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Introduction

On the night of Jesus' last Passover, He instituted the New Covenant of eternal life with His apostles and disciples, beginning with the footwashing. With a profound lesson in mind for His followers, Jesus "rose from supper and laid aside *His* garments; and after taking a towel, He secured it around Himself. Next, He poured water into a washing basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel which He had secured.... [And] when He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, *and* had sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak rightly, because I am. **Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also are duty-bound to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, to show that you also should do exactly as I have done to you.** Truly, truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor a messenger greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them' " (John 13:4-5, 12-17).

Next, Jesus Christ introduced the symbols of the Christian Passover in order to institute the New Covenant of eternal life: "And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed *it*; *then He* broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' And He took the cup; and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, 'All of you drink of it; for this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins' " (Matt. 26:26-28)

Jesus revealed that if we, as Christians, do not eat the bread and drink the wine of the Christian Passover, we do not have life eternal within ourselves. Furthermore, by eating the bread and partaking of the wine, we are renewing our New Covenant pledge to live our lives by Jesus Christ, even as Jesus lived His life in the flesh by God the Father: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. **As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.** This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. **The one who eats this bread shall live forever**" (John 6:53-58; also see verses 35, 41-43, 47-51).

After completing the first New Covenant Christian Passover with His apostles, Jesus further expounded the meaning of the Passover as recorded the Gospel of John, chapters 14-17. These special, intensely personal instructions that Jesus gave His apostles constitute the "Words of the New Covenant."

These four chapters likewise express the three greatest spiritual qualities of God the Father and Jesus Christ—FAITH, HOPE and LOVE! As you read and study these scriptures, and listen as they are expounded, you will come to understand that they embody nearly every aspect of a Christian's life experience. Indeed, these passages could be compared to a scriptural love letter *from* Jesus Christ *to* everyone who has been called according to His purpose and has received the begetting of the Holy Spirit unto eternal life from God the Father. Not only do these special passages inspire within us faith, hope and love—they also give us comfort, understanding, conviction and strength.

To encapsulate the full meaning of the "Words of the New Covenant," we have prepared this special transcript study booklet, *Passover Preparation Series 1-5*. It combines the transcripts of five special study sermons on preparing for the Passover—and goes verse-by-verse through John 14-17. These five studies are included on the accompanying MP3-formatted CD.

Introduction

By studying this booklet and listening to the sermons simultaneously, you will be able to renew your commitment to the New Covenant of eternal life. As you prayerfully study the *Passover Preparation Series 1-5* booklet and listen to the “Words of the New Covenant,” you will be able to fully examine yourself so that you may partake of the Christian Passover in a worthy manner (I Cor. 11:28-29).

The crucifixion and sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world is the foundation of true Christianity. Without His death and the shedding of His blood, as well as His resurrection, there is no forgiveness of sins (I Cor. 15:1-23). By virtue of this profound historical and spiritual fact, **the Passover day is, therefore, the most important commanded feast of God!** Indeed, Jesus Christ is the supreme sacrifice of God the Father—*He* is our Passover Lamb. The apostle Paul made this absolutely clear when he wrote to the Gentile church in Corinth: “**For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us**” (I Cor. 5:7).

May God the Father and Jesus Christ bless you with a most meaningful and inspiring Passover—this year and every year to come.

Fred R. Coulter

PASSOVER PREPARATION # 1

February 22, 2003

Now in this study of the words of the New Covenant which we have agreed to live by, you can go ahead and open to the section where it begins in John 14. Now the words of the New Covenant which we have agreed to live by are contained in John 14, 15, 16, and 17. And these are the words that Jesus spoke to His apostles on the night of the Passover. And this becomes very important and also quite profound. Because as we have seen, the night of the 14th is what you would call the Covenant Night for the New Covenant, but also it was the night that God began His covenant with Abraham.

And so let's go back to Genesis 15 and let's review that. Now if you have *The Christian Passover* book you can go through in great detail that I have there, showing that this occasion in Genesis 15 is very important in relationship to the Passover; that this actually took place on the 14th day of the first month, on the night of the 14th day of the first month. Now I won't go through all of the proof of that, I will leave that up to you to read in *The Christian Passover* book. And I also have a chart there that shows the timing of it. But let's begin here in Genesis 15:4. "And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And He brought him [that is, God brought Abraham] forth abroad [that is, took him out at night], and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them..." So this had to be at night. You can't see the stars unless it's night.

"...And He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Now what we have here, we have two promises: number one, the promise of physical seed, which would then be Isaac, and from which then later came the children of Israel. And [number two] we have the promise of spiritual seed, a foretelling then of not only the covenant that Abraham entered into, which God proposed to him; and this was a unilateral covenant. God is the one Who gave all the information here. And it is also a foretelling of the spiritual sons and daughters of God, who when they enter into the kingdom of God will shine as the sun. And this was given on the night of the 14th. So He told him, finishing verse 5, "...So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD..." Now I want you to circle that, "believed," because that's very important when we come to the section there in John 14, 15, 16, in 17.

