven’t forgiven. That becomes a stumbling block in your perfection and your relationship with God.

Likewise with your own sins, those sins, which are repentable, you also need to ask God to give you forgetfulness of that, because every time you think of it again you remind God of it again. God being perfect, He can forget it and put it away and remove it from us as ‘far as the east is from the west.’ That’s the righteousness that Peter is talking about here.

Verse 2: “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue” (vs 2-3). That’s how we’re perfected. So, when Paul says ‘let us go on to perfection’ it has a lot to do with

- growing
- developing
- using the Word of God
- being led of the Spirit of God

Verse 4: “Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises... [Understand this: ***No one else in the world has the promises given to them at this time!*** That’s why ‘many are called but few are chosen.’] ...that through these [promises] you may become partakers of *the* Divine nature...” That is the ultimate of the perfection that God wants us to have. And obviously being a human being—and as we have learned by going through the book of Job—human works cannot equal Divine nature. The greatest that human works can do is human works. Regardless of how righteous we are, of ourselves we still have sinful human nature—don’t we? Therefore, there can never be any true perfection by works of themselves. It has to be Christ in you, which is of itself a Divine gift of God.

“...having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust. And for this very reason also... [He gives a step-by-step way to grow to perfection, and the ultimate of that is Godly love.] ...having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue... [right behavior] ...and to virtue, knowledge... [grow in grace and knowledge] ...and to knowledge, self-control... [led by the Holy Spirit] ...and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness” (vs 4-6). So there’s a process that takes place.

Verse 7: “And to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*.... [This is the goal and the agenda that is set out for us on a lifelong growth in our Christian life and walking in the way of the Lord.] ...For *if* these things exist and abound in you... [they are living, acting and growing] ...they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 7-8). That’s how to avoid the pitfalls of Heb. 5 of becoming dull of hearing, becoming in need of basic milk and how then you learn to exercise your *spiritual* senses to discern good and evil.

It reverts right back to what we’re talking about, of what Paul warned of in Heb. 6. Verse 9: “But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—... [sounds a little Laodicean—doesn’t it?] ...so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time” (vs 9-10). So, we have an absolute guarantee we won’t fail.

The reason I’m going through this is because we’re going to cover the *unpardonable sin* and I don’t want anyone to think that, or be fearful that you have committed the *unpardonable sin*.

Hebrews 6:1: “...not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and *of* faith in God, of *the* doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of *the* resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (vs 1-2). I’m going to just briefly review without referring to any Scriptures:

#### **The doctrine of baptisms is plural**

- by water
- by fire for the unpardonable sin
- trial by fire
- baptism that James and John said when their mother said, ‘May they sit on My right hand and left hand.’
- Jesus said, ‘Are you able to have the baptism that I’m going to be baptized with?’ They said *yes!* And He said, ‘So be it, you will’—martyrdom. He spared John, but nevertheless, those are the baptisms.

#### **Laying on of hands has to do with the receiving of the Holy Spirit**

- ordaining for those to serve as leaders within the Church
- for those who are sick
- for marriage and setting aside
- for blessing of children

#### **Resurrection of the dead**

- first resurrection to eternal life
- physical resurrection to physical life
  - ✓ before Christ comes—Lazarus and others that Jesus raised from the dead
  - ✓ second resurrection at the end of the thousand years—the first phase to receive an opportunity for salvation
  - ✓ cast into the Lake of Fire as incorrigible wicked—second phase

#### **Eternal judgment**

- for us—judgment is now on the house of God
- final judgment—which will determine our reward; sealed when we die

Verse 3: “And we will do this, if indeed God permits.” God does permit it! He does go on! Then Paul goes on to explain about the *unpardonable sin!* Verse 4: “For *it is* impossible... [no power available; it’s an impossibility. If you put yourself at odds with Christ and reject Him you are in an impossible situation.] ...for those

1. *who were* once enlightened, (v4)
2. and who personally obtained the heavenly gift, (v4)
3. and became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit, (v4)
4. and who have tasted *the* good Word of God, (v 5)
5. and *the* powers of *the* world to come, (v 5)

That's an awful lot. I mean, *you have to be a full-fledged bonafied, baptized, receiving the Spirit of God Christian, and walking in the way of God* for a substantial period of time in order for all five of these conditions to apply to you.

**I. "...for those who were once enlightened..."**  
(Heb. 6:4)

It's quite a profound thing to be enlightened of God, by the Spirit of God. John shows right there in the beginning {see sermon series: *Was Jesus God?*}. We'll briefly go over those verses because it flows together and shows what it means to be enlightened.

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The reason that this being enlightened is so important is because that it come directly from God. In other words, God has moved in your life and God has done something in your life of a profound nature that He hasn't done to other people.

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness..." (vs 2-5). Showing

- Light equals Truth and the Spirit of God
- darkness equals sin and the world of Satan the devil

"...but the darkness does not comprehend it" (v 5). The reason that the darkness does not comprehend it is because it won't receive it.

John 3:18: "The one who believes in Him is not judged... [that belief must follow with actions and faith] ...but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil" (vs 18-19). But they think their evil deeds are good in many cases. When Satan deceives the people. Let's use the example of witchcraft, because there are a lot of witches around today—witchcraft and occultism.

Satan doesn't come along and say, 'I want

you to commit human sacrifice.' No! Most people would reject that automatically—wouldn't they? What does he do? *He comes along and says, 'I've got a way that you can have more power.'* How so? *'I've got a way you can control other people!'* I have a way through these rituals that if you do them you can get in contact with the spiritual powers that govern this world! And they will give you more power.' Then he leads them through the stages of occultism or illuminati or whatever—then they get into human sacrifice at the later stage. That's where a lot of these missing children go—you know that, don't you?

Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. Here's the key, v 20: "For everyone who practices evil hates the light..." These are the unconverted in the world. They're not involved necessarily in the *unpardonable sin*:

- they are deceived
- they're cutoff
- they're eyes were closed
- they're ears are stopped
- they can't see
- God has given them over to this world

They hate the light! "...and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be exposed." The difference is this: When you are enlightened by the Spirit of God and you understand the Word of God and the Law of God and the Word of God convicts you of sin, then you repent and you come to the Light even more so you can have those things removed from you. That's the difference. So, *the ones that have had this and then reject it, they put themselves in a terrible position with God.*

Verse 21: "But the one who practices the Truth... [living by the Word of God] ...comes to the light..." Constantly coming to Christ because He is the true Light; constantly coming to the Word of God

- to live by it
- to judge your actions
- to judge your thoughts
- to judge the things that you do

—by the Light of the Word of God! "...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (v 21). They were done by God, not by you. That's what it has to be for all of us.

1-John 1—We see the same thing here; this defines it further so that we can see the separation and the difference between light and darkness. It is said, 'If the light be in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?' What is even worse is this: *If you once have been enlightened and then you reject*

**that Light.** That's a whole different story. We're going to see how profound that is.

1-John 1:5: "And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light..." If you're coming to the Light, you're coming to God. If you're coming to God, you're coming to Christ. If you do so, God's Spirit will reveal to you the things that you have to change and grow and overcome; reveal even more to you about your own human nature and your thoughts and things like that. It's all a progressive thing in growing and grace and knowledge. Once you have had that and then turn from that, it's a deliberate thing!

"...and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 5-6). What is Truth? *Your word is Truth!*

- you're not practicing the Truth of God
- you're not living by the Truth of God
- you're not living by His commandments

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from **all** sin." It's continually cleansing us from sin! That's why

- *if* you're loving God
- *if* you're keeping His commandments
- *if* you're confessing your sins
- *if* you are trusting in Christ to forgive your sins and block them out

***you have not committed the unpardonable sin!*** You have your sins forgiven—***all of them!*** There's no forgiveness for the *unpardonable sin*. We'll see that's more than just a slip of the tongue or something like that.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us." That is getting close; that's one of the first steps toward the *unpardonable sin*; saying: 'Well, I'm good. All people are good. They're not inherently sinful. We have no sin. All we need to do is just be better.' That's the first step toward it.

Verse 9: "If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." (vs 9-10). What is sin?

- Transgression of the law!
- Transgression of the Word of God!

Let's see where John shows there's a difference

between a sin which is not unto death *and* a sin which is unto death. Here he's defining sins that are forgivable, which are not unto death *vs* the unpardonable sin, which is not forgivable.

1-John 5:16<sub>[corrected]</sub>: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death... [that could even be a grievous sin] ...he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death.... [any repentable sin] ...There is a sin unto death... [the *unpardonable sin*] ...concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*." When a person has committed the *unpardonable sin*, that's between them and God, and God is going to judge them. There is no repentance granted to them.

Verse 17: "All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.... [can't be repented of] ...We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him" (vs 17-18).

So, if you reject the Light (Heb. 6:4) 'it's impossible for those who are enlightened.' Let's take the definition of the *unpardonable sin* so you'll know what we are talking about. Sometimes people can be like David. Remember when David deceived himself concerning Bathsheba. That took place over quite a period of time. He did quite evil things; so did Manasseh; so did Ahab. But they hadn't seared their consciences. So, a person can be a 'backslider' and be a 'backslider' for a considerable period of time, but they haven't committed the unpardonable sin.

**Definition of the Unpardonable Sin:** *Deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and salvation through Jesus Christ!* Deliberate and willful is the main thing. Here's a complete definition: ***The unpardonable sin is a deliberate and calculated renunciation of God!***

- It is not an accidental sin
- It is not a sin unto temptation
- It is not a sin through weakness

The *unpardonable sin* is a knowing, determined, calculated, pre-meditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, ministers and brethren. ***It is a willful determination to reject*** the gift of repentance, ***hostile contempt for***

- the commandments of God
- the Spirit of God
- the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- the salvation of God

That's pretty heavy-duty—isn't it? *Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have*

- no regrets
- no sorrow
- no conscience

*They have turned their back on God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Word of God!* It is impossible

- to renew them to repentance
- for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance
- for others to move them to repentance
- to move themselves to repentance

They have seared their consciences with a hot iron and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the power, to renew them to repentance.

- Their choice is final!
- Their judgment is final!
- God's judgment against them is final!

That's the full definition of the *unpardonable sin*! I've had people call me on the phone and say, 'Oh, have I committed the unpardonable sin?' *No! If you're worried about committing the unpardonable sin, you wouldn't even call to ask.* What about Catholics or false religions that reject God's way and so forth? *They were not enlightened in the first place!*

Matthew 13—let's read the condition of most of the people in the world. There will be some few who will commit the unpardonable sin by their rejection of God—such as the beast and the false prophet as we see in the book of Revelation. They will have enough witness by time the two witnesses get done with them. It's very possible that they could commit the unpardonable sin; probably most probable that they will have.

Matthew 13:11: "And He answered *and* said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given.' That is enlightenment! Here's a condition of the most of the world. Most of the world cannot commit the unpardonable sin. Only those who have the Holy Spirit of God can commit the unpardonable sin. That's why he's writing this to those who have been in the Church for decades.

Verse 12: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance... [that is if he takes care of it properly] ...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him.... [And that's what has happened to the religions of the world. They don't have. They've never been *enlightened*. Their enlightenment is the darkness of Satan the devil or the occult in most cases—not of

God!] ...For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand" (vs 12-13). So, God has given them over to their own devices.

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing... [Heb. 5] ...and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them'" (vs 14-15). In other words to enlighten them, to bring them to repentance and so forth. I don't know how Protestants handle this verse in relationship to God is busy trying to save the whole world. So, #1 is *you have to be enlightened!* That is *understand the Word of God and walk in the Light of God.*

## II. "...who personally obtained the heavenly gift..." (Heb. 6:4)

### 1. Repentance

What is the heavenly gift? *The gift of repentance!* God has to grant you that repentance! Romans 2:4: Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?" It is *tasting of the heavenly gift.*

### 2. Answer the Call of God—God's Calling

After you repent you have answered the call of God. In other words, part of the heavenly gift is *God's calling* John 6:44—'none comes to Me unless the Father draw him.' That is a gift.

### 3. Fruits of the Holy Spirit

### 4. Salvation

Ephesians 2:8: "For **by grace you have been saved** through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God." So, if you've tasted of the heavenly gift of having your sins forgiven; if you've tasted of the heavenly gift by being led to repentance; if you tasted the heavenly **gift of salvation** through faith—which Christ alone can give—and reject that, then you're in bad shape.

### 5. Righteousness

Romans 5:17—let's see the ultimate of the gift of God—the gift of righteousness. "For if by the offense of the one man [Adam] death reigned by the one... [death passed to all human beings in the nature of sin] ...how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the **gift of righteousness**... [that's the imputed righteousness

that God gives you—*it is a gift!*] ...reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.”

What a tremendous blessing. Understand this: When you repent, when you have been baptized, received the Holy Spirit, God the Father imputes to you the **gift of righteousness**, which means that He views you as He views Christ. In other words, since the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you, that is the righteous standing that you have before God. When you reject that, there's nothing else you can do. You need to understand that.

This is pretty strong stuff: *the rejecting of God and committing the unpardonable sin!*

### III. “...became partakers of the Holy Spirit” (Heb. 6:4)

Actually receive the begettal from God the Father. That's what's so profound! That's how you partake of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is in you. You have the begettal of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the disciples on that last Passover night that the Holy Spirit was going to come and be *within* them.

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age; *even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive... [notice that the unpardonable sin applies to those that God has called, that have partaken of the heavenly gift, that have received the Holy Spirit, which the world has not received, and cannot receive it; it's impossible!] ...because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you” (vs 15-17).

That's what is the begettal of the Holy Spirit. Once that takes place, if you reject that—we can use an analogy here: It's the same as going to an abortion clinic and having it removed. It's a willful decision. Just like going to an abortion clinic is a willful decision to terminate a pregnancy to kill an unborn life.

We have the Holy Spirit in us. We have been begotten of God and now we are His children. That's why in 1-John 3 it talks about that we are ‘the children of God’ and how much love God has bestowed upon us. 1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly

as He is” (vs 1-2). So, we're the children of God.

Verse 4—In the *King James Version* this is probably the most misleading verse of all. It's misled a lot of Protestants in the doctrine of *born again*. “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him **does not practice sin...**”(vs 4-6). Doesn't mean it's impossible to sin. We just read in 1-John 5 that if you ‘see your brother sin a sin not unto death’ that would be a direct contradiction of this verse if it meant the impossibility of sinning. This means that whoever had Him dwelling in him *does not practice sin*.

“...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous... [because of the gift of righteousness imputed to that person] ...The one who practices sin... [transgressing the law] ...is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten by God **does not practice sin...**” (vs 6-9).

In other words, you can't live in sin. Why? *Because the Spirit of God will prick your conscience to repent!* That's why you cannot practice sin. You may continue in a sin for a great period of time, but as long as your conscience is still pricking you and you know you've got to get back to God, you haven't committed the unpardonable sin. Your conscience is telling you that you can't continue this way. What is that? *That is the Spirit of God*—through the power of God, because you still have the Spirit of God in you—*convicting you of that sin in hopes that you will repent*. That is leading you to repentance! You cannot practice sin, and here's the reason:

“...because His seed... [the Greek there is ‘sperma’—the begettal of the seed of eternal life from God the Father] ...*of begettal* is dwelling within him, and **he is not able to practice sin** because he has been begotten by God” (vs 6-9). So very profound! If you have become partaker of the Holy Spirit, you are in a total different category than other people in the world—even religious people who are deceived. You have had something special given by God individually to you—*the begettal of the Holy Spirit, partaker of the Holy Spirit*. That is the begettal. You have to grow in grace and knowledge. You have to let the Holy Spirit lead you. All of those things are partaker of the Holy Spirit.

Let's show that after you are begotten of

God and you grow in grace and knowledge, you are to let the Holy Spirit lead you. How do you do that?

- prayer
- study
- living by the Word of God

then

- God's Spirit will lead you!
- God's Spirit will prick your conscience!
- God's Spirit will inspire you!
- God's Spirit will give you the desire to do the will of God!

In spite of all your weaknesses! Just like the man who said, 'I believe, Lord, help my unbelief.'

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

Verse 9—very important to show the distinction, the difference, why the unpardonable sin is a premeditated and pre-determined rejection of God, of unmitigated hatred toward God. "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." There again, the world does not have the Spirit of God. It's only in those who have been made partakers of the Spirit of God.

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness." Here's how we use the Spirit. This is how we are led of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works within our mind because the seed of begettal is there.

Verse 11: "Now if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [make alive] ...your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die... [because you will continue to go on and commit the unpardonable sin] ...but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live" (vs 11-13). That's just in summary to overcome human nature.

As you are doing that, v 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." So, you have to let the Spirit of God lead you—*partaker of the Holy Spirit*. This narrows the category down to who are those who could commit the unpardonable sin. It's a pretty high threshold—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* It's a very high threshold. When it is done, it is absolutely premeditated beyond belief.

Verse 15: Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba,

Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God" (vs 15-16). That's what it means to become partakers of the Holy Spirit.

#### IV. "...have tasted the good Word of God..." (Heb. 6:5)

- You believed it.
- You understood it.
- It has cleansed your life.

Jesus said if you 'hunger and thirst' after the Word of God, you shall be filled. When you are filled, then you have *tasted* the Word of God—haven't you? *Yes!* You've seen what it's done for you.

Psalm 34:8: "**O taste and see** that the LORD is good... [Now, you don't take a bite out of the Lord; that is through His Word *you taste the good Word of God.*] ...blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. O fear the LORD, all you saints, for there is nothing lacking to those who fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing" (vs 8-10)—***tasting the good Word of God!*** You understand it.

Have you ever been studying the Bible and all of a sudden something that you wanted to know suddenly becomes clear where it wasn't before. It's kind of like DING! a little light suddenly goes on. That's the best way I can explain what it means to *taste* of the Word of God and what it does for you. That's why study is so important, coupled with prayer and all the basic things that you have heard. It's like this: If you want to live physically, you have eat food, drink water and breathe air, and then the other things such as sleeping, etc.

If you want to live *spiritually*, you have to ***led of the Spirit, pray, study, grow and overcome.*** If you don't do these things then you will die. Just like if you don't take care of your body or you mistreat it, it's going to react to you. And then if you don't take care of it from there on, it's going to react up to the end, including death. Spiritually speaking, the same thing could happen. If you avoid all of these things—you go against everything that is here in Heb. 6:4-5—then you're in bad trouble!

#### V. "...and the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:5)

What do you mean "...the powers of the world to come"? *The power of God intervening in your life!* Have you ever lived through something that *you know* that God had to intervene to keep you from dying a physical death? Such as being in an accident or just missing something bad that happened? ***That's God intervening!*** That the power

of God which is going to be common in the world to come.

Hebrews 6: “If they have fallen away, to renew *them*... [v 4 it’s impossible—1-5—who] ...have fallen away... [it’s impossible]: ...to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.”

Let’s see the process of this: From the *Biblical Word Commentary*—which is generally a good commentary because mostly they just expound on the different words. They don’t get into doctrine, they get into the meaning of the words and so forth:

In Hebrews the characteristic terms for sin that display contempt for God are compounds of ‘para’—many of which occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

Again, here we have these right in the book of Hebrews.

- 1) Heb. 6:6—‘paradeigmaizein’—*to expose to public humiliation*; making a mockery of the sacrifice of Christ. If once you have gone through all of these five steps and you make a mockery of the sacrifice of Christ—that’s something!
- 2) Heb. 3:16—‘parapikainein’—*to rebel*—“For some, after hearing, **did rebel**... [Of course, they heard the very voice of God from Mt. Sinai. You can’t have it any more direct than that—can you? *No!*] ...but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses.”
- 3) Heb. 3:8—‘parapikramos’—*rebellion*—“Harden not your hearts, **as in the rebellion**, in the day of temptation in the wilderness.” Isn’t it interesting that right after chapter three, in chapter four it ‘remains therefore, for the people of God, Sabbath-keeping.’ So, it’s a hardening of the heart! It’s really something. Where does that hardening of the heart begin? *By not listening to the Word of God!*

v 7—“For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice.’ And everyday we have the opportunity to hear—don’t we? *Yes!* ‘Harden not your hearts as in the rebellion in the wilderness.’

v 15—“As it is being said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion.’”

- 4) Heb. 2:1—‘pararrein’—*to drift away or fall away*—“For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the

things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away**.” That’s how the unpardonable sin begins—you begin drifting away, slipping away, a little folding, a little turning of the hand so that your spiritual poverty come upon you. Then you get into a Laodicean condition where you are blind and naked. Then you get into a condition where God is still working with you, He spews you out of the Body [of Christ], spews you out of His mouth and then He’s knocking at the door—He’s still working with you. If you open the door and repent, then God continues to deal with you.

If you harden your heart, if you slip away, if you let these things just totally carry you away and you go back into the world in hard-heartedness, then you can commit the unpardonable sin.

- 5) Heb. 13:9—‘parapherein’—*to carry away*—This again shows another process: “Do not be **carried about** by all kinds of strange doctrines....” Isn’t that profound? This tells us one of the first steps that Satan will use to start leading people away will be all kinds of strange doctrines. I suppose that in this day and age I don’t think we’ve heard of all of them, but we’ve heard probably well over 90% of them.
- 6) Heb. 12:12—‘pareinenos’—*being listless*. “Therefore, lift up the hands that are **hanging down**... [What does that generally mean? What does that generally show? *An attitude of giving up!*] ...and *revive* the weakened knees.” What the Apostle Paul is doing here from Heb. 6 to the end of the book of Heb. to show them that they need to look to Christ and avoid the unpardonable sin and how to not get caught in the trap of all of these things.

Let’s see how Paul explains it again. The book of Hebrews is written to those who have been in the Church for decades. It is written to them so that they will recover from their weaknesses, their slipping away and their sins so that they will not commit the unpardonable sin. That’s why just like the book of Hebrews was for the close of the apostolic age, the book of Hebrews is for the close of the age right before Christ returns.

Hebrews 10:18: “Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifices* for sin.... [animal sacrifices] ...Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest [the Father] by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil



(that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works” (vs 18-24). Many brethren are doing that. Reach out to the other brethren that you know that may be slipping away, drifting away, just getting back into the world.

Notice, just like Heb. 3-4—rebellion and rejection of the Sabbath—so we have it here, v 25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near.... [Boy, if we don’t see *the day* drawing near, we are blind indeed!] (v 26 ties right in with Heb. 6:4-6): ...For if we willfully go on sinning... [practicing sin, living in sin] ...after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, **there is no longer any sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*” (vs 25-27).

That’s what the unpardonable sin is! Now, let me read something from the *Word Biblical Commentary*, which I think defines it pretty good. It says this concerning the sacrifice of Christ:

What is visualized by the expressions in Heb. 6:6 is every form of departure from faith in the crucified Son of God. This could entail a return to Jewish convictions and practices as well as a public denial of faith in Christ under pressure from a magistrate or hostile proud simply for personal advantage. The insertion of ‘it is impossible to restore them to repentance’ is parallel to the notion of ‘laying again the foundation’ concerning repentance. In the eschatological perspective of Hebrews... [that means in the fulfilling of the prophecy of Hebrews] ...there is no other repentance than that provided by God through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification of sins accomplished by the Divine Son in the final period of God’s redemptive activity.

The ‘adunatone’—which is the impossibility—is used and is absolute and without qualification in v 4 expressing an impossibility and the apostate repudiates the only basis upon which repentance can be extended.

In other words, *brace the impossibility*—that’s what the unpardonable sin is.

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:1
- 2) Ephesians 4:11-16
- 3) Matthew 5:48
- 4) 2 Peter 1:1-10
- 5) Hebrews 6:1-5, 4
- 6) John 1:1-5
- 7) John 3:18-21
- 8) 1 John 1:5-10
- 9) 1 John 5:16-18
- 10) Matthew 13:11-15
- 11) Hebrews 6:4
- 12) Romans 2:4
- 13) Ephesians 2:8
- 14) Romans 5:17
- 15) Hebrews 6:4
- 16) John 14:15-17
- 17) 1 John 3:1-2, 4-9
- 18) Romans 8:14, 9-16
- 19) Hebrews 6:5
- 20) Psalm 34:8-10
- 21) Hebrews 6:5-6
- 22) Hebrews 3:16, 8, 7, 15
- 23) Hebrews 2:1
- 24) Hebrews 13:9
- 25) Hebrews 10:18-27

Scripture referenced, not quoted: John 6:44

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Epistles of Peter*
- *Was Jesus God?*

Book: *Word Biblical Commentary*

FRC: bo  
Transcribed: 4-22-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XVIII

## Denying God

Fred R. Coulter—August 10, 2002

We have been talking about the things concerning the *unpardonable sin* and let's just review that so that we understand that the *unpardonable sin* is a very pre-meditated thing. The *unpardonable sin* is a deliberate, willful choice and rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the repudiation of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation through Jesus' sacrifice and His blood. That's after the five steps of having known:

1. being enlightened; once enlightened
2. obtaining the heavenly gift
3. partaker of the Holy Spirit
4. taste of the Word of God
5. powers of the world to come

It's not a light thing, and it's not a happenstance thing. (from handout—found on the website: CBCG.org along with the Hebrews Series):

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate calculated renunciation of God. It is not an accidental sin, nor a sin under temptation, nor a sin through weakness. The unpardonable sin is a knowing, determined, calculated, premeditated, willful decision and choice arrived at by rejecting any pangs of conscience, leading of the Holy Spirit, pleadings of the Word of God, or ministers and brethren. It is a willful determination to reject the gift of repentance, and hostile contempt for the commandments of God, the Spirit of God, a willful repudiation of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of God. Those who have committed the unpardonable sin have no regrets, no sorrow and no conscience that they have turned their backs on God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the Word of God. It is impossible to renew them to repentance; it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to move them to repentance, for others to move them to repentance or to move themselves to repentance. They have seared their consciences with a hot iron and there is no power—human or Divine—that is able, or has the ability to renew them to repentance.

- Their choice is final!
- Their judgment is final!
- God's judgment against them is final!

As we went through the different Greek words that have been used in the book of Hebrews, meaning

- to expose to public humiliation

- rebel
- rebellion
- drift away, fall away
- to carry away
- being listless

There is no other repentance than that provided through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification for sins accomplished by the Divine Son in the final period of God's redemptive activity. The impossibility, which is used—'adunatou/adunaton'—absolutely [an impossibility], and without qualification in Heb. 6:4 expresses an impossibility because the apostate repudiates the only basis upon which repentance can be extended. **"To repudiate Christ is to embrace the impossible"** (*Word Biblical Commentary*).

That's why the Laodiceans have not committed the unpardonable sin. That's why most of those in Thyatira did not commit the unpardonable sin. That's why when God deals with a person that He will bring circumstances upon them that if they have drifted away or if they have fallen away somewhat—

- they haven't rejected God
- they haven't rebelled
- they haven't rejected the commandments of God
- they haven't rejected the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

—they, just because of following their own human nature and sin, have become what we would call *backsliders*. Backsliders can recover.

Let's see how they recover. Backsliders have not committed the *unpardonable sin*. 1 Corinthians 3 tells us about what is discussed there in Heb. 6 about all the things that you go through for conversion, etc. Here Paul is also warning them in this particular situation; then we will see a similarity between this and what follows in Heb. 6.

1-Corinthians 3:10: "As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*." There are two warnings here:

1. **to the ministers**—because Paul said 'as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another is building upon it'—Apollon. The one laying the

foundation has to be very careful how he's doing it, too. That is by

- Truth
- the Word the God
- the Spirit of God

so that it's right and correct!

2. **to each one**—each of the brethren has to build on that foundation him/herself. It can be laid. Christ is the One Who leads you, gives you the understanding, gives you the tasting of the Word of God—the heavenly gift—and all those things that we have covered.

How you build upon there then becomes the important thing.

Verse 11: "For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ." That's the whole important thing! This ties in with John 14:6 where Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father but by Me.' *There's no other way to eternal life!* It is Jesus Christ or nothing at all. That's what's going to cause the problems in the future between the Church of God and the world.

Worldly Christianity is becoming more and more pagan, and, in fact, they call it the 'neo-paganism.' It is becoming more and more infiltrated with witchcraft through the likes of *Harry Potter* and actual infiltration of witches, etc. If you have the Trinity Channel, just turn it on and watch it; it's nothing but emotionalism, nothing to do with salvation, growing in grace and knowledge. It has nothing to do with growing in Christian character. It is only an experience, an emotion, and you get it amplified if you send lots of money to the preacher.

The only way is through Christ and the only way is *His way*, because He said, 'I am *the Way*'—no other way; '*the Truth*'—no other truth; there's no such thing as Christian truth, Jewish truth, Catholic truth, Orthodox truth, Islamic truth, Hindu truth, Buddha truth, Confucius truth. There's only ONE TRUTH—that's Christ! And He is '*the Life*'—because no one can receive eternal life any other way! I don't know if that would help stop the suicide bombers over in Palestine or not, but they think they're going to heaven if they blow themselves up.

Read 1-Cor. 13—you can give your body to be burned, or you can give your body to be blown, or you can give your body to be ground up, or you can whatever, and if you don't have the love of God and love Jesus Christ it's of no avail! That's why the only foundation is Jesus Christ.

Verse 12 tells us how we are to build, and we will see a parallel between this and Heb. 6: "Now if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones... [those are things which are

valuable, improved with trial, pressure, fire and heat. That's what God wants us to do.] (the other three are very interesting—aren't they?): ...wood, hay or stubble." You have the *Three Little Pigs* fairytale. Stubble is very interesting. If they get too much stubble in a silo it gets too hot and it can blow up—spontaneous combustion! Hay goes almost as quickly. Wood may take a little longer.

You look at some of those hot coals of a forest fire as they're all burning. And, of course, what they did is they let all the bramble grow, the underbrush grow. They didn't take care of it because those who 'love trees' must let them grow. They really hate trees because in the final analysis, after they've let them grow, because they weren't maintained they burn up anyway. We're going to see trees, vines and so forth were made to be pruned, were made to be taken care of so they produce more. But, wood, hay and stubble is all burned up.

Now, if a person has not committed the unpardonable sin—he just has flimsy Christian character—there's still hope for him. Verse 13: "The work of each one shall be manifested... [In other words, God is going to try them.] ...for the day of trial will declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire... [and that is any day that you have to stand for the Truth] ...and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is." That was literally true in the case of William Tyndale, and in the case of those who taught their children to recite the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm in English. They were burned at the stake.

Verse 14: "If the work that anyone has built... [on the foundation] ...endures, he shall receive a reward." Please understand that a reward is *in addition* to the gift of salvation. A reward is something that you *work for*. A reward is something that you *can earn*. But you cannot have the reward unless you have eternal life, and **you cannot earn eternal life**; God has to give that to you. That's why he puts it in this way.

Verse 15: "If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet as through fire." That's what is the important thing! If you had wood, hay and stubble as your Christian building, but you haven't repudiated Christ, you will still receive salvation. You will lose reward. Exactly how God is going to do this I don't know, because God is the One Who's going to judge—correct?

What we need to do is do exactly like the Apostle Paul said here, v 16—this is how we have to do it: "Don't you understand that **you are God's temple**, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?" God desires that more than He does a temple or a tabernacle. He wants to dwell *in* you through the power of the Holy Spirit so that you can become, at the resurrection, a spiritual child of God. That's what

God desires. When we keep this in mind and we understand it and we realize that we have the Holy Spirit and we then stir up the Spirit of God. If we find ourselves building with hay and stubble clear it out yourself and start building with gold, silver and precious stones. Always remember this:

- *As long as there's life, there is hope!*
- *As long as there is repentance, there is renewal!*
- *As long as there is repentance, there is forgiveness!*

God is able to redeem you out of those circumstances, though you have not exercised the Spirit of God in a way that you should have. Or we can use the classic case of the Laodiceans today. They had to come to the point that Christ had to 'spit them out of His mouth.' That was their trial so they would wake up to the fact that they need to be zealous. They are in a repentable condition—aren't they? They'd have to be, otherwise Christ would not tell them to repent. We need to understand that. The Laodiceans have not committed the unpardonable sin! They have just been sloppy builders.

In many cases they've been like what you used to see years ago. In Idaho we used to see quite a few of them. They would get their land and the first thing they would do is excavate for the basement. Then they would pour the foundation for the basement and everything and they would have a little stairwell going down into the basement and then put a temporary roof on the basement, because they were going to build the house the next year. Twenty years later that temporary roof is still there, and anybody that drives by knows that they haven't finished that house and it's been well over 20 years.

It's the same way, the Laodiceans have been living in the basement and they have the temporary roof and they haven't finished the house. God spits them out so they will have to build. That's why you have to understand you are *the temple of God* and the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Now then, here's a warning, it can go too far, v 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him..." You defile the temple of God by rejecting God, by repudiating God. What he's doing, he's giving a warning! You've got this building, a trial is going to come, if you're not close to God it's going to burn up, and then where will you be? If you continue that way then you defile the temple of God and God will destroy you.

Hebrews 6:6: "If they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves... [It's a very interesting verb here; it's a middle voice verb. They are doing this to themselves; God is not doing it to them.] ...and are publicly holding *Him* in

**contempt.**" This happened just before the fall of Jerusalem when the rebellion took place.

Since Christ didn't return when a lot of people figured that He would return, then the Jews beginning in 66 A.D. decided to take it upon themselves to get out from underneath the Roman domination. A lot of the zealots whom James said believed in the Lord, renounced Christ, renounced His sacrifice, went back to the animal sacrifices and the temple worship, and threw their support to those who were rebelling against Rome. So, it was quite a thing that happened!

There is another way that you can repudiate Christ and hold Him in public contempt. That has to do with the wrong Passover observance. Let me just mention here, though the Catholics are blinded and the Protestants are blinded, nevertheless, if someone leaves the Church of God—having been enlightened, having these things of being illuminated and receiving the Holy Spirit of God and so forth—deliberately rejects and goes back into the Catholic Church and participate in the Eucharist. You are dealing with priests who claim they have the power to command God to come into the bread so that the very body of Christ and the blood is in the bread. And every time they perform the Eucharist they are sacrificing Christ again and again and again. Whereas, He died once! And that's why we keep the Passover once a year in the proper manner.

All of those who are Catholics need to think of this: Did that same priest, with those same hands, who gives you the bread—and if you're able to take the wine—just molest one of the boys in the backroom before mass? Something to think about! The truth is the Catholics, in their religion and belief, are so far from God that are so convinced that they believe that they are really *the church*. It's like the thing that is said: Lies told over and over again, and enough people believe it and it's reinforced over generations, when someone comes along and tells the truth, they'll be considered a raving manic and a lunatic.

Those are the ways that you can reject God and hold Him in public contempt! You can also do so by just renouncing Christ. We had one man do that temporarily. He saw the folly of what he was doing after about three years. But when he did, he took some brethren with him. The brethren who followed him *made their own choices* to do so. That's why we are to prove all things so that those things won't happen.

Let's see some ways in which we can *deny*. *Denying Christ* is not quite as bad as rejecting. It's serious! But not as bad as rejecting. Remember when Peter said, 'Lord, we're not going to let this happen to You. I would go to the death and go to prison with You and I would never deny You.'

Christ said, ‘Peter, you’re going to deny Me three times before the cock crows.’ And he did! But he repented! So denying—unrepented of—would, of course, then lead to rejection. But there are times when people can do that. Denying then becomes something which can bring you to the threshold of the *unpardonable sin*.