"...And He counted to him for righteousness." Now you might want to circle that, because that's important too. This kind of righteousness means that you are put into right standing with God because you believe Him. And that's the righteousness that Paul is talking about when we come to the book of Romans. Now you can't have any greater righteousness than this, where then God counts it to you, or imputes it to you so that you are in right standing with God. And as we will see, this has nothing to do with relieving people from the obligation to keep the commandments of God.

The days begin in the Bible at sunset. (So sunset came [beginning the 14th], God talked with Abraham, and God said, "All right, Eleazar of Damascus is not going to be your heir, but one that shall come forth from your own bowels shall be your heir." And so He took him out and showed him the stars at night.) Now then on the day portion of that day, here's what took place, verse 8: "And he said it to Him, LORD God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Because He said, "You're going to have all this land."

Now verse 9: "And He said unto him, Take Me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Then was performed of very unusual sacrifice. This sacrifice and this offering was not an ordinary sacrifice. There was no altar built, there's nothing burned upon it, but this was rather done

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upon the ground. And this was most unusual because what he had to do was to kill the animals and cut them down the middle. In other words, take an ax, literally a sharp ax - and if you've done any butchering you know what I mean. You just cut down the middle of the spine. And then of course that would be a very bloody, sordid affair. And of course all the intestines would be there and everything. So what he did, he laid them back to back with a path coming down between the animals. And the reason he did that was because God was going to perform an oath to Him and a pledge of His death. This is actually a foretelling of the crucifixion of Christ on the 14th day of the first month.

So verse 10: "And he took unto Him all these, and divided them in the midst [that is, cut them down the middle], and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not." He put one on one side and one on the other side. Now how long this took to do it, we don't know. But notice verse 12: "And when the sun was going down..." which then ends that day, does it not? If it begins at sunset the day before, then this begins to end the day with this. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a [horrible] horror of great darkness fell upon him." This would have to be God showing Abraham the death that God Himself was going to experience as symbolized by this sacrifice. Now in the Passover book I have it laid out that this probably took place at the same time that Jesus died, at the ninth hour at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon. And then with the great darkness coming upon him, that shows the literal death of Christ.

So then, verse 13: "And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And when it came to pass, that, when the sun went down..." Now notice, we have the going down of the sun. Then we have the sun "went down." And it was dark, so we begin the 15th day of the first month. That's why the Passover and the Night To Be Remembered and the day portion of the 15th day of the first month are all tied together and lead together in the events that we have laid out, or that God has laid out; that we understand the 14th is the Passover, and it's the Passover night - the day portion of the 14th - Christ was crucified, died at 3 in the afternoon, and was put into the tomb. So now when it says the "sun went down and it was dark," now we're dealing with the time that Christ was in the tomb.

This also has significance for the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt, because they came out on the 15th day. So here God completes the covenant that He began on the night of the 14th. He completes that covenant on the night of the 15th and He guarantees this: "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt and to the great river, the river Euphrates..." (Genesis 15:4-18, *KJV*). And then He lists all of the Canaanite tribes.

Now let's go to Exodus 12 and see the literal fulfillment of the children of Israel coming out of Egypt on the 15th day of the first month. Now that's how we established that the first one was on the 14th day of the first month because of what we find here in Exodus 12 on the 15th day. It's easy to count one day backwards, isn't it? Now notice, let's pick it up here in verse 40: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass..." (verses 40-41, *KJV*). Well what do you mean the "selfsame day"? This is the selfsame day that God passed through those parts, as Abraham was able to see, with the smoking furnace and the burning lamp, and He passed between the parts. That was the day that He said that the children of Israel would be brought out from Egypt. So the "selfsame day," being the 15th day of the first month, goes back 430 years before, and you are at the time of Abraham when this occurred. Then you go back one more day and you find the proposition of the covenant given to Abraham on the night of the 14th.

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So we will find the same thing for the New Testament. The words of the New Covenant that Christ gave to His apostles - and by the way, please understand this: the apostles were the only ones who kept the New Covenant Passover on that Passover because only the apostles were with Him. They had to teach the rest of the disciples for the next Passover what they should do. So likewise, the words of the New Covenant that Christ spoke to His apostles now to fulfill the promise given to Abraham we find given on the same night, the night of the 14th.