Let’s come to Titus, the first chapter. When we analyze what Peter did, he denied three times in word—didn’t he? Did he deny Christ in works? *No!* He repented before he went out and did the works of denial. We can see the difference there.

Titus 1:9: “Holding steadfastly to the faithful Word... [anyone who is an elder; that really includes anyone who hears the Word of God] ...according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ*, so that he may be able both to encourage with sound doctrine... [the Word of God has to be known, it has to be *sound* doctrine, not frivolous thought, not ideas and things that come into the mind as important and replace the Word of God.] ...with sound doctrine, and to **convict** those who are gainsayers.” Not convince; you’re not going to convince a gainsayer. How did Jesus do it?

Remember they brought the woman caught in adultery. They said, ‘Moses says that this person ought to be killed.’ Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground. I think what He probably wrote there was, *where is the man?* That would be very simple, because you can’t commit adultery by yourself—can you? Has anybody ever committed adultery by himself? *No!* or herself? *No!* How did they get her anyway? Which one of the Pharisees enticed her? How did they catch her in the very act and not catch the man? So, I think He wrote, *where is the man?*

What Christ did to convict the gainsayers was He made them face the fact of proper judgment that they didn’t bring the man. What happened? Each one, beginning with the oldest, left. And then standing in the middle of the crowd was Jesus and the woman. And Jesus looked up at the woman and said, ‘Does any man accuse you?’ She said, ‘No man, Lord.’ He said, ‘Go and sin no more.’ I think that may have also convicted the conscience of that woman, too, as well as the conscience of those men. It can be done that way. You can convict them. Some you can’t! Some you can’t stop!

Verse 10: “For there are many rebellious and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from the circumcision party, whose mouths must be stopped...”

Every once in a while I get a letter—it happened quite often with the series *Why God Hates Religion*—and I tell you what, if you can’t figure out why God hates religion then you need to go back to the sandbox and start all over again, because religion is a substitute of man’s way or God’s way, using the

name of God and claiming the promises of God and yet, retaining all of the carnality and stupidity of human nature. If you don’t believe that, witness all of the religions in the world. Then I also get letters which ask why all of this refuting and debunking and like the series on *Was Jesus God?* going through and refuting the writings of these men. Why? Should we just let it go by? Have a nice day, and you don’t answer back and you don’t show what the Truth is? Have you defended the Word of God? *No!* Have you stopped their mouths? *No!* That what they were to do.

“...whose mouths must be stopped, who are subverting whole households, teaching things which *they* ought not, for the sake of selfish gain. One from among them, *even one* of their own prophets, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, and evil, wild beasts, and lazy gluttons.’ This testimony is true. For this reason you *must* rebuke them severely... [There comes a time when there has to be sharp rebuke] ...**that they may be sound in the faith**” (vs 10-13). That’s the whole purpose of it. The purpose is not to get up there and attack people and intimidate them and put them down. It’s to show them that they need to change their ways.

Here’s what happens; this is why God called the Apostle Paul, v 14: “Not paying attention to Jewish myths...” If you think that Protestantism and Catholicism is pagan, you don’t have a clue concerning Judaism. One of the worst things that ever happened in the Church of God—when it was in its heyday—is this: ‘The Jews are just like us.’ They are just waiting for the Messiah to come. *They are not like us*. Their religion is pagan, steeped in superstition and the their Talmud is full of hatred, and vindictive and full of vitriol against Jesus Christ—which they have printed and is an open repudiation of Christ. How many are blinded so they are not held accountable, I don’t know. But either way, I wouldn’t want to be in their shoes.

That’s why we should not have, v 14: “...paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men, which turn away from the Truth.” [We have been invaded with sacred names, prayer shawls, praise dancing—just to name a few—15<sup>th</sup> Passover, 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan Pentecost. Going through the whole *Code of Jewish Law* shows you all the commandments of men; of do this, do that, and do the other thing; and don’t do this, don’t do that, and don’t do the other thing. All of those things as is described in the introduction to the *Code of Jewish Law* are designed to keep the people so busy trying to remember what they are supposed to do that they don’t have time to think for themselves on what they need to do. God expects us

- to use His Spirit *to think*
- to use His Word *to reason*

Verse 15: “To the pure, all things *are* pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing *is* pure; rather, both their minds and consciences are defiled.... [When it’s that way, that your mind and conscience are defiled, you undoubtedly have committed the *unpardonable sin*.] ...They personally profess to know God...” (vs 15-16).

We’re talking about Jews in this particular case. We can do the same thing with any other religion today, too, but they have not necessarily rejected God. They have just never gotten out of paganism. They are in an entirely different category. Christ was there in person. The apostles were there in person. They knew!

Verse 16: “They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work.”

So, when the denial reaches beyond the mental denial, as Peter did, into the actionable denial that you repudiate Christ, denial is one of the steps that leads to it. What happens when you deny Christ? There is something else that happens. There comes a point when Christ gives up on that person, because they have reached a point of

- no hope
- no repentance
- no remorse
- no sorrow
- no pangs of conscience, because they have defiled it

2-Timothy 2:12: “If we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; **if we deny Him, He will also deny us**... [How many times will you read some of these parables in the Gospels, and Jesus would say, ‘I never knew you.’] ...if we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself” (vs 12-13)—because *He is*.

I want to cover this point and make sure we understand thoroughly concerning the *unpardonable sin*. So that we realize the severity of it, but we also need to understand and realize that when brethren are loving God and serving Him, regardless if they’re building ‘wood, hay and stubble,’ they still haven’t committed the unpardonable sin. Therefore, if there’s to be any correction or exhortation given to them, then they should be exhorted for the sins that they are doing and not threatened with the unpardonable sin in a blanket statement *to put a guilt trip on people, to put them in fear!* Do you understand the difference between it?

If you’ve been backsliding, you haven’t committed the *unpardonable sin*. But you better repent of your backsliding or you may get to that point! Matthew 10:32: “Now then, whoever shall

confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven” (vs 32-33). Then He wanted to make sure that you would understand that this is going to be under great duress and pressure when it comes.

Let’s look at it this way: If you’ve never had a trial, if you never had difficulty, if you’ve never had any of those things come along and all you were was just blessed and blessed and blessed and kept from everything, you would have no occasion to deny anything—would you? And if you did, you would be almost insane—wouldn’t you? He wants you to know that it’s going to be under duress.

Verse 34: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s enemies *shall be those of his own household*. The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me” (vs 34-38).

So, when you come to that denial it’s going to be under pressure! It’s going to be under duress! He wants you to understand it. Then He says, here’s the key, v 39: “The one who has found his life shall lose it, and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it.” If you try to relieve the pressure against you by denying Christ, then He’s going to deny you.

Just stop and think for a minute: William Tyndale was hauled before the court. He was interrogated for 18 months, I believe, before he was finally burned at the stake. He could have well-reasoned in his mind—which would have been good human rational thinking—I’m *not* going to change these guys anyway. He wasn’t! *I need to finish the translating of the Old Testament, so I’m going to go ahead and placate them with the answers that they want so I will be released, so I can do the translating to finish the Old Testament.* He didn’t do it! And when he prayed, the last words were: *O, God, open the eyes of the king of England*—which was Henry VIII. There’s a big guy to try and move. How are you going to open his eyes? ‘

It was also brought out that in history there was a woman who was temporarily Queen of England before Mary Queen of Scots—who was ‘Bloody Mary’—and her name was Lady Jane Grey. She was reading the Bible—probably a translation by William Tyndale—and she rejected the Catholic faith and the prelates were after her to renounce

Christ and they were after her day and night and she lost her hair and everything, but she didn't renounce Christ. Finally, she was beheaded and the Mary, Queen of Scots—Bloody Mary—took over and had a terrible, bloody reign, when the Catholics came back to England again.

Then when Mary, Queen of Scots died, Elizabeth—the daughter of Anne Boleyn who was the second wife Henry VIII—became Queen of England. And you might get the video and watch that because that's a very interesting video. There are a few risqué places in it, but that's the nature of some movies today, even though they're historical. It is really quite something, and you can see that the lord protector for Queen Elizabeth had to be sent by God to do the things that were done. I think you'll find it very interesting that especially when you see the final counsel by the pope and his cardinals to decide on assassinating Elizabeth, the pope said in a very low voice: 'God will bless this assassination.' How Elizabeth was protected and how those things were done was really quite something!

Today they want to have everybody in such a accepting and ecumenical and politically correct society, that you accept anything, you stand for nothing and you go along with everything. Denying the name of Christ is something that really needs to be considered.

Let's see another way how you can *deny God*, and that is by hardened sin. That you just set your mind to sin in such a way that you do not care, and in such a way that you relish it. Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah is engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; *it is* carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars." In other words, right into the religious fabric of Judah. I tell you what, that really is quite a thing when you go back and consider that.

Let's see another way that you deny Christ, Acts 8. This would be very good for all ministers to read, especially those on the Trinity Channel. A lot of the things that are perceived on television do not show you the truth behind what is happening. The truth behind all of this is to come out with a one-world acceptable Christianity. That's what Simon Magus wanted to do. He wanted to combine Christ and the paganism that he had and still have the Holy Spirit.

Now, let's look at this man, Acts 8:9: "But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery [witchcraft] in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria, proclaiming himself to be some great one. To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God'" (vs 9-10). That's exactly what they're saying of the pope, because what you are reading here, this

Simon was probably the one whom you could call the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church, though the Roman Catholic Church was not formed for about 300 years later. He had all the practices that they had.

Verse 11: "Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip, who was preaching the Gospel—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ—they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself also believed..." (vs 11-13). *Professed* that he believed, because obviously he did not believe because he hadn't repented.

- Can you have a belief without repentance? *Yes! The demons believe there's one God, and tremble! No repentance!*
- Can a human being have a profession without repentance? *Yes!*
- Can he have a baptism without receiving the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*

Simon himself believed "...and after being baptized, he steadfastly continued with Philip; and as he beheld *the* signs and great works of power *that were* being done, he was amazed" (v 13). Isn't it interesting, this reminds me of the hovering of the *false prophet*, the attempt of infiltration by Satan the devil, the usurpation of the Church of God by false apostles.

Verse 14: "Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God..." And we might add that Simon was baptized; they knew something wasn't right and God did something very important because of that. He did not give the Holy Spirit! The apostles came down and straightened out the situation. I'm sure that Philip learned from his mistake. Would you not think that it would be a mistake to just go out and baptize John Paul II because he said he believed in Jesus Christ? *Yes, indeed!* That's what we're up against here.

"...when the apostles heard that...they sent Peter and John to them; who, after coming down *to Samaria*, prayed for them, that they might receive *the* Holy Spirit; for as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the* Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money" (vs 14-18). This is in here for everyone to learn the lesson that God has not given to the leadership of the Church of God that which is going to give them the power to merchandise brethren. He's not given that. God does not want the brethren merchandised. Of course, Simon would *sell* the Holy Spirit—wouldn't he? Just like they *sell* masses, and *sell* indulgences, and *sell* forgiveness.

That's merchandising! That's why he wanted it.

Verse 19: "Saying, 'Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.'.... [This was such a critical thing. Notice Peter's answer, this is really a vehement answer]: ...But Peter said to him, '**May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money**'" (vs 19-20). Today this is likened unto the saying, 'Go to hell! You and your money' to the theological place of ever-burning! This is where this kind of attitude would go! Whether Simon committed the unpardonable sin or not, I don't know, because he never repented, so we can conclude that he didn't. But he certainly was used of Satan to lead a lot of people astray.

Peter says, v 21: "**You have neither part nor lot in this matter...** [apostleship] **...for your heart is not right before God.** Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you; for I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness.'.... [And ultimately, if that is not repented of even in the second resurrection, it is the *unpardonable sin*—is it not? *Of course!*] ...But Simon answered *and* said, 'You beseech the Lord on my behalf... [No, you've got to pray to the Lord yourself.] ...so that none of *those* things which you have spoken may come upon me'" (vs 21-24). So we have the example there.

Let's see how that infiltrated into the Church and the problems that it caused in the Church. Let's see why the warnings are given. God gives plenty of warnings before a person comes to the point of committing the unpardonable sin. He calls to repentance before a person commits the unpardonable sin. That's why we have the message to the seven churches here in Rev. 2 & 3. He warns them of their mistakes and calls them to repentance.

### The Church at Ephesus

Revelation 2:4: "Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.... [There's the admonition. There's the exposing of the sin so they can repent.] ...Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works... [If they didn't go back and do the first works, what happens?] ...for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent" (vs 4-5). So, God always gives a warning! He gives a call to repentance!

### The Church at Pergamos

Because they have the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes and teaching of eating the things sacrificed unto idols and commit fornications. Revelation 2:16: "Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*, I

will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth." That is not talking about the second return of Christ. Can God come upon you at any time? *Yes!* He can come upon you with judgment, trial, and to fight against them.

Here the Truth of God is so important not only to God and the brethren, but to Christ, that if it is not in His Church He is not going to fight against His own Church. That's how important that this really becomes.

### Church at Thyatira

We come over here to the Church that really fell into the depths of it because they had Jezebel the prophetess. Let's see where the point comes of no return. We see part of it here. Actually, He has more things to say against the Church at Thyatira and Pergamos than any of the other churches.

Revelation 2:20: "But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication... [spiritual as well; and because this Jezebel is the harlot woman of Rev. 17. Jezebel was the daughter of the priest of Baal, and she married Ahab, king of Israel. That's the whole historical background for this.] ...and eating things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent... [Again, God always gives space to repent. So, when God gives space to repent, accept it and be receptive. Don't go back on it.] ...of her fornication, but she did not repent. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works" (vs 20-23). They're right at the edge—aren't they? Right absolutely at the edge!

Here He explains why, v 24: "But to you I say, and to *the* rest who *are* in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine... [So, you can follow false doctrine to eternal death—can't you? *Yes, you can!*] ...and who have not known the depths of Satan... [If you get into Satan worship: repudiation of the Word of God, accepting of the false teachings, accepting of the teachings of Jezebel—which are the teachings of Satan the devil and Baalim—and you get into the depths of Satan worship, *you commit the unpardonable sin*. That's a warning!] ...as they speak; I will not cast upon you any other burden." These things impact and affect the Church.

We have two things which are important, v 13—He says to Pergamos, "I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is*... [living in the middle of a satanic world] ...but **you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My**



**faith...** Very important! You can live in the midst of evil all around you, and if you hold fast the name of Christ and do not deny the faith, then you'll receive salvation.

### **Church at Philadelphia**

Revelation 3:8: "I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and **have kept My Word, and have not denied My name.**" Very important! If we follow what is said here in v 8, then we will be building gold, silver and precious stone and we will not be building with wood, hay and stubble and we will not be building things up to the point of *denying Christ*.

Let's look at one last thing. When the unpardonable sin and the rejection of the Holy Spirit has occurred, there is no forgiveness, there is no repentance now or when you're resurrected. Matthew 12:22: "Then was brought to Him one who was possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that the one *who had been* blind and dumb both spoke and saw." The traditions of the Jews, even in Judaism, says that when the Messiah comes He will make the blind to see and the dumb to speak. We have it both in this one person. They saw this done. The religious leaders saw this done! This becomes important.

Verse 23: "And the multitudes were all amazed, and said, 'Is this the Son of David?'" Who is what? *The Messiah!* If the Messiah comes, then the religious leaders lose all their power. When Christ returns you can well bet that all the religious leaders are going to lose their power. I did a sermon series *Why God Hates Religion* and I asked the question: When Christ returns, which religion will He retain in the Millennium? *None!*

Verse 24: "But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, 'This *man* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, prince of the demons.' But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.... [That is a truism, absolutely true!] ...And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then shall his kingdom stand?'" (vs 24-26). The truth is, Satan is only able to unite his kingdom at various sporadic times. His house is divided against itself and the power and principalities are arguing against each other as to who is going to control what. There is a truism here. It appears at times united, but it's really divided.

Verse 27: "And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? On account of this, they shall be your judges. But if I by *the* Spirit of God cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you.... [The action of God,

and this is by the power of the Holy Spirit from God the Father.] ...Or how is anyone able to enter into the house of a strong *man* and plunder his goods, if he does not first bind the strong man? And then he will plunder his house" (vs 27-29). That's literally what Christ did to Satan, who, in this case is the strongman.

Then He gives a warning, v 30: "The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.... [That's a truism that will always be.] ...Because of this, I say to you... [this is very important to understand]...**every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men...** [That's why it's so very difficult to commit the unpardonable sin and why it is such a premeditated thing.] ...**except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit; that shall not be forgiven to men**" (vs 30-31). *Because*

- you're rejecting God
- you're rejecting what the Holy Spirit is doing
- you're rejecting Christ
- you're repudiating the works of God

There is no forgiveness for that! What you are doing, you are repudiating and rejecting God the Father, the Sovereign of the universe! If you do that, on what grounds do you ever expect to have eternal life? *It cannot be!*

Verse 32: "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him... [That's something—isn't it? That's a broad blanket of forgiveness—is it not? *Yes!*] ...**but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming age.**"

It has to be so premeditated that there is no hope, because premeditation is so final, and the resolve is so vicious, and the hatred is so intense. I don't know anyone that is in the Church of God who has come close to committing the unpardonable sin. I don't know about those who have left the Church of God and have gone out to go with the religions of the world and accept the world, deny the Truth and things like this. I don't know how many have come to the point of just building wood, hay and stubble or how many have come to the point of rejecting the Holy Spirit of God or not. God makes that judgment. That's why we need to understand how powerful it is to commit the unpardonable sin.

### **How is your Spiritual Garden?**

Hebrews 6:7: "For the ground that soaks up rain coming often upon it, and also produces useful plants for those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God. But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning" (vs 7-8). That's very interesting—isn't it? It says here

“...near to being cursed...” Not totally yet, but *near!* “...the end of which is for burning” if it continues that way.

Let’s look at some good spiritual plants. We’re part of that *spiritual* Vine and that Vine is Christ. Notice how Jesus brings about almost very similar in wording to what we just read in Heb. 6. In this we’re going to look at several things, which talks about the analogy of growing good things, and then growing weeds and thistles.

John 15:1: “I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit...” (vs 1-2). Very important— isn’t it? If you come to the point that your works are so bad that

- you don’t have any *wood*
- you don’t have any *hay*
- you don’t have any *stubble*
- you don’t have any *faith*

God the Father is the One Who does the pruning Himself. He’s the One Who gets rid of the dead wood. Very interesting— isn’t it? Which also helps answer this question:

If a person is disfellowshipped from an organized body of believers, and he is disfellowshipped unjustly—with false charges and things which are not true—*God the Father has not removed that person. He or she is separated from evil!* There’s a difference. ***Only God the Father can take a person out and qualify them for the branches to be burned.*** No edict by a man can do that!

- The pope can’t do it!
- A minister can’t do it!
- A priest can’t do it!
- ***Only God the Father does it!***

That’s what Christ said—right?

Verse 2: “He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit.” That’s why we have trials! We’re going to see what happens when you just let things grow. You can let them grow, and we’ll see what happens then. When you have a trial or a difficulty, understand that it’s so you can bring forth more fruit. You can bring forth more of the fruits of God’s Spirit. That’s the produce that we are producing—right. *Yes!* We’re not producing grapes. We’re not producing figs. Although you have a parallel and an analogy there.

“...that it may bear more fruit.” (v 2). And isn’t that true when you see a well-kept vineyard where they maintain it, take care of the ground, take care of the vines. Especially as that vineyard gets older—and you can tell how old it is by how thick that the trunk of the vine is—because they prune it

every year. Sometimes you will see them six or eight inches thick; you know that is a good plant, and that will produce great wine. But when you see these vineyards all laid out and they prune them and they trim them, and they know exactly how to do it so it will produce the most grapes; then that will produce the best wine. Whereas, when you look at one that isn’t taken care of, you get nothing out of it. You get a lot of branches growing everywhere. But remember, branches are not fruit. God wants fruit!

Verse 3: “You are already clean through the Word that I have spoken to you.” Always remember that, brethren. Whenever you repent, you are clean! And those are the words that Christ has spoken and ‘every sin and blaspheme against the Son will be forgiven’—correct? *Yes!* “You are already clean through the Word that I have spoken to you”—and remember, this was given on the Passover night. It is the Passover which year-to-year, taken in the proper manner, keeps us abiding in Christ, and we’ve seen how many times when people quit keeping the Passover, they quit dwelling in Christ, and that’s what the word *abide* means: to  *dwell* or *live* in Christ! It happens!

Here’s our responsibility; notice how He puts it, v 4: “Dwell in Me... [We have to make the choice to continue dwelling in Christ—don’t we?] ...and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches....” (vs 4-5).

Very interesting— isn’t it? Very simple and profound— isn’t it? Does the branch bear the vine? *or* Does the vine bear the branch? *The vine bears the branch*—doesn’t it? *Yes!* Therefore, everything we do has to come from Christ—doesn’t it? You stop and think about this: Remember how the Apostle Paul said, ‘Shall the thing say to its maker, what are you making?’ A lot of people do that by saying, ‘God, I’ve got a better way of doing it.’ NO! You can have no better way of doing it than God’s way—that’s the best way of doing it!

There’s something about a branch that does not abide in the vine, v 5: “I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing.” What we can understand is this, just look at it this way:

Those of you who live up here in Napa *wine country*, with all these vineyards around, every year there is a new crop—correct? *Yes!* So, we can look at it this way: In our lives, every year, we have to be producing the fruit—don’t we? We can liken that with starting out with the Passover, because what do we do? We take the bread and wine—which is keeping us in the New Covenant, renewing us in the New Covenant—and then produce more fruit that

year and come back to the Passover again. Of course, we can go through the whole thing of all of the Holy Days and see how those things fit in it, too.

A branch of itself, cutoff remaining away from the vine cannot produce anything. You may be able to take that vine put it in some water and maybe start growing a new plant. We're not saying that's what's going to happen here. For example: you cannot take a branch and cut it off and go put it in the water of Protestantism. You cannot go ahead and develop a new plant that way; it won't happen! These kind are not going to be the transplantable vines that are cut that you can make a new plant out of them. You've got to stay in the vine of Christ.

Verse 6. "If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch... [Who's the one who takes it away? *The Father!*] ...and is dried up..." That's what happens— isn't it? I suppose you can cut a branch and before it loses it's sap you can graft it back in—right? *I suppose you could and it would survive!* But it would take a while for everything to heal up and for everything to begin flowing again into that branch. But unless that is done, if it is cutoff and removed by God the Father then it's withered

"...and men gather them... [In this case it's the angels that gather the wicked to throw them into the Lake of Fire.] ...and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned" (v 6). So that you will not be despaired and think that 'Oh boy, this is a tough saying.' Well, it is, but it's also easy. Because Jesus said, 'My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.' Here's the guarantee that that won't happen to you:

Verse 7: "If you dwell in Me... [notice that the condition is on *us*] ...and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.... [There's the guarantee! Stay in Christ!] ...In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love.... [That's how you stay in the Vine! Continue in the love of God. And 'this is the love of God that you keep His commandments'] (which He says right here): ...If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love" (vs 7-10).

The most important fruit; the fruit of *love* is the most important thing. And if you truly, truly have the love of God and keep His commandments, there is no way that you're going to commit the unpardonable sin. It is not going to happen! You don't need to worry about it!

Verse 11: "These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that

you love one another, as I have loved you.... [Not only from God to you, but from you to God and back to the brethren.] ...No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.... [What Christ did for us. This puts us in the same category as Abraham who was called 'a friend of God'—correct? *Yes!*] ...You are My friends... [someone said, 'I'm a friend of God.' Okay!] (Here's a qualification): ...**if you do whatever I command you.**" (vs 11-14).

Are you doing everything that Jesus said? If you're not doing everything that Jesus said, then you can't be a friend. You may not necessarily be an enemy, but you may be an acquaintance. To be a *friend* is an entirely different thing—isn't it? I'm sure there are a lot of people who are out there who are acquainted with Christ; they've heard the name of Christ, but they're not a *friend* of Christ.

Verse 15: "No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father. You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you" (vs 15-16).

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 3:10-17
- 2) Hebrews 6:6
- 3) Titus 1:9-16
- 4) 2 Timothy 2:12-13
- 5) Matthew 10:32-39
- 6) Jeremiah 17:1
- 7) Acts 8:9-24
- 8) Revelation 2:4-5, 16, 20-24, 13
- 9) Revelation 3:8
- 10) Matthew 12:22-32
- 11) Hebrews 6:7-8
- 12) John 15:1-16

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 14:16
- 1 Corinthians 13
- Revelation 17

#### Also referenced:

##### Books:

- *Word Biblical Commentary*
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hymn Goldin

##### Sermon Series:

- *Why God Hates Religion*
- *Was Jesus God?*

FRC: bo Transcribed: 4-24-11

# The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XIX

## How is Your Spiritual Garden?

Fred R. Coulter—August 24, 2002

Hebrews 6:6: “If they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.” That’s what happens when they reject Christ. They always do, one way or the other.

Verse 7: “For the ground that soaks up rain coming often upon it, and also produces useful plants for those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God. But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning” (vs 7-8).

How is your spiritual garden? There are many, what you might call, agricultural parables and analogies in the whole Bible. Let’s understand something very important; let’s go back to Genesis, the second chapter. We can learn a lesson here. We can learn these things physically and spiritually. The reason that they are so important and profound is because they are so simple and they are so true. We go clear back to the beginning, God created Adam and Eve—created man first.

Genesis 2:15: “And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it.” There is one thing for sure, that in order to have anything in a garden grow, you have to dress it and keep it. Otherwise, it will bring up thorns and thistles and things like that. The more that you dress it and keep it, the more that it’s going to produce and bring forth fruit. John 15—‘Christ is the vine and the Father is the Husbandman.’ He trims and prunes all of those who bring forth fruit so that they may bring forth more fruit. Those that don’t He cuts off.

This is a story of life based upon a garden. Your life, regardless of who you are and where you are is like a garden. How is it? In what condition is it? We will look at the things concerning the weeds, which can be likened unto human nature, and the fruit which is likened unto the Spirit of God. Also, we’re confronted in our lifetime with the thing that Adam and Eve were confronted with.

Verse 16: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying...” God always commands man, always does because He’s God! We’re going to see that one of the greatest weed producers or poor plant producers, or genetically engineered plants, are those things where men reject the commandments of God and go ahead and graft in their own or genetically engineer their own. So, we can kind of in advance liken all ‘religion’ to genetically engineered gardens.

You can start out with what God created, but you end up with what you create. You will end up just exactly like Cain. You will bring an offering that you have genetically engineered and it’s going to be rejected. You’re going to say, ‘God, haven’t we done this and that and the other thing?’

He “...commanded the man, saying ‘You may freely eat of every tree in the garden...’” (v 16). God gives us free choice; He gives us plenty of right and good things to do—doesn’t He? But, because He loves us, He doesn’t want us to sin. Therefore, He wants you to understand the difference between the way of life of God *and* the good and evil of the world. These are likened by the two trees:

1. The Tree of Life
2. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Every human being is confronted with the choices of good and evil—from the time of Adam and Eve clear down until now, that’s just the way that it is.

He said, v 17: “‘But you shall not eat of the tree of *the* knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die.’” Not that you would immediately die in the day that you ate of it, because Adam and Eve lives 900-and some odd years beyond. But if you have the *law of sin and death* in you it doesn’t matter if you live to be a thousand years, as Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, *when you die, you’re dead!* Just like Rover, you’re dead all over!

As we get older it’s the rusting out that really is the problem. Everyone is confronted with good and evil, whether they’re going to follow God or not. Even in the world, in the letter of the law, we’re still confronted with that. You know what happened with Adam and Eve; they ate of the fruit. They didn’t genetically engineer it, of course. What did they do? They took Satan’s command: *go ahead and eat it*. In their own lust they modified what God said—right? *Yes, they did!* What happened? *They brought curses upon themselves rather than blessings!*

Let’s notice here the similarity of the curse of Adam, Genesis 3:17: “And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat *of* it!”—the ground *is* cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall

you eat of it all the days of your life. It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you..." (vs 17-18).

There is also the analogy of that *spiritually*. In Heb. 6 he says that if it's not taken care of that 'which brings forth thorns and thistles is rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which is for burning.' So, he's going right back to Gen. 3 to show you cannot build a spiritual life on weeds.

- How is your spiritual garden?
- Are you tilling it?
- Are you taking care of it?
- Are you watching over it?

There are all kinds of analogies and things we can learn from this, which we are going to do. It also talks in Heb. 6 about the rain. Without rain, without water, nothing is going to grow—is it? Spiritually speaking, God's way and God's Holy Spirit is like water. In order to have any kind of garden, even if you grow weeds you've got to have some kind of water.

- Where is your water coming from?
- Is it good water?
- Is it the former or latter rain?
- Is it, as it is now, in some of the drought-stricken areas of America that you have to use re-processed sewer-water?

Psalms 1 tells us why we need water. And here is another spiritual analogy of our *spiritual garden*. A *spiritual garden* does not necessarily mean that all of the fruits that are there are to be eaten. You can have some for just beauty and pleasure like special trees or special flowers.

Psalms 1:1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful.... [All of these are the weeds and thistles that get in the way.] ...But his delight is in the law of the LORD... [he's going to obey His voice, obey His commands] ...and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper" (vs 1-3). This is what Paul is hoping they would have (Heb. 6). That they would bring forth fruit.

Verse 4: "The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away." You're going to see plenty of that. We've had a dry summer, the hills are dry. We can say concerning taking care of not only a garden, but taking care of the whole earth, God has given man dominion of the whole earth. (Look what happens when they get kooky ideas and don't take care of the forest. The forest likewise should be dressed and kept, because what happens? *It all burns up!* Every bit of it!

Today with the 'eco-gestapos' they don't want to cut anything down. At least George W. Bush is getting it right concerning the forests. You must log them! Trees were made to be logged. They grow, they get old, and if you don't harvest them at the right time they're going to fall on you when you're driving by them along the road.

That happened right up here close to where we meet. A person was driving down where there was a eucalyptus growing right alongside the highway and guess what? On a windy day BANG! a tree fell right down on the car and killed them. It was old and should have been harvested. Like all of these millions and millions of acres of forest that have burned up this year—not only because it was dry, but because all of the trash and everything that is there, the undergrowth, and it gets built up. Some of these places they have gone into, they haven't done anything for 30 years! When it gets tinder dry, it's just all burned up.

It's exactly the same thing with the ungodly! What is the ultimate fate of the ungodly? *The Lake of Fire!* These things are very simple, plain analogies that you can see in daily living.

Verse 4: "The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away.... [Remember what we covered about building on the foundation of Christ: gold, silver and precious stone or chaff: wood, hay or stubble. Chaff is stubble.] ...Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish" (vs 4-6).

Let's see the analogy of how it is with those who stay close to God with water and growth and taking care of the garden. Taking care of gardens is a lot of work. You have to keep at it. Let's get the comparison here. Since thistles and thorns is compared unto sin:

Jeremiah 17:1: "The sin of Judah is engraved with a pen of iron, with the point of a diamond; it is carved upon the tablet of their heart and upon the horns of your altars... [This is another way of saying that they had actually let evil be written into their hearts.] ...while their children remember their altars and their Asherim beside every green tree on the high hills. O My mountain in the field, I will give your wealth and all your treasures for spoil, and your high places because of sin, throughout all your borders" (vs 1-3). In other words, if you build a garden, or in this case a garden likened unto 'religion' that is contrary to the laws of God—and most religion is a genetically engineered version—it's not going to stand. God is going to take it away from you.

Verse 4: “And you, even of yourself, have let go of the inheritance which I gave you... [You’re not even going to have any land to plant a garden.] ...and I will cause you to serve your enemies in a land which you do not know. For you have kindled a fire in My anger, *which* shall burn forever.” In other words, God *waxed hot* as it were. All the way through we’ll see this analogy of fire. He talks about the ungodly being burned up (Heb. 10:26).

Verse 5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes. But he shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land that is not inhabited.... [Now, look at the comparison]: ...Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters... [Psa. 1] ...*it* sends out its roots by the river, and *it* shall not fear when the heat comes, but its foliage shall be green; and he is not worried in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit” (vs 5-8).

When I come home from my water therapy every once and a while I come the back way into Hollister and it reminds me very much of a spot that I would drive by when I was up in Idaho in the middle 60s. In Idaho there was a rancher that specialized in Black Angus cattle. He lived in a dry area, but they had irrigation water. He had a nice gentle sloping pasture right alongside the highway that he divided down into about eight different sections. He took good care of it and managed it really well. He never ruined the pasture by overgrazing, because he would irrigate it and let the grass grow, give good feed for the cattle and then he would run the cattle in that one after growing to a certain height and let them feed for so many days. Then he would irrigate all of these eight sections and he would alternate where he put the cattle so they never ran out of green grass.

As I come back from my water therapy, there’s this one place where they have cattle and they have so many cattle, and in there’s no water and they don’t irrigate it. All that’s left is straw, skinny cattle and manure everywhere. In this small area—about an acre—they have about 12 cattle. Just up the road from it on the other side there’s a man who does the same thing as the man in Idaho. He’s got a bigger pasture and he’s got it laid out in four different sections and he’s always irrigating the sections the cows are not on and his cattle are fat and look good, are well-fed and the ground is healthy. It’s exactly the same way spiritually!

Verse 9—here’s the one we’re familiar with concerning the human heart: “The heart *is* deceitful

above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

- Only God can change the heart!
- Only God can judge the heart!
- Only God can change the mind!

And in order for us to bring forth good fruit, we need the grace of God to do it because we have to overcome *the law of sin and death* that is in us.

Verse 10: “I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.... [What do you produce in you?] ...As the quail that hatches eggs it has not laid; in the same way he who gets riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the middle of his days, and in his end he shall be a fool” (vs 10-11).

You see how these things are real in life today? When you don’t have irrigation, you’ve got to depend on rain. If you don’t have rain, you’re not going to get your crop. This is talking about the covenant they were to keep:

Deuteronomy 29:9: “Therefore, keep the words of this covenant and do them so that you may prosper in all that you do. You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and your stranger that *is* in your camp, from the cutter of your wood to the drawer of your water; so that you should enter into covenant with the LORD your God and into His oath which the LORD your God makes with you today” (vs 9-12). Today we do that at baptism. You enter into a covenant with God.

Verse 13: “That He may establish you today for a people to Himself, and *that* He may be your God as He has said to you and as He has sworn to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Nor do I make this covenant and this oath with you only, but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us today... [that is out into the future] ...(For you know how we have lived in the land of Egypt and how we came through the nations which you passed. And you have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them)” (vs 13-17).

Now then, He gives a warning here and all the way through, because if you do what comes naturally, it’s going to be a weed patch. If you just let it grow of itself, you will never have anything to eat. Today, we’re spoiled. We go down to the supermarket and there’s so much there you really don’t know what to get. But, if you had to go out and work to produce it—plant the seed—and if you didn’t get the crop and it didn’t grow, or if you

didn't take care of it, you wouldn't have any food. We need to be careful. He [Moses] gives this warning here; this is why they had this final meeting:

Verse 18: "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God to go serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that bears gall and wormwood, and it shall come to pass when he hears the words of this curse that he shall bless himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart,' to *the* sweeping away of the watered and the parched" (vs 18-19).

That's what a lot of people do. They take the garden of their life and they say, 'God, I'm going to grow what I want.' They take the Word of God and they genetically engineer into their religions and bless themselves after the imagination of their own heart. There are many analogies you can get from this. You can watch the news and look at all the cloning and everything that they are doing, and how they say that this is great. But it's the imagination of their hearts. One thing we need to understand: ***Christ is not coming for our convenience so that we can be right. He is coming to save the world!*** Not only to save His people, but to save the physical world from destruction. That's how bad it's going to get before the end comes. The whole world is doing vs 18-20 in everything that they do.

Verse 20: "Then the LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but the anger of the LORD and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven.... [That's talking about the *unpardonable sin*.] (Then he [Moses] shows that He [God] is going to render judgment): ...And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law; so that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say (when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it), 'The whole land shall be burned *with* brimstone and salt...' (vs 20-23).

I want you to think of what God did to the area of Palestine from 30<sub>A.D.</sub> until 135<sub>A.D.</sub> They had famines and droughts. In 42<sub>A.D.</sub> they had a tremendous drought begin. We find in Acts 11 that Paul and Barnabas brought up relief supplies from Antioch. We read in the book of *Josephus* it was really a terrible famine that was taking place at that particular time. You see what God did to Jerusalem—because they rebelled against God, they rejected Jesus Christ—He destroyed the city, He destroyed the temple and scattered them into all the

world. Then the Jews decided that they had a new messiah. In 130<sub>A.D.</sub> Rabbi Akiva declared that Bar Kokhba was the messiah. They came and attacked the Romans and drove them out. Everyone was saying, 'Look, we're going to rebuild Jerusalem. Then the Romans came and they scraped Palestine to the ground. It was so terrible what they did to the land that it became just exactly what it says here:

Verse 23: "'The whole land shall be burned *with* brimstone and salt...' They burned everything; they tore down everything! They chased the Jews to Masada and they were so absolutely set on getting everything, the Jews who rebelled would never again be a Jewish rebellion against the Romans. You've probably seen the movie *Masada* where the Romans built the rampart—which went clear up to the top of where Ft. Masada—was that Herrod built during his reign to get them.

- The Jews were going to hold their way.
- They were going to hold their religion.
- They were going to keep their days.
- They rejected Christ.
- They rejected the Church.
- They rejected to apostles.

True enough that came upon them! Now then, as we have seen as Paul says, 'if you think that under the hand of Moses they died at the mouth of two or three witnesses, how do you suppose he that rejects the Son of man, who counts the blood of the covenant whereby he was sanctified, was an unholy thing?'

We need to examine *how is our spiritual garden*. Do we have weeds? One thing about weeds. You need to get out and get rid of them as soon as you can. What's one way to ensure that you will have thistles forever? *Do nothing about it and let them grow!* Then they go to seed. What happens when they go to seed? *The wind comes and takes the seed and plants it somewhere else! That's just like the way that evil affects you. When you let it grow and grow, then it goes to seed and the seeds go out and contaminate everything.*

In Hollister, alongside the highway, I wondered for years why they didn't send the highway crew to burn down these thistles. Why do they let them grow every year and let them go to seed? Well, that's what we're dealing with.

Verse 25: "Then *men* shall say, 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers which He made with them when He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they did not know and that He had not allotted to them. And **the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land** to bring on it all the curses that are written in this book. And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger and wrath...

[This sounds like a little bit of editing—doesn't it? This sounds a little bit like some Ezra editing when he canonize the Old Testament. He's writing it here in past tense as though it already happened—right? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is today*” (vs 25-28). Ezra did write that—didn't he? Where were most of the Jews when he wrote this? *In Babylon!* Just a very few came back.

Verse 29: “The secret things *belong* to the LORD our God, but the things *which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever so that we may do all the words of this law.” Then in Deut. 30, God says He ‘sets before you life and death—choose life so that you may live.’ Let's see what happens when you just let it grow of it's own accord.

At home we have a couple of grapevines that we want to make into a grape arbor. What we have done, we have a little lattice roof over it—an area about 6x8—and we have the grape plants growing up on it and the grapevines grow over the top. We don't prune it, we don't trim it, so every year we get all these little green grapes all over it, but we hardly ever get any grapes that can be harvested, because we're not growing this to have grapes. If you want to grow grapes you have to have a cultivated, tilled, pruned, controlled, well taken care of vineyard. If you do, about this time of year you can look and see all the clusters of the grapes just hanging waiting for the right time to be picked so they can be made into wine. So, if you just let it grow you're going to be in trouble.

Isaiah 1:5: “Why should you be stricken any more? You will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.... [We're getting close to that in America—aren't we? *Yes, we are!*] ... 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.... [Of course, that's going to happen. Every time we have a riot, what do they do? *They burn the cities*—don't they?] ...Strangers devour your land right in your *very* presence, and *it is* wasted, as overthrown by strangers” (vs 5-7). Isn't that happening? *Yes!*

I had to go to San Jose this week and I stopped by Costco. The closest one I could get to is on what is called Senter Ave. When I went in there I felt like I was in Hong Kong. I really did! You look around, especially in the cities, strangers are taking over—aren't they? *Yes, they are!* It says that they're going to get very ‘high above us.’ I guess we can say we haven't seen anything, yet.

Verse 8: “And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a garden of

cucumbers, like a besieged city.” That is saying a vineyard untaken care of and a cucumber garden untaken care of—just let it grow and grow—it will produce nothing. You'll have vines everywhere, but you'll have no fruit and it's a horrible mess.

I remember when we were up in Idaho, we decided to go into partners with some brethren. They had some land available to them and it was right near an irrigation canal, so we had lots of water. What we did, we planted a garden there. He lived in Boise away from the garden, and we lived in Meridian, 12 miles away from the garden. It happened that we both left for a couple of weeks at the same time and no one took care of the garden. When we got back there, guess what happened to it? Morning glories had covered the whole garden. We had a big garden, at least half-acre garden. We got virtually nothing out of it. Every time I read this verse I think of that. You might ask yourself:

- How is your vineyard?
- How is your garden?
- Is it full of thorns and thistles?
- Is it full of weeds?
- Is it just growing unkempt?
- How is it?

There's something else you're going to need. In order to take care of it, you've got to have water.

Isaiah 5:1: “Now I will sing to my Beloved a song of my Beloved concerning His vineyard. My Beloved has a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And He dug it up, and cleared it of stones... [showing he took care of it] ...and planted it *with* choice vines, and built a tower in its midst, and hewed out a wine vat in it... [we're going to see a parable that Jesus speaks of which talks about this] ...and He looked *for it* to produce grapes. But it produced worthless [wild] fruits. [God says]: ‘And now, O people of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, I ask you to judge between Me and My vineyard. What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Who knows? I looked *for it* to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now I will tell you what I will do to My vineyard; I will take away its hedge, and it shall be consumed...’” (vs 1-5).

- I want you to think about Israel.
- I want you to think about what happened to the Church.
- I want you to think about what has happened to people's lives.

We can apply this all the way down the line—can't we? God can do His part. God can give us of the best. But unless we do our part—and our part is to keep the weeds out, to bring forth good fruit—He says:

Verse 5: “‘I will tell you what I will do to



My vineyard; I will take away its hedge, and it shall be consumed; *and* break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor dug; but briars and thorns shall come up. And I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it” (vs 5-6).

We can also have the analogy of the former and the latter rain. God casts His bread upon the water and it won’t come back in empty. All of those things apply. Also, the rain is likened unto the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is like ‘rivers of living water.’ In order to have *spiritual fruit* you have to have the Holy Spirit. In order to have *physical fruit* you have to have water.

Verse 7: “For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts *is* the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant; and He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress! Woe to those who join house to house, *that* lay field to field, until *there is* no place left, and you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!” (vs 7-8). In other words, the same kind of urbanization that we are seeing today. Then it ends up that they’re casting the Law of God behind them.

We need to understand that we can learn a lot of things from what we have in the Old Testament, but we apply that *spiritually* in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy 11:13: “And it will be, if you will hearken diligently to My commandments... [If you listen to the commands of God for your spiritual life—you shall dress it and keep it] ...which I command you today, to love the LORD your God...” Isn’t it interesting, because when we get through with the *fruits of the Spirit* we’re going to see that the most important fruit that we are to have is *the love of God*! Here He starts out with showing how they were to maintain and keep their relationship with God.

“...and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul... [That’s exactly what God wants us to do in the New Testament] ...then I will give the rain of your land in its due season... [We have the same thing *spiritually*. God will bless us! We will grow in grace and knowledge!] ...in its due season...” (vs 13-14).

- What are the seasons?
- What are the spiritual things that as it were water us?
- Like the former and the latter rain?
  - ✓ *The Holy Days!*
  - ✓ *The spring harvest!*
  - ✓ *The fall harvest!*

Those are the things that water us and sure enough, when you stop keeping the Holy Days and then you

begin to slack up on the Sabbath—what happens? *You’ve got a lot of weeds in your spiritual garden that you have to go get rid of!*

Let me tell you, if the ground is hard and dry, and you’ve got a great big thistle plant there and it’s roots go down about two or three feet, you’re going to have a hard time getting rid of it. That’s why if you cut down the plant and you burn the thistle plant—***get rid of that sin in your life***—then you’re going to have to work of getting rid of the lust that caused it, because the lust is just like that root down in the dry, hard ground.

Whereas, if the weeks are starting to come up and there is rain—likened unto God’s Holy Spirit—what happens? *You can go out and pull the weeds and you can get the root and all*—can’t you? If you’re tending your garden and if the rain of God’s Spirit is coming upon your garden, you can go out and pluck out those weeds before they grow into becoming thorns and thistles and get rid of them. You can pluck them out by the root and they’re not going to grow back.

Verse 14: “Then I will give the rain of your land in its due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil.... [When we take the Passover, what is it? *The wine! The bread!* Symbolizing that we are to eat God’s way—right? That is the fruit of what we are to eat. Again, when He mentions things being produced, He mentions corn and wine—not like Iowa corn, this means grain.] ...And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock so that you may eat and be full” (vs 14-15).

What is important is this: God wants us to eat—doesn’t He? He wants us to have the best—doesn’t He? It’s just like with the Word of God, you don’t get the understanding of the Word of God unless you work at it, unless you dig into it, unless you study and apply yourself to it. Then, if you do like the Psalm says—taste and eat; taste and see that the Lord is good—then the Word of God will constantly be feeding you the good things and the rich things. But, what is important that when you have those blessings and God has given it, that you don’t say ‘I’m rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.’

That’s why God wants us to depend on His Holy Spirit as rain, rather than irrigation. ***Rain takes faith!*** Irrigation: you can irrigate for a long, long time without rain. Then one day all the dams are going to run dry. Then you have a total disaster!

Verse 15: “...I will send grass in your fields for your livestock so that you may eat and be full.... [Then He gives a warning]: ...Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived... [What happens when everything is nice and smooth

and good and convenient? The next time the electricity goes out in your area think about how hard it is for you to get along without all the things that electricity does. What happens when the electricity goes out? You're so used to getting it.

Right where our house is we've got this big power pole—not a cross-country power-pole—and the electricity lines are there and every once and a while a black bird will get up there and zonk itself, electrocute itself, fall to the ground and electricity goes out. I remember one time that it went off and I forgot that it went off. I went upstairs and I was going to watch a football game or something like that. I sat down and I kept working the remote control and the thing wouldn't go on. I forgot that the electricity was off. That's how we get so accustom to things. Then one time last year, it happened again, the electricity was off for about six hours. Finally, the PGE guy came out and Delores said to him, 'Why don't you just put a little shield over that so the birds won't electrocute themselves and we won't have power outages? Just think how much that will save you.' So, sure enough, they put it on and we haven't had a power outage or executed the birds since.

It's the same way *spiritually!* You put on the shield so that you're not going to have power outages. What I'm saying is this: It's so easy to take things for granted that you forget from where they came. And *you forget Who gave them!* You're so used to the rain coming on time that *you forget Who sends the rain!* You get increased with goods and so forth.

Verse 16: "Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them... [Can we look at recent history in the Church?—hello! *Yes!*] ...and the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain, and so that the land will not yield her fruit, and you perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD gives you. Therefore, you shall lay up these My words in your hearts and in your souls, and bind them for a sign upon your hands so that they may be as frontlets between your eyes" (vs 16-18). In other words, it's going to guide everything that you do.

Look what's happened to this nation because we didn't do v 19: "And you shall teach them to your children..." Now we have to have metal detectors and police at the schools—correct? *Yes!* You can't speak of them to you children; you can't discipline your children because that is 'child abuse.' Just like the 'eco-nazis' have done to the poor, so they have done to our children. You can't correct them. You can't teach them. Therefore, they're like a bunch of wild weeds set up to be burned—aren't they? *Yes, they are!*

This should be the central thing in your life, v 19: "...speaking of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And *you* shall write them upon the door posts of your house, and upon your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied..." (vs 19-21). God wants them written upon our hearts and mind now, not just on the doorpost; not just have a plaque of the Ten Commandments on the wall, but ignore them. Have them in your mind so that you automatically do them. That's what's important! Not that we live by the letter of the law, we don't, but when the sun goes down on the Sabbath, Sabbath has started automatically! God wants the days to be multiplied.

...in the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, like the days of heaven above the earth" (v 21). If you do all of these things then God is going to be with you, fight all your enemies and you won't have to worry about a thing. Now it's a completely different story.

Matthew 17:17—this after the disciples couldn't heal this young man: "Then Jesus answered *and* said, 'O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you *in your unbelief?* Bring him here to Me.' And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it departed from him; and the boy was healed from that hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately *and* said, 'Why were we not able to cast it out?' And Jesus said to them, '**Because of your unbelief.** For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain... [Here we have a seed, a plant—don't we?] ..."Remove from here," and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting'" (vs 17-21). Here again, we have another analogy of a plant—don't we?

Mark 11:12—this is a very unusual one: "And in the morning, after they left Bethany, He became hungry. Then, seeing a fig tree afar off that had leaves, He went *to it to see* if He might possibly find something on it...." (vs 12-13). It really wasn't the season of figs, because figs are not ripe until later in the summer, and this was just before the Passover. Why would Christ do this? Come to a fig tree and then curse it, expecting something on it when there was nothing on it? *This is a parable, an analogy!* The fig tree is much like Judaism. It produced no fruit and all it had was leaves. It looked good, but it didn't produce anything. Therefore, He cursed it.

"...But after coming to it, He found nothing except leaves because it was not yet *the* season for figs. And Jesus responded *by* saying to it, 'Let no one eat fruit from you any more forever!' And His disciples heard *it*" (vs 13-14).

Then they came back in the morning, v 20: “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, ‘Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith *from* God.... [God’s faith] ...For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, ‘Be taken away and be cast into the sea,’ and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say” (vs 20-23). Of course, we need to modify that according to the will of God—don’t we? So, whatever is the will of God! It can be an impossible thing. And the greatest, most impossible thing to change is human nature.

Then He gives another caveat here, v 24: “For this reason I say to you, all *the* things that you ask *when* you are praying, believe that you will receive *them*, and *they* shall be *given* to you. But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive, so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses. For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who *is* in heaven forgive you your offenses” (vs 24-26).

Now, let’s look at another analogy, Matthew 21:33; here we have the vineyard. This is taken right out of Isa. 5. “Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and put a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it...” Of course, that was for grape juice (sarcastically).

Someone sent me something that obviously they had grape juice for the Passover because it was fresh squeeze in the spring. That shows you they have never planted anything. They don’t know a thing about grapes. You don’t get grapes in the spring. You get grapes in the fall. In order to have something from the fruit of the vine to drink in the spring, you must make it into wine.

Samuele Bacchiocchi put out a book trying to vindicate grape juice for their communion, saying they could put sulfur in and keep the grape juice fresh. The only way you could do that is have a deep cellar where it’s always cool and you could put the sulfur in it and keep the grape juice for a period of time. What happens? You have polluted drink for the Passover if you have grape juice. Two reasons:

1. the natural leaven from the grape is in the juice, so you’re drinking a leavened product
2. if you drink the grape juice, if you have to put sulfur in it then it’s contaminated

[We always have wine for our Passover services]

“...[he] dug a winepress in it and built a tower... [Why have the tower? Obviously so you can watch over the vineyards, take care of it, whatever

you needed] ...and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country. Now when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits. But the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another” (vs 33-35). This is what some people would like to do ministers today that teach that tithing ought to be something you should do. They want to beat them; they want to stone them; they don’t want to give to God what is His!

Verse 36: “Again he sent other servants, more than the first *time*; and they did the same thing to them. Then at last he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will have respect for my son.’ But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us murder him and gain possession of his inheritance.’” (vs 36-38). Sounds like what’s going on in Zimbabwe today—doesn’t it? Wait and see, they will have famine. ‘Oh yes, we must send them famine relief!’ But it will be a self-induced famine from lust and stupidity and barbarianism. ‘Let’s get the land. Let’s take the land.’

Farrakhan—leader of the Islamic Nation—says, ‘We’re a nation within a nation, and the United States should give us millions of acres so we, as the black Muslim nation, can prosper on our own.’ Don’t laugh! They’ll take it by force. Same thing here.

Verse 39: “‘Then they took him, *and* cast *him* out of the vineyard, and murdered *him*.... [That’s where Jesus was killed, outside the camp—wasn’t it? *Yes!*] ...Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen?’ They said to Him, ‘*Evil men!* He will utterly destroy them... [These are the scribes and Pharisees answering back to Christ. When He gets done they’re going to perceive that *they* are in trouble.] ...and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures...’ (vs 39-42). Isn’t it interesting how last time we talked about the *foundation*, which is Christ? This time we’re talking about the *garden*, talking about the vineyard. So, right here the same thing follows. He talks about the vineyard and then He talks about the *foundational stone* being Himself—correct? *Yes!*

“...‘Have you never read in the Scriptures...’” Isn’t that so true? All of those who leave God, leave the Scriptures and think they still know them, and they don’t have a clue! That’s why “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures, “*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes*”?’ Because

of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that* produces the fruits of it.... [They're going to tend to their garden!] ...And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken... [Showing that if you repent and turn to Christ with a 'broken spirit and contrite heart' you'll receive forgiveness and the Holy Spirit. But if you don't, your day with the Stone is still coming.] ...but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (vs 42-44).

Finally the scribes and Pharisees got the point, but not the right way, v 45: "Now after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them.... [and they fell down at His feet in repentance—NO they didn't!] ...And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet" (vs 45-46).

Let's look at some genetically engineered plants. We can be guaranteed; genetically engineered plants are going to be rooted out. What are genetically engineered plants? Let's see what they were for the scribes and the Pharisees.

Matthew 15:1: "Then the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, 'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?....'" (vs 1-2). They came all the way down there. This is an official committee to track Him down. They wanted to find out, because they heard and they saw that His disciples didn't wash their hands before they ate, and they weren't following the traditions of the elders, which is effrontery.

We're not as familiar with that today as we are with the Muslims praying five times a day, because of the recent thing with Islam. It's likened to the same thing. 'Why don't you pray five times a day? Why don't you wash your hands when you eat? And you've got to do it in this way.'

Verse 2: "'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.' But He answered *and* said to them, 'Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?.... [You've made a hybrid. You have genetically engineered the commandments of God—correct? *Yes!*] ...For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him die the death.' But you say, 'Whoever shall say to father or mother, 'Whatever benefit you might receive from me *is being given as a gift to the temple,*' he is not at all *obligated to honor his father or his mother*'" (vs 2-5).

In other words, he's going to be released. 'If you don't take care of the obligation of God, we'll

release you; we'll figure a way.' They had their arguments. Which is greater, he that bows on the altar or he that bows on the sacrifice on the altar, or he that swears by the temple or by the gold in the temple? All of those things are nonsense, because if your heart isn't right it doesn't matter. Likewise here. These traditions, which are the genetically engineered religious practices of the Jews—or any other religion; you can apply that to any religion today—you shall be free.

Verse 6: "'And you have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition.... [It's a plant that cannot bring forth fruit.] ...Hypocrites! Isaiah has prophesied well concerning you, saying, 'This people draw near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me.... [Doesn't that describe today? *Yes, it does!*] ...But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for doctrine the* commandments of men'" (vs 6-10).

If you have all of these genetically engineered commandments—which are 'religious'—you're not going to produce any fruit. You're not going to worship God that way. This also shows that ***you worship God by doing His commandments!*** Isn't that interesting? Not that you just come to a temple and do chants and then everything is fine; the doctrines and commandments of men! If the Jews don't take care of it, I'm sure one of the first things that God is going to get rid of is Mecca! And Medina!

Verse 10: "And after calling the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, 'Hear, and understand.... [I want you to get the point!]' ...That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man...." (vs 10-11). If you have a little dirt on your hands, are you going to die. I mean, what are you going to do if you're out in the orchard and pluck an apple? Of course, you're going to rub it on your sleeve and start eating it—right? *Same thing!* What if a spider crawled on that just the minute before you started eating it? You rubbed it on your sleeve and you got it as clean as you could—are you going to die? *Of course not!* Those little minute things are not going to defile you! It's not going to make you less acceptable to God! What makes you acceptable to God is what's in your heart. That's what He's saying here.

Verse 11: "'That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man, but that which comes out of his mouth, this defiles the man.'" And, of course, the worst kind of defilement does not come with cursing and swearing. The worst kind of defilement comes from genetically engineered 'religious' plants that you say, in all righteousness, that this is good and right. Like all the traditions of the Catholics and Muslims and Buddhists and whatever. That defiles!

Verse 12: "Then His disciples came to Him

and said... [You're not politically correct, Jesus!] ...'Do You realize that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?' But He answered *and* said, 'Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted **shall be rooted up**'" (vs 12-13).

- How is your *spiritual garden*?
- How is your *spiritual Truth*?
- How is it *growing*?

Matthew 13:31—here it shows that the Kingdom of God is likened unto a plant that grows: "Another parable He presented to them, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a *tiny* mustard seed... [this is about the third time we've read 'mustard seed'— isn't it? *Yes!*] ...which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is very small among all the seeds; but after it is grown, it is greater than all the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches'" (vs 31-32). What if you plant a thistle? What if you plant a genetically engineered plant that really looks good, but its fruit is deadly? *It will be rooted up!*

Matthew 15:13: "But He answered *and* said, 'Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.'" In other words:

- no one is going to get into the Kingdom of God on their own terms
- no one is going to get there by their own fruits
- no one is going to get there by their own works

Verse 14: "'Leave them alone. They are blind leaders of *the* blind. And if *the* blind lead *the* blind, both shall fall into the pit.'" That's where it's all headed!

Luke 13—this shows that there is hope. If you haven't been producing fruit, *you can*. If you've been letting the weeds grow up, *you can get rid of them*. But, you've got some work to do! There are some plants and some trees that if you have too much growing around them they can't produce. That's kind of like what it was here:

Luke 13:6: "And He spoke this parable: 'A certain *man* had planted a fig tree in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it, but he did not find *any*. Then he said to the vinedresser, "Look *here!* For three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and have not found *any*. Cut it down. Why should it *continue* to waste *space* in the ground?" But he answered *and* said to him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and put *in* manure"' (vs 6-8).

If you're not bringing forth some fruit, what you have to do is to do a little digging and dung it; a little 'd and d'. You dig around it so the earth is loose and when you water it—after you put the

manure on it—the nutrients go down into the ground and tree can bring it up and produce fruit. That's what we need to do. We need to have a little 'd and d' —a little *spiritual* 'd and d' and little *digging and dunging*, and to clean it up.

Verse 9: "'And *see* if in fact it will bear fruit; but if not, after that you shall cut it down.'" It's very interesting: God is long suffering with us— isn't He? He'll give us a chance! He'll give us an opportunity to grow!

- You've got to 'dig and dung'!
- You've got to water!
- You've got to get rid of the weeds!
- You've got to get rid of the thistles!

***You have to be on guard so that your spiritual garden will produce the fruit that He wants!***

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:6-8
- 2) Genesis 2:15-17
- 3) Genesis 3:17-18
- 4) Psalm 1:1-6
- 5) Jeremiah 17:1-11
- 6) Deuteronomy 29:9-23, 25-29
- 7) Isaiah 1:5-8
- 8) Isaiah 5:1-8
- 9) Deuteronomy 11:13-21
- 10) Matthew 17:17-21
- 11) Mark 11:12-14, 20-26
- 12) Matthew 21:33-46
- 13) Matthew 15:1-13
- 14) Matthew 13:31-32
- 15) Matthew 15:13-14
- 16) Luke 13:6-9

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 15
- Hebrews 10:26
- Acts 11
- Deuteronomy 30

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FRC: bo  
Transcribed: 4-24-11

# Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XX

Fred R. Coulter—October 19, 2002

Let's go back and just do a little review through to where we are in Heb. 6. Let's go back to the very first part. And let's just pick up some key things to see what it is that Paul is writing about, and how he's building his case, so when we come to Melchisedec and our opportunity—as those who have been called—to pray directly to God the Father right in heaven above without having to go through a man, and with Christ as our High Priest there, it's really quite a thing.

Hebrews 1:1: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His Son*.” He is

- the ultimate *Word*
- the ultimate *Son*
- the ultimate *Message*

that God has sent.

“Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the [ages] worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (vs 2-3) That's quite a statement, because God came to be a human being.

Let's just think on this: Why is Christ the intermediary between men and God? *Because He came in the flesh*, and He also—because of the nature of His birth—had to receive genes and human nature from His mother. Otherwise, His birth was not a birth, and it was not a pregnancy; it would have been an illusion. Then the one born was not really a human being; which a lot of people would like to believe that is so. In receiving genes from His mother, I think that's a very important thing, because if that being the case, then that means that Christ will be forever having those genes. So, we'll just think on that. This is one of these things that, it was a great and a magnificent thing that God did.

Then it talks about Him being the firstborn, loved righteousness, hated lawlessness; then in the light of all of that he begins to show *how important our calling is*, and then, what it is that Christ went through to suffer and to die.

Hebrews 2:1: “For this reason... [that's the reason of everything mentioned in chapter one] ...it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.... [It's not the word that will slip away, but *we*.] ...For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression

and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great salvation...” (vs 1-3). This is what Paul is writing about. In the course of human time, what happens? We've seen it—haven't we? What happens? *Human beings get lazy, they get tired, they get neglectful and everything like this!* What is so great does not appear to be so great. In a progressive sense they can begin to slack up, and then we will see where that leads to. So then he refers to the situation concerning Abraham.

Then in Heb. 3, he wants to make it absolutely clear that Christ is greater than Moses. Remember, that's what the Pharisees said. Remember the man who was born blind? He was brought to the Pharisees, and they said, ‘Were you born blind?’ *Yes!* ‘How did you see?’ He told them how he saw; asked his parents, and so forth. And they said, ‘As for this man... [referring to Jesus] ...we know He is a sinner. We're disciples of Moses.’ So for the whole Jewish community, even to this day, those who reject Christ, Moses is the key individual. That's what they rely upon.

Hebrews 3:1: “Because of this, Holy brethren... [because of everything that Christ did to become the perfect sacrifice] ...partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the faith* we profess—Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*.” (vs 1-3).

Again, it talks about the disobedience concerning the Sabbath, and not keeping the Sabbath; why they were left to die in the wilderness because of unbelief, and because they didn't follow God the way that they should. **Belief** is the whole heart and core of everything that we do. Then that follows either obedience or disobedience. You have belief and obedience; you have disbelief and disobedience. And that's what he's talking about here concerning the Sabbath.

Hebrews 4:9: “There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.” Paul shows how Christ is our High Priest in heaven; how that He was tempted in every way like we are, yet without sin.

Then he shows the difference between the high priesthood of men and that of Christ, Who then, for the first time in Hebrews 5:6: “Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’”

We're about ready to get into the explanation of Melchisedec a little bit more when we come to Heb. 7. Then it shows what Christ did, and then also again corrects them for being dull or sluggish in hearing. Heb.6:1 shows we're to go beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, and we should go on to perfection. And so a lot of the things that we are doing and studying and so forth fall into that category. Those who don't, Paul gives the warning of the unpardonable sin. And the last one that I did was, *How Is Your Spiritual Garden?* Are you growing good plants or you growing thorns and thistles?

Hebrews 6:8: "But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning." Of course, the end of that is the Lake of Fire; that's what it's referring to after talking about the unpardonable sin. But as we covered, what was the curse that was brought upon Adam because of his sin? *Thorns and thistles and things would be the result of it!* Why? *Because of sin!*

Now likewise, in our growing in grace and knowledge and understanding, we can either build, as we covered, 'gold, silver and precious stones,' or 'wood, hay and stubble'; in this case thorns and thistles. And if we neglect what God has given us, then it really creates great and huge problems.

Verse 9: "But, although we speak these things, beloved, we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you, even *the fruits* that accompany salvation." This is what God wants us to do, what He wants us to have; those things in our life which bespeak those who are called to salvation. Let's look at some of the things where it talks about it.

Mark 14—here again, we're talking about the fruits, talking about the things that are planted, and how they grow. And we've seen this through the whole operation of what has happened to the Church of God too—haven't we? *Yes!*

Now Mark 4:14: "The sower sows the Word. Now the ones by the way, where the Word was sown, these are the ones who hear, but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts" (vs 14-15). He is able to do this today via many things. He's got all kinds of helpers out there to distract people. And he can take it away. Some people hear it and immediately they think it's great, and then Satan comes along takes it away.

Verse 16: "And the ones which were in like manner sown upon the rocky places, these are *the ones* who when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with joy; but *because* they have no root in themselves, they do not endure; when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, they are quickly offended.... [And we've also seen that

happen—haven't we?] ...And those which were sown among thorns, these are the ones who hear the Word. But the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things *that* come into *their lives* choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful" (vs 16-18).

"Now those which were sown upon the good ground, these are *the ones* who hear the Word and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, one thirty-fold, and one sixty-fold, and one a hundredfold" (vs. 19-20). Here we have almost an exact parallel—don't we?—to Heb. 6 at this point, concerning how we are to bring forth fruit and so forth. Now he wants us to bring forth the fruit *concerning the things of salvation*.

Let's come to Galatians 5 and see what those things are. Isn't it interesting that it talks about

- that which is the fruit of the Spirit
- that which is the result of the Spirit
- that which is spiritually growing and developing in your life

It talks first of all about the lust of the flesh, and it ends up with all the works of the flesh with everything it lists there.

But here are the works concerning salvation, Galatians 5:22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace... [And those things hold you through, and carry you through, through all circumstances, because we're all going to be tried in this world. We're all going to have difficulties and problems come along. But if you have] ...love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (vs 22-23). Meaning, that these things are a law unto themselves, and this becomes a very powerful force in our lives, that these are the characteristics that we develop.

Then it shows, again, the struggle that we have, v 24: "But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." That means that's how the operation takes place, where you control human nature, control the things that cause you to sin, and so forth, and you live *by the Holy Spirit*.

Verse 25: "If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit.... [In other words, if we claim to have the Spirit of God, let's walk as the Spirit of God will lead us to walk. That's what's important.] ...We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another" (vs 25-26). All of that is just the competition and the sins of the world. We want to have those things, those fruits which accompany salvation. You might want to run a separate study yourself and cover more of the things concerning

salvation so that you can add that to it. That would be an extra Bible study you could do.

Hebrews 6:10: “For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work... [No! Even if no one else sees it. Even if no one else knows.] ...and the labor of **love** by which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*.” What we’re going to see here, we’re going to see the three greatest gifts, which then are the gifts of the Spirit. Here we have love, your “...labor of love...”

Verse 11: “But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the **hope** until the end... [You have to make it to the end. *The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved*.]...so that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through **faith**... [So, there we have love, hope, and faith.] ...and steadfast endurance inherit the promises” (11-12). The promises start out with:

1. you’re going to have an existence as God
2. you’re going to live forever
3. you will have no more sin; it will be righteousness forever
4. not only inherit the world, as it was with Abraham, but also God is creating the universe for some spectacular things that we need to understand

The thing is this: If we focus just strictly on the things on the earth, then we’re going to forget the things that are in heaven. That’s why he says he doesn’t want you to be lazy.

Notice how all of this ties in, v 13: “For God, after promising Abraham... [All of this comes right back to Abraham. ‘If we are Christ’s, then we are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.’] ...swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater.” And this is a phenomenal thing that God did to do that, to guarantee the promise that He’s given. We’re not dealing with agreements like human beings have. They make them to break them. We’re dealing with what God promised, **and promised unto His death in the person of Christ, that He would do for Abraham what He promised He would do.**

Here’s what He said, v 14: “Saying, ‘In blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’ Now, after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise” (vs 14-15). It says in another place that he didn’t obtain the promise. So part of the promise that he obtained was the promise of a physical seed Isaac, and he lived to see Jacob up to two-years-old. So there was the promise that he obtained; that part of it. The rest of it is yet to come. He draws a parallel between how men solve their

problems vs how God handled this, and because of the swearing of an oath and so forth.

Verse 16: “For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them.” There are many oaths and swearings that people do. Whether they go to court, whether it’s like the Indians that would have their blood oath (they would mingle their blood, or whatever), these are the kind of covenant promises that are made. So God did something greater.

Verse 17: “In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise... [which is Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, *and us*] ...the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath.” God doesn’t need to take an oath, because, God does not lie. So this is an extraordinary thing that God has done:

- to grant eternal life to us
- to grant the forgiveness of sin to us
- to give us all of these promises and things

This is a tremendous thing that has happened brethren, and that’s what He wants us to understand.

Verse 18: “So that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible *for* God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the **hope** *that has been* set before *us*... [That’s the hope of the eternal life, which he’s talking about all the way through the book of Hebrews.] ...which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast...” (vs 18-19). So he’s really bringing out a lot of things here. This is some pretty powerful writing, and covers a huge gamut of what we have in the Bible.

“...and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil...” (v 19). Now he’s starting to build up to being able to have that access to God the Father directly through Christ in heaven above. In other words, whenever we get on our knees to pray, we are praying, and we are being heard by God the Father. That’s what he’s saying here.

“...which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil... [That’s in the Holy of Holies in heaven above, the sanctuary within the veil.] ...where Jesus has entered for us... [on our behalf] ...*as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec” (vs 19-20).

From here on there is going to be an awful lot concerning *the order of Melchisedec*. Let’s go back and let’s look at some things here that we need to understand concerning **love**. The bottom line of everything that there is, ***if you don’t have the love of God, and you don’t have love, all the rest really doesn’t count.*** It’s not completely thrown away, but if you have that love of God—let’s see what Jesus says about it. Let’s see the parallel here in John 15 to



that of Heb. 6. Remember, we just got done with the warning of those who are not producing; here it talks about fruit. God expects things in our lives. Not only accomplishments that we do, that's fine. Remember, He told the apostles to 'go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' That's work they have to do; it is to produce fruit.

- you have fruit that a church does
- you have fruit that a group does
- you have fruit in your individual lives

—and this can encompass all of that. Here He's talking about the individuals. This is on the Passover night talking to the apostles:

John 15:1, Jesus said: "I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit... [Again, tie that in with the warnings that we've seen in the book of Hebrews. So what this is doing is showing us a consistency in the pattern of how God teaches us.] ...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit.... [As we just saw, some 30, some 60, some 100-fold.] ...You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you" (vs. 1-3).