Now let's look a little bit concerning the New Covenant. The New Covenant is a covenant of love and grace, which is very important for us to understand. Let's come to Romans 5. God pledged His death back there to Abraham. Then when Christ died on the cross, was put in the tomb, was there three days and three nights, that fulfilled the promise that God gave to Abraham. And it was for us. Now this is why when we come back here to -let's come back to Romans 5, but let's go back into Romans 4 for just a little bit, and let's pick it up here in verse 17, because this ties it all together here.

“(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) [Now that's physically and spiritually] before him whom he believed, *even* God, Who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope...” Now I want you to serve circle “believed,” because Abraham believed God. We are to believe. And the very first thing that Jesus tells His disciples on the night of the 14th is to believe. “...Believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall your seed be [And we just read that]. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God...” That's why it was counted as righteousness. And as we will see, if you believe God you will believe what He says and you will do what He commands. It's that simple.

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded...” Now I gave a sermon on that one time - are you fully persuaded? Like Festus, or Felix, after Paul was talking to him he said, “Paul, you almost persuade me to be a Christian.” And there are a lot of people who are almost persuaded. We need to be like Abraham, wholly, fully persuaded, “...that, what He had promised, He was also able to perform.” Now that's profound, because we're dealing with God, Who cannot lie; the God of truth, God of love, God of faith, God of hope, that cannot lie. And here is a very basic, profound thing to understand: you cannot worship the God of truth with lies. And that one statement alone answers everything concerning Sunday, and Christmas, and Easter, and anything else, doesn't it? Yes, it does. That's why he was fully persuaded.

“And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” We just read that, didn't we? Yes. “Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed...” So we are here because of the blessing of Abraham. And we're here because of the calling of God. Now notice, “...if...” I like to circle every “if” I can find. Because the world has it backwards. The world has it, “Well, God, I'm going to do this if You do so and so.” It's the other way around. God says, “I am here. I love you. I'm constant. I don't lie. If you will love Me and keep My commandments...” We'll see that all little later on. The “if” never applies to God, it always applies to us. “...If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:17-25, *KJV*). And this justification means to be put in right standing with God the Father in heaven above. And that means on an individual, one-to-one basis.

Now as we have been going through the series in the book of Hebrews, this will dovetail with this quite a bit because it talks about how we have access directly to God the Father in heaven above. Now then, let's continue on in Romans 5:1, “Therefore being justified by faith

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[not by offering, not by sacrifice, but belief in the sacrifice of Christ], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..." We're no longer fighting God. We are no longer telling God what to do. We're no longer telling God, "Yeah, but..." We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, "...by Whom also we have access by faith into this grace..." Now I'll explain a little bit more about grace, but I'll just briefly summarize it here: Grace is the first extension of God's love toward His people. Grace covers all lot of things. Because you are standing in this grace, it gives you access to God the Father; you receive the Holy Spirit of God; you can trust God; you can believe God; you are in right standing with God, and all of that is grace. Now it even goes further than that. By the fact that you have the Holy Spirit of God in you and Christ is dwelling in you by faith, and with the Holy Spirit in you, then God is dwelling in you and you are a temple of God. Now that summarizes quite a few other scriptures in the New Testament.

So that's why we don't "go to church," though we assemble together. We are the church, the body of Christ. And there's a distinct difference. There are a lot of people who "go to church." But as I gave in the sermon, "Christianity Without Christ," they don't find Christ there because they're "going to church." Christ goes where there are those who are His, that He has called, that He has chosen, that He has selected. God is not going to make any mistakes in saving the world. He's got a time plan, which most of the world doesn't know. But right now we stand in this grace. We have the Spirit of God as a begettal in us. That's a tremendous thing, brethren. And with that God puts us in this right standing with Him, the righteousness of Jesus Christ by faith.

Now let's go on. "...We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Now what is this "hope of the glory of God"? Now notice, this is the hope of the resurrection, isn't it? Because we are going to share in the glory of Jesus Christ at the resurrection, aren't we? That's why God told Abraham, "Look at the stars, number them if you are able. So shall your seed be." The glory of God. With this hope, then, though we have difficulties and troubles and trials, which he speaks of next; and I haven't come to the point that the apostle Paul did, because obviously he was taught directly of Christ. But hopefully we are inching closer toward this position, which is this, verse 3: "...and not only so, but we glory in tribulations..." Now I don't know anyone of us that glory in tribulation today. But he understood it. So what we need to do is understand the purpose of trials and difficulties that come and to realize that there are things that only God can work out. And God will work them out, provided we have faith, provided we hold to that hope.

"...Knowing that tribulation worketh patience [or endurance]; and [endurance] patience, experience [or you could also say character]; and [character] experience, hope..." So hope comes full circle then, doesn't it? This shows the whole process of hope. "...And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy [Spirit] Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:1-5, *KJV*).