In other words, through the word which Christ has spoken and, of course, with repentance and baptism and all the other things that go with it, *you are clean*. And that gives you the entrance into the Holy of Holies so that your prayers go directly before God. And that's something we are not just to say okay, that's interesting. That's something we are to **believe** and **act** upon and **consider** our prayers to be answered in that manner.

Let's notice how this is accomplished, v 4: "Dwell [live] in Me and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing" (vs 4-5). And that's what we always need to understand. The world will have a hard time understanding this, because in the face of whatever the circumstances are, we continue doing this, regardless.

Verse 6: "If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned." Notice how this follows right along with Heb. 6:9: '...we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you...'

Verse 7: "If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.... [That's why this kind of love, and this kind of faith, and this kind of

hope is so profound and important.] ...In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love" (vs 7-10).

Loving God requires action, and action then is the *obedience*. Yes, there's the emotion, but there's also the action that follows it, because the love is backed up by faith, and faith is backed up by doing. And that constantly gives us hope because God is there to help us, and intervene, hear and answer our prayers. And that's what it's talking about here. This is what is so profound concerning what we're covering here.

Let's come to 1-Corinthians 13—unfortunately in the *King James* they've translated the Greek word for *love*—which is 'agape'—they translated it 'charity' which is a Latin word for love. The Latinist on the committee that did this section of the New Testament took away from the real meaning of it. But here now, one of the most humble but greatest men of the New Testament—the Apostle Paul—here's what he writes about love. And here's what we constantly need to come back to, to run our lives, to regulate our lives, to produce the things in our lives that God wants us to do. We can have great accomplishments, like Paul said here.

1-Corinthians 13:1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.... [in other words, hollow] ...If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing" (vs 1-2).

That's why he said in the beginning: *love is the greatest thing!* This is why whatever we do in the world, whatever our accomplishments are, that's fine. That's wonderful. Thank God for it and realize that He has provided the way, the means, and everything to do so. Whatever trial or difficulty we have that comes along, now those are going to be hard. Thank God for it so that you can learn from whatever the trial and difficulty is. Trials and difficulties are to help you grow in

- character
- resolve
- belief
- hope
- love

That's what they're there for. So here Paul is showing some different aspects of it.

Verse 3: "And if I give away all my goods...

[On whatever cause, because sometimes you can give to causes which are not just for the poor and be some magnanimous philanthropist in the world.] ...and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing." Then he goes right on showing, after we've looked at ourselves the way we really need to look at ourselves. ***If you love God you're always going to be in a repentant attitude***, and that's what this is showing.

Verse 4: "Love is patient *and* is kind... [in spite of all the circumstances and difficulties] ...love [charity] envies not; does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things... [That doesn't mean you don't take care of yourself. It just means it doesn't seek its own to the exclusion of helping other people and serving them, too.] ...is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails..." (vs 4-8).

What it's telling us here is that the love of God, coupled with the hope and belief of God, and that all in faith, then is a formula for success regardless in the circumstances in the world.

Someone just sent me by e-mail 36 pages of something to do with some of the martyrs of the Anabaptists. And he says that some of that reading was really most inspiring, how people looked at the circumstances when the Inquisition was going on. Of course, the Anabaptists were Sabbath-keepers. And they believed in baptizing at an older age; that's why they were called Anabaptists instead of infant baptism as children. Sooner or later the day is going to come when all the words that have been said about enduring to the end and holding fast in spite of all circumstances, is going to come true. And so it may be some difficult sledding somewhere down the road in the future. That's why we need to be doing it now, because you can't hurry up on a hurry up course and get it from someone else.

Here's what we need to understand, v 8: "...But whether *there be* prophecies..." I am convinced that those are prophecies of men, because Jesus said not one of His words would fail. And haven't we had a lot of *prophecies of men*, interpreting the Bible the way they saw it, come out wrong? *Yes!* So they failed!

"...whether *there be* languages, they shall cease..." (v 8). Yes, they're all going to be replaced with a true language. Just exactly like God confounded the languages in Gen. 11, so He's going to give the whole world a true language again when He returns. And what language we will speak when we are resurrected, we'll find out when we're

resurrected, because we'll be able to communicate. What we know now is going to cease.

"...whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away" (v 8). That means the knowledge that we know and understand when we have the knowledge of God and are God; it's going to pale in such insignificance all the things that we have in this human life that it's going to be just like vanishing away. So what God has for us is absolutely fantastic.

And here is the truth of the whole matter, v 9: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Living in the end-time we can key together a few more things than before. But it is still *in part*. Remember the sermon I gave *The 14 Points of Prophecy* (Day 6, FOT, 2002) that have to take place before Christ returns? And only three or four had any degree of fulfillment at all. So we prophesy in part.

Now then, here's the day we're looking for, and this is what Paul is also writing about to try and inspire the brethren by saying, Hebrews 6:9: "...we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you, even the fruits that accompany salvation."

1-Corinthians 13:10: "But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child" (vs 10-11). What he is really saying here is if we don't have the qualities of love that he has just covered here, then we are childish in our understanding of God's way and are behaving in that manner. We need to put those things away. And childish behavior is behavior of the world, where there are all the things that go on there. We have to function in the world, so you have to be careful and cautious with that; we have to understand how they are. But that doesn't take away from what we need to do for God.

Verse 12: "For now we see through a glass darkly..." We can see, we can catch glimpses of these things. Today, I would say, considerably more than the Apostle Paul. I wonder what he would have thought if he could have seen some of the telescopic pictures of the universe. I wonder what kind of epistle he would've written. So we can see a little more clearly, but it's still darkly. Because when we come down to these things we have to say, as Jesus said, we don't know 'the day,' we don't know 'the hour.' But we can, if we're watching, understand the season of these things as they are coming.

"...but then *we shall see face-to-face*..." That's going to be something to see God face-to-face.] ...and I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known. And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of

these *is* love” (vs 12-13)—because it never fails. We have the same kind of pattern here back in Heb. 6 of love, and hope, and faith. Exactly in the way that he has written it here.

Let’s come to Revelation 22:3 and see what he’s referring to, *face-to-face*. “And there shall be no more curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it... [New Jerusalem] ...and His servants shall serve Him, and **they shall see His face**... [We will see God face-to-face. There can be no greater thing or hope or promise that has been given of God to cling to so that we are successful unto the end, to see Him face-to-face.] ...and His name *is* in their foreheads” (vs 3-4). So that’s what Paul is talking about back here in 1 Cor. 13.

Now let’s look at a couple of other Scriptures here that tie in with Heb. 6:10, and love, serving God, and so forth. 2-Thessalonians 2:13: “Now we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation...” You stop and think about that! Out of all the billions on the face of the earth. This is why the world does not like the Church of God—in the final analysis, won’t like the Church of God—and those who believe this, because we will say ‘we have been chosen by God’ for eternal life, and ‘you have not.’

- God is the One Who makes the selection.
- God is the One Who does the calling.
- God is the One Who gives the Holy Spirit.
- God is the One Who will resurrect us from the dead.

But He has chosen us specifically, individually; and that’s why with the Holy Spirit of God in you, you belong to Him. You are chosen by God the Father; the great Sovereign of the entire universe has chosen those that He has called. *Handpicked! Hand selected* to the exclusion of other people. Their day will come; He has a different plan for them.

“...called you unto salvation... [that ties right in with fruits that accompany salvation]... through sanctification of *the* Spirit and **belief of the Truth**” (v 13). And that’s why it’s so important. The love of the Truth, belief of the Truth is so hard in this age of talk shows, opinions. Everybody has an opinion, and that’s where so much religious confusion comes from. They have an opinion about this, an opinion about that in the Bible. Rather than saying that the Bible says this, ‘let me find out what else does it say about this,’ and put it all together so that you know what God says.

That’s why, and I don’t know if they’ve ever done this on a religious program or not, it certainly wouldn’t surprise me if they would do it to run something like: What do you think? What’s your

opinion of this? What’s your interpretation of this? Then run a quick poll, and then five minutes later say, ‘Well, 60% say this and 40% say this.’ You have to **believe the Truth**, which is from God, and it’s not like a CNN poll. You have two choices:

1. believe it and live it
2. reject it

Those who are in-between create for themselves great problems. That’s called *Laodiceanism!* They had a more difficult time than we do. Why did they have it more difficult than we do? *Because today we have the Word of God!* Remember, 2-Thess. was the second epistle that Paul had written. Granted, they may have had a form of what became the Gospel of Matthew; chances are they probably had that, because Matthew’s Gospel was finished in 35<sup>A.D.</sup>

They had the Old Testament. But here we have the complete New Testament, so our belief of the Truth should actually be stronger than their belief because we can base it upon facts that we can study out of the Bible and build Scripture upon Scripture and do as it says, ‘precept upon precept; line upon line; here little, there a little,’ and so forth, to put it together. We can have a more solid and firm belief of the Truth. The Truth is what? *Your Word is Truth! The Truth of God!*

Verse 14: “Unto which He called you by our Gospel... [again verifies that God is the One Who does the calling] ...to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here they were understanding already at that time that our inheritance is going to be obtaining the same glory that Jesus has.

Verse 15: “So then, brethren, stand firm... [Isn’t it interesting how the style—though he’s covering a subject a little differently—that the Spirit of God makes the style very similar to Hebrews.] ...stand firm, and hold fast the ordinances that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace—encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work” (vs 15-17).

See how the admonition that we find here in Heb. 6 follows right along with the same flow as we have in 2-Thess. That’s another proof, by the way, that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. There are quite a few scholars who don’t believe he did. But when you see the style and you see the way that it’s put together, you can see how closely it follows along.

Now, let’s look a little bit more here, let’s come back to Hebrews 6:11: “But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the

same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end.” In other words, since God is true, and God is righteous, and God is love, then we can have the full assurance that what God has promised as *the hope* is there to the end. And that’s what’s so profound and important.

Let’s understand something about the hope that God gives us. It’s not just a false mirage of a thought within our hearts. It is part of the fruit, as we saw: love, joy, faith, and hope. Just like *love* comes from God, *faith* comes from God, they are the gifts of the Holy Spirit; so *hope* comes from God, because that’s what He’s called.

Romans 15:13: “May the **God of hope** fill you now with all joy and peace in believing... [That kind of belief, with the hope of God, the love of God, and all of these things combined together, will bring joy, in spite of all circumstances; will bring peace of mind regardless of what is happening.] ...that you may abound in hope *and* in the power of the Holy Spirit.” And that’s how we are to run our lives, and to which Paul is talking about back here in the book of Hebrews.

Come back to Hebrews 6:12. Here’s why we have hope: “So that you do not become lazy...” That is always to inspire you. The proverb says that without vision the people perish. And that’s what hope is. **Hope is the vision**; the looking out into the future; the seeing the great and fantastic possibilities. *So that hope is the vision*. And when you have that, then you’re going to be, what the world calls a *self-starter*. What does that mean? That means that *you can run and govern your life with the power of the Holy Spirit to do what is right!*

- you *will pray* because you desire to pray
- you *will study* because you desire to study

—because *this hope is that vision* which gives you the impetus and the power everyday to go ahead, regardless of the circumstances that are around you. So that’s a fantastic thing. And that’s why he says that, when you have that, you have that hope you’re not going to become lazy. That doesn’t mean you’re not going to have periods where you’re going to have some letdowns, because we all have that. But this means *lazy and negligent*.

“...but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises” (v 12).

Then he talks about Abraham, and you know the story about Abraham. You can read it in *The Christian Passover* book, that the Passover actually began with Abraham in Gen. 15. And that’s a profound thing! It didn’t begin with Israel. *It began with Abraham!* And isn’t it interesting how it always comes back to Abraham. Abraham had to believe God, because God said, ‘I want you to leave your

country, I want you to leave your house and go into a land that I will show you.’ That he would be a blessing to all nations—his seed. And that He would bless those that bless us, curse those that curse us, etc. *So it all goes back Abraham*. What I want to do is for us to understand something very important concerning this example that he is drawing out here.

Let’s come to Genesis 22, because this is the example that he uses. Lots of times God will do things so that on the surface it will look like it’s not going to come out the way that you think, but in the end it comes out better than you have thought. Does that make any sense? *Yes!*

Remember, Abraham was called when he was 75-years-old. He received the promise that Isaac would come when he was 85—that’s 10 years. He then also had the promise confirmed in his 99<sup>th</sup> year that Sarah would bear and bring forth Isaac. So here now we have 25 years involved—don’t we? This is what Paul is talking about, the time span leading up to Abraham.

Genesis 22:1 is very instructive *in faith, in hope, in belief*, and all of those things are very important here concerning what God asked Abraham to do. “And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ And He said, ‘Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac... [Isaac was not his only son. If you recall, Ishmael was also his son—not through Sarah, but through Hagar. That problem still exists with us today with Jacob and Esau. But how does God look at it for the inheritance?] ...your only *son* Isaac...” (vs 1-2)—which means, it was his only *true* son, though he fathered Ishmael, because his wife Sarah bore Isaac. It was the both of them combined.

Verse 2: “...‘Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you.’”

We find in the book of Hebrews, chapter 11—the faith chapter—that he did this because he counted that God was also able to raise him from the dead, if it really came to the point of sacrificing him. In other words, God gave to him when he was 100-years-old—gave him Isaac as his son—his body being dead. And you know at 100-years-old, I’m sure things don’t work like they do when you’re 20 having a son. Then he said in his own mind, and *this is belief, this is faith*: ‘If God asked me to do this, I know that He will resurrect him from the dead.’ God didn’t quite require that.

Verse 3: “And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two *of* his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up and

went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, ‘You stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.’” (vs 3-5).

We’ve debated back and forth many times how old was Isaac at this point? He’s called *a lad*. I don’t know if Abraham, being at this point well over 100-years-old, and he has a young son, how many years he could still call him *a lad*. But you know how it is with older folks, they even call 30-year-old adults ‘youngsters.’ So we don’t know. We’ve estimated back and forth at different times anywhere from 12 to perhaps 30. We don’t know, probably on the younger side, below 20. I think we have the clue, v 3, “...and took two *of* his young men with him...” So *young men* are young men, *a lad* then has to be younger than *young men*. So let’s figure 20 or below just for the sake of trying to figure it.

Here’s what happened. Now just imagine this scene, v 6: “And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son... [This is a type of Christ carrying His own cross because he was carrying the wood for his own sacrifice.] ...And he took the firepot in his hand... [That means he took a censer bowl of coals, carried it in his hand because you can’t hold fire in your hand.] ...and a knife. And they both went together. And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father.’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold the fire and the wood... [In other words, ‘I see the fire and the wood.’] ...But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’” (vs 6-7).

This is quite profound here, because I don’t believe that up until this point Abraham told Isaac what was going to happen. Notice his answer, and here is a good example of faith for us in spite of the circumstances looking like they are desperate and unto the end. I’ve also found that when you go through circumstances that are desperate and look like the end, and you go through with faith and understanding, and perhaps maybe even the end does come certain situations, but you still remain faithful to God, there is a blessing that comes later in God’s time and in His way. Here we have a very similar thing.

Isaac asked the question of his father, and notice his answer, v 8: “And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.’....” Which is also a type of the coming sacrifice of Christ. Which is also then a type of what is called *theologically*, a substitutionary death. Which then becomes the death of another for your sins; or in this case, the death of another for the death of Isaac. He said, “...God will provide...”

“...So they went both of them together.... [And I don’t imagine there was very much conversation at that point.] ...And they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. And he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood, upon the altar” (vs 8-9). This would indicate he is younger rather than older, because if he were older, maybe the weight would be a little difficult for him to get him up there on the altar. And I’ve often wondered two things:

1. I wonder what Isaac was thinking when he was helping his father build the altar?
2. I wonder what he thought when he was binding him to put him on the altar for the sacrifice?

And you notice that Isaac himself did not fight back either.

Comment was made that it probably was God’s Spirit supernaturally kept them calm while they had the faith. But here in this case, we have to know that Abraham had to have faith and Isaac had to have faith—didn’t he? He had to have faith and trust in his father that in spite of the circumstances his father knew what he was doing. Likewise for us in relationship to God the Father. Whatever our circumstances are, God the Father knows what they are, and we trust God—in that faith and belief—that He knows what is best for us according to His will. That doesn’t mean we consign ourselves to not thinking or doing or acting. But that just means *we continue to trust God for the solution!*

Verse 10: “And Abraham stretched put his hand... [He reached down to take the knife, whether it was in a sheath on his waist, or whatever.] ...and took the knife to slay his son.... [That’s coming down right to the last minute—isn’t it? *Yes indeed!*] ... And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*.’” (vs 10-11).

This is done to show all of us, how far God required Abraham to go to prove his belief and his obedience. *To the absolute ultimate!* Likewise, when God calls us what are we to do? *We are to love God more than father, and mother, and brother, and sister, and lands, and children, and yes, our own life also;* and we’re to carry our own cross, just as Isaac carried his own wood, and follow after Christ just like Isaac followed after Abraham. And we are to trust the Father in spite of the circumstances, which may look totally opposite of what we may consider they ought to be. I think that describes a lot of situations in a lot of lives. I can tell you this, in my own life it has not been as I ever had thought. And I would have to truly say I really never thought very far beyond.

Notice what happened here, and this is what the Apostle Paul is writing about in the book of Hebrews concerning Abraham. This was such a fantastic and profound thing to do, v 12: “And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’”

What does this tell us about our test and trials? *It tells us the exact same thing!* God knows that we love Him and fear Him when that which in our lives is the most dear to our hearts—that is, in this world—we count as nothing for the sake of love and obedience to God and eternal life.

It is easy to say those words, but it is hard to carry them out as Abraham and Isaac did here. Let’s also note that at this time we can say, if he was 12-years-old, then it’s 37 years; if he was 20-years-old, then it’s 45 years that God was trying and testing Abraham and then at that moment, because he did this He said, “...for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son from Me” (v 12). That’s quite a thing—isn’t it? That’s why we are told *endure to the end*. And that’s what it’s based upon here.

Now then, we have a miraculous thing take place, v 13: “And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold, behind *him* a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns.... [I’ve said *maybe* God supernaturally created this. He could do that because nothing’s impossible for God, as a type of the supernatural existence of Christ in the flesh, that’s possible. Or, while he was laying Isaac up on the altar, God caused a ram to go up there and get caught in the thicket. Either way, it was there; either way, God provided it.

“...And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son” (v 13). This is the exact same thing that God the Father has done for us and our sins. *He offered up Christ for our sins instead of us!* The wages of sin is death, but God says: All right:

- if you repent
- if you love Me
- if you believe Me
- if you live My way

*then* I will apply the sacrifice of Christ and His death to your life. And here is a type of it here.

Verse 14: “And Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide; so that it is said *until* this day, ‘In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.’ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time” (vs 14-15). Here is the swearing that is quoted back in Heb. 6. Let’s understand how important that this is.

1. God cannot lie
2. God needs not take an oath

—because what He says will be. God doesn’t have to take an oath for His Word to be true.

He did this because of what Abraham did in his belief. That’s why if we are Christ’s then we are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. We are to be of the faith of Abraham. So then God did an extraordinary thing. The only time He has ever done this. Which means that it goes from the time of Abraham on down through all eternity, of course.

Verse 15: “And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, ‘By Myself have I sworn,’ says the LORD, ‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you...’” (vs 15-17). It becomes irrevocable, unconditional, that God is going to do this in two profound ways:

1. “...and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens...” (v 17). Those are the resurrected spiritual sons of God who will shine as the stars, as Jesus said. That is the ultimate promise. That is the promise given to us who are called today.
2. “...and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies” (v 17).

The sand then represents the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and as it comes down into the world today. And in those nations the world has been blessed, and from those nations has come the Word of God.

That’s why the world hates us today. They’re jealous, just like Isaac had the jealousy of Ishmael, and Jacob suffered the jealousy of Esau—*because here is the promise. It’s unequivocal*—which means this: Their descendants will receive the promise that God gave to Abraham, which came to Isaac, which came to Jacob when he blessed the twelve sons of Israel, when the blessings came in to the twelve tribes of Israel, that that blessing is not dependent upon their behavior, because it’s unconditional. The blessing *will* come!

Now, the retaining of the blessing then, becomes conditional, but God will give the blessing. That’s why, just take for example, we live in this tremendous land in America, or wherever you may live in part of the countries of Israel, whether its New Zealand, or Australia, or England, or parts of Europe, or Canada. We were blessed with this land, grew up in this land, and we received it not because of anything that we did—correct? *Yes!* The world

looks upon that and looks at all of our sins and says these people don't deserve it. And in some ways they're correct. So here it is, irrevocable.

Let's apply this to the *spiritual* seed. It is irrevocable that the spiritual seed, those who are called to eternal life, because of what Abraham did, and then Isaac and Jacob and on down to the birth of Christ and what Christ did, which this little episode here in Gen, 22 was just sort of a miniature thumbnail sketch of what God the Father and Jesus Christ would do during the ministry of Christ, you see. God has bound Himself to do this. And He will not lie. So therefore, if you understand the Word of God, if you have the Spirit of God, realize that God is going to do and finish the work He has sworn to Abraham. *He has sworn by Himself*. And we can believe that to the uttermost of our being.

Verse 18. "And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice.**" That's the whole key thing throughout the whole Old Testament and New Testament: Do you obey the voice of God? under all circumstances? under all duress? That's not to say that Abraham didn't have his faults and problems. He did! That's not to say that he didn't have his sins. He did! But when God said do something he did it. And when He asked him to do the impossible, he did it. That's why.

Now, let's come back to Hebrews 6 and to see why this is so profound, and how this ought to affect our very lives in the way that we live and believe and everything that we do. I am convinced also that if we are faithful to God and we look to God, He is going to provide opportunities for us to do things we've never even thought of.

Hebrews 6:13: "For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater, saying, 'Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.'" (vs 13-14). And He has.

Here's why, v 17: "In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose... [The heirs of promise include Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all of the spiritual seed that are called, and so forth, all of the physical seed that would come from that.] ...confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things... ['In blessing I will bless; in multiplying I will multiply'—those are the two immutable things.] ...in which *it was impossible for God to lie*..." (vs 17-18).

Most of the religionists today accuse God of lying all the time. And they think that the New Testament is a pack of lies, too. But God does not lie; it's impossible for God to lie!

Now, let's come here to Titus 1, because we need this in here concerning God not lying. Titus 1:1: "Paul, *a* servant of God and *an* apostle of Jesus Christ, according to *the* faith of God's elect and *the* knowledge of *the* Truth that *is* according to Godliness; in *the* hope of eternal life, which God Who **cannot lie**..." (vs 1-2).

The Greek here is 'adunati'—meaning, the *impossibility* of God lying. That's why it's so very important that the Word of God be presented truthfully, straightforward. Because you can take the Truth of God and you can exchange it for a lie by having all kinds of false doctrines and things that you claim are in the Bible.

"In hope of the eternal life, which God, Who **cannot lie**... [cannot; the impossibility of it. That's why we are to have absolutely no doubts whatsoever, that what God said, He is able to do. He is.] (Not only that He cannot lie): ...promised before the ages of time, but revealed in its own set time in *the* proclamation of His Word, with which I was entrusted according to *the* commandment of God our Savior..." (vs 2-3), Who is Christ. Christ is God, the Father is God. So it's impossible for God to lie.

Hebrews 6:18: "So that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for* God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul..." (vs 18-19). When that is that way then you are, what you would say in this world, *stable*. James 1, we'll cover next time, it talks about those who don't have faith are driven like the wind of the sea, driven here and there. They're not anchored.

"...both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil" (vs 19). That you have that relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above in the Holy of Holies in the temple in heaven. That's awesome. Now if you want to know what that's like, read the section there in *A Harmony of the Gospels* on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day when Christ was, after He was resurrected and was accepted of God the Father. What was that like? That will give you something to really sink your teeth into.

"Where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner... [He's the One Who went ahead and paved the way to prove it can be done.] ...having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec" (v 20 ). We're going to see that the order of Melchisedec is different than any other priesthood. It is the only priesthood that was and is a King and a Priest.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 1:1-3
- 2) Hebrews 2:1-3
- 3) Hebrews 3:1-3
- 4) Hebrews 4:9
- 5) Hebrews 5:6
- 6) Hebrews 6:8-9
- 7) Mark 4:14-20
- 8) Galatians 5:22-26
- 9) Hebrews 6:10-20
- 10) John 15:1-10
- 11) 1 Corinthians 13:1-9
- 12) Hebrews 6:9
- 13) 1 Corinthians 13:10-13
- 14) Revelation 22:3-4
- 15) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- 16) Hebrews 6:11
- 17) Romans 15:13
- 18) Hebrews 6:12
- 19) Genesis 22:1-18
- 20) Hebrews 6:13-14, 17-18
- 21) Titus 1:1-3
- 22) Hebrews 6:18-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 6:1
- Genesis 11; 15
- Hebrews 11
- James 1

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *How is Your Spiritual Garden?* (Hebrews Series #19)
- *14 Points of Prophecy* (FOT, Day 6, 2002)

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Transcribed: 11/16/2002  
MDS/cs/dds  
Reformatted/corrected: bo-5-1-11



# Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXI

## The Order of Melchisedec

Fred R. Coulter—October 26, 2002

Hebrews 6:20 builds on everything going clear up to Heb. 10:26. It starts out with our access to God the Father, but let's back up to Hebrews 6:18: "So that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for God to lie*, we who have fled for refuge... [flee from the world and all the things concerning it] ...might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been set before us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul..." (vs 18-19). In other words, that's how you're going to remain faithful and steadfast, is

- to always know the hope of your calling
- to always understand the great, fantastic thing that God has for us
- to know that we are going to be the children of God
- to know that we're going to share in spiritually eternal life and live with God the Father and Jesus Christ and all the saints forever and ever in New Jerusalem

*That's the hope!*

"...both secure and steadfast..." (v 19). In other words, because of the promises of God by the two immutable things which He swore that He cannot lie, and because Jesus has already given Himself as that sacrifice and is our High Priest, it is secure and steadfast, and meaning *nothing can shake it*. Our way of worshiping God

- is not in ritual
- is not in sacrifice
- is not in form and ceremony

***Our way of worshiping God is direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ into the Holy of Holies in the temple in heaven!*** And the whole purpose of everything from here on, whatever he says between this and Heb. 10:26, is to show how *superior*—not just better—but *superior* the New Covenant is to the Old Covenant, and hence, superior to any other form of worship or any other religion. ***Only those that have the Spirit of God have this hope!***

It is true that if anyone will truly pray to Jesus, though they are not converted and baptized, and they believe, God will answer their prayers *according to their faith at their level*. Why would He do that? *To encourage them more toward conversion and coming to God!* That's why. So, the thing to say that Jesus only hears the prayers of those who are converted is not a correct statement. However, it is a true statement that only those who have the Spirit of Christ will receive eternal life. God can answer prayers for anyone. *Answering a prayer does not*

*mean eternal life*. It just means that God answered the prayer. Now if they go on and they're thankful and they pick up the Bible and really want to know and learn and study, then God's Spirit can be with them and lead them and, hopefully, they would be led to repentance and baptism.

But as far as those who are in the Church we have to where God has absolutely drawn the line, Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit..." This is how God is viewing you, because, obviously, you are still in the flesh. And you still have the pulls of the flesh to overcome. But this, then, is your relationship with God. It is *spiritual*.

Here's the dividing line: "...if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, **he does not belong to Him**" (v 9). God is not making a mistake on what He is doing. Those who have the Holy Spirit are His. They are the ones who are called to salvation. So if you have others out there who know of God, heard of God, heard of the name of Christ, if they pray to Jesus and He answers their prayer, that's fine. It is not giving them eternal life. You do not have to have the Spirit of God in order to have your prayers answered. Otherwise, how would anyone ever be able to approach God at all? *You couldn't!* Then you would have to have a system set up where then they would have to come to some man to have their sins forgiven before they could even pray. Can you imagine what a church would do with that?

Here's our relationship with God, Hebrews 6:19: "...and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil..." Now you're able to understand this a little bit more, so I guess it worked out just fine showing you, or having you see the tabernacle again, where you could see the two compartments of the tabernacle, where you have the Holy place and then you have the Holy of Holies. And the veil, within the veil, that is, into the Holy of Holies where the mercy seat of God is; in other words, to the very throne of God.

Notice how this is almost a repeat. This is the summary which begins the whole topic there in Heb. 6:20. Here's the conclusion of everything, Hebrews 10:19: "Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with

full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful..." (vs 19-23). It *begins* with hope in Heb 6:19-20, and it *ends* with hope, Heb. 10:23.

Now, let's come back to Hebrews 6:20: "Where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec." We are going to start with that today: the order of Melchisedec, and there's a reason why. This is all based upon that what we find in Psa. 110:4 is repeated many times in the New Testament. This is the whole basis of the foundation of the New Covenant and the worship of God under the New Covenant, and our access to God the Father, and Jesus Christ and the High Priest that we have.

Psalm 110:1: "The LORD said unto my Lord... [We know David had no lord over him. So this is one of those places in the Old Testament that *reveals* the Father as well as Christ.] ...'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.' The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion *saying*, 'Rule in the midst of Your enemies'" (vs 1-2). Isn't that something? ***The enemies of God can only do what God allows.*** They don't even realize how restricted and how held back they are by God.

Psalm 2—here's their attitude; here's the attitude of them today. And this is what they are wanting to do with all of the new religions, and now with this book that I mentioned earlier, *Christianity Without God*. God is going to let this world go its way, and they think they're getting away with it. And then one day BAM! In the heavens there's going to appear the sign of the Son of Man, and they're going to be astonished at what's going to happen. It's going to be something.

Psalm 2:1: "Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Christ, saying, 'Let us break Their bands asunder... [God has no hold on us] ...and cast away Their cords from us.' He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and in His fury He terrifies them. 'Yea, I have set My King upon Zion, My Holy mountain.' I will declare the decree of the LORD. He has said to Me, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'" (vs 1-9).

So when it says that He rules in the midst of His enemies, that's something to have great hope in. Yes, there are times that God lets the enemies conquer His people; that is true. And that's what they're going to figure that they are doing in the last days when the martyrdoms occur. And what is going to be the ultimate reality of the fulfillment of Ps. 2? When they think that they have finally won.

The enemies are going to think that they have finally won when they kill the two witnesses, because look what they do after that. Revelation 11:9: "Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs..." After they've tormented them with plagues and everything like this, and they can call fire down from heaven, and hold back the rain, and everything. So God is going to let them kill them [two witnesses]. Whereas before, if they tried to kill them, what would happen? Fire would come out of the mouth of the two witnesses and devour them.

They are going to think, 'Boy, we finally got it! These guys are dead!' They "...shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth" (vs 9-10). So for three and a half days they're going to think they're victorious. Really not very long at all! Then right after that, they are raised, the seventh trumpet is blown, and the resurrection takes place.

Never worry about the enemy. Yes, we're to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves,' that's true. But never worry about the enemy, because God *rules* in their midst, and if He lets them rise very high—guess what? *They have further to fall!* Always remember Pharaoh. God said, 'I raised him up for this very purpose: to show My power and My glory, that will be known in all the earth' Yes, it was, and still is.

Wherever the Bible is, and you read it, it's still known in all the earth that God took him down. But He let him be raised up in great glory. And He let him oppress the children of Israel. Then God intervened. And Pharaoh learned one thing—even though he didn't have any of the technological marvels that we supposedly have with our weapons today—that *you can't fight against the plagues of God*. You can't be a very good warrior when you're covered with boils and blains. And you can't concentrate on what you're doing if flies and frogs and lice and all of these things are bothering you. God has a good way of taking care of them. God does rule in the midst of His enemies.

Psalm 110:3: “Your people will offer themselves in the day of Your power...” That’s something! When is the day of His power? *Whenever He intervenes on behalf of His people*, whether it is *before* the second coming or *at* the second coming. Of course, the second coming is going to be the greatest manifestation of it—*isn’t it? Yes!*

“...in the beauties of Holiness from the womb of the morning: Yours is the dew of Your youth.... [This is just sort of a symbolic expression of eternal life.] ...The LORD has sworn and **will not repent**, ‘You... [‘the LORD said to my Lord’] ...are a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec” (vs 3-4). One thing that’s very important here that we need to understand is *when this was given*. This was given while the Levitical priesthood—the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites—were in full blossom in Jerusalem. And this is already telling us while that priesthood was functioning that it was going to be out of date sometime in the future and *be replaced by the order of Melchisedec*—and this is what we will see.

Verse 5: “The LORD at Your right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.... [this shows His second coming] ...He shall judge among the nations... [He’s constantly doing that] ...He shall fill them with dead bodies; He shall shatter chief men over the broad earth. He shall drink of the brook by the way... [likening unto the Holy Spirit] ...therefore He shall lift up the head” (vs 5-7)—lift up Himself for battle; His second return.

Hebrews 7:1: “For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, Who met Abraham *as he was* returning from *his* slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, and to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God, remains a Priest forever. But consider how great this one *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils” (vs 1-4).

Now let’s go back and look at the priesthood of Melchisedec. Let’s first of all understand that it says here in Heb. 7:1, that He is King *and* Priest. Under the system that Israel had, the priest could not be king. You had the kingship, which would come down through the line of David; you had the priesthood, which would come down through the line of Aaron. A king could not become a priest, and a priest could not become a king. But here we have both offices together in Melchisedec. The reason that this is so is to show the *superiority* of the priesthood

of Melchisedec, Who is Christ—that’s what it’s showing.

Let’s go back and see the account in Genesis 14; this is all we have concerning Melchisedec in the Old Testament. This becomes a very important precedent when we understand that Melchisedec (Gen. 14) was actually the One Who became Jesus Christ. Every other man has what? *A mother, a father, a beginning of days and an end of life!* Some commentaries like to say that Melchisedec was Shem. Why could it not be Shem? It’s very, very simple, the Bible records his birth—doesn’t it? *Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah!* So, he had a father and mother; he had a beginning of days, and he had an end of life. So therefore, just as God appeared to those in the Old Testament time in different manners, there’s a time later when He came to Abraham and He appeared as a man. Here’s a time where He appears as a High Priest. Now this becomes very important, because this occurred before the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system. That means that it has precedence over the covenant with Israel.

When they came back from the slaughter of the kings, Genesis 14:17: “And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter... [The king of Sodom didn’t go out and fight. He stayed home.] ...of Chedorlaomer and of the kings with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king’s valley. And Melchisedec the King of Salem...” (vs 17-18).

This tells us this is a preview of the only ceremony that we have where we use physical things. And that ceremony is what? *The Passover!* This King of Salem, Priest of the Most High, did not accept animal sacrifices, did not accept any other form of worship—did He? Here we have right here—by what He did—was a prophecy of what would be when it comes time for the Passover. This may not have been at the Passover time. It doesn’t tell us whether it was or whether it wasn’t.

“And Melchisedec the King of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And He *was* the Priest of the Most High God” (v 18). When it talks about the Most High in the Old Testament, that is talking about God the Father. So there are these some few references in the Old Testament concerning God the Father. In Dan. 7 He is called the *Ancient of Days*. So here He is the *Priest of the Most High God*, and that means God the Father.

Though the king of Sodom may have been there, there’s no indication that he participated in this service with Abraham and Melchisedec. Notice what happened, v 19: “And He blessed him, and said, ‘Blessed *be* Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed *be* the Most High God, Who has delivered your enemies into

your hand.’ And he gave Him tithes of all” (vs 19-20).

This becomes a very important thing. This also shows that tithes were required *before* the Levitical priesthood. We won’t get into tithing today, but we’ll sort of set the stage here with it. Was Abraham a righteous man? *Yes!* He’s called *righteous Abraham*—isn’t he? Which meant what? *That he kept the commandments of God*—didn’t he? But more importantly, what made him more righteous than others was this: **he obeyed the voice of God without question, and with a willing heart and obedience!** That’s what’s so important.

Now here we have the blessing passed on from Abraham to Isaac, and God tells him, Genesis 26:3, He tells Isaac: “Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father...” Isaac remembered that oath—didn’t he? He was one of the participants—wasn’t he? *At the time when God asked Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering.* He understood fully what was being said here. And he remembered the swearing that God said, ‘In blessing I will bless, and multiplying I will multiply.’

So He reiterates it here in v 4: “And I will multiply your seed [Isaac] as the stars of the heavens and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed My voice** and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws” (vs 4-5).

And these had to be the very same that He gave to the children of Israel at a later date. Why can we be so sure of that? *Well simply because Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and ‘I, the LORD, change not!’* If His commandments are righteousness, which they are; and if obedience is required of them, which He does; then *they had to be the exact same laws.* Otherwise, how would Abraham know how to tithe unless God had commanded him to tithe? Though we only have this one account of spoil, that doesn’t mean that that was the only time that Abraham tithed. It gives this one account to establish a precedent that the priesthood of Melchisedec was

- in operation before the priesthood of Aaron
- has superiority over the priesthood of Aaron
- that the priesthood of Aaron and the Levitical system was to come to an end at a future date

That’s why these things are there.

Hebrews 7:2: “And to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace.” This is a literal declaration of His title back in Gen. 14, and it is a prophetic reference of His titles when Christ sets up the Kingdom of God. And we will see that all the way through when we’re going through this.

Verse 3: “Without father, without mother... [No human being can be without father or mother—correct? *This has to be the One Who became Christ!*] ...without genealogy...” There is no genealogy in the Old Testament you can’t go back where it says, ‘This is the genealogy of Melchisedec, the Priest of the Most High God.’ Whereas, you could go back into the Old Testament in you could find the genealogy of the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites—can’t you? Beginning with whom? *Moses and Aaron! Yes indeed!*

“...having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God...” (v 3). When Melchisedec appeared as the Priest of the Most High God, He presented Himself in a form that He would look like when He became Christ. Now as the Son of God, He remains a Priest forever. This becomes so very important, because it means that *there is no interruption of the service of His Priesthood.* He does not need a successor because He is there *forever* it says.

“...remains a Priest forever” (v 3). And that’s continually, without interruption. How much better a priesthood is this, than a priesthood of men who through history have shown that they have become corrupted? And that corruption was previewed by what? *Right back in the wilderness—wasn’t it?* When the people came to Aaron and said, ‘As for this man Moses, we don’t know where he is. Aaron, make us gods.’

So, the corruptible nature of the Aaronic priesthood was revealed immediately in Aaron himself—wasn’t it? Aaron didn’t say, ‘Now look, we know we heard the voice of God. We know that He said *you shall not make any idols or graven images of anything, and you shall not bow down and worship them.* So therefore, no, I’m not going to do this. And since my brother Moses is up there talking to God, if you so much as raise a finger to make an idol, I’m going to have the soldiers over here thrust you through with a spear.’ Which is what he should have done, but he didn’t. So that whole episode of making the golden calves was not only a sin at that time, but it was also *a prophecy of the coming corruption of the Aaronic priesthood.* And you can go back and read how corrupt they became. Here we have a King of Righteousness:

- no corruption

- Who lives forever
- Who is the right hand of God
- Who has given us permission to come into the Holy of Holies in the temple above to God the Father, and Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God

That's why it's so superior.

- We have God the Father Who lives forever
- God the Son Who lives forever
- Who can never be corrupted
- Who are always righteous
  - ✓ gives us of His Holy Spirit
  - ✓ gives us hope
  - ✓ gives us understanding
  - ✓ gives us of His Word
  - ✓ gives of His Truth
  - ✓ we can have direct contact with Them in heaven above

That's contrasted with the Aaronic and Levitical system, where they had to come to the priest. They didn't have direct access to God the Father in heaven above. Only certain of the prophets and the patriarchs had direct access to God. What a tremendous privilege that is, brethren!

That's why Paul spent so much time on this, so when he comes to the end of this in Heb. 10, he says, 'If you trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith you are sanctified as an unholy thing, it's over with,' because this is a tremendous, absolute privilege here. ***He remains a Priest forever!***

Why would he say, 'the King of Righteousness,' rather than 'the Priest of Righteousness'? Very important! He's called the King of Righteousness, the King of Salem, which is the King of Peace, because not only as High Priest, He has the two offices: He is King and He is Priest—which then is a *special office* not granted to other human beings. This is to show that actually ***He is God!*** Because no one can be King of Righteousness unless he is God—can he?

Let's come here to Revelation 19:11, it shows His activity in righteousness here even in making war: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war." Only the King of Righteousness can judge and make war this way. Then it talks about Him and His glorified form, and He's called The Word of God.

Verse 16: "And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords." Being King of Righteousness and King of Peace, *and* Priest at the same time, is a *far greater office* than the priesthood of Aaron, because he was only a priest and he was physical. Whereas we now

have a Priest *forever* Who is also King, Who is also Ruler.

You can tie Isaiah 9 in there with it. The very purpose why Christ came, and it shows all of these things all tied together. Here it doesn't show His *priestly office*. Here it shows His *kingly office*. Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder..." The *kingly office* is being exalted here. In Psa. 110 we have the *priestly office*. Then in Heb. 7 we have them *combined together* for the very first time, because ***Christ was the only One Who was righteous enough to be King and Priest!*** Foretold by being King of Salem and Priest of the Most High back in Gen. 14.

So, here it talks about the *kingly element* of it, Isaiah 9:6: "...the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful..." [all of these are names of God, qualities of God] ...Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.... [In Heb. 7 He's called the King of Peace.] ...Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David... [Showing that though He is Prince of Peace, He will be King of Peace because He's going to sit on the throne of David.] ...and over His kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this" (vs 6-7). There we have the *kingly* part of the Melchisedec, being King and High Priest.

Now, let's cover a couple of things concerning Melchisedec Who established it? *The Lord established it Himself, the Most High!* Melchisedec was Priest of the Most High. That means that God the Father established this, and it was before the establishment of the covenant in Gen. 15; that was on the Passover Day. How long it continued to exist we don't know. If it went beyond the days of Abraham to Isaac; we have nothing other than what it tells us in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

That's why Paul spends the time here, saying, Hebrews 7:3: "Without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God..." And that could be translated *assimilated into*, meaning ***the very office of Melchisedec was assimilated into the function of the Son of God***, Who was Christ.

- He is a Priest forever, because He lives forever
- He is King forever, because He lives forever.

Verse 4: "But consider how great this one *was*..." This is important to understand, because what is it

that the Jews today look to as the most important man? *Moses!* They also understand about Abraham, but they look to Moses more. Abraham preceded Moses—didn't he? *Yes!* So this is why he's going back to this historical setting to show that the precedent of Melchisedec *as Priest and as King* was established *before* the covenant with Abraham.

Now then, he says, v 4: "But consider how great this one *was*, to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth from the spoils." The reason he brings this out is because under the covenant with Israel no one was to receive the tenth other than the Levites and the priests. So he is showing here the giving of the tenth, and also it shows that God required a tenth—when? *Long before Israel and, undoubtedly, long before Abraham!*

We don't know, but we could make a guess, so we'll have to say part of this is a guess and part of it is fact. God does expect us to use our minds in a proper way and to think things through with Scripture to come to understand what His Word is. Most of the time God does not necessarily repeat everything over again in exactly the same way. And this is what bugs people to death to no end concerning the New Testament, because they say, 'Well, there's no command to keep the Sabbath.' But yes there is when you come to understand it, likewise here when we read about Cain and Abel.

If you keep the commandments of God and obey His voice and keep His charge, His statutes, His commandments and His laws, you are righteous—is that correct? *'All Your commandments are righteousness.'* If you do not do that, and you break the commandments, we know that sin is 'the transgression of law'; therefore, *sin is the breaking of the commandments*—correct? We understand that. Let's come here and read this account with Cain and Abel, and this will help us understand.

Let's give just little background before we start reading. Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden and two cherubim were put at the entrance of the east gate. This is very similar to what, as we went through and showed concerning the tabernacle, how the tabernacle was constructed. In the Holy of Holies, the inner part of the tabernacle, or the temple, was where the Ark was, or, the throne of God, or where the presence of God was. Now, after Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden, who lived in the Garden of Eden? *God still did!* He didn't destroy it. He put the cherubim there to protect the *tree of life* so that they could not get in there.

In symbolism under the covenant with Israel, the high priest was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies of the temple once a year. He would come into the outer chamber every day. In the outer chamber we have what? *We have the seven lamp*

*stands*—don't we? *We have the things for washing*—don't we? And we have the table of showbread with the six loaves on each side of the table of showbread. All of that is reflective back here to the Garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve and Abel would want to have contact with God, where would they go? Probably at the set time, probably on the Sabbath Day they would meet the Lord at the entrance of the Garden of Eden. Just outside the entrance of the Garden of Eden there had to be some sort of altar. Just like outside the entrance to the temple you had the altar of burnt offerings. Inside the first part you also had the altar of incense. Here we have instead of a temple, the Garden of Eden and the two cherubim; out from there we have an altar. And there had to be an altar, because of what we're going to read here in Gen. 4.

The Lord also functioned not only as King, but as Priest—did He not? *He would have to with Abel and Cain, and Adam and Eve!* This maybe reflects back on the office of Melchisedec going clear back here, because obviously the Lord had no beginning of days, or end of life, nor any genealogy. So it can come clear back here to Genesis 4:3, what happened here after Cain and Abel were born: "It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground."

Are you to bring certain offerings of the ground to God? *Yes, you are!* You're to bring the firstfruits—aren't you? You're to bring the tithe of it—aren't you? *Yes indeed!* The same laws apply. We can take the laws that God gave to Israel, and they have to be the same ones back here. Even though you brought an offering from the ground, was that sufficient? And if you brought an offering of the ground that was not the firstfruits, or that was not the tithe of the ground, that still was not an offering in the sense that it was an animal sacrifice. There are a lot of things we can derive out of this when we understand the rest of the Bible.

Verse 4: "And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it..." What are the firstlings? *They are the firstborn*—aren't they? Where do we find the law of the firstborn? *Exodus and Deuteronomy!* 'All that opens the matrix being males are Mine, says the LORD.'

Were these offered at the same time? *It doesn't say that they were offered at the same time*, and you don't put the firstfruits on the altar, and you don't put the tithe of the ground on the altar. The only thing you put on the altar is an animal sacrifice. But also, because of the nature of man, what was it that God required of Israel when they approached Him? *To bring an offering for sin*—is that not correct? Only by the shedding of blood is there remission of sin—is that not correct? *That's correct today through the blood of Christ!* That was correct

with Israel with the animal sacrifices they had. Therefore, we can say it had to be also correct with Abel and Cain, otherwise, God then would have different standards for different people when there is only one law, and one standard, and one Lord—correct? So this is how we are to reason with the Scriptures.

Verse 4: “And Able also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it.... [It could be offered for a firstborn; it could also be offered for a sin offering, either way.] ...And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering.” People look at that and they think, ‘Well, now, Cain tried.’ This was before New Age philosophy. ‘If he was sincere and he tried, therefore, God was being discriminatory because He accepted Abel’s sacrifice and not Cain’s. And after all, from the goodness of his heart, Cain must have done this.’ *No!* We don’t find that at all.

Verse 5: “But He did not have regard unto Cain and his offering....” Why? *If it would have been done according to the laws that God gave them it would have been accepted*—wouldn’t it? If you do something according to the Law of God, does He not accept it? *Yes, He does!* That’s what He said is acceptable. You even read there of the sacrifices in Lev. 1, it says *when any man bring a voluntary offering of his own will*. He has to initiate it. Then when he initiates it He gives all of the commands on how that is to be offered at the altar. So likewise, we’ve got to have the same thing in play here—don’t we? When did God not accept an offering by the priest and the Levites? (Mal. 1). You bring the blind and halted and the maimed—that which God rejects—and you expect Him to accept it. So God didn’t have any respect to that.

Whatever it was that Cain brought and did, he did not do it according to the commandment of God. So therefore, God did not have respect unto it. Now then, from this we can learn a great principle—can’t we?—which covers everything: ***Unless you do it God’s way, He is not bound to respect what you do.*** We can just think on that! That’s true! After all, is not God, *God*? Since He *is* God—not *if*—He is the One Who commands men—does He not? *Men do not command God!* So what we have here is, Cain doing his own way, coming to God and asking God to accept something that was done contrary to the law; otherwise, it would have been accepted.

Let’s come back to the book of Jude and tie this in with relationship to New Testament faith. We’ve read this many times before, but let’s put this in a little different light. Jude 3: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.” Jesus said, ‘If you love Me, keep My

commandments’—correct? *Yes!* We can go through all of that, too.

Verse 4: “For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment.... [That means their condemnation of old was written about.] ...*They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 3-4).

After he talks about what happened to the children of Israel, and Sodom and Gomorrah, and the angels that sinned, and so forth, v 10: “As for these... [men who are turning the grace of God into licentiousness] ...whatever things they do not understand... [they don’t understand them] ...they blaspheme; but whatever things they understand by instinct, as irrational brute beasts, they are corrupting themselves in these things. Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain...” (vs 10-11). This defines the way of Cain—doesn’t it? The way of Cain is contrary to the commandments of God, contrary to the faith of Christ. While Abel is called righteous, Cain is called wicked in this way, and it is the way of Cain, because he established something after the account there in Gen. 4.

Verse 11: “...and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam’s delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.” What was the thing of Balaam? *Balaam wanted to be paid for his services!* ‘Yes, I will come and curse if you pay me.’ And he says, ‘Whatever you ask.’ God let him have it. He gave him a warning with the angel and the jackass. “...and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.” Korah did what?

- They were the ones who wanted to usurp the priesthood.
- They were the ones who wanted to offer incense
- They were the ones who wanted to get rid of Aaron.

So you have that same thing connected with Cain, Balaam, and Korah. What was it that Cain did back here? Isn’t this typical? Genesis 4:5: “...And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell.” He wanted *his* way.

Try the same thing on any Sunday-keeper, and say, ‘You ought to keep the Sabbath.’ They’ll get mad and their countenance wroth, fallen. They will be, ‘How dare you!’ There’s one man who sent an e-mail, I forget what it was, but I called Ron Carey, and I had Ron Carey give him a little note and send him the *Rome’s Challenge To The Protestants*. And boy, I got back a hot e-mail. ‘I never knew you were SDA [Seventh Day Adventist]!’ *Well, we’re not SDA.* ‘You SDAs

always hide under other names!’ *We’re not SDAs, and we’re not hiding under other names.* We have it very clearly stated, Christian Biblical Church of God. That’s not another name. And then he says, ‘Jesus gave us the first day of the week by being resurrected on the first day of the week.’ All mad! All angry! Didn’t want the Truth.

That’s exactly what Cain was. So God gave him a chance, v 6: “And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, shall you not be accepted?’” Whatever he did was not right, because it says that the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, which means that what? God accepted it—correct? So He’s saying to Cain, ‘You didn’t do this in a right manner. Had you done it in a right manner you would have been accepted.’

Verse 7: “...But if you do not do well... [In other words, if you do not what is right.] ...sin... [which is the transgression of law] ...lies at the door....” That’s a very interesting statement there. This I’m sure has reference to the entrance into the Garden of Eden where God would come out and He would manifest Himself. Maybe that’s when the priesthood of Melchisedec began. The altar was at the entrance, or the door, to the Garden of Eden. So here he’s bringing sin. “...**sin lies at the door**....”—right at the entrance where God lives. That’s what He’s saying.

“...Its desire *is* for you... [In other words, if you give in to it—you give in to your lust—it’s going to get you. What is the wages of sin? *Death!*] ...but you must rule over it!” That’s what it should read. In other words, you are to overcome sin. So what did God do when Cain sinned? *He called him to repentance*—did He not? *Yes, He did!* Isn’t that what God commanded Israel? *Yes, indeed!*

Since he brought an offering of the ground, and he brought it to the altar, could it be that he brought it and put it on the altar in place of a burnt offering? In other words, on the altar of God instead of a sacrifice of a lamb or a goat, as we know would be allowable. He brought the fruit of the ground and put it on the altar and expected God to accept that as a burnt offering. Can you burn wheat? *Yes, you can put a bundle of wheat up on an altar with the fire and it will burn!* It’s possible. Again, we don’t know. We can’t say for sure, but something like that must have been the case, because it was called sin. So therefore, we know it was not firstfruit offering; we know it was not a tithe offering. Another possibility just brought up, which is a good comment. Since Cain would have to bring an animal for a sin offering, he probably would have had to trade with his brother Abel to get a lamb to do that, and he didn’t want to do it. So he was going to force his way upon God. Either way you look at it,

whatever Cain did was *to force his way upon God*. That’s totally the opposite of repentance.

Let’s come to Isaiah 1, and let’s see the same thing here. Whenever there is sin, God defines it, and God calls to repentance. God instructs what needs to be done after repentance, and that’s the same thing that He did with Cain—wasn’t it? You go back and analyze that. Isaiah 1:10: “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....” Even the animal sacrifices, if they were not offered correctly, or if they were not according to what God had said, or if you come with an evil heart and think that if you offered 10,000 rams as it is there in the book of Micah, that you’re going to have greater favor with God. You can even take God’s way and so pervert it and still say that you’re doing it to God, even in the temple of God, but you’re living in sin. That’s what they were doing.

“...‘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.... [Yet, He commanded it—right? But they were doing it with sin.] ...When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts?’” (vs 11-12). It sounds an awful lot like Gen. 4—doesn’t it? *Yes indeed!* You might put there Sunday-keeping. ‘Who has required you to do this? And you come and say you’re doing it in the name of God. And you’re coming and saying that you have entrance to Me and My court.’ *No!*

Verse 13: “Bring no more vain sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies... [We know that for Israel, these were their own sabbaths and own new moons and everything like this. It wasn’t God’s. We know when we read the rest of the book of Isaiah that they were worshiping Baal. They were following all the gods of the nations around them, offering their children in the fire to Moloch.] ...I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!”

I tell you what, there is nothing more frustrating than to go to some meeting and it turns out to be some stupid meeting with absolutely no meaning or relevance to anything. And much more so if you come to hear the Word of God and anything but the Word of God is expressed. This is what God is telling us here.

Verse 14: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*.... [He says in another place: ‘Israel, you have made Me to serve with your sins’ That’s what God did. He’s exposing their sins, and He’s telling them why. Now He’s going to tell



them what to do here in just a minute.] ...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.... [Then He brings them to repentance]: ...Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil... [that's repentance] ...learn to do good... [that's what you do after repentance] ...seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. 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, 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 14-20).

What happened to Cain? *He refused!* He went and killed Abel. Maybe he had to go to Abel to barter some of his goods of the ground to bring an animal for a sin offering or a sacrifice for a Sabbath or Holy Day. And he didn't want to do it. There are many different things that we can read out of the account there with Abel and Cain. He was jealous. He was firstborn, therefore, he figured that whatever he did should be acceptable. And so you always have this kind of thing going on even in families today. You always know the one who is second born is always playing catch-up.

You have everything there. Even though he brought something from the ground, if it were proper according to God's law, he would have been accepted. None of the things from the ground can be taken for a sin offering or a burnt offering. The burnt offering is given when you're thankful to God, and its wholly consumed on the altar, and God takes that as a real sacrifice on your part; and He commanded it, and if it's done right, God accepts it. So there are many, many different things that you can glean and from the account with Abel and with Cain.

This also ties in to tithing, and ties into the thing that people want to give offerings rather than to tithe. There are two things people get upset about—their lives and their money! *Satan is right there to take advantage of both of those! And God is right there to bless you with both of those!* So before we get all huffy and puffy and before I even get to it, I know there are going to be people who will say, 'You're doing this because you need money.' *No!* I'm not bringing this because the Church needs money, or I personally need money. I'm bringing it so that you will understand that if you go contrary to the commands of God in anything—including tithes and offerings—then you're holding back a blessing that God would want to give you. That's why.

If you have to live by every Word of God, which you do, then that's included. I'll just say right here, those who are retired and who are on Social Security and so forth, you do not have an active servile working increase, so therefore, to give offerings on what you receive, that's perfectly fine. So I'm not trying to preach that those who are on pensions or those who have very little income, they should tithe. But nevertheless, *always remember the widow's mite*. And the point was not how much she gave, the point was that *she loved God!*

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

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Hebrews 6:18-19
- 2) Romans 8:9
- 3) Hebrews 6:19
- 4) Hebrews 10:19-23
- 5) Hebrews 6:20
- 6) Psalm 110:1-2
- 7) Psalm 2:1-9
- 8) Revelation 11:9-10
- 9) Psalm 110:3-7
- 10) Hebrews 7:1-4
- 11) Genesis 14:17-20
- 12) Genesis 26:3-5
- 13) Hebrews 7:2-3
- 14) Revelation 19:11, 16
- 15) Isaiah 9:6-7
- 16) Hebrews 7:3-4
- 17) Genesis 4:3-5
- 18) Jude 3-4, 10-11
- 19) Genesis 4:5-7
- 20) Isaiah 1:10-20

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 10:26
- Daniel 7
- Genesis 15
- Leviticus 1
- Malachi 1

#### Also referenced:

- Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering
- Article: *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*

Transcribed: 12/10/2002

MDS/cs/dss

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—5-1-11

# Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXII

## Tithing

Fred R. Coulter—November 3, 2002

Let's pick it up here beginning in Hebrews 7:4. I mentioned that we were going to do some things on tithing—we have a whole series on: *Tithing*. It all gets down to whatever your obedience to God is, *it has to come from the heart*. If someone makes you do it, or puts you in fear to do it, or coerces you to do it, or whatever means of pressure is upon a person to do something, and they don't want to do it, well then you can't change their mind. God shows that what He does in dealing with people, *He always brings repentance first*.

Hebrews 7:4: "But consider how great this one *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils." The reason that this is given here is because he gave it to Melchisedec. There are two reasons why this is very important. It's because Abraham was the father of *physical* Israel. Abraham is also the father of *spiritual* Israel, being the Church. And in giving a tithe to Melchisedec, it was based on eternal life, because He remains a Priest forever. So, the authority for tithing is based upon God; He's the One Who gave the authority. The reason he is contrasting this, he brings up the sons of Levi and the Aaronic priesthood; then he is showing that the authority for tithing under the covenant with Israel was a lesser authority and a temporary authority, because the authority really resides in God, in the person of Melchisedec.

Verse 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham; but on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him who had the promises. Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* is blessed by the superior *One*.... [this is what Paul is showing here] ...And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever*. And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes, also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 5-10).

This is showing the point that the priesthood of Melchisedec is far superior to the priesthood of Aaron and the Levites. And that the receiving or the giving of tithes in Abraham's case; and that wasn't the only time he tithed, as recorded there in Gen. 14. That's the only one that's recorded.

Let's come back to v 5: "For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who

receive the priesthood... [That's separating out not just Levi alone, but also Aaron, because the Levites were assistants to the priests.] ...are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham."

Let's look at something that is very important to understand. When Abraham tithed to Melchisedec, and we saw that Melchisedec was the manifestation of God to Abraham, as the Priest of God. Just like He appeared to him when He came with the angels as a man.

Numbers 18:20: "And the LORD said to Aaron, 'You shall have no inheritance in their land....' That means that the tribe of Levi did not receive a territory like we would call a state. Rather, the Levites and the priests were scattered throughout all Israel, and they had cities for Levites. The Levites and the priests could own their own homes on their own property within the cities that they had designated for the cities of the Levites. They were not without land that they owned themselves. Howbeit, they did not own agricultural production land as the rest of the tribes of Israel.

"...neither shall you have any part among them.... [that is in the land] ...**I am your part and your inheritance** among the children of Israel" (v 20). Isn't that interesting? Whenever you belong to God, that's how it's phrased, especially with the ministry. With the priesthood it's phrased that way here.

In John 13 we have the last Passover with Jesus Christ. And He was talking to His apostles, who were going to be the leaders of preaching the Gospel—is that not correct? *Yes!* Notice what Jesus said to him when He came to Simon Peter, John 13:6: "Then He came to Simon Peter; and he said to Him, 'Lord, are You going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall know after these things.'.... [You'll know when I'm done.] ...Peter said to Him, 'You shall not wash my feet, not ever.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me'" (vs 6-8). It's interesting that that's the same phraseology that's used concerning Aaron. He had his part with God. Likewise with the apostles: "...you have no part with Me."

Let's come to Acts 1, and let's see when they selected the replacement for Judas Iscariot. And they selected Mathias. The reason that ministers are not selected in this manner today is because the

Bible does not instruct us to do so. And since the selecting of the apostles—because Jesus Christ personally chose them—they would be presumptuous if they had chosen one. For example if they said, ‘Ok, let’s have a vote on it, guys. Let’s all gather around here and we’ll vote who’s going to replace Judas.’ *They didn’t have the authority to do so.* Let’s just carry this one step further. When Barnabas and Saul were ordained as apostles, how was it made known to them that they were to be apostles? *The Holy Spirit revealed it*, and apparently there was the spoken word through the power of the Holy Spirit to ‘separate Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to do.’ So again, we have the selection of apostles done, not by men but by God. So we have the same thing here. This is why they cast the lots.

Verse 24: “And they prayed, saying, ‘You, Lord, *the* Knower of the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have personally chosen to receive the part of this ministry and apostleship...’” (vs 24-25). Not only did Aaron and the Levites have part in the ministry, and their part was with God, so likewise when it comes to the apostleship those who are going to be the ones in establishing the Church you have exactly the same thing, *a part*.

“...of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas *in* transgressing fell, to go to his own place.’ Then they cast their lots; and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles” (vs 25-26).

Come to Acts 8 and let’s see some interesting things that Peter said to Simon Magus when Simon said, ‘Oh, I’ll give you money and you give me this power.’ Acts 8:19: “...‘Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part *nor* lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God” (vs 19-21). Then he told him to go ahead and repent. So it’s very interesting, that the exact same wording in Num. 18 when God is talking to Aaron, and why He was going to do with Aaron what He was going to do.

Let’s see something that is very important and very profound. We have seen that the One Who became Melchisedec was also the One Who was the LORD God of the Old Testament—Old Covenant—or the LORD God, dealing with the patriarchs. When He dealt with the patriarchs, He appeared to them personally and also in vision. When He dealt with Moses, He told Aaron and Miriam that He would talk to Moses face-to-face. But any other prophet from that time forward He would speak in dreams and revelations. So, here we have a situation, now,

where God is establishing the Aaronic priesthood with the Levites to help. The same One Who was Melchisedec. And that’s the whole point that Paul is making here.

Numbers 18:21: “And behold, I have given the sons of Levi **all the tithe** in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Let’s look at a couple of things here concerning that. God *gave it* to them. It was His to give. So it tells you that this is something that God owns. Whatever God owns He can give to whomever He wants. So He gave it to them. Let’s also understand another thing. He says, “...all the tithe...” —which He does not restrict to agricultural or animal products. All the tenth is not restricted to agricultural products or animal products, because the earth and the fullness is God’s, and He made it. And everything that we do anyway is derived out of the ground—isn’t it? If you produce oil, it’s out of the ground. If you produce a metal, it’s out of the ground. If you work with woodwork, it’s out of the ground. It all comes from the earth. God well knew that it was going to be more than just on the agricultural products. That’s why He said, “...**all** the tithe...” —whatever the tithe was.

So here we have established that Melchisedec in the person of the LORD God, because that’s Who it was, then took the tithe which was rightfully His by the fact that He was God, and gave it to the Levites and to Aaron. We will see that that is the whole point of what Paul is writing about here: that *Melchisedec is far superior* to the Aaronic priesthood. They are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people. Now then, since God owns it, then whatever the tithe is, *is the thing that belongs to God*. And that’s why Jesus said, ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and render to God the things that are God’s.’

Hebrews 7:5: “...that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham” So, even in spite of the fact that they are on a human level, equal, He did not give the tithe to anyone but to Aaron and the Levites. Now then, he’s making a contrast here between the authority of the law, because they are commanded by the law. What Abraham gave to Melchisedec was on the authority of eternal life. Which is a higher authority, law or eternal life? *Eternal life is!*

Verse 6: “But on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham...” He’s making a point here very importantly. He is showing very clearly that the tithes given to the Levitical system was temporary. That’s why we have the prophecy, ‘You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec...’ (Psa. 110:4) showing that that system of the Levitical and

Aaronic priesthood was coming to an end. And we covered on how the Levitical and Aaronic priesthood is corruptible, because they are human, and how that the very first time that Moses didn't come back from the mountain, and the people said, 'Make us calves,' Aaron was corrupted the first time (Hebrews Series #21).

Here we have, based upon a Priest Who lives forever, Who does not die, Who has greater authority, and Who in fact was the One Who gave the tithes and the commandment to the sons of Levi in the first place. So therefore, you cannot make the argument in any case that the only ones who were to receive the tithes were the priests or the Levites. Abraham never gave it to a priest of Aaron or Levi, because in fact they were still in his loins. Showing the superiority of the effort of Abraham and the superiority of the priesthood of Melchisedec, both.

And furthermore, v 6: "...and blessed him who had the promises. What were the promises? *Two major promises*—right?

1. promises of *physical seed*; as the sand of the sea
2. promises of *spiritual seed*; the Church

And if you are Christ's then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. So you have both.

If you are an Israelite and you're looking back at your roots, then you would have to say that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are your forefathers, and those are your roots. But when you come to Abraham, Abraham had a relationship with God *long before* the promises were given, at least ten years. And he had a continuous, faithful relationship with God all through his life, and obeyed His voice and kept His charge and His commandments, laws and statutes. This shows that Abraham, as a person, had a higher relationship with God than they did. And his relationship with God was on a *spiritual* basis. That's why when he believed God it was counted to him for righteousness. ***He had faith! He obeyed!***

Yes, he did offer some sacrifices—didn't he? But the sacrifices he offered were burnt offerings. Nowhere do we find that Abraham offered a sin offering. So, that means with his direct relationship with God, whatever sins he committed he could repent just like we do, because he had that access to God. That's why he is the *father of the faithful*.

The children given to Abraham as physical descendants, are in a lesser position with God than Abraham was. And they had a temple, or tabernacle, to worship at. They could not have a relationship with God like Abraham had, or like those who God calls now, and we, being of Jesus Christ. So this is

what he's saying. This is the whole point that he is making here. He "...blessed him who had the promises" (v 6) That shows that He was *superior* to Aaron and the Levites.

Verse 7: "Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* [Abraham] is blessed by the superior *One* [God].... [this is both true physically and spiritually] ...And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever* (vs 7-8). This also tells us something concerning receiving tithes in the New Testament. The tithes were to be received to help people with eternal life. That's what it's for, to minister unto them the Word of God unto eternal life. Whereas the tithes that the Levites received were not unto eternal life. So the tithing that Melchisedec has, which we also have in the New Testament, is based upon everlasting life. The tithing that was given to Israel was temporary, because God for the time and duration of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood gave it to them. Now we're going to see how God handled that when we get to the section concerning Paul's authority in tithing. So we'll just bypass it from there.

Now, to make the point, v 9: "And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes... [the priests who were there at the temple] ...also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him" (vs 9-10). What we have with this: this very act, then, was a prophecy of the subordination of the Levitical priesthood to the Melchisedec priesthood. That's what it's showing us. Here is the reason for the change.

Verse 11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—" What do you mean by perfection? *That is, pointing to eternal life!* Paul also covers this in Galatians, showing that eternal life is a gift of God. And the power and authority of eternal life is greater than the authority that was given to the Levites.

Galatians 3:21: "*Is the law then contrary to the promises of God?.... [This is the whole Old Covenant. That's what it's talking about here when it says the law.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life... [eternal life] ...then righteousness would indeed have been by law*"—or *true perfection*.

Law tells you what is right and what is wrong. Yes, if you love God you're going to keep His commandments. That's absolutely true. But you've missed the whole point of law if you don't understand that that is to lead you to Christ. And when you come to Christ you don't give up the law-keeping and commandment-keeping; rather it is all now spiritually magnified and in keeping the commandments of God. That's why when it talks about annulling the law there in Heb. 7, it's not

talking about doing away with all law. It was talking about the law as related to the priesthood. Those had to be changed. So there is no law that brings perfection. *Law gives us the knowledge of sin!* Law tells us what is right and wrong. The Holy Spirit from God the Father through Jesus Christ brings us eternal life, and we receive that by promise. And that's the promise that was given Abraham, which is extended to us.

Now let's look at a couple Scriptures here showing a little bit more about perfection, which Christ even said in the Sermon on the Mount. Of course, no law can make you perfect; no law can give you life. That's why salvation comes through what? *Repentance and baptism, and belief, and walking in the way of God!* It does not come because you open a book of the law and it says if you do these laws you will receive eternal life. And if that were the case then, you could earn it. ***But you can't earn eternal life!*** That's why it's not by law. That's why Paul said, "...if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness would indeed have been by law" (v 21). And that righteousness means *the righteousness of perfection*, which comes through eternal life.

Matthew 5:48, where He summed up this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." The only way that can be done is through the gift of eternal life—is that not correct? ***Yes! Perfection comes by God's Spirit!*** Perfection does not come by law-keeping. And it's so difficult for people to understand that you must keep the commandments of God, yet, that does not give you eternal life. Howbeit, it's got to be a condition of eternal life—does it not? Let's come back here to the very last chapter of Revelation, and we will see that it is a condition. God can put conditions on it. You can't buy it. It's not a condition that you buy. It's a condition of something that you do.

Let's come here to Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be.... [We are to have good works. God created them that we should walk in theme.] ...I am Alpha and Omega, *the Beginning and the End*, the First and the Last.... [What He's saying here is that there's 'no way you're going to get eternal life by going around Me.'] ...Blessed *are* those who keep His commandments... [practice and keep] ...that they may have the right to *eat of* the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city" (vs 12-14). Commandment-keeping *is* required, but commandment-keeping *cannot* give life, because commandment-keeping *is not* receiving the Holy Spirit.

Is it possible to keep the commandments of God though you're not converted? Can you keep them in the letter? *Of course, you can! To keep them in the Spirit is another challenge*, because you're dealing with the mind and you're dealing with overcoming lust, and you're dealing with overcoming human nature. The whole spiritual keeping of the commandments of God is another whole different story.