Now let's come back here to the study translation of John 14. And with this background let's go ahead and begin to study the words of the New Covenant and see how they apply to us and see what we agree to. Now let's read the very first verse: "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me." There are two beliefs there, right? Yes. Now let me explain a little something about belief. In Greek the verb for "to believe" is *pisteo*, and the noun is *pistos*. And the noun really means to "faith-ize." Now to show you how important this is, just in the book of John alone, the gospel of John, he uses the word "believe" 77 times; and "believe" with "believe not" 24 times.

Now in this very first verse of the words of the New Covenant, it starts out with belief, or faith, doesn't it? Now what we're going to do as we go through this study we are going to see the progression of John 14, 15, 16, and 17. The first part of John 14 you could write it out this

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way: faith and love. Later we will see that we'll get to hope and love; and then later when we come to John 17 you could have love and love. Put it all together so you have faith and love, hope and love, love and love. So you have to start out with belief. That's why the word of God is so profound. That's why God did not leave the canonization of the Bible to other people 400 years later that never knew Christ.

Now then, He begins telling you some very important things. He said, "In My Father's house are many dwelling places..." There is a reward for you. There is a place for you. So you need to understand that God's plan is so profound and important that He is making a place for you. When you have all of these things together it really makes the plan of God and the purpose of God, and our covenant with God all that much more greater. Then He says, "...If it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you." Isn't that something? Christ is preparing a place for you. What is that going to be like? I don't know, but I want to make it to the first resurrection so I'll be able to see what it's like. And He says, "And if I go and prepare place for you, I will come again and receive to Myself [So Christ is coming again]; so that where I am, you may be also" (John 14:1-3, *FV*). And of course, we know that's going to be on the earth. So this is quite a way to open the covenant, isn't it? This is quite a thing.

Now let's look at some other things concerning the belief of God, how important that is. Let's look at some things in the gospel of John. Let's look at a few of those verses we discussed. Let's come to the gospel of John, and let's come to John 5, and let's pick it up here in verse 39. Now when you read the words of Christ, it's quite interesting what He says here to the Pharisees. Just like it is today, you remember Jesus said many times, "Have you never read?" And they were the ones who had the Bible. Those who have the Bible don't read it. So He says to them here in verse 39, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me, they ye might have life." You've got to come to God. He said, "I receive not honor from men..." Now we could also put that another way: you never worship God by men's devices, because that's man's honor to God. You worship God with His devices in spirit and in truth.

"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." And let's understand something, brethren: the New Covenant is based upon the love of God. The New Covenant shows the verse that is often quoted there in John 3:16 (*paraphrased*), "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him may have everlasting life." This shows it. And the whole covenant that we are dealing with in the New Covenant is based upon the love of God.

Now let me ask some questions. Did the Pharisees understand about law? Oh yes, and made thousands more. If you don't have love then all the law in the world will do no good because it will be used for destructive purposes. But you must have the love of God in such a way that it is, as Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being, and strength; and your neighbor as yourself. And on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." You have to see the love of God through those laws. Now if you have law without love you end up with the dictatorial, letter of the law, killing society. That's what it does. That's why it says the letter of the law kills, because it does. We're under grace, but we will show you how we're to keep the commandments a little later on.

He says, "But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in My Father's name, and ye received Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that *cometh* from God only?" Now what is that honor that comes only from God? And how do you receive that honor? You receive that from repentance and baptism and the Holy Spirit. That's the honor that comes from God. It doesn't come any other way.

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“Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses [there's that word again], ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me.” Now here's a key. This is Jesus' own teaching. This adds to the other scripture which Jesus said, “Think not that I've come to destroy the law...” This adds right to it. So you can put in your margin there Matthew 5:17-18. Speaking of Moses, “...But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?” (John 5:39-47, *KJV*). Very interesting. And there's a key to understanding the New Testament. You can't understand the New Testament unless you believe Moses, and unless you believe the prophets as we find a little bit later on. So that's quite a thing there.

Since we're here, let's come to John 6:26. And again, this becomes a very profound thing. The covenant that God has called us to is a covenant of eternal life based upon love, and faith, and hope. People always like to do things though, don't they? Now let's see right here beginning in verse 26: “Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.” Now I tell you one thing, if you want to get a real good following today, you go somewhere and you feed 5,000 people from that little bit of fish and little bit of bread. And of course, they saw that every time the disciples broke the bread it grew. Every time they broke a fish, it grew. They kept taking from these little fish and these little loaves and they fed 5,000. So they said, “This is what we really want.” So Jesus said, “That's why you're seeking Me.” And they did all this chasing around to try and find Him.

So He said in verse 27: “Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed.” So they heard these words and they said, “Then said they unto Him...” Now notice very carefully. And maybe you can let these words kind of ring in your ear a little bit here, “...What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?” Have you ever heard “The Work of God?” The Work, the Work, the Work? Everyone wants to do a work. But let me tell you something, you can't do anything unless you believe in Christ.