Physically speaking, Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'.... [Jesus said to him, 'Just believe. All you have to do is believe...' (sarcastically)] ...And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.'.... [The young man said to Him, because he figured 'I've been doing that. I've been good, Lord, I've been good.'] ...Then he said to Him, 'Which?' And Jesus said, 'You shall not commit murder... [haven't done that] ...you shall not commit adultery... [haven't done that] ...you shall not steal... [haven't done that; boy, I must be getting close] ...you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The young man said to Him, 'I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?'" (vs. 16-20).

What does he lack? *He lacks the Holy Spirit!* So this is showing that it's more than just the physical keeping of the law. But it also shows this: It shows that, yes, you can keep the commandments in the letter, and that in keeping them in the letter there is no spiritual perfection. Why? ***God expects that of every human being!*** That's why.

Verse 21: "Jesus said to him, 'If you desire to be perfect... [There we go; this is for eternal life.] ...go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor... [Get rid of your idols on the earth. That's what He's saying. Whatever your idol on the earth is. In his case, it was money.] ...and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.' But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions" (vs 21-22). So, we can conclude by this, commandment-keeping is required. And Jesus never said it was wrong at any time. As a matter of fact, He said He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill. But we also find here that commandment-keeping, though God requires it, is a basic fundamental. It does not perfect you spiritually.

Now let's look and see why He said that. What Paul is doing is he's helping put everything in perspective. It again talks about selling all that you have. There is a way to sell all that you have and still be able to use it. That may sound a little contradictory, but it's not.

Matthew 13:45: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; who, after finding one very precious pearl, went and sold everything that he had, and bought it” (vs 45-46). This is showing a complete dedication of your life.

Let’s come to Luke 14—the *repentance and counting the cost* chapter. Here is how you need to sell the things. Selling them alone and then wishing you had never sold them, or selling them, and then complaining that God said to sell them. Selling it and not repenting and coming close to God and not doing the spiritual things isn’t going to help you either, because Paul said, ‘Though I give all my goods...’ The *King James* says, ‘to the poor,’ but it’s *you can give it to different causes* ‘and have not love, it profits me nothing’

When we come to Heb. 7 this is the kind of perfection that he is showing. That under the Levitical priesthood you could not have perfection of the heart and mind and spirit:

1. because the Holy Spirit was not given
2. because the system under the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood never allowed for salvation of eternal life

Luke 14:25: “And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (vs 25-26).

That’s what was the problem with the young rich man, not that he couldn’t have sold his goods. He could have sold his goods. But he wasn’t willing to give himself. So if you give yourself, and count yourself this way to God, this is called counting the cost and so forth. And just realize that, as Paul said, ‘In whatever circumstances you are, whether you are abound, or whether you are abased, you always trust in God’ That’s the spiritual attitude that God wants us to have. So if you don’t have that, Jesus said, ‘He cannot be My disciple.’

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” Now a cross is whatever trial, a difficulty, whatever thing that you have to give up. Some people have to give up more than money. The two things people get all concerned about is

1. their lives
2. their money

And we see that interplaying throughout all of this that we’re talking about.

So, it is possible, if you count everything but loss for Christ, that you don’t have to sell everything you own, because you have already in your own

mind divorced yourself from all the physical things around you, and count them but dung. That doesn’t mean that you don’t take care of the physical things around you. That just means to serve God there isn’t one physical thing that is going to hold you back. You’re always going to be yielding to God. In some cases it’s going to be hard. Other cases it will be easier.

Let’s look at this perfection again, and here is the whole spiritual process. That’s why Paul said in writing Hebrews, that perfection did not come by law. ***Perfection, or eternal life, comes by gift, and comes by the Holy Spirit!***

Ephesians 4:11: “And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints...” (vs 11-12).

The ministry of Christ—Who was High Priest after the order of Melchisedec—their work is what? *A spiritual work! You have part with Christ!* And also, all of those who are baptized have a part with Christ and eternal life. And the whole purpose and goal and meaning for having those who serve is for the perfecting of the saints, *that they may receive eternal life!*

“...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ...” (vs 11-13). You can put in your margin right there Matt. 5:48, because that then gives the definition of how to be as ‘perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.’ It is a spiritual thing that must take place. So Christ gave the command and Paul shows how. Now, that’s quite a thing to grow into—isn’t it? And eternal life is a fantastic and wonderful thing, so much that, as Paul said, we ‘look through a glass darkly.’ He tells them to grow up. And I think this is what needs to be for a lot of people in the Church of God today.

Verse 14: “So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine...” And, oh boy, do we get *every wind of doctrine*, every kind of question, everything! They come in cycles. If we hadn’t had a certain question for a certain time, know for sure it’s going to come up. The whole thing that is important here is if those who are teaching the brethren *teach* them the Word of God, and *help* them grow up in Christ, then the brethren are not going to be any more children. And instead of being tossed to and fro and saying, ‘Oh, isn’t that interesting! Tell me about it.’ You’ll be able to say:

- that’s right
- that’s wrong
- here’s why it’s right

- here's why it's wrong

—because you will have the mind of Christ to do so. That's the whole purpose in it. And all too often it comes down to a matter of force, and personality, and rules, and regulations. And then what should have been to Christ becomes a religion to men. And we've all lived through that—haven't we? *Yes!*

It's very interesting here, v 14: "...every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error... [In other words, they were going to systematize it into a 'religion.' Has that been done? *Yes!* So much so, that as I've mentioned, I have a book called *Christianity Without God*. And it is true that Christianity today is without God, because why? It has been totally undermined and replaced by the *systematizing of the error*. And now they have a religion.

Verse 15: "But holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even Christ*." How much does God want us to grow spiritually? *As much as we yield to God and choose to do so!* That's how! He's not giving any limitation. There's no difficult law for you to do that you must complete, and if you don't complete that law you're not going to have eternal life; or you won't be perfected. If you believe Christ and walk in His way, and have the Spirit of God, and continually repent of your sins and grow in grace and knowledge and overcome, you are going to grow up into Him in all things. And then you can be part of those who had the five talents and increased five, or the two talents and increased two. So it's quite a thing here— isn't it? Then he talks about the whole Church growing up into that, and so forth.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood..." Verse 19: "Because **the law** brought nothing to perfection..."—*the law* is a principle of law. But what we are talking about here, we're talking about the law, concerning the priesthood in serving the people. Otherwise, there is an annulment of the law, there's a changing of the law.

Yet Jesus said in Matthew 5:17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets..." And hence, you would have a great contradiction—wouldn't you? Since the law came from God, can any man annul it? Can any man change it? Oh, they can say they can. But in reality, do they, in fact, do it? *No!* What God has given, He can take. What God has commanded, He can change.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the law that* the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there for* another priest

to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?".... [If you had something that was perfect, why would you want to replace it? You wouldn't want to.] ...For since the priesthood has changed... [He is stating it as a fact.] (If you have a different priesthood): ...it is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place" (vs 11-12).

Now the change of the law means the laws relating to the priesthood, directly. Secondly, it can include all the laws are brought to their spiritual fullness. So they were changed in that sense. But they were not changed in the sense of the change in the priesthood law. A change had to take place. How was that change accomplished? Well, He's preparing the way. The change has already taken place. Instead of worshiping in Jerusalem, Jesus said, 'You shall worship God *in spirit and in truth*. Not in Jerusalem, nor in Samaria. For God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must *worship in spirit and in truth*.

You change the form of worship. Under the covenant with the Aaronic priesthood, they came and brought a sacrifice. They recited certain words, bowed the head, and the priest blessed them and they went on their way. Now it's entirely different. You have the Spirit of God, and you develop a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So therefore, you have to have a change in the priesthood, you have to have a change in the temple.

- Instead of the temple on earth, it's the temple in heaven above
- Instead of the Holy of Holies on earth, it's the Holy of Holies in heaven above
- Instead of animal sacrifices, there are two sacrifices that are required:
  1. the sacrifice of Christ
  2. your baptism

—because you literally die in that watery grave. Entirely different than repeating the sacrifices over and over again, as he covers there in Heb. 10. Entirely different! It also requires a change to whom the tithe belongs to. God is the One Who gave it—didn't He? *Yes!*

We're going to look at 1-Corinthians 9, because it fits right in here. So all of the laws *relating to the worship of God under the covenant with Israel* were changed or annulled. Not having to do with the Ten Commandments, not having to do with tithing. But having to do with the form of worship, from worship at a temple to a spiritual relationship with God with the Holy Spirit in your mind where you worship Him *in spirit and in truth*.

Now one thing I'm going to cover is why Paul did not use that authority. He had the authority

to use it, but he didn't use it. We'll understand that when we get to it, which I'll cover separately.

1-Corinthians 9:11, Paul wrote: "If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things? If others participate in this authority ['exousia'], over you, much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority... [Why? *Because they were carnal!* That's why! Didn't he say, you're carnal, and not spiritual? *Yes!*] ...but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? In the same way also, the Lord **did command**..." (vs 11-14)—'diatasso'—which means, *to command, to ordain, to direct*.

If the Lord commanded, or directed, or ordained, "...that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel" (v 14)—how should they live of it? *As the priest who waited in the temple and served at the altar!* And what did they receive? *Tithes and offerings!* So here is a clear-cut Scripture which shows that in the New Testament, yes, it is an authority that should be used.

That's why it had to be changed. Because, when we read back there in Num. 18, God gave it to the Levites. Now that He is doing away with the Levitical priesthood, God has the tithes and the offerings, so then He designates to whom He gives it. And He just did, right there in 1-Cor. 9. It's designated! The Lord commanded, ordained, or appointed that that's how it should be done. And I found it very interesting that all those who don't believe in tithing very rarely go to 1-Cor. 9 and the verses that I read. Yes, they read the verses which have not to do with tithing, but have to do with the varying degrees of a person's ability to give. And Paul even said, 'You don't even treat me as good as an ox.'

So it's like everything else. If you don't love God, and if you don't want to serve Him from your heart, and if you don't want to do what is right, then, you just have to examine your heart before God, that's all. No one can make you do it. All the letters, all the envelops, all the beatings, all of the fear and everything else. But it's still true, if you take the things that belong to God, you're stealing from God. It's just that simple. And there are some people who are upset if I read that verse in Mal. 3, because they've been so traumatized in their own mind over tithing, and corruption of men, that they have forgotten that it is the commandment of God. It's that simple.

The Protestants like to read Hebrews 7:12 as the change in the law, so therefore, that does away

with the law. "For since the priesthood has changed... [that's what it's talking about] ...It is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place... [And you can put there, *regulating the Levitical priesthood*. That's what it's talking about.] ...because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe..." (vs 12-13). So that means it's Christ. Is this not also telling us that Melchisedec was Christ? Is that not true? *Yes indeed!*

"...from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar. For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah... [This ties it right in. The Lord, from Judah; Melchisedec Son of God, a Priest forever. All of those tie together.] ...of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood" (vs 12-14). Therefore, God had to make a change. If He was going to take it from the Levites and give it to someone else, God had to make the change—didn't He? *Yes, He did!* And the command there is in 1-Cor. 9.

Verse 15. "And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life" (vs 15-16). And that's why what I said is absolutely true. The authority for Melchisedec to collect the tithes is based upon eternal life. The authority for Levi to collect the tithes is based upon a temporary command, which God gave to Levi until Christ came.

That's why he says, v 17: "For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" Melchisedec was appointed by a swearing of an oath 'I have sworn, You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.' (Psa. 110:4).

That was never said of Levi—was it? They were never appointed by an oath. They succeeded by physical inheritance. If you were of the house of Aaron, you were a priest, or able to be a priest when you reached the proper age. If you were of the tribe of Levi, but not of the house of Aaron, then you were a Levite and you were to serve the priesthood, and you were to serve the people as teacher, and so forth. That's why God gave the tithe to Levi. Now then, we have something greater that is to be done. That is, to teach the way of eternal life.

Verse 16: "...by *the* power of indestructible life. For He testifies, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.' For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron*... [that's what it's talking about, the difference between Aaron and Melchisedec] ...because of its weakness and unprofitableness, because the law... [of the priesthood] ...brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought



about by a superior hope...” (vs 16-19). And that’s what the Greek means—not a better hope—*superior*. Not something that is just better. *It is superior!* Let’s liken it this way: today, the physical descendents of Judah are waiting to have another temple spot so they can build another temple. And where do they go? And every year it is, ‘Next year in Jerusalem. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.’ Well, that prayer has never been answered because they have rejected the King of Peace Who is Christ.

So what is one of the things that they want to do? They want to get to the physical place. If they can get to the Western Wailing Wall and scribble out a little prayer...as a matter of fact, you could even fax a prayer to Jerusalem, and they will put it on a little, thin piece of paper, and they will take it up and scrunch it into a crack in the Western Wailing Wall. Now, which is superior? That you can get on your knees and have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ wherever you are; and you don’t have to do like the Muslims, pray toward Mecca five times a day.

Here’s what it is, v 19: “...**through which we draw near to God.**” What do you have to do to draw near to God?

Let’s come to James 1. This is by faith. We are told Jesus gave the promise. He said, ‘**Ask**, and you shall receive; **seek**, and you shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened.’ That’s the kind of access that you have to God by prayer and by belief. If you believe God, don’t worry about the circumstances around you. Take care of it the best that you can. You have to trust God to intervene for you. You do your part. *You believe God*, and continue to believe Him, even though a prayer may not be answered in the timeframe you think it should be. And when that happens, you know that’s not the timeframe of God. And don’t look at the circumstances around you as being so dire that they are not recoverable, because with God, all things are possible. That’s why it’s a *superior hope*.

James 1:1 concerning faith: “James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.... [that means *the proving of your faith works patience*; the same word for *endurance*.] ...But let [patience] endurance have *its* perfect work...” (vs 1-4).

What happens if you get impatient? You’re cutting off patience [endurance]. It’s that simple. You’ve got to let patience have its perfect work. Maybe God has something else in mind, rather than what you have in mind, or what I have in mind. Put it all in God’s hands, He’ll work it out. If you believe, *He will answer*. He will answer in His time

and in His way, because we have a *superior hope*, because we draw close to God.

So it says, v 4: “...let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything.... [This is the whole process of perfection that the law is not able to do.] ...However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the* sea that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*” (vs 4-6). We also know that, not only driven by the wind, but also enhanced by tsunamis, and enhanced by earthquakes—and the water responds.

“Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. *He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (vs 7-8). When that happens then you are not trusting in God.

James 4:7 talks about it again: “Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil... [we have our work we need to do] ...and he will flee from you.... [we’re to resist him in the faith] ...Draw near to God... [because that’s what it’s talking about in Heb. 7:19, a *superior hope* through which we draw near to God.] (here James is saying): ...Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 7-10). God will do it!

So this is a greater relationship with God. And what is so fantastic about this is that, it is not dependent upon whom you are. It is not dependent upon whether you are one of the twelve tribes of Israel; it is not dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the flesh; *it is dependent upon whether you are circumcised in the heart*, and have had the baptism of Christ. That’s how we draw near to God.

Hebrews 7:19: “...*perfection* is brought about by a superior hope, through which we draw near to God. And according to this *superior measure*... [that’s how we are to measure it] ...*it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath but *He was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, ‘*The Lord swore and will not revoke His Word, “You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.”*’)” (vs 19-210).

Now, if you truly, truly understand this, you won’t be bothered with problems of Judaizing. If

you truly understand this, you won't be bothered with a lot of problems that people have, because then you are going to be living by that *superior hope*, and always have that before you. So that's something!

Verse 22: "By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant." Through the priesthood of Melchisedec, through being the perfect sacrifice of God, ***that is a superior covenant!***

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

#### Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 7:4-10, 5
- 2) Numbers 18:20
- 3) John 13:6-8
- 4) Acts 1:24-26
- 5) Acts 8:19-21
- 6) Numbers 18:21
- 7) Hebrews 7:5-11
- 8) Galatians 3:21
- 9) Matthew 5:48
- 10) Revelation 22:12-14
- 11) Matthew 19:16-22
- 12) Matthew 13:45-46
- 13) Luke 14:25-27
- 14) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 15) Hebrews 7:11, 19
- 16) Matthew 5:17
- 17) Hebrews 7:11-12
- 18) 1 Corinthians 9:11-14
- 19) Hebrews 7:12-17, 16-19
- 20) James 1:1-8
- 21) James 4:7-10
- 22) Hebrews 7:19-22

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 14
- Psalm 110:4
- Hebrews 10:26
- Malachi 3

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Sermon Series: *Tithing*

Book: *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering

Transcribed: 01/31/2003  
MDS/cis/rel  
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—5-1-11

# Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXII (A)

Fred R. Coulter—February 1, 2003

We need to understand some very profound and important things that the book of Hebrews brings out. Heb. 7 lays the foundation for chapters 8, 9 and 10. It becomes very important in understanding our relationship with God more than anything else. What this is telling us is that the Priesthood of Christ is a priesthood of being King *and* Priest, which makes it *superior* to what was under the Old Covenant—not just better, but *superior*. Then you add to that eternal life. And now you have something that is so great, and so marvelous that we need to really understand that, that this is telling us how we have a continuous relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, through the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Since Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth to Melchisedec (Heb. 7:4), what he's also showing is that Abraham is greater than all Israel; because he was the father of what became all Israel—was he not? So, as I mentioned in the last one that we did on tithing, that if people do not believe in tithing, then they are denigrating the Priesthood of Christ below the Aaronic priesthood.

Hebrews 7:9: “And in one sense Levi, who receives tithes... [the priesthood had not yet been completely done away] ...also gave tithes through Abraham; for if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood... [perfection has a great meaning] ...—for *the law that* the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there for* another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron? For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the law* also take place...” (vs 9-12).

The Protestants love this, because they say that this does away with all law. We will see that the term *law* applies to the regulations regarding the Levitical priesthood, and all the laws of sacrifice, etc. The law also applies to the covenant, but the covenant change does not change the commandments of God. That's why Abraham is brought in here. Because the verse that we go back to so many times is this: that the covenant was confirmed to Isaac, the one that God gave to Abraham, because Abraham

- obeyed His voice
- kept His charge
- His statutes
- His commandments
- His laws

‘We are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise,’ if we are Christ’s. Nowhere in here does this imply in any sense that the commandments of God have been done away. Those who do so, then, are living in a perpetual state of lawlessness. And, of course: God is a God of

- law
- love
- mercy
- forgiveness

—and all of these things are important. So, what has changed, it's also obligatory that a change in the law take place, too. What was changed in relationship to the priesthood? First of all, *how the priesthood began!* The Priesthood of Christ was prophesied in Psalm 110:4. From the very beginning the priesthood of Aaron was doomed.

Psalm 110:4: “The LORD has sworn... [There are two places where the Lord has sworn. We'll look at those two places. And when God swears, and swears by Himself, that is a profound thing.] ...and will not repent... [That's interesting— isn't it? He's not going to change. So really, this is saying it doesn't matter what people think. He's not going to change. God does not run salvation with CNN polls, or public opinion.] “...‘You are a priest **forever** [eternal] after the order of Melchisedec.’”

Now we are dealing with a whole change of circumstances—aren't we? *Yes, we are, an eternal Priesthood!* Why is that important? Because men fail—don't they? *Sure!* Let's look at what is says concerning the law. Let's look and see how a priest is selected. God did not establish the Aaronic, Levitical priesthood with an oath. He appointed it by physical descent—entirely different.

Hebrews 5:1: “For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... [There are all the laws you find back in Lev., Num. and Deut., that the priests had to do.] ...*and* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people” (vs 1-3).

Let's go back and see the prophecy of the doom of the Old Covenant, and the doom, or the ending, of the Levitical priesthood. We're just going to kind of do a review by chapter. And sometimes

it's good to go back and do a review by chapter and just get the overview as to where we're coming.

Exodus 20—we have the Ten Commandments given, and then we have the reaction of the people. Thus showing that the people would not have a direct relationship with God. Under the Old Covenant, you did not have a direct relationship with God except those special, selected ones with whom God made the choice to have the relationship with Him; like Moses, and David, and certain of the kings of Israel, and certain of the prophets.

Exodus 20:18: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear...’” (vs 18-19).

There's a basic flaw, right there. Whenever you depend upon a man it cannot lead to eternal life. Why? *Because man dies!* And man has a sinful nature. People like to have a man that they can look to, so if something goes wrong they can blame. They may be right or wrong in their accusations. But nevertheless, that is just the way it is. Whenever people get caught doing things, or doing things that are not right, what do they always do? They justify it by pointing out the difficulties of someone else that's very similar—correct? *That is the fatal flaw in human nature!* It is completely weak, it is unable to save itself, it is incapable of true, right, righteous thinking. We're all limited with that. That's just the way it is.

So, here's the flaw in the relationship between the people and God under the Old Covenant. They wanted a man between them and God. Moses did that. He went up and he got all the things concerning the things for the Old Covenant. He came back and he told all the people all the words:

Exodus 24:3: “And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.’” Then He established the covenant with them, and so forth.

While Moses is on the mountain for forty days receiving more instructions, the corruption of the Aaronic priesthood made itself very evident right at first—didn't it?—and was influenced by the people. That's why when you go through the history of the children of Israel, what do you find? *You find periods where they come to God, then corruption!* God corrects them; they come back to God; same way with the priesthood. So what happened in Exo. 32? The situation with the golden calf, showing that

the priesthood of Aaron was subject to corruption. Not only in dying—because he died—but also in practice. That is why every religious movement goes through a cycle where they start out fine, and then what happens? *They become corrupt!* And then they have to be purged, and then there are splits, and all these things that take place. That's all a part of the weakness of human nature.

In order to have eternal life, you have to have a different, completely different set-up. That's why the order of Melchisedec is *by an oath*, and then it's going to be forever, and no man can turn it down. That's why when Christ came in the flesh He had to carry within His flesh the law of sin and death and yet never sin so He could become the perfect sacrifice, and so that He would qualify as the perfect High Priest forever, Who never sinned, contrary to the priesthood of Aaron, where they had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as sins of the people. That's why it was obligatory.

Come back to Hebrews 7:12: “For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place.... [What are the differences here?] ...because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar.... [Even God abided by His own laws until the establishment of the New Covenant—didn't He?] ...For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood. And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment...” (vs 12-16). That is if you are the son of Aaron you are *automatically* a priest. You qualify for the priesthood by the virtue of your birth. That's the law of fleshly commandment.

Now contrast that with this: “...but by *the* power of indestructible life. For He testifies, ‘You *are* a Priest **forever** according to the order of Melchisedec’...” (vs 16-17)—a *perpetual* priesthood. Now what God is establishing here is a higher priesthood, because the Levitical priesthood was fundamentally flawed from the beginning, because it was an appointment of a man who had the law of sin and death in him, and was subject to corruption like all other human beings.

Now we have a High Priest Who has not sinned; Who—though He died to be the perfect sacrifice—is incorruptible. So there is no comparison. This is to give us the understanding and realization that, brethren, the calling we have is absolutely marvelous and fantastic. It is not just a religion; it is not just an organization; it begins with a personal relationship between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So, everything has to be put on an entirely different basis. Here's what has to change, and God did all the changing. What God instituted, God also destroyed. Radical difference now in all things that pertain to the priesthood:

1. the temple *destroyed*
2. the high priesthood *destroyed*
3. the sacrifices *destroyed*
4. cleansing *destroyed*
5. access to God—*totally different*
6. worship of God

All of those had to change and be replaced with something *superior*.

Now we have the temple in heaven above—don't we? Is that not greater than a temple on earth? *Yes, indeed!* Now we have a High Priest at the right hand of God the Father, or the Majesty on High, Who intercedes for us, Who was human, Who died, Who suffered, Who was tempted in every way like we are, yet without sin. We have the High Priesthood. We have the sacrifices. We have a greater sacrifice. What animal sacrifice could be compared to the death of Christ? *No comparison!*

- Circumcision—circumcision of the heart
- Cleansing—cleansing of sin

How are we cleansed of our sins? *Physical ritual never cleansed sin! Access to God! We draw near to God!* That's a tremendous thing, brethren. All of these are very profound and important. Let's look at a couple of them.

The most important function that we have with the Priesthood is One Who knows and understands. Now then, instead of going to a temple, instead of going to a human priest—which the Catholics have never understood—we come to a High Priest in heaven above. *Because*

- He lives forever
- He is the order of Melchisedec
- He became human and died and was the perfect sacrifice for us.

Therefore, when we come to Him, and we come to God the Father through Him, everything is on an entirely different level.

It is true, people can fool people some of the time, part of the time, and all of them fool all of the people part of the time. *But you can never fool God!* That's what's important. And that's profound in our relationship with God. When we come before God privately in prayer, this is the most important time in your relationship between you and God. You have direct access to God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both

soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart. And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account" (vs 12-13).

When we come to God in prayer—that is our form of worship to God, mainly; and that is also the basis of our relationship with God—we hold nothing back from God. That's important to understand.

- That's all a part of *repentance!*
- That's all a part of *spiritual growth!*
- That's all a part of *understanding God's Word!*

That's how we have our relationship with God. It must be totally open, totally right before God, because we are sinners. We can have full confidence.

### Cleansing

The next thing we will look at, then, will be the cleansing, v 14: "Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (vs 14-16).

That's why, brethren, we live under grace. You have the greatest thing that is given to you. So you come before God, completely open, completely honest. God knows everything about you; He made you. He even knows the number of hairs on your head—doesn't He?

So what do we have here? *We have the basis for a proper relationship between the individual and God*, of which then the hypocrisy of human nature can be overcome, and the sins of human nature can be overcome. And God, in His grace, does something greater. He gives you something that was never available under the covenant that He had with Israel: ***He gives you the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of promise.*** Let's look at that, because the Holy Spirit and circumcision tie together.

This is one of the greatest acts of grace that God can do, aside from having sent Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world. God gives you the Holy Spirit, coming from Himself, as a seed of begettal that you have. That is a great and a marvelous grace that God gives.

Ephesians 1:13: "In Whom [Christ] you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the

Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...** Now that's a tremendous thing, brethren, to understand having the gift of the Holy Spirit because God *called you and chose you and selected you*. And also, you had to repent, too—didn't you?—which is the beginning of the true cleansing. You received the Holy Spirit.

Verse 14: "Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory." This puts us under the grace of God on a continuous basis. We don't have to, as it said in one place, go to heaven to find God. We don't have to go to the depths of the earth to find God. God has given His presence in our hearts and minds with His Holy Spirit. We become a temple of the Holy Spirit or a temple of God. Is that not a greater relationship than going to Jerusalem? Even like the Jews say every year, 'Next year in Jerusalem!' The only year I want to go to Jerusalem is after I've been resurrected and I'm on the Sea of Glass and come down with all the saints. That's the only time I want to visit Jerusalem. This is why we are told this:

Ephesians 2:8: "For **by grace you have been saved...**" It was an individual act upon God

- to call you
- to select you
- to lead you to repentance
- to give you the Holy Spirit

All of that's an act of grace. None of that can be accomplished with a physical temple, or a physical priesthood.

"...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God..." (v 8). Which is both *of faith* and *of grace*. Can any human being save himself? *Of course not!* Only God can save him—can't He? Therefore, it has to be by God's grace.

Verse 9: "Not of works... [not of something we can do] ...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship..." The whole complexion of everything is changed—isn't it? We are His workmanship. Christ is being formed in us. 'Let this mind, which was also in Christ, be in you.' The whole process of conversion—through the relationship that we have with God the Father in heaven above through Jesus Christ, Who is a High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec—is *so superior* to any other means—period!

Verse 10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [those are the works of the Holy Spirit] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them." We have been called, not to a 'religion' but, to a *special way of life* by God; that's why it's so

important. That takes care of the High Priesthood and the sacrifice of Christ.

### Circumcision

Circumcision now is required of all. Under the Old Covenant it was only required of the male, and then when marriage took place the females participated in the circumcision through the sexual act. Now under the New Covenant, everyone has to be circumcised in heart and in mind. Paul wrote concerning it. I think we could apply a lot of this to ourselves, too, today. Unfortunately, as it turns out, too many people fall into a 'religious' category as the Jews did here. 'Oh, well, we're the people of God.' So this is why Paul wrote what he wrote. Let's just go through it so we get a full complexion and picture of it; so that we understand how much greater this relationship that we have with God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Priesthood of Christ is today. It is fantastic.

Now beginning in Romans 2:17: "Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the law. You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also?...." (vs 17-21). In other words, you better take care of yourself first. And that's why under the New Covenant you have that relationship with God so that you can.

"...You who preach, 'Do not steal,' are you stealing? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law? For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written." (vs 21-24). And I would have to say the Church of God made itself a laughingstock of the world, too—hasn't it? *Because of that, because of the very same thing!*

"For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcised is keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?" (vs 25-26). What he is showing here is that the physical act had no relationship to the spiritual need of keeping the commandments. To be circumcised did not mean that one was less of a sinner, or had less hypocrisy. It was only part of the Old Covenant as God had established. Now moving into the New Covenant, an entirely different kind of

circumcision is required.

“And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* law? For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly... [Christ is *in* you, and He came from the tribe of Judah—did He not? *Yes indeed!*] ...and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God” (vs 27-29).

Let’s see that under the New Covenant and with the Priesthood of Christ, we have a greater circumcision. So, to say that circumcision was done away really gives the wrong implication. It should be *physical circumcision is no longer required*. Circumcision has been spiritually more profound than physical circumcision, because spiritual circumcision is to change the heart and the mind, of which only God can do. Before God deals with you, you have to have the spiritual circumcision.

Colossians 2:10: “And you are complete in Him... [in Christ. And as we see in the book of Hebrews with the priesthood that is eternal, your completeness, or perfection, comes through Him and through that process.] ...Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ...” (vs 10-11). That circumcision begins with *repentance!* He changes your heart and your mind, and your whole way of living and thinking. Of course, you have to grow into it. You also have to apply yourself to it. ***This is the circumcision of Christ!*** How is that accomplished?

“Having been buried with Him in baptism... [into His death; conjoined] ...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead” (v 12). That is the *spiritual circumcision* that takes place. On the heels of this, with the grace of God, with the Holy Spirit of God, with the circumcision—the spiritual circumcision in Christ—now we have a new way of cleansing, *spiritual cleansing*.

The Pharisees were concerned about being clean—weren’t they? And the reason they became so fastidious in the washings of pots and pans and tables and hands and clothes and everything else, was that they made the mistake of this: As the temple was to be cleansed—*clean, purified—in everything that was done by the priests in everything; therefore, in your home, everything you do should be as the temple*. And that’s how they got carried away with it. God never required that the home be as the temple.

When John the Baptist came, this presented the Pharisees with a problem—didn’t it? John the Baptist was the son of a high priest—wasn’t he? *Yes!* Where did John the Baptist operate? *In the River Jordan!* Not at the temple. That was a profound thing that God did, because God was showing that through repentance and purification by baptism sins were forgiven. They didn’t have to go to the temple. Now you understand why the Pharisees and the Levites came to John and said, ‘Who are you? (We’re losing people from coming to the temple to be purified)’—the unspoken thing. After Christ we have a new way of being cleansed. We have an entirely different relationship, too.

John 15:1: “I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit... [That means *cleanses it*. Cleansing by ‘the washing of the water by the Word.’ He cleanses or purges it.] ...in order that it may bear more fruit.... [If we look upon all of our trials and difficulties that we go through as a means by which God is using, so that if we repent and come to Him, we can bear more fruit.] ...You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you” (vs 1-3).

Have you ever had the experience that after you have studied the Word of God you feel really great? Inspired and uplifted? Why? *Because it has cleansed you!* On the other hand, don’t you feel miserable and rotten when you don’t study, when you don’t pray? *Yes! Because you’re not being cleansed!* We are to be cleansed with the Word of God, and that is to be daily. We are to be cleansed with the Spirit of God, and that is to be daily. That’s why the model prayer says, ‘Give us our bread day-by-day, and forgive us our sins...’ and the obvious implication is day-by-day. So, we are cleansed of our sins by the Word of God and through repentance—day-by-day. And instead of going to a priest and saying, ‘I did this. I want to bring this animal sacrifice,’ you go to God and you confess your sins, between you and God directly.

That’s something—isn’t it? *That is a profound and magnificent privilege!* It’s something that we need to realize that we need to do every day. And that’s why John 1 gives us a thumbnail overview of this relationship that we have with Jesus Christ, Who is a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, and how great it is!

1-John 1:1, because the whole chapter fits together: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves... [The difference between *seen* and *looked upon* [observed]: is that ‘looked upon’ means *we have just intently gazed and examined.*] ...and

our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us)” (vs 1-2). So he is showing the great experience they had as apostles. And this is referring to after the resurrection when they saw Him.

Verse 3: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—**is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ.**” That is what Paul is writing about in the book of Hebrews. That’s why we must understand the greatness of the Priesthood of Christ, the greatness that He has been made a Priest after the order of Melchisedec *forever*, and that we have this relationship with God.

Verse 4: “These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth” (vs 4-6). The Greek there is ‘poieo’—which means *to practice the Truth!*

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another...” [Between God the Father and Jesus Christ, *and* with each other. That’s very important, because that’s part of the basis of the whole reason why we keep the Passover—*isn’t it?*—that we love one another.] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.”

- We are cleansed through the sacrifice of Christ.
- We are cleansed through the Word of God.
- We are cleansed through the Holy Spirit of God.

That’s why the whole process of cleansing of sin is entirely different. And it’s a better and a greater way—*isn’t it? Yes it is!*

Verse 8: “If we say that we have no sin... [we don’t have a sinful nature; we’re all just good people] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. **If we confess our own sins...** [to Him] ...**He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**” (vs 8-9). The whole operation of the temple and the priesthood had to be a change in the way that it was done, which meant *there was a change in the law of the priesthood and the temple.* We are now under the operation of *faith, belief and the power of the Holy Spirit.* Maybe some of you have not understood this.

And I’ve often wondered about this, so I’ll bring this out in relationship to that there was a necessity that there be a change in the law. What was it changed to?

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit.” That’s what we are doing—*isn’t it?* We are

- walking after the Spirit
- keeping the commandments of God
- striving to overcome
- maintain the relationship with God

*to prepare for eternal life.*

Verse 2—here’s part of the grace of God. “Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus...” Hello! ***The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus!*** That then is the new priesthood law and operation of our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, which then leads to eternal life. And through that through the cleansing of sin that we just covered, through the cleansing and the ‘washing of the water by the Word.’

“Because **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me...** [justified me] **...from the law of sin and death**” (v 2). And that becomes a very important thing. Living under the grace of God puts you in the special category that God does not look upon you the same way that He does other people. That’s not to lift us up, that’s to encourage us, and help us to be thankful to God. But He looks upon us as what we are going to be in the Kingdom of God. He is looking to the end, or the completion of His work. Because God speaks of those things that are not, as though they are. Isn’t that something? That is a tremendous and a fantastic relationship that can only be accomplished because we have a High Priest Who lives forever, and because now we have a priesthood that is not subject to the physical laws.

Hebrews 7:15: “And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life.... [When you come before God the Father and Jesus Christ, bear that in mind. He lives forever.] ...For He testifies, ‘You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.’.... [on into the ages of eternity forever] ...For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron* because of its weakness and unprofitableness...” (vs 15-18). Why was it weak and unprofitable? *The corruption of human nature, and not being given access to the Holy Spirit!*



Verse 19: “Because the law... [of the priesthood] ...brought nothing to perfection... [The law, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, brings us to perfection—doesn’t it? *It’s greater!*”

Let’s look back here at v 11 for just a minute so we see how this progresses here: “Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood...” It wasn’t possible.

Verse 19: “Because the law brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a **superior hope, through which we draw near to God.**” We have the superior hope of eternal life. They had the hope of living in the ‘promised land.’ Which is greater? *Eternal life!* “...through which we draw near to God.”

That is the whole basis. That’s why when He gave the Ten Commandments we find there in Deut. 5:29, when the people said, ‘Oh, we’ll do everything that You say.’ God said, ‘Oh, I would that there were such a heart in you, that you would fear Me and keep My commandments always!’ But they couldn’t. So we have a *superior hope*. We draw near to God. That is the whole theme of the rest of the book of Hebrews. In drawing near to God there are some profound things that we need to do. James 4 ties in with what we’ve already covered in relationship to cleansing.

James 4:6: “But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.’.... [Again, showing our relationship with God.] ...Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.... [How about that? That is the relationship that we have with God—isn’t it? *Yes!*] ...Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded!.... [That is by repentance. So that follows along with what we’ve already covered.] ...Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 6-10). There again is another way of expressing the same relationship that Paul was writing about here in Heb. 7.

Hebrews 7:19: “...through which we draw near to God. And according to this *superior* measure, *it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath; but He *was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath... [they just get it by inheritance] ...by Him Who says concerning Him... [he repeats it at least four or five times in the book of Hebrews] ...‘*The Lord swore and will not revoke His Word, “You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.”*’) By such a greater measure then,

Jesus was made the Guarantor of a **superior covenant**” (vs 19-22). Not just better, *superior!* Can you compare life with death? *No!* That’s why it’s *superior*.

Verse 23: “Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death... [Wouldn’t have to worry about that.] ...but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes.... [You can always count on God.] ...Therefore, He has the power... [*‘dunamis’*—in this case because it is eternal, it has the implication of *absolute power*. Does God have absolute power? *No question about it!*] ...Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them” (vs 23-25). What if there is someone out there just kind of feeling lost and miserable and sort of cries out to God, ‘Help me?’ What does God do about that?

Revelation 5:6: “Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth... [The seven horns in the head of the Lamb signifies the seven churches of Rev. 2 & 3, and Christ is the Head of the Church; that is why there are seven horns. ***Christ is always the Head of the Church.***] ...the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth.” What do the seven Spirits of God do? Why are they sent forth into all the earth? *God is busy and active!* God is ready to intercede on behalf of those who call out to Him. The seven Spirits there are the seven eyes of God, which go through all the earth.

2-Chronicles 16:9: “For the eyes of the LORD... [the seven Spirits of God that we saw (Rev. 5)] ...run to and fro in all the whole earth... [in other words, they’re busy surveying the whole earth] ...to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect [sincere] toward Him....”

That’s why Jesus said, ‘Seek, and you will find, and knock and it will be opened; draw near to God, He’ll draw near to you’ because those seven Spirits of God are active and busy watching over the whole earth. Now, that covers those people who are not converted or called yet, who may be in the process of being called. But with us, we have the Spirit of God direct, and we go directly to God.

2-Chronicles 15:1: “And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him, “Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD *is* with you while you are with Him.... [That’s always the way it’s been. That is a living principle.] ...And if you seek Him, He will be found by you....” (vs 1-2).

*Always a living principle!*

If you find yourself in predicaments where it's very difficult, **seek God!** And if necessary, start out: 'Oh God, I'm here in the bottom of the barrel, and I don't know where to go. I've gone clear to the bottom. And, of course, You want me there.' Now that's hard to admit— isn't it? Why does God want us there? Everyone's going to come to the bottom of the barrel in his life, one way or the other,

- that we'll trust in God
- that we'll turn to God
- that we'll seek Him
- that we won't seek ourselves
- that we'll look to His solution
- that we'll wait patiently for it
- we'll do our part

Yes, we'll do the things that we need to do, no question about that!

But here's a guarantee, v 2 "...if you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you." And that's also the story of the book of Hebrews—isn't it? Did we not cover the thing on the *unpardonable sin*? {see #s 17 & 29 this series} *Yes, indeed!* Therefore, He is able to save throughout all time,

Hebrews 7:25: "...to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them." How quickly will God forgive sin? *As soon as you repent!* Many times when you sin you have such a great guilt complex about it, because you really are not repenting in the way that you need to. You're letting the guilt complex take hold of you more than you ought to. You ought to feel guilty and repent, that is true. Then on the other hand you end up sort of accusing God, that He can't forgive you unless you do something else. You really don't mean to, but that's just sort of the way that human nature is.

Have any of you sinned as badly as King Manasseh? (2-Chron. 35); he did it for 55 years. He shed much innocent blood. He let the homosexuals take over the whole temple area. He even built an altar in the temple of God dedicated to other gods. And God sent him off in captivity. While he was in the dungeon in Babylon he repented. And God had mercy and brought him back.

Likewise with Ahab. God told Elijah, "You go to Ahab, and you tell him that he is going to die. You tell him that he is a wicked, and evil, and terrible, and a wretched human being; and My judgment is, he's going to die, and the dogs are going to lick his blood and Jezebel's blood off the wall." So sure enough, Elijah goes and he tells him that—and, I'm sure, shakes his finger right in Ahab's eye—and says, "You are the man!" So he

left. And what did Ahab do? *He repented!* It says he walked tenderly, put on sackcloth. And as Elijah was on his way back home, God told him, 'Go back to Ahab, My servant Ahab. And tell him I will forbear.'

None of us have sinned to any extent like those two men. And those are examples for us, so that when we repent we can know we have forgiveness. When we come to Jesus Christ, and He has the power—the absolute power—to save, He will.

Now verse 26: "For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest... [With a *superior covenant* should we not have a superior High Priest? *Of course!*] ...*Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens; Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests, to offer up sacrifices day-by-day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the law... [of the priesthood of Aaron] ...*the* Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs 26-28). That's what it means.

### Perfection

Let's look at this thing concerning perfection, because the law could not make anything perfect. What God did, He perfected Christ. Now, being God in the flesh, was He ever imperfect? *Of course not!* But He was not *perfected* until He had gone through the crucifixion, and then being resurrected.

First of all, you have a High Priest Who has been perfected. Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God*. Although He was a Son, *yet* He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected... [by the things that He suffered] ...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 7-10).

So first of all, you have the perfection of the Priest—don't you? Next, you have the perfection of the people. The whole point is, that under the Old Covenant you could not be perfected. Under the New Covenant you can receive that perfection. How does that come about? We've already covered some of it—haven't we? *Repentance and baptism, receiving the Holy Spirit!* Now then, there is the process of growing in grace and knowledge, which then is *perfection*.

Let's come to Ephesians 4, and see that that is the whole purpose of what God has in mind. The whole purpose as to why there are ministers and teachers. There are ministers and teachers, not for the exercise of authority, but for the exercising of teaching the brethren to exercise that authority in their lives through God's Spirit

- to grow
- to be perfected
- to let God work in their lives

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints...** [Only possible under the New Covenant; only possible with a perfected High Priest Jesus Christ.] ...for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ; until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man...**" (vs 11-13). **Perfection!** That is, *spiritual* perfection. Don't worry about the physical perfection; God is not perfecting the flesh. ***He is perfecting the spirit!***

The other night I was watching Larry King. And he was talking to Art Linkletter. I caught the section which was just somewhere before the close, where he said, 'How old are you?' And he said, 'I'm 90 and six months.' And Larry King sort of dropped his jaw and took a deep breath, and said to the effect (I'm sort of paraphrasing), 'How do you do it?' And he said, 'First of all, I live a very modest life. Secondly, I exercise everyday.' And he looked younger than a lot of 65-year-old people that I have met. So as the Apostle Paul wrote, physical exercise profits, but you've got to keep at it.

Now then, he said something else. Larry King asked him, 'How are you able to do this?' And he says, 'We all live between our ears.' I thought it was a good statement. In other words, *in ye cranium is your life*. And, brethren, that's where perfection takes place. ***Perfection in character, with the mind of Christ, with the fruits of the Holy Spirit.*** It has to come from within by the power of the Spirit of God, and everything that is done within the Church of God should be toward that goal of perfecting the saints. Till each one comes to, as it says here, v 13: "...unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ." And, of course, that won't take place until the resurrection. Now, that is a tall order— isn't it?

Let's come to Philippians 3 and see how Paul did it. Since we live between our ears—I thought that was a good way of expressing it—what do we do? How do we handle it? You can spend all your life like the Jews and the Arabs hating each other, killing each other, vengeance against each other, blowing up each other, condemning each

other. Where does it lead? *Death and destruction, and plenty of misery in-between*—right? Or you can live in the past, whatever your past has been. And if it hasn't been too good, if you dwell on the past, you're going to be dwelling on the past. So you have some things that you need to do. And this is what the Apostle Paul did. No one had any greater case for a perpetual guilty conscience than Paul. No one has done any worse than the Apostle Paul when he was Saul, hauling Christians off to be killed and to force them into renouncing their faith. So this is what he said. This is how Paul lived with himself and God *between his ears*.

Philippians 3:4: "Though I might also have *reason* to trust in *the* flesh. If any other thinks he has *cause* to trust in *the* flesh, I *have* much more..." I mean, here's his pedigree. A lot of people like to get into genealogy. And boy, they get all excited when they find out they belong to the kings and queens of England and so forth, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah! Well, a lot of them were nothing but a bunch of corrupt murderers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and deceitful political people, and the only reason that America and Britain has what they have is *because of what the promise was given to Abraham*, and **not** because of any inherent goodness in them. So pedigree doesn't mean a thing.

"...Circumcised on *the* eighth day; of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee... [couldn't be any more strict] ...with respect to zeal, persecuting the Church ..." (vs 5-6). You talk about a wrong cause. You read that in Acts 9, he soon found out—BINGO!—there he is, lying on the ground.

"...with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless. Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... [That's what we need to do.] ...for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things... [and yes, our own lives also, through baptism—correct? *Yes, indeed!*] ...and count *them* as dung... [Greek—'skubalon']. ...that I may gain Christ. and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is by the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith... [To be put in that right standing with God.] ...that I may know Him... [not look at the physical circumstances around] ...and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (vs 6-11).

In the face of every difficulty, problem, struggle, trial, and things that he had to go through,

this is the attitude he maintained. This is what we need to do. He didn't accuse God. That's the whole lesson of Job. You accuse God, you're in terrible shape: 'Well, why did God do this?' Well, go to God and find out what you need to do. Maybe the answer will come. That's what Job had to do. Paul said that he always looked toward the resurrection.

Verse 12: "Not as though I have already received..." [Everyday is another day. Everyday you have to keep striving] ...or have already been perfected... [You *are being* perfected. That's the whole purpose of the High Priesthood of Melchisedec Jesus Christ, to perfect you.] ...but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.... [Never gets discouraged. Never gets down.] ...Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing *I do*—**forgetting the things that are behind...**" (vs 12-13). That is the key. **You must forget the things that are behind!** They are done! They are over!

Let me give you a good example. How many here have a checking account? When you get your statement you get back your canceled checks—don't you? If you want to know how worthless they are, take one of those canceled checks for your house payment or rent payment and send it back to the mortgage holder, or the one who's renting to you, and see if they will accept it. Of course, they won't! It's worthless! Why? *Because it's over, it's done*; the function of that check has been fulfilled. It is worthless.

Likewise, everything that you have done, which has not been for building the character of God, you repent of, you forget, you put behind you, it is worthless. To remember it, to dwell on it, it is the same as trying to pay your rent with a canceled check, it won't be accepted. That's why he says, forgetting those things that are behind.

What if you say, 'I can't forget those things'? Well then, you better get on your knees and ask God to help you forget. You better begin filling your mind with some of the things of the Word of God so you can forget. And you better be asking God for His Spirit and understanding so you can put those things behind you. They have to be put behind! Here's another way of looking at it: all of the problems of today end at sunset, or when you go to bed. They end! If there's nothing you can do about it when you wake up in the morning, put it behind you. Why pollute the new day with the problems of the old day? Solve the problems of the old day, and go on. Whatever problems come, as Christ said, 'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.'

Let's finish it here, v 13: "...but *this* one thing *I do*—**[#1]** forgetting the things that are

behind, and **[#2]** reaching forth to the things that are ahead, **[#3]** I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So then, let as many as *be* perfect **be of this mind...**" (vs 13-15). *That's how we are perfected!*

Christ was perfected by suffering in the flesh so that He could be the High Priest to make intercession for us. Now He is perfecting the people of God, and this is the process of perfection.

"So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you" (v 15). Why? **So you can repent and change!**

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

### Scriptural References

- 1) Hebrews 7:9-12
- 2) Psalm 110:4
- 3) Hebrews 5:1-3
- 4) Exodus 20:18-19
- 5) Exodus 24:3
- 6) Hebrews 7:12-17
- 7) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 8) Ephesians 1:13-14
- 9) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 10) Romans 2:17-29
- 11) Colossians 2:10-12
- 12) John 15:1-3
- 13) 1 John 1:1-9
- 14) Romans 8:1-2
- 15) Hebrews 7:15-19, 11, 19
- 16) James 4:6-10
- 17) Hebrews 7:19-25
- 18) Revelation 5:6
- 19) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 20) 2 Chronicles 15:1-2
- 21) Hebrews 7:25-28
- 22) Hebrews 5:7-10
- 23) Ephesians 4:11-13
- 24) Philippians 3:4-15

### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 7:4
- Exodus 32
- Deuteronomy 5:29
- Revelation 2; 3
- 2 Chronicles 35
- Acts 9

### Also referenced:

*Hebrews Series #s 17 & 29 the Unpardonable Sin*

Transcribed: 03/19/2003

MDS/cis/ddc

Reformatted/Corrected: bo—5-15-11



# Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIII

Fred R. Coulter—February 15, 2003

What we are going to cover today is going to, I hope, give you a greater understanding and appreciation for what God has done and is doing. And especially from the point of view that God wants us to have a relationship with Him through the New Covenant that is individual and special and very particular. And He doesn't want us playing religion or church or whatever. But He wants us to worship Him *in spirit* and *in truth*.

Let's see a prophecy in John 4 that Jesus gave about how we are to worship God, which then sets the foundation for what we have here in the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews goes into great detail showing how the New Covenant—which is *superior* to the Old Covenant—works.

Jesus is talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, John 4:19. "The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain...'" (vs 19-20). If you need the background on the Samaritan worship and the temple at Mount Gerizim, I've got a section of that in *The Christian Passover* book, and you can see that that was a counterfeit substitution worship in competition with Jerusalem during the days of Ezra.

Verse 20: "...but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem." When it was with the Old Covenant, that was the central place where they were to worship. Everything came out of Jerusalem. The high priest was the one to whom everyone looked to for the finality of law and decisions, the settling of high-level controversies, and so forth. And when they were spread in the Diaspora, they had to come to Jerusalem on pilgrimages to keep the Feasts. They could keep the Feast out in the local areas, but they couldn't keep the Passover because the Passover had to be kept in the land. So therefore, that's how it came about that the Jews in the Diaspora did not keep a 14<sup>th</sup> Passover, because they couldn't keep a 14<sup>th</sup> Passover being outside of the land. So, they renamed the Feast of Unleavened Bread *Passover*, and then they extended it from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>—having a false notion of eight days. We cover all of that in the Passover book.

However, Jesus gave the answer, v 21: "Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship...'" (vs 21-22).

That's quite a statement— isn't it? There are a lot of people who worship and they don't know what they're worshipping. Why do they go to church

on Sunday? *Well, they have a good time*, whatever it may be. Or why do you bow down to this crucifix and statue of Mary? *Because it makes me feel good!* You worship you know not what. And you see, all of those things can never put you in contact with the true God.

I spoke to a man who is a Seventh-Day Adventist yesterday, and he is reading the Bible through. He's one of the partners down here where I do my water therapy, so we talk back and forth every once in a while. He's a 'Laodicean' S.D.A. If you can figure out how bad that is, then you'll know. So he's reading the Bible, and he's asking me questions about it, and so forth.

Jesus says, v 22: "You do not know what you worship..." The book of Hebrews then clarifies Whom we are worshipping, and how we are worshipping, and how we have access to the Father in a very particular way. It is explaining how the New Covenant works after the destruction of the temple, because the temple was the place to go. So He says, 'you don't know what you're worshipping.' And remember, you can just put in your margin there Simon Magus, who the great one, who was giving himself out as a great prophet of God, the great power of God (Acts 8).

"...We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" (v 22). That is also a *spiritual* statement in two ways.

1. to the Jew first, then to the Gentile
2. those who have the circumcision of Christ are the true Jews

Are they not? It applies in both cases. In other words:

- salvation is not going to come out of Samaria
- salvation is not going to come out of Rome
- salvation is not going to come out of New Delhi
- salvation is not going to come out of Southeast Asia
- Salvation—the *knowledge of salvation*—comes out from the Jews

*Jesus was a Jew*. So therefore, He is the main One Whom it's talking about. You can put all of those factors together.

"But the hour is coming, **and now is...**" It is pretty well clear, coupled with other things in the book of John, that that was an added thing that John wrote when he finished his gospel, which was finished after the temple was destroyed. It wasn't

*now is*; yet, when Jesus was speaking; *now is* was *after* the temple was destroyed.

The disciples were not worshipping God the Father. Jesus was in *the process of revealing* Him. And they didn't understand the Scriptures even concerning Jesus until after He was resurrected from the dead and He explained it to them, as we find in Luke 24. So all of these things show that the phrase "...and now is..." is an edit by John when he finished the Gospel.

Verse 23: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth..."—not in ritual, not in law. People have a very hard time understanding about grace, and I'll explain a little bit about it today. Grace is the most fantastic thing we could possibly receive in this life, and everything that comes with the grace.

"...shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him **must** [obligatory] worship in spirit and in truth" (vs 23-24). The whole book of Hebrews tells us how this is done, and the circumstances and the covenant under which it was done.

Let's also look at something else leading up to the beginning of the New Covenant. Remember, the Law and the Prophets were the authority until John; there was no higher authority. You could go to no higher authority than the Law and the Prophets. If it didn't state it in the Law and the Prophets, it had no bearing; it had no meaning.

Then when John came something very important occurred. Who was John the Baptist? What was he? *His father was a priest*—wasn't he? That means that John was a priest. So what we are seeing here—in the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant—is that God used the authority that He established beginning with Aaron and the Levitical priesthood coming on down to the time of John the Baptist. And John the Baptist, being a priest, then means that God followed the authority that He gave.

However, where was it that they normally went to worship and be cleansed of sin through giving offerings and washings and things like that? They went to the temple. John being a priest, did he ever officiate at the temple? *No!* Where did he go? *It says he went into the wilderness until the day of his appearance.* Where did he begin his ministry? *The River Jordan*—away from the temple, away from the cleansing of the temple—*out at the River Jordan!* And this becomes a very important thing, because the Pharisees' idea of cleansing and the reason that they had all the laws that they did, was because they

wanted to make the home—all of the eating, all the things, all of the bathing and all of the rituals that they did at the home, all the laws that they added—as nearly like the temple as possible.

So, when John starts out there and begins preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, we have the transition period between required temple worship and how then God is going to establish and move on over to the New Covenant. He was a messenger sent before *to prepare the way for the Lord*. This is why people don't understand the statement: 'The law and the prophets were until John. They say we don't keep the Law and Prophets anymore.' That doesn't say you did away with the Law and the Prophets. It's just saying that the highest authority was the Law and the Prophets. The highest authority becomes the Kingdom of God beginning with John the Baptist, who was the messenger sent to prepare the way before the face of the Lord.

He wasn't in his priestly garb. What did he wear? *Camel's hair*—didn't he? How do you think one of the priests coming up the way from Jericho would have looked upon John the Baptist? And in addition to show the humility of his office, he was a Nazarite from birth, meaning, he did not cut his hair; he did not shave his beard. So being dressed in camel's hair, he was probably a pretty wild looking man. This gives us some very important points in coming over to understanding more about the book of Hebrews, because God didn't just suddenly do this. He prepared the way, He used the authority that He had used before, to prepare the way with John the Baptist.

Matthew 3:1: "Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, '*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."*'" Now John himself wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (vs 1-4). You talk about a sumptuous diet. Now remember, there was never a man born, as Jesus said, greater than John the Baptist. Yet, Jesus said, 'I say to you, he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist' So this is an amazing thing that took place.

Verse 5: "Then went out to him *those from* Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country around the Jordan..." Why? *They knew that*—whenever it was, probably 30 years before—that *this was a miraculous birth* by a, probably, 75-year-old woman and her husband. He finally showed himself, and they're wondering who he was and what was going to become of him. And can you imagine how

quickly this spread, even without telephones? ‘He’s here! Let’s go down there.’ What do you think all the scribes and Pharisees thought when the temple population was suddenly reduced? The people weren’t coming to the temple to be cleansed, they were going to the River Jordan to be cleansed. This was a direct affront to their power. So, we have to understand some of the politics involved here.

Verse 6: “And were being baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, ‘*You* brood of vipers, who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance” (vs 6-8)—and don’t say, ‘We have Abraham.’

Let’s look at the account in the Gospel of John, the first chapter. We will see that this was this account here was actually an official delegation from the temple; they wanted to know:

- Why are you doing this?
- Who sent you to do this?
- By what authority do you do this? As they asked Jesus

Then Jesus said, ‘You tell Me by what authority John did it, and then I’ll tell you by what authority I do it.’ The Pharisees and Sadducees and priests would be coming down there with their full dress, meeting a priest who had all this wild hair and beard, and was dressed in camel’s hair and standing alongside the river, and saying, ‘You generation of vipers!’ I mean, this is something! And they were probably really steaming.

John 1:19: “And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him... [This tells us this is an *official* delegation: We have been sent.] ...Who are you? Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, ‘I am not the Christ’” (vs 19-20). He knew they were looking for the Christ sometime around there. They understood the prophecies.

Verse 21: “And they asked him, ‘Then who *are you*? Are you Elijah?’....” Of course, Jesus later said he was. I think it’s very interesting for all of the Elijah candidates out there, if John the Baptist didn’t know he was Elijah, how do you know that you are? How many people have set themselves up as Elijah? Or Elijah’s message? *No!* Don’t any man appoint himself, especially to the office of Elijah. You’re asking for heap, big trouble. Did heap, big trouble come when that was proclaimed in our church experience? Yea, verily!

“...Are you Elijah?” And he said, ‘I am not.’ *Then they asked*, ‘Are you the Prophet?’.... [See sermon *Who Is That Prophet?* That’s the one prophesied by Moses (Deut. 18)] ...And he said, ‘I

am not.’ *Then they asked*, ‘Are you the Prophet?’ And he answered, ‘No.’ Therefore, they said to him, ‘Who are you? What do you say about yourself so that we may give an answer to those who sent us?’.... [‘We’ve got to write up a report when we get back.’]. ...He said, ‘I *am* a voice crying in the wilderness, “Make straight the way of *the* Lord,” as Isaiah the prophet said.’ Now those who had been sent belonged to *the sect* of the Pharisees, and they asked him, saying to him, ‘Why then are you baptizing...’” (vs 21-25).

This is for cleansing, because the Pharisees had what? *They had the washings* of cups, washings of pots, washings of hands and arms and feet, and everything else—didn’t they? They wanted to know, “...Why then are you baptizing?” (v 25). The question is really this: Since you are technically a descendent of the priesthood, why are you here doing this in the River Jordan, and you’re not up at the temple doing what you’re supposed to be doing up at the temple? That’s the basic, underlying question.

This is such a new thing. I mean, this is unheard of! Jesus said He confirmed it when the woman said that ‘you ought to worship in Jerusalem’; He didn’t deny it. But He said the time is coming that you won’t. Here’s the first instance of it as a preview with John the Baptist.

“And they asked him, saying to him, ‘Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?’ John answered them, saying, ‘I baptize with water, but there is one *Who* stands among you Whom you do not know. He it is Who comes after me, *but* Who has precedence over me; of Whom I am not worthy to loose the thong of His sandal’” (vs 25-27).

And then he said there in Matt. 3 that He will baptize with the Holy Spirit. What happened when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit? We need to follow this through; we need to understand. This also helps destroy the proposition of the Mormons that Jesus was sent to the Mayans in Mexico, because they claim that the other people, the ‘other flock’ that Jesus had were the ones that were the descendents of the Mayans, and therefore, that’s part of the Mormon religion.

Let’s understand something: God always follows His own authority, what He’s established. Therefore, the giving of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church started at the temple so there would be no question that this was of God. Had it been done in Samaria, how far do you think it would have gone? Had it been done in Rome no one would have believed, or any other place in the world. This becomes very important, because now this sets the stage of beginning the preaching of the Gospel at the temple.



Where did the apostles teach? They taught everyday at the temple—didn't they? *Yes!* Till they were run out of town! This shows a consistency in what God did in preparing the way for the Church, and also in preparing the way for the future destruction of the temple, which was already prophesied to happen. Let's see that that's what Stephen was preaching (Acts 6). People do not like to be told that their beautiful temple, and their beautiful ceremonies, and their rituals, and their sacrifices, and their gold, and their silver, and everything that they have is worthless. Or as the book of Hebrews says *unprofitable*, but which really means *useless*. Especially when it was God Who said, 'Ok, you can build it, and you come and worship here.' Great affront!

Acts 6:9: "Then certain arose among those of the synagogue who were called Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia; *and* they were disputing with Stephen.... [these were all Jews] ...But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. Then they suborned men, who said, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and *against* God.' And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes; and they came and seized him, and brought *him* into the Sanhedrin. Then they set up false witnesses, who said, 'This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this Holy place and the law; for we heard him saying that this Jesus, the Nazarean, will destroy this place, and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us'" (vs 9-14).

Right from the beginning this is what they were preaching. Can you imagine that, right in the area of Jerusalem, and perhaps even standing in the temple saying, 'God is going to destroy this'? And He did, and when that was fulfilled it was awesome!

He was probably preaching out of Isa. 66. Here is a prophecy of what we are getting into in the book of Hebrews. We've gone over this many times in the past. But it becomes very important for us to understand the importance of the relationship with God that we have under the New Covenant, and the importance of the New Covenant itself.

Isaiah 66:1—this probably is where Stephen was preaching from: "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?'...." What are you going to build for Me? *Especially now that we can look out and see the vastness of the universe in a much clearer form than at any time in the history of man!* What are you going to build for God? What are you going to contain God in?

"...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. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word'" (vs 1-2). In other words, a humble, worshipful attitude toward God; that's more important than anything else. This is probably Christ speaking.

In the New Testament the collective *body of the saints* compose *the temple of God*. That's where God dwells. ***He dwells in His people!*** He is delighted to dwell in His people. And the only way He can dwell in His people is *through grace*, because we are still physical. And that's why we have an earnest of the Holy Spirit, because a physical body cannot contain the wholeness of the Holy Spirit; you have to be resurrected. So this gets in to be really some things to understand and to fully appreciate, and *especially* when you pray. And I hope that this is going to open up for you a whole new approach to praying, and to understand the access that you have to God, and to comprehend what He is doing in your life, because *it is profound!*

Verse 3—he talks about if you come to the temple and offer something with a wrong attitude: "'He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog's neck... [Who commanded these things to be offered? *God did! Yes, He did!* So even if you do what God commanded, if your heart isn't right, then it's of no worth to Him.] ...he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations. 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'" (vs 3-4).

And I can just tell you that summarizes exactly what happened with the destruction of the temple in 70<sub>A.D.</sub> It was awesome! How many here have *Josephus*? Take the time and read about the destruction of Jerusalem and the awesome things that took place. It was something! And one of the things that God entrapped them in their own ways, in their own thoughts; by 70<sub>A.D.</sub> Judaism had completely rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. They thought they understood the prophecies that the Messiah would come and save them from the Romans. Therefore, in 70<sub>A.D.</sub> the word went out that, 'As many of you as possible, come and keep the Passover in Jerusalem.'

The Romans had another plan. The Romans said, When the 'the pilgrims' come from out in the empire, we'll just stand back and let them go right up to Jerusalem. We're not even going to fight. We're just going to let them go in there. So Josephus records that there were 3-million in Jerusalem. And

then Titus' army surrounded Jerusalem, and they dug trenches so they couldn't get out. It never happened that the Messiah came to rescue them. It was the most horrible destruction of people recorded in the history of the world.

Here's what God wants and desires now, v 5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, 'Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake...'" That happened during the days of the apostles—didn't it? *Cast them out of the synagogues!* How many times did Paul go in the synagogue and preach, only to end up in a riot? And I think it's really quite humorous in Corinth when that happened, they moved into a hall that was right next to the synagogue. So here, you had the Christians on one side of the wall, and you had the Jews on the other side of the wall. Cast them out. "...said, 'Let the LORD be glorified.'" But He will appear to your joy and they will be ashamed." (v 5)

We'll just summarize this, Heb. 7. What he is doing, he is showing the *superiority* of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Not just better; *the superiority!* And also what he is showing is this, and this becomes so very, very, very profound and important: *Everyone who has the Spirit of God has direct access to God the Father—individually and directly—without going through another physical human being!* That doesn't mean that they don't have to be taught. That doesn't mean that there aren't ministers, and so forth. This means that today, everything that is found in Judaism, and Catholicism in particular, cuts people off from God because they have to go through a man. God does not want that. God does not want His personal, Fatherly relationship with you—*begettal in your mind*—to be filtered through another man. Why?

1. because we have a perfected High Priest—Jesus Christ
2. all men and women have a sinful nature—they are not fit to filter anything to God

That's important to understand. I want you to grasp the fact that you have a direct relationship to God the Father and Jesus Christ with no man in-between. And that's why prayer and study become so important. And this cuts off relying on a human being. Therefore, anyone who is a true teacher of God is going to say, 'Here are you, and there is God, now get with it.' We come together as brethren and love each other as Christ loved us because God does something special when we get together—especially on the Sabbath Day—through the power of His Holy Spirit with us. We have that individual relationship.

Hebrews 7:11: "Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the law that* the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there for* another priest

to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?"

Remember this was prophesied in Psa. 110:4. So this was not something that came as a bolt out of the blue. God already prophesied that He was going to do it. He already prophesied that He was going to make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah. This comes as no surprise. God is acting upon it, and when He acts upon it the old says, 'No, we don't want that.' So, He has to explain it in great detail.

Verse 12: "**For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory that a change of the law also take place.**" This is the law of *how you come to God*. This includes the *law of the rituals* that were under the Old Covenant. That is all changed. And this includes the *spiritual laws by which we operate*. *Operating under the New Covenant:*

- it is the *spiritual law*
- it is the *spiritual application*
- it is by *faith*
- it is by *belief*
- it is by the *receipt of the Holy Spirit of God*

That's what it's based upon. And it's based upon that you now live your life according to walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the flesh*... [live as the world. Just do the things that the world does; do the things that you do automatically as a human being. No!] ...but according to *the Spirit*." With the Spirit of God in you you're concerned with the spiritual thing. You're concerned with loving God. You're concerned with how you serve God. And even though you are in the flesh with the weaknesses that you still have, you are not walking according to the flesh. You're walking according to the Spirit.

And here's what it's described as, v 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus... [That's what the law was changed to. The spiritual application of the law, through Jesus Christ and through His grace brings forgiveness of sin.] "...has delivered me from the law of sin and death."

In other words, by having the Spirit of God and being under the grace of God, He justifies you from the law of sin and death and the carnal nature that you have, that you can have the spiritual relationship with Him. And He's got to do that, otherwise you do not have access to God. That's why the world out here has no access to God. Oh, they can play church, they can play religion, they can do all sorts of things.

But you have to have the Spirit of God, which I think is interesting. Here it is called the

“...law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus...” Quite a thing—isn’t it? That’s a statement! “...has delivered [justified] me.” It doesn’t mean free! ***You haven’t been freed of sin!*** You haven’t been freed of physical death. But as far as God is concerned, ***you have been justified from sin, and you have been given eternal life!***

Let’s come back here to Hebrews 7:12: “For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the* law also take place.” That’s quite a change—isn’t it? And what does this ‘change of the law’ do? *It takes away every physical apparatus of worship under the Old Covenant!*

- no sacrifices
- no physical temple
- no physical circumcision

Now you have a spiritual requirement which is the law of life and Christ Jesus for *all* of these things:

- a spiritual temple
- a spiritual circumcision
- spiritual worship of God

—and so forth. That is why, at the Passover, we take the bread and the wine; Jesus gave a new definition to it. It is *His body and His blood* of the New Covenant.

Verse 13: “Because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar.” As long as Jesus was on the earth *He followed the law that He established through the covenant that was made with Israel and the Aaronic priesthood*. He did not put Himself forward to become a priest. Remember what happened to Uzziah back in the Old Testament, when he decided that he was going to offer incense, and the priest told him, ‘No, you’re not; don’t offer incense.’ As soon as he walked in to offer it he was struck with leprosy and died a leper.

Christ, being on earth, did not even intimate that He was going to be the priest. The closest He came to it was when He was talking to the Pharisees and He said, ‘Tell Me, whose son is the Christ?’ And they said, ‘David’s’ And He said, ‘Well then, tell Me, how does he in the Spirit call Him Lord, if He’s his son?’ They couldn’t answer it. So that’s about the closest that He came to it; Psa. 110:4 talks about Melchisedec.

Verse 14: “For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood. And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec; Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment...” (vs 14-16).

God said, ‘Aaron, you’re the high priest. I establish your descendents as the high priest. The

rest of the Levites, who are descendents of Levi, will be your servants.’ Remember, they had a great rebellion about that, and it was settled with the staff of Aaron that budded. Remember that? So it was a fleshly commandment. They were to be physical descendents. They were to be priests by birth. And when they died another one had to succeed.

But now then, compare that to what the Priesthood we have is, v 16: “Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment, but by ***the power of indestructible life***.... [You can’t have a greater power than that—can you? *No, you can’t!* I mean, the whole foundation of it is lifted so much higher—isn’t it? *Yes, it is!*] ...For He testifies, ‘You *are* a Priest forever... [perpetual; continuous; never changing; never running out] ...according to the order of Melchisedec.’.... [is greater than Levi (Heb. 7)] ...For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron* because of its weakness and unprofitableness... [or actually, the *uselessness*] ...because the law brought nothing to perfection...” (vs 16-19). Now hear and understand this very clearly:

- What is the function of law? *Law defines what sin is! Law cannot save!*
- Why cannot law save? *That’s not a function of law! Law cannot bring salvation!*

We are required to keep the commandments of God; we are to keep them *in spirit and in truth*—are we not? *Yes!* Commandment-keeping cannot of itself save you, because commandment-keeping is required. Law can’t save you. Repentance—an operation of the heart and mind through Jesus Christ, and the receipt of the Holy Spirit from God the Father—that saves you. That is an *operation of grace*, which is separate from the Law and Prophets. Within that scope God does something greater. He puts in our hearts and our minds His commandments and His laws, where it ought to be. So it was useless!

Verse 19: “Because the law brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a superior hope...” What was the hope of the Israelites? *When they left Egypt the hope was to go into the ‘promised land’*; because they sinned and so forth, they were 40 years getting there. That’s a long detour, but they eventually got there. Their hope was that if they obeyed God—as you read the blessings and cursings in Deut.28 and Lev. 26—that they would be blessed physically, they would have all kinds of physical goods, they would have blessings of children, freedom from their enemies, and all of this. If they didn’t, then they would lose that hope and they would have curses and captivity, and so forth.