Now hold your place here, and let's just show you an example in Matthew 7. There are people who did work, and they did a lot of work. This is the result of even using the name of Christ and doing a work, but not believing in Christ. Now you can never say that you believe in Christ if you don't obey Him. You can profess belief, but that is not belief in truth and in deed, but that is a profession. There are a lot of people, you walk up to them and say, “You believe in Christ?” “Yes, I believe.” I'll show you what Jesus did to some people who believed in Him here in just a minute. “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth...” That's a very interesting word in the King James, because the “-eth” means this: this means that it is a present tense participle. Now you don't need the parts of speech to understand it, it means, “the one who is doing.” So every time you read in your King James Bible and you see the “-eth,” just let your mind translate that into “-ing,” the one who is doing; the one who is believing; the one who is hoping, and so forth.

What is the will of the Father in heaven? Number one, to believe in Christ; and number two, to keep His commandments, as we will see. That's the will. Now you can do a lot of things. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out [demons] devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity,” or lawlessness (Matthew 7:21-23, *KJV*). So there are a lot of people that have “work,” but they don't believe.

Let's come back to John 6:29, “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.” Very interesting. See the little word “on”? The Greek word there is in three letters: *eis*. That means “into.” Your belief goes out

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from you and toward God, and God's Spirit and faith comes back into you. So it is a continuous exchange, from you to God, and God to you. That's the kind of faith and belief that He wants. You are to believe on Him. Then He explains about the bread that came down from heaven.

Now let's come back here to John 14 again in the study translation. Now let's continue on where we were here. Our whole – how shall we say? Our whole commitment and faith and trust to God is that we believe on Jesus Christ and everything about Him. Now let's look at a belief – let's come to John 2, and let's look at a belief that is superficial and not “conversional.” There is a belief unto conversion; there is a belief in seeing something happen, that you saw it happen, but you don't believe in the way that is unto salvation, or “conversional.” “Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did.” But now notice verse 24: “But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them...” It's very interesting, because the root of this verb is “believe,” which really means that Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, “...because He knew all *men*, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man” (John 2:23-25, *KJV*).

Now there is even a belief – let's come to James 2 – but it is a belief without obedience. And this is the kind of belief that many, many people have. I was talking to a man one time and we were talking about Sabbath/Sunday, and he was a Sunday-keeper. And I said, “Well, I go to church on the Sabbath.” He says, “Oh, I know that the Sabbath is the seventh day. I go to church on Sunday, and the Lord knows my heart.” Let's understand, as I told him, sincerity does not necessarily equal truth.

Now let's pick it up here in James 2:17, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” Because faith – now remember, faith is to what? Faith is the word which means “faith-ize,” or believe. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” And what it really means in the Greek is this: “You show me your faith with your works, and I will show...”

In other words, if you don't have works, you don't have faith. Now we'll see that as we go along. Now notice, here's a kind of belief coupled with disobedience: “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well...” A lot of people say, “I believe in God.” The truth is, God expects every human on earth to believe that He is Creator. You have done nothing if you say, “I believe in God.” Maybe you've taken a step away from atheism. But notice: “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the [demons] devils also believe, and tremble.” Why do they tremble? Because they were disobedient and sinned and were cast down. So here is a kind of empty belief that results in death, not the kind of belief that results in conversion.

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” Now he talks about Abraham here. And the key is this – there are two instances that are being referred to. The one we covered in John 4 relates to Genesis 15 where God said, “Count the number of stars,” which he couldn't; he believed God, that was imputed to him for righteousness. This account that James is talking about [in Gen. 22] when God said, “Abraham, you take you son, your only beloved son, and you take him to one of the mountains I will show you, and you offer him for a burnt offering there.” And he believed God, he obeyed God; he took Isaac, he took the wood, he took the coals for the fire, he took a couple other men to help them go to one of the mountains of Moriah; and there he offered Isaac for the burnt offering. Of course, God provided the ram as a substitutionary sacrifice.

So where it requires works, you believe God, and it requires works, you do what God says. So God told Abraham to “take your son...” He believed Him. And James says, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest

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thou how faith wrought [or that is, working together] with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (James 2:17-22, *KJV*). So if you believe and don't have the works, and obedience to God which show that belief, you only have half the formula.

Now then, if you only have half of it, how are you ever going to get the whole? Here's an example: if you have one half of water, which is oxygen, and the other half of water which is hydrogen, separate, you have gases which go off into the atmosphere. And both of them are very flammable. You put them together and have H₂O, you have water. Now you've got the whole thing, and that puts out fire. So can you imagine that, that God is so absolutely magnificent and profound that He can take two flammable materials, combine them together and have one that puts out fire – water? So likewise, if you don't have faith and works, your faith is dead. If you have works and have no faith, your works are dead. You have to have both.