What is our hope? *It is a superior hope!* The King James says ‘better,’ but the Greek there means

*superior*. Can there be any comparison between having a calm, blessed, physical life, and you die? or Having the promise of eternal life? And at the resurrection you are given a spiritual body, and a spiritual mind and share in the glory of Christ? Which is greater?

That's why when you read the parables—the parable of the pearl of great price, you go sell all that you have—because all of the physical goods that you have are not equated to anything that can be compared to eternal life. What this *superior hope* is supposed to do with the Spirit of God is to help us to understand that, regardless of the circumstances around us. God did not say we are going to be blessed with peace and security. What did Christ say to His disciples on that Passover night? *He said, 'In Me you will have peace, in the world you'll have tribulation. But be courageous; I have overcome the world.'* So with a *superior hope* we do not make a judgment based upon the physical circumstances. And this *superior hope* does this, v 19: "...through which we draw near to God."

Now, let's look at a comparison here. Here's another account of receiving the Ten Commandments. And after they heard the voice of God they said to Moses, Deuteronomy 5:27: "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*." They never did it! Today when we draw near to God, how do we understand the Word of God? How does God speak to us through His Word and His Spirit to lead us and guide us? It's a whole lot different. Where is the law to be written? *In our hearts and in our minds!* It's a greater, more superior thing.

But notice what he said here, v 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.'" In other words, they were sincere and well intentioned. Sincerity is absolutely no proof of right or wrong. You can be sincerely convinced in something that is wrong, and your sincerity is no guarantee of truth. Truth stands by itself without feeling. So they intended well.

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 and with their children forever!" With the *superior hope* we have a way of drawing near to God. And we're going to see when we get into Heb. 8 how near that is.

Hebrews 7:20: "And according to this *superior* measure, *it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest*. (For those who

*descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath... [again showing the superiority of the Priesthood of Christ] ...but He *was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, '*The Lord swore...*'" (vs 20-21). We have two times when the Lord swore—don't we?

1. to Abraham when he offered Isaac
2. to Christ to be High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Those are the only two times that God swore by Himself; showing the absolute finality of these things, and the spiritual reality of it, because God swore. God cannot lie, so He doesn't need to swear. But in swearing an oath, that makes it that much more binding, that makes it that much more powerful.

Verse 21: "...and will not revoke *His Word*, 'You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'" By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant" (vs 21-22). Everything about it is superior. There can be nothing greater. That's why we read there in John 14 that Jesus said that, 'I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and none can come to the Father except through Me.' *Superior covenant!* We don't need to go around and hang our heads asking, 'What are you?' *Well, I'm...um...one of these...um...I go to the Church of God. 'I'm a Baptist!' No!*

- We belong to God!
- We have *the Spirit of God!*
- We have a *superior High Priest!*
- We have a *superior hope!*
- We have a *superior covenant!*

Not because we're greater; because in order to impart the blessing of this superior status with God, *God calls the individual*. It's not of the choosing of the individual. Yes, we have to respond and repent, that is true. *God has to call!*

He gives another comparison, v 23. "Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death; but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes" (vs 23-24).

You don't have to worry about praying one week, and then the next week you go to pray, and all of a sudden, 'Uh oh. Who is this new guy?' *Well, the one you confessed your sins to last week died.* 'Well did he pray for me before he died?' You can see the uselessness of having a system like the Catholic Church has. It doesn't get any further than the confession booth. And besides, a lot of the priests' amorous overtures are made in the confession booth to the ones that he is taking the confession from. The corruption of human nature corrupts that process

entirely, as it did with the priesthood under the Old Covenant. His priesthood never changes. We can add in there: *He is a heart-knowing God*. He knows our hearts; and that when we come to Him, everything He knows, and is able to judge the thoughts and the intents of the heart. So therefore, when you come to Christ and really repent, it's a true repentance to the core of your being. It is no pretense to gain favor. It is no pretense to get rid of the 'heat.' It is true and deep and profound confession to Him.

Verse 25: "Therefore, He has the power throughout all time... [Here it gives the indication of absolute power. In other words, *there is no other power to forgive sin*, or to save.] ...to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them" We'll cover some of that when we get into our relationship with grace and confession of sin, and how God looks at us, and so forth, concerning that.

Verse 26, "For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest..." In other words, if you're going to have a superior covenant, you're going to have a superior hope, you have to have a superior High Priest—don't you? You have to have one that fits the covenant, and *Christ is*.

"For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest, *Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens... [as compared to]: ...Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests, to offer up sacrifices day-by-day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people..." (vs 26-27). You know what the priest had to do every day before he started? *He had to offer up a sin sacrifice for himself!* Now he's ready to start offering for the other people. Christ doesn't have to do that.

"...for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself. For the law makes high priests of men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the law, *the* Son, Who has been perfected forever, *has been made High Priest*" (vs. 27-28).

Hebrews 8 begins setting the stage—chapters 7-10 all come together. Hebrews 8:1: "Now, *here is* a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest Who sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens... [can't get any greater, can't get any higher than that] ...a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore, *it is necessary for* this one also to have something that He can offer" (vs 1-3). He offered Himself.

If anyone wants to talk about a work, no one can do better than the work that Christ did when He

was on earth—correct? Of all the things to sacrifice and give up to show love of God, He did the greatest—didn't He? *Yes, He did!* That's why He offered Himself. Now, being the Creator of all human beings, that becomes all the evermore awesome, all the greater or superior. If someone does a wonderful thing for you, you thank them, and you know they have love and concern for you—right? *Yes!* Christ has done greater: *He gave Himself!* Not only for you and me, but for the whole world, because God has a greater plan than men give Him credit for.

Verse 4: "Now on the one hand, if He were on earth He would not even be a priest since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law; who serve as a representation and shadow of the heavenly things..." (vs 4-5). We're comparing the true tabernacle in the heavens, compared to the shadow or the representation the shadow of it. Which would you rather have: a toy Cadillac or the real thing? Let's use that as a comparison.

"...exactly as Moses was Divinely instructed when he was about to construct the tabernacle: 'For see,' says He, '*that* you make all things according to the pattern that was shown to you in the mountain'" (v 5). This indicates that He had plans; God had them all drawn up to give to him. When you make a replica of it, that is only just a shadowy representation of the true. Now if you want to know what it's really like at the throne of God, the closest we can come to it is Rev. 4 & 5, when John saw the vision of the throne of God, and so forth.

Verse 6: "But on the other hand, He... [Christ, the heavenly Priest] ...has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises." This then brings us right back to how he opened the book of Hebrews.

Let's come back to Hebrews 1, where he set the stage. What he's telling us is that all the way through the book of Hebrews he's showing us how then our relationship with God needs to be on the highest level possible, because of what God has done and how He has set up the New Covenant to operate.

Hebrews 1:1: "God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high" (vs 1-3).

You talk about an opening. You talk about getting your attention instantly. This is something! Until John the Baptist it was the Law and the Prophets, and after John the Baptist it's the Kingdom of God and Christ.

Verse 4: "Having been made so much greater than *any* of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them." These are superlatives which cannot be defined any greater in English. I want you to be inspired in prayer when you come to God; to know that you have this access through Jesus Christ. There is nothing between you and God. Therefore, we should have

- the faith
- the hope
- the understanding
- the confidence

in God, regardless of the outward circumstances in which we find ourselves, because this is so fantastic. If you ask people, if you just ran a survey and said, 'How would you like to be an angel?' They would immediately equate it with the TV programs where there are supposedly angels that do things. Of course, they'd like to be angels. But he's saying here, this is greater. *This is greater!*

Verse 5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say, 'You are My Son; this day I have begotten You'? And again, 'I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me'? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, 'Let all *the* angels of God worship Him'" (vs 5-6). Didn't that happen right after Jesus was born? The host of the angels appeared unto the two shepherds and were singing praises and worshipping God, and telling about the One Who had been born?

Verse 7: "Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, 'Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.' But on the other hand, of the Son *He* says, 'Your throne, O God, *is* into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your Kingdom'" (vs 7-8). You can quote that back there in Ps. 45. That's something. Of course, then there are people who say Jesus was not God.

Verse 9: "'You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness... [that has to be the attitude we come to] ...because of this, God—even Your God—has anointed You with *the* oil of gladness above Your companions.'" So, that ties right in with what we're reading back here, *a more excellent ministry*. There we have a tremendous and profound thing that we look to, brethren.

Hebrews 8:7: "For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made." But God made

provision—didn't He? He even prophesied of it. He prophesied of the Priesthood of Christ, the order of Melchisedec; He prophesied of the New Covenant—didn't He? And here's what He did:

"But since He found fault with them..." Not only them, but the whole physical system of the temple was flawed by the very fact that imperfect human beings were running it. It served temporarily for the purpose. One of the biggest mistakes that people assume in the world is this: those who are *professing* Christians assume that under the Old Covenant they were given salvation through the physical things that they did at the temple, and so forth. No, they were not given that. He did not give the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Most people assume today, and the universal religion that they're wanting to create, that all religions have truths, and they all lead to the same God. Now that statement is only true insofar as it relates to Satan being the 'god of this world.' It is not true insofar as relating to the true God the Father and Jesus Christ. Here's what God wants to do with us. He's going to cure the fault. The fault is carnal nature—isn't it? The fault is the law of sin and death—isn't it?

Here's how He's going to cure it, v 8: "But since He found fault with them, He says, 'Behold, *the* days are coming'... [from Jer. 31] ...says *the* Lord, 'when I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in *the* day that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,' says *the* Lord. 'For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days,' says *the* Lord: 'I will give My laws into their minds, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts'" (vs 8-10).

What does that do for you? *That can only be done with the Spirit of God!*

- that gives you the heart
- that gives you the attitude
- that gives you the willingness
- that gives you the consciousness

so that when you do sin you can repent rather than just ignoring God.

"...inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.... [The ones that have the Spirit of God are the people of God.] ...And they will no longer teach every man his neighbor... [of course, that's a prophecy yet to be fulfilled] ...and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord' because all will know Me, from *the* least to *the* greatest of them; for I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and

their lawlessness I will not remember ever again” (vs 10-12). That’s quite a promise— isn’t it? And with this promise then, we should never go before God and say, ‘I wonder if You can forgive me, God?’ ***If you repent there is always forgiveness!*** God promised that, and He cannot lie. He will grant you a clean heart and a clean mind, and will forgive you. That’s quite a promise. “For I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their lawlessness I will not remember ever again” (v 12).

Let’s go to Psalm 103; here’s what God does with them. The reason there needs to be the forgiveness of sin is because ***as long as sin dominates in the mind and in the heart you cannot have the laws of God written in your heart!*** That’s why with repentance and a change of heart, then with the change of heart these things can be added to you.

Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction; Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies” (vs 1-4).

Verse 8: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him. ***As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us***” (vs 8-12). This is how David stood before God, but it is also a prophecy that applies to us today. There’s no way.

Verse 13: “As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting... [that’s how far the east is from the west] ...upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children’s children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them” (vs 13-18).

- If you have the laws and commandments written in your heart and your mind, will you remember them? to do them? *Of course, you will!*
- Do you remember the Sabbath, to keep it? *Yes!*

- Do you remember to worship God because He is our God and Father? *Yes!*
- You have no problem with idols and statues—do you? *No!* You’re not swearing and cursing—are you? *Except may be you may slip, and can repent of that.*

- ✓ you’re not breaking the third commandment
- ✓ you’re not breaking the fourth commandment
- ✓ you’re not breaking the fifth commandment
- ✓ the sixth commandment
- ✓ or any of the commandments.

Why? *Because they are in your heart and in your mind!*

Now then, the challenge with having it within your heart and mind and the Spirit of God is this: is that you learn through the power of the Spirit of God, and exercising the Spirit of God, and the laws and commandments of God through the *superior covenant*, through the *superior relationship* with Jesus Christ, then you learn through your faults and mistakes to overcome the source of sin, which is *the law of sin and death* within you. And the ultimate victory over that is the resurrection. So this is why the New Covenant is so fantastic and superior.

Now next time we’ll get into how Christ mediates for us, because this is very important. And always remember: ***Christ is always there!*** He doesn’t need to sleep. You don’t have to worry about like you do when you call someone on the phone, ‘Oh, did I wake you up?’ or, ‘Did I catch you busy?’ ***God is always there!*** And He is ever there to answer our prayers. That’s quite a thing when you really grasp and understand this, and you have this in your heart and mind and attitude when you come to pray. This opens up a great deal of understanding and truth and knowledge, and your relationship with God then is so important. You can build on it. You can know

- God loves you
- Christ loves you
- He has created this relationship in the New Covenant so that you can be in His family and live forever.

*That is the greatest thing!*

So with that then, we need to understand that as we go down the rusty trail and we get older. I think a whole lot more of us senior citizens—and being 68-½, I give myself ten year life, maximum; if it’s more than that, that’s fine. I’m figuring what I need to do and what God wants me to do, I better plan on doing it within the next ten years, if I have that long. And I am going to treat my ‘bionic’ hips

as if they are solid gold and be most careful with them. That we are going to find that the brethren among us are going to die. That should come as no great surprise, because no one yet has lived forever in the flesh. The ultimate last step—next to the last step, the last step in this physical life, and the next to the last step—is that you die and are put into the grave. If you do, look upon it as a blessing, because you don't have to go through the things that the rest of us who are living still have to go through. And they're going to be horrendous indeed.

Transcribed: 06/16/2003  
MDS/cis  
Reformatted/Corrected: bo—5-15-11

We need to take a view of death as God does, that God is pleased in the death of His saints. He knows that *the final step is going to come at the resurrection*. That is the *superior hope* that we are looking to. Therefore, ***anything that happens to this flesh is never going to deter that promise or take away that hope.***

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

#### Scriptural References

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Matthew 3:1-8
- 3) John 1:19-27
- 4) Acts 6:9-14
- 5) Isaiah 66:1-5
- 6) Hebrews 7:11-12
- 7) Romans 8:1-2
- 8) Hebrews 7:12-19
- 9) Deuteronomy 5:27-29
- 10) Hebrews 7:20-28
- 11) Hebrews 8:1-6
- 12) Hebrews 1:1-9
- 13) Hebrews 8:7-12
- 14) Psalm 103:1-4, 8-18

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 8
- Luke 24
- Deuteronomy 18
- Psalm 110:4
- Deuteronomy 28
- Leviticus 26
- John 14
- Revelation 4; 5
- Psalm 45
- Jeremiah 31

#### Also Referenced:

##### Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Josephus*

Sermon: *Who Is That Prophet?*



## Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews XXIV Old Covenant/New Covenant Comparison #1

Fred R. Coulter—November 22, 2003

Today we're going to do a comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Before we get into that, let's cover something very important; let's come to John, the fourth chapter, and I think maybe you can understand this in light of the New Testament, even more than we have in the past. We've gone over this many times, but let's see what this is really telling us in the light of what Jesus said, and in the light of other Scriptures, which help define it for us.

John 4:19—this is the woman at the well talking with Jesus: “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. You do not know what you worship. We know what we worship, **for salvation is of the Jews**.... [This becomes a very important point.] ...But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth’” (vs 10-24).

- What kind of Jew is Jesus talking about?
- Does this mean, as most people interpret it, that Christianity came out of Judaism?
- Or, is this the basis of what is called ‘Judeo/Christian’ religion or ethic?

Let's examine this just a little bit more. What is He talking about here? *He's talking about true worshipers!* Were the rabbis, the Pharisees and the priests true worshipers of God? What did Jesus say? *You keep your traditions! Keep the commandments of God.* (Mark 7).

So they weren't the *true* worshipers. We'll see in a minute that they had some former knowledge, but they are not the *true* worshipers. The way we answer the question is *salvation is of the Jews* so we know that it is not Judaism, and we know it's not from Jews, but from God! It says that you have to **worship Him in spirit and in truth!**

Let's see what Paul defines as to who is a Jew in the *spiritual* sense. Jesus was not talking about coming to the temple and worshiping. He said, ‘You're not going to be worshiping in this mountain nor at the temple.’ What He's talking about is New Testament worship. What kind of Jew? Let's look at Paul's comparison here; let's see something here

concerning *physical* Jews and *spiritual* Jews. What Jesus is really talking about in John 4 are not the *physical* Jews, but the *spiritual* Jews, and Paul defines that for us; to show the difference between the *physical* Jew and the *spiritual* Jew. Some people get all excited when they find that they have Jewish blood in their *physical* genealogy background. Don't count it a blessing unless you obey God. Here's what Paul says:

Romans 2:17: “Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law... [So, they have the framework of the law—don't they?] ...and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the law” (vs 17-20). This is the same boast that we have clear down to this day—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

So, he asks a question, v 21: “You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, ‘Do not steal,’ are you stealing? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege? You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law?.... [That's interesting— isn't it? In one case there's a definite article: ‘you who boast in law’ meaning all their traditional laws, everything else, they're boasting as if it's from God.] ...are you dishonoring God through your transgression of **the** law?.... [God's laws!] ...For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision” (vs 17-25).

That's the greatest insult you can tell one who claims to be a *physical* Jew. If you don't believe that, I challenge you to go to the so-called land of Israel and go into the Orthodox section where the Orthodox Jews live and tell them that their transgression of the law makes them uncircumcised and see if you get out of there without being stoned! That's the highest insult possible!

Verse 26: “Therefore, if the uncircumcised... [Whom they hate and call ‘goyeem’; and lie, cheat and steal to take from them because ‘it's their right

as the chosen people' to do so] ...is keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* law? For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly**, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is* one inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God" (vs 26-29). This is what Jesus was defining! The *spiritual* Jew, not the *physical* Jew!

Let's see something else which ties in with Alan Knight has been writing in the *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*. Revelation 3:7: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One, the One Who *is* true... [Why is that so many ministers call Him a liar, when He says, 'I am the Way, the Life and the Truth?'] ...the One Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word, and have not denied My name" (vs 7-8).

Those who do that Paul said are 'spiritual' Jews—of the heart—because circumcision is of the heart and that's the key to understanding the comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Very profound! Very important!

Notice what they are confronted with; notice where the battle lies, v 9: "Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie ..." Meaning they are not converted, spirit-filled Christians who have had the circumcision of the heart! They belong to Satan the devil. And just like Satan has always done, he counterfeits what God does. He calls God a liar; calls Jesus a liar. Isn't that the way that liars always do when they're caught? *Yes!* Or they attack the messenger. Christ is going to take care of it. He has a way of doing that. He is going to intervene for us.

Here's what He's going to do. Put in your notes the book of Esther and read about Mordecai who was distained by Haman the Agagite and who he wanted to kill. He wanted to get rid of Mordecai. What happened? You read about the fate that came to Haman the Agagite. This is what happened:

"...behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you" (v 9). That's going to be very galling, indeed— isn't it? *Yes!* The great of the world are going to 'bow down' to the least in the world who have been resurrected. Why?

Here's the key of true *spiritual* Jews, v 10:

"Because you have kept the word of My patience... [constantly keeping the Word of God] ...I also will keep you from the time of temptation which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown.... [Even though He does not correct them for any sin, notice what He says, this is very important]: ...The one who overcomes..." (vs 10-12)—which means you still have to overcome:

- human nature
- the world
- Satan

How do you do that?

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

That's how you do it! ***Walk in faith, believe in hope and live in love!*** That's how you overcome. We are to be *perfected in Christ!* That's profound!

"...will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (vs 12-13).

- How is it that they faithfully kept the Word of God?
- How can you do it with so much religious confusion in the world, especially among professing Christianity or Christendom today.

They do not understand the Truth of the New Covenant when compared to the Old Covenant. What they say is that God has changed! God has NOT changed! What did God say? ***I change not!*** Very important! Another error that they have so that they don't understand is that they have what is called 'dispensationalism.' That means that

- those before the Flood received salvation one way
- those after the Flood received salvation another way
- those who were called of God from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the children of Israel—and were given the law—were saved another way
- now we have the new *spiritual* dispensation and are saved another way

The truth is this, when you understand about the Old and New Covenants: ***Only the few prophets and righteous kings received salvation before Christ came***—the very few! God did not offer salvation—

*spiritual salvation*—to the nation of Israel. There are no promises of eternal life until you come to Christ.

Let's do a little comparison here, and we're going to see that the basis of what is called *the Old Covenant* and the physical things that they did always pointed to Christ. If you want a good book on that: *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes. He shows that the type of everything that was given with the sacrifices and so forth all pointed toward Christ.

### **Old Covenant—Physical Promises:**

The Old Covenant is a physical covenant based upon physical promises. Nowhere does it say that you will receive eternal life. Deuteronomy 28 defines the promises. This gives all the blessings first. Remember what's important is this: ***God set before them life and death, blessing and cursing***; therefore, choose life that you and your seed may live long, physical lives. I want you to read all the blessings, we're going to skim a few of them.

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.... [Notice: not going to heaven! Not entering the Kingdom of God!] ...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).

Notice the blessings, v 3: "Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the field. Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed *shall be* your basket and your store. Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The LORD shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be stricken before your face. They shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon you in your storehouses, and all that you set your hand to. And He shall bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you" (vs 3-8). Nothing about eternal life—right? *NO!*

Verse 9: "The LORD shall establish you a Holy people to Himself, as He has sworn to you, if you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. And the LORD shall make you abound in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land which the

LORD swore to your fathers to give you" (vs 9-11). Then he goes on to open the treasures and so forth.

Then you can read all the curses; He says, v 16: "Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the field. Cursed *shall be* your basket and your store. Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body..." (vs 16-18).

### **New Covenant—Spiritual Promises:**

Now then, let's look at the comparison in the New Covenant, when Christ came. John 3:16—this tells us exactly the promise, and this is important to realize: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." That's nowhere given in the Old Testament. There are conditions in order to accomplish this. It's not just divvied out. God has to do the calling.

The New Covenant is a spiritual covenant based upon spiritual promises. We need to understand that only in the New Covenant with Christ was there the offer of eternal life. Never was there in the Old Covenant, none whatsoever! Paul is giving the comparison between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Melchisedec, of which Christ was called, and the Lord swore that the Priesthood forever according to the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 7:22: "By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a **superior** covenant." The *King James* has 'better' but the Greek is *superior*. Why is it *superior*? *It's based upon better promises!* That's why! Which would you rather have:

- physical life with everything your soul desires and death and no more?
- or
- the promise of eternal life?

***There's no comparison!*** That's why it's a *superior covenant!*

Talking about the priesthood, v 23: "Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death; but in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes. Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is* Holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens" (vs 23-26). That's superior! We're going to see you have a *superior* form of worship.

Here's the great argument: to be circumcised

or not {see sermon series on the *Circumcision Wars*} You do not understand that the conflict in the early New Testament Church was this: Under Judaism—and even according to the Law of God—if a stranger wanted to participate in the worship of God he had to be circumcised. Under Judaism all proselytes were circumcised. That's where the rub came in with the New Testament.

### **Old Covenant—Circumcision of the Flesh:**

Genesis 17:9—this is what Christ talked about concerning circumcision: “And God said to Abraham, ‘And you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. And a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you, every male child in your generations; he that is born in the house, or bought with silver of any foreigner who *is* not of your seed. He that is born in your house, and he that is bought with your silver, must be circumcised. And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant” (vs 9-13).

Notice, there's no promise of eternal life. Not here! The promise of eternal life was given to Abraham *before* he was circumcised (Gen. 15).

### **New Covenant—Circumcision of the Heart:**

So, in the New Testament we have a higher standard. What we're going to see all the way through in this comparison is that you have one standard that is *physical*, one standard that is *spiritual*. The standard that is spiritual is a higher standard, requiring a great deal more than just physical circumcision.

Let's see how this begins; we'll find that this is a very important distinction. In order to receive eternal life you have to have something beyond you as a person. No one has inherent eternal life in them. You've got to have an addition from God. But you don't get that unless there is a change.

There is repentance and circumcision of the heart through baptism, Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” They need the gift of the Holy Spirit—the seed of the begetting—unto eternal life.

Let's see what this repentance is to do. If you cut off a little bit of the foreskin in circumcising the male, it doesn't change the heart—does it? It does permanently change that part of the anatomy, which

is *a sign that spiritual circumcision is to permanently change your mind!* That's the comparison.

Acts 3:19: “Therefore, repent and be **converted**...” You don't find that anywhere in the Old Testament—do you? You have a prophecy (Deut. 10) about circumcising the foreskin of your heart, but God never gave the ability to do that because He didn't send the Holy Spirit.

Let's see that there is a circumcision of the heart, which is a greater circumcision than the circumcision of the flesh. This is what is important! Colossians 2:9: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily... [We're to become like Christ.] ...and **you are complete in Him**...” (vs 9-10). That's an important, profound statement! You don't need the other teachings such as the worshiping of angels and following demonic spirits and so forth. That's what they were confronted with.

What happens in the false Christianity, they come along and say ‘Well, if you have the commandments of God, that's not enough, you're not complete. We need to add a little bit more to that.’ NO! God is the One Who adds the more to it, which is His Spirit, through repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit.

He's talking to those who have the Holy Spirit, v 10: “...Who is the Head of all principality and power **in Whom you have also been circumcised with the circumcision not made by hands**, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (vs 10-11). You have a changed nature; your mind becomes permanently changed *spiritually* just as physical circumcision changes that part of the anatomy of a man permanently. That's the comparison. One is physical, the other is spiritual.

Let's understand something: The Holy Spirit was never offered under the Old Covenant, so therefore, they could not receive salvation. If you don't have the Spirit of Christ you're none of His for eternal life! They may be of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob physically, but not for eternal life.

“...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [here's how it's done]: ...having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with Him through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross” (vs 11-14)—that is, *our* sins!

Roman 8:7—here shows the result of this *spiritual* circumcision: “Because the carnal mind... [the mind of the flesh; one that does not have the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is an addition. Peter said to ‘repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ Only God can give that!] ...the carnal mind... [lacking the Spirit of God] ...*is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*.” And you can understand this whenever you talk to any carnal-minded person—right? Especially when you

- tell them about the Sabbath
- tell them about the Holy Days
- tell them about eating pork, shrimp, lobster

That blows them away!

Just as aside: I heard on the news what the favorite astronaut food is—that they get in tubes? It’s all processed and it’s guaranteed to last for three years. Do you know how they enjoy a meal up in the space capsule? They get a tube and they squeeze it into their mouths. Do you know what their favorite dish is? *Shrimp cocktail!*

They can’t understand! What is their first retort? If they supposedly believe in Christ—based on their version of Christ—they say, ‘Well, Christ changed the law; you don’t have to worship on that day any longer.’ They don’t understand the New Covenant. It didn’t change the laws; it changed *how we keep them!* That’s what’s changed—from a *carnal* mind to a *spiritual* mind.

Verse 8: “But **those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God.**” You think about that whenever you want to add something on to what God says—that ‘we ought to have this’; that ‘we ought to have this addition to it’ and so forth.

Verse 9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh... [before God; this doesn’t mean you’re a spirit being, capable of walking through walls] ...but in *the* Spirit, **if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you...**” That is *circumcision of the heart!* The Spirit of God takes away the carnality and the enmity and the hostility toward God and His ways and you delight in keeping His laws, His commandments. You delight in the Word of God. You are not looking for arguments for getting around keeping God’s way—are you? You’re looking for every way to do the things that right and that are good! You have to have God’s Spirit dwelling *in* you.

Here’s the dividing line, v 9: “...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” That’s very profound and very important. Add Acts 5:32, that God gives the ‘Spirit to those who obey Him.’ That’s what’s important!

You obey in the Spirit of the Law. In the two covenants, God did not do away with His laws. He did not change His laws.

- He changed *the way* that they are kept!
- He changed *the way* that you are justified!

Verse 10: “But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin... [that’s what baptism is all about] ...however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. Now if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live” (vs 10-13).

There is a whole different requirement— isn’t it? A higher standard! A spiritual standard! One that supercedes the standard of the Old Covenant. That’s why it’s called a *superior* covenant, a *greater* covenant.

#### Old Covenant—Letter of the Law:

The people did not have the Holy Spirit under the Old Covenant. They would obey in the letter of the law. This is a very important point concerning the covenant, and most people do not understand what it’s talking about here. When Jesus was God of the Old Covenant He was married to Israel. {see sermon: *Was Jesus Married?*} He died and that released Israel from that.

#### New Covenant—Spirit of the Law:

Romans 7:6: “But now we have been released from the law...” That doesn’t mean He was released from the obligation to keep the law. That means **‘released from the law of marriage’ that bound them to the Old Covenant.** The only way a covenant comes to an end is by the death of Christ. That’s the only way that the Old Covenant came to an end.

“...because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter” (v 6). The oldness of the letter was practiced by Bill Clinton when he said, ‘I never had sex with that woman.’ Christ says that in the ‘spirit of the law’ if you lust after a woman you’ve already committed adultery in your heart. Is that not a higher standard? *Yes, indeed!* That’s the spirit that we are to serve in—the newness of spirit. Paul makes this clear.

Verse 7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not

have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, ‘You shall not covet.’” So the law brings out what sin is. This all ties together—doesn’t it? Under the Old Covenant, you go back and read Deut. 28, Lev. 26 all the way through the requirement is *obey in the letter of the law*. Can people obey in the *letter* of the law? *Yes, they can!* Even though they don’t have the Spirit of God. How many people are out there who don’t murder, commit adultery and all these things? *Billions!*

***Converted believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit or obey in the spirit of the law.***

Romans 6:16: “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have **obeyed from the heart...** [That’s the spiritual obedience.] ...that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness” (vs 16-18).

If obeyed in the letter of the law they could live in the community and worship at the earthly tabernacle. Hebrews 9 shows this operation, because Paul said that it’s ‘impossible for the blood bulls and goats to forgive sin.’ What were the sacrifices for then? What did it accomplish?

Hebrews 9:13 tells us: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh.” Notice that it didn’t sanctify to the purifying of the spirit, only to the flesh. That’s why they had different washings and oblations and different sacrifices, which means that under the Old Covenant, when they came and offered a sacrifice for whatever it was—whatever sin, whatever transgression that it was—it only justified to the flesh. That’s why you had the tabernacle or temple the on the earth. It was

- a physical tabernacle
  - a physical temple
  - a physical worship
  - a physical obeying in the letter of the law
- forgiveness to the tabernacle, no further!

Verse 14 shows what the blood of Christ does: “To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ... [the New Covenant] ...Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **shall purify your conscience...** [Again, a permanent change of the mind; it was not possible under the Old Covenant.] ...from dead works to serve *the* living God. And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the

transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (vs 14-15). So, it’s a completely different thing under the New Covenant.

Another thing that this facilitates and gives us is—which they didn’t not have under the Old Covenant—they could come to the temple. That’s why Jesus said where the woman was talking to Jesus and said, ‘You say that Jerusalem is the place that you ought to worship’—under the Old Covenant, yes!

- they came to the temple
- they offered the sacrifice
- they were justified to the temple
- God accepted them in the letter of the law
- they could continue to receive the physical blessings of God

But now—once you have your sins *forgiven spiritually*—something new changes and that is this: You don’t have to go to a temple as Jesus told the woman. *You worship God in spirit and truth.* How do you do that?

Hebrews 10:14: “For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, ‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the* Lord. ‘I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.’ Now, where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin. Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* Holiest by the blood of Jesus” (vs 14-19).

Now you have access directly to God! Profound difference—Isn’t there? Before you had to go through a physical priest and a physical temple to offer physical sacrifices for physical justification of the flesh—and it didn’t change the conscience. Now you repent to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above

- through repentance
- forgiveness of sin
- circumcision of the heart

***Now you have direct access to God the Father and He has direct access to you with His Holy Spirit!*** That’s something! That’s why it’s a *superior* covenant!

Let’s see how Paul writes of it here, Ephesians 2:18: “For through Him... [Christ! He’s our Intercessor! Mediator! He’s at the right hand of God! (Heb. 4)] ...we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father.” God has given you the greatest

thing that He can in this physical life: His Spirit and access to Him! That's why the New Covenant is superior!

Verse 19: "So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (vs 19-22). So, it's reciprocal, having the Spirit of God!

### **Old Covenant—Administration of Death:**

2-Cor. 3 shows that under the Old Covenant they had the *administration of death*—execute people for certain sins.

### **New Covenant--Disfellowshipment:**

Under the New Covenant, since the Church is scattered throughout the world in many sovereign nations, you cannot have a sovereign church in the middle of the sovereign nation executing the death penalty. The Church does not have that. The greatest authority that the Church has when someone sins is disfellowshipment—that is all! God will take care of the rest of it. That is important to realize when we understand the function of the New Covenant.

However, Paul gives us a warning! There is something to fear! Hebrews 10:20: "By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart... [if you have sins to repent of, you repent] (but it's a): ...true heart with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful; and let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near" (vs 20-25).

Verse 26: "For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins." This is a permanent thing! Once you receive the Holy Spirit of God *there is no turning back!* We do have sins, shortcomings, mistakes, backslidings—those things do take place. Happens to all of us! That's why we're under grace and can repent. God will forgive us and we go on

again. That's why in the model prayer that Jesus gave: 'Give us day-by-day our daily bread and forgive us our sins' because we need our sins forgiven every day—don't we? That keeps us in right standing with God.

As we have covered concerning the *unpardonable sin* before, if that is committed there is no longer any sacrifice for sins—period! The sacrifice of Christ will do you no good!

Verse 27: "But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries *of God*.... [That's pretty strong language—isn't it?] ...*Consider this*: anyone who rejects *the* Law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?" (vs 27-29). The stakes are higher! The punishment is greater!

Verse 30: "For we know Him Who has said, "*Vengeance belongs to Me. I will recompense!*" says *the Lord*.' And again, '*The Lord will judge His people.*' *It is* a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God" (vs 30-31). I tell you what, it's something!

There is a difference. If we have the Spirit of God, have our sins forgiven, have our conscience cleansed, have direct access to God the Father in heaven above, through Jesus Christ, then there's no turning back from that. No turning back!

**Under the Old Covenant:** if they transgressed the law there was *physical atonement* for certain sins and the *death penalty* for others.

**Under the New Covenant:** if they transgressed the law, forgiveness *upon repentance*, or the second death for the unpardonable sin.

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

### **Scriptural References:**

- 1) John 4:19-24
- 2) Romans 2:17-29
- 3) Revelation 3:7-13
- 4) Deuteronomy 28:1-11, 16-18
- 5) John 3:16
- 6) Hebrews 7:22-26
- 7) Genesis 17:9-13
- 8) Acts 2:38
- 9) Acts 3:19
- 10) Colossians 2:9-14
- 11) Romans 8:7-13
- 12) Romans 7:6-7

- 13) Romans 6:16-18
- 14) Hebrews 9:13-15
- 15) Hebrews 10:14-19
- 16) Ephesians 2:18-22
- 17) Hebrews 10:20-31

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 7
- Esther
- Genesis 15
- Deuteronomy 10
- Acts 5:32
- Leviticus 26
- Hebrews 4
- 2 Corinthians 3

Also Referenced:

Books:

- *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight
- *The Law of the Offerings* by Andrew Jukes

Sermon Series:

- *Circumcision Wars*
- *Was Jesus Married?*

FRC: bo  
Transcribed: 5-18-11