Now let's come back here to John 14, and we will jump ahead to one verse and we will see that when we come to again as we go through this words of the covenant. Now notice this. And again, as we go through, go ahead and circle the "if's" because the conditions are upon us. "If you love Me..." Now we know God unconditionally has loved the world, "For God so loved the world..." He's already shown and expressed His love. Now Jesus says, "If you love Me , keep the commandments [and I've given the correct translation in the Greek] - namely, My commandments" (John 14:15, *FV*). So if you love God you are going to keep His commandments. The two go hand in hand.

Now since we're here in John 14 let's come back to verse 3 where He said, "...so that where I am, you may be also. And where I am going you know, and the way you know.' And Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going; how then can we know the way?'" Then He gives them the answer. And this is one of the very basic, absolute, fundamental belief verses in the whole Bible. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me'" (John 14:3-6, *FV*). And that's why all other religions hate true Christianity because they must give up theirs in order to get to God.

Now it's very profound when He says, "I am the way." There is no other way. This whole thing, which is comforting to world, "Well, there are many ways to God. We're all just traveling different paths." Well no. "The way" can actually also mean the road, the path. He is the way, and the truth. There's no such thing as truth of Hinduism, or the truth of Moham-madism. We could say it this way - what they call "the truth" of what they believe is only the apparent reality of what they have created. It is not the truth because it rejects Christ. And so in the covenant that we have with God and the words that He spoke of the New Covenant for us, we understand that we are to live the way of God, Christ is the truth, and He is the life. There is no other way. You can't come around some other way. There are not many doors, there are not many ways, there is one way.

Now let's see what Jesus said about this in John 10. He makes it very clear. And again, we see over and over again why God does not want to have a hierarchy imposed upon His people. Now let's notice, John 10. This is a very importance section of scripture here. Let's begin right in verse 1: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." If you go any other way, come in through other door is a thief and a robber. "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice..." Now how do you hear the voice of God? How do you the voice of Christ? By knowing the Scriptures, by understanding what He is saying. So if someone else comes along and says, "Thus saith the Lord," and you know the Lord did not "thus saith," then you know that's not the voice of Christ. That's why anyone who is going to be teaching has to teach the word of God. Any other teaching then is another voice. And we could all take comfort in the fact that none of us created the word of God. God did. It's His word. We hear His voice.

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“...And he calleth his own sheep by name...” And God has a new name that He is going to give you at the resurrection. The thing that we need to understand in our faith and our hope and our love toward God is that He knows us, He loves us, He's called us, He's chosen us. Calls them all by name, “...and leadeth them out.” So you are to be led by the Holy Spirit of God. “And when he put forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” And that's what happens when churches split. When they're infiltrated by a stranger and start speaking strange doctrines you say, “I'm out of here.” That's how God keeps His church pure. Just always remember this: correction always begins with God's own people. And if God destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and corrects His own church in our day; He has destroyed the Worldwide Church of God, taken away the campuses, the colleges, everything that it owns because they didn't obey His voice. That's how profound it is to obey the voice of God. So all the words that we have, all the words that we have learned, everything that we study, we are accountable for to believe, to understand, to act upon, and our relationship with God and each other. They will flee.

Now he says here...it talks about the hireling that flees when the wolf comes, and so forth. Let's come down to verse 14. “I am the good shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine, as the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep.” So any time you get discouraged, any time you get down, any time that you worry, and any time that you begin to waver in faith - like Peter, when he was out there on the water, Christ had to rescue him. Remember this - God loves you. God has called you; God cannot lie. But God will hear you, He has promised so, if you come to Him in repentance and yieldedness to God. And when you're dealing with things that you don't understand, or things that are coming upon you that are too much for you to bear, you tell God, “I just don't understand. Help me to understand. Help me to realize, help me to grasp what You want me to learn.” And sometimes that answer won't come right away. Sometimes it will come later. And then it will dawn on you that God has answered that prayer. And God will because He knows you. He has laid His life down for you. So if you get clear down to the bottom of the valley of the shadow of the death that you have to walk through, remember this: Christ laid His life down for you, individually and particularly.

And God the Father imputes that sacrifice of Jesus Christ to you for the forgiveness of your sins. And consider this, it was not just a man who died. It was God who became flesh, the Creator Who made you, died for you to give you eternal life. Brethren, there can't be anything greater in anyone's life than to know that kind of love that God has for you. That's why when He makes the covenant here He makes it this way.

Now He continues on, verse 16: “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might [and it should read ‘receive it back again’] take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have [authority] power to lay it down, and I have [authority] power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.” So what He's talking about here is this - He is talking about the agreement that He and Christ had. They had a covenant with each other before Christ came in the flesh. And that covenant is expressed right here, that He had authority to lay His life down and authority to receive it back. And this commandment He received from His Father. So when we are brought into this New Covenant of God it brings us into a new standing. It brings us into a new relationship. That's why Christ said on the Passover night, when He said of the bread, “Take and eat this. This is My body which is broken for you...” and, “Drink of the wine; this is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of the sins of many.”

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Now let's come back to John 14 where we have been reading here. So that's why verse 6 is such a profound verse, "I am the way, and the life, and the truth, and no one comes to the Father except through Me." And no one goes to Jesus unless the Father calls them. It works both ways. Let's see that. Let's come to John 6. When God truly begins to deal in someone's life - now as I mentioned this morning, and it is true, once you come to the knowledge of some truth you must act upon it. Otherwise you will lose it. Because unless you act upon it, it's of no value. But if you act upon that truth, believe that truth, accept that truth and understand that truth, then God will add more. And then it's a building process from there. He will add more; He will add more; He will add more. And as He does that, you have to understand that God is the one Who is dealing with you. And of course, He deals through your mind which He created and gave to you. He deals with the Spirit to lead you.

Now let's come to John 6:44. So we have, not only can no one come to the Father except through Christ, we also have this: no one can come to Christ except the Father draw him. So it's a joint decision by both, isn't it? Now that is a very humbling thought indeed, isn't it? Now if you have an opportunity to watch any videos or anything showing the universe, I want you to look at those and to understand that God the Father and Jesus Christ, Who have created the universe and everything that there is, and in Their special plan has called you. He didn't call the mighty, He didn't call the rich. He didn't call the intelligent, and He didn't call the leaders of the world. Because God doesn't do things the way men do. And we're the most unlikely group of people to rule the world that you'd ever want to look at. But we're not going to rule the world as we are. We're going to rule the world as spirit beings, with a spirit body and a spirit mind.

But no one understands this: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him..." What compels you to want to understand word of God? God the Father. Who gives you that desire? And why doesn't someone else down the street, or your neighbor next door to you, or, yea, even your husband and your wife may not have that same desire? Because there is a special spiritual something that has taken place. There is a special action of God the Father, the Sovereign ruler of the universe, has done something in your life. He has begun to draw you. And He says, "...and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God..."

Now how is it that you understand anything of the word of God? You're taught of God the Father through the Spirit. You can read the words, but why do those words have the impression upon you that they do not, say, on someone who God is not dealing with? Because they are not being taught of God. Now there needs to be teachers in the church, but what should they do? They should teach the words of God so that you are what? You're taught of God. That's why when you read and study the Bible and you go along and all of a sudden you know, you have a spiritual understanding and a spiritual connection with the words of God, what is said and whatever you are reading or studying, and you get a tremendous value out of it, that is the Father teaching you through His word. Now that's something. "...Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." That's quite a spiritual operation. Then He calls you into covenant. Isn't that something?

Let's come back here to John 14, and see if we can make little progress here. John 14:7 (FV), " 'If you had known Me...' " Now they were with Him three and half years and they still didn't know Christ. Of course He's talking to Thomas here, isn't He? "Doubting" Thomas. " 'If you had known Me, you have known My Father also. But from this time forward, you know Him and have seen Him.' Phillip said to Him..." Now Phillip was one of the first ones to see Christ, because Philip was one of the disciples of John. So the apostle Phillip said to Him, " 'Lord, show us the Father, and that will be sufficient for us.' " Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long a time, and you have not known Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father; why then do you say, "Show us the Father?" ' "

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Now we've got a very interesting little four page article called *90 Facts About God*. So if you don't have it you can write for it. Because as I mentioned, the very first thing they try and do when they have false prophets and false doctrines is they change the nature of God. And to believe in God the Father Who has bodily form is anathema to Christians in this world. But when you read the Bible you find God has a head, He has a face, He has eyes, He has a nose, He has a mouth, He has hands, He has feet, He has a body. And if you've seen Christ - now was Christ there in a body? Did He have a body? Yes, He did. He looked just like His Father. So, "If you've seen Me you've seen the Father."

Now besides, have you ever - I did a sermon, "Is Your God a Glob?" when they began to change the doctrine within the Worldwide Church of God, where it says, "Well, God doesn't need ears, and God doesn't need hands, and God doesn't need a nose. God is everywhere and in everything." Well that's pantheism, "God is in everything." That's not the way God is. God is a personal being. You can't have love with a glob, can you? Now if you've got a great big huge pillow at home, just grab it and see if you can have a relationship with it. No you can't. It's just a glob. We're made in the image of God so that we can become like He is. That's the whole plan and the whole purpose. So when He said, "If you've seen Me you've seen the Father." Then He goes on to say, "...Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I speak to you, I do not speak from My own self; but the Father Himself, Who dwells in Me, does the works." And these are the kinds of works that we need to have that are inspired of God.

Let's see how Jesus fulfilled the will of God. Let's come back to John 5 here for just a minute, "Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." Jesus did the will of God the way God wanted the will of God done. Now that also sets us an example of how we need to fulfill the will of God, correct? Yes. "...For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth all things that Himself doeth: and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." (John 5:19-20 *KJV*). Then He talks about the resurrection.

Now come down here to verse 30: "I can of Mine own self do nothing..." That didn't mean He was not capable of doing something. Every human being is capable of doing something on their own, aren't they? Yes. But this means that He did nothing from Himself. In other words, whatever He did, did not come from Him as a human being, but it was inspired and motivated and according to the commandments of God. So He says, "...as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." And the will of the Father is that we enter into the kingdom of God. That's how Jesus did it.

So when He said, "I don't speak of My own; I don't speak My own words, but it's the Father Who dwells in Me, He does the works." Come over here to John 12. Let's pick it up here beginning in verse 42. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him..." Now then here comes a little bit of politics mixed in with belief: "...but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue [They didn't want to lose their standing]: for their loved the praise of men more than the [love] praise of God." Now there are a lot of people that are that way. That's why we have a very unique thing with those who are truly converted and have the Spirit of God. Number one, they must stand on their own two feet before God alone. Number two, when we assemble together and love each other it's because we love God the Father first. And that being the relationship that we have with God the Father and Jesus Christ, then we ought to love one another even that much more when we come together. That's why God does not like politics within His church.

Now notice, Jesus made it even more clear: "Jesus cried [that means He spoke out loud] and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me." So your true

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belief, you believe in Christ, that's in the Father. "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me [again, there it is - 'into'] should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." So isn't that a profound judgment? Those who come along and reject the words of Christ, those are the very words that are going to judge them. Likewise, if you believe the words of God, and you love God, and you have faith in God, then the very words that God has spoken that He gives you eternal life will come to pass. Tremendous thing.

Now again, verse 49, "For I have not spoken of Myself: but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak" (John 12:42-49, *KJV*). So the bottom line is this: if anyone rejects Jesus Christ, they're rejecting God the Father.

Now let's come back here to John 14:11. Now there's another way that He told the apostles to believe. He says, "Believe Me..." Now look, we've got verse 1, we have it twice; verse 10 once; verse 11 twice; verse 12, again. So you might want to circle those and draw those all together there. "Believe Me, that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe Me because of the works themselves." All the works that He did - the healings, the raising from the dead, the preaching of the gospel, the feeding of the 4,000, the feeding of the 5,000 and all of that. And He's talking to His apostles that very night. And these words are recorded so that we can have them as the words of the New Covenant by which then we live. And He says, "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do, because I am going to the Father" (verses 11-12, *FV*).

Now let's look and see some of the greater works that were being done after He ascended to the Father and they received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Let's come to Acts 5. Here's a summary of it. And we have never seen the demonstration like this with an outpouring of the Spirit of God. And remember that it was to the Jew first, because God promised. Acts 5:12, "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And the rest [dared] durst no man joined himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)" They literally turned Jerusalem upside down. And if you think that Paul caused a riot every time he went into a synagogue, they totally destroyed the power base of the scribes and Pharisees and priests, and everything.

"Insomuch [Now notice this] that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them [And that is, be healed]. There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about and to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Now notice the reaction: "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,)..." and ran out and were baptized and believed. "...And they were filled with indignation." Because there were losing their power base. They were losing their authority. "And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison."

And I always like this one. This is a great section here. "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought." So they opened the door and they weren't there. "But when the officers

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came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, [Now we know] the prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors; but when we had opened, we found no man within.”

“Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them where unto this would grow.” So right when they were thinking on this here comes one running in breathlessly and said, “...Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people” (Acts 5:12-25, *KJV*). So they did greater works, didn't they? Yes they did. And I tell you, brethren, those greater works will return to the church at the end again when God is ready and determined to do them. Now one thing, let me tell you, you don't have to worry about persecution coming upon you. It's going to come. Be ready. How it will come, we don't know. When it will come, we don't know. But we should not do as others do and play politics if it comes. We do need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But when it comes to stand for Jesus and the truth, that we are to do regardless of the cost. And we will see that all little later.

Let's come back here to John 14 and bring it down to verse 15 where we were, and then we'll end it there. Let's read verse 12 again: “Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” Now we'll cover that again next time, “If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.” You can just put right in the margin there, it must be according to the will of God. So that's something we can claim. That's a promise we can claim. God said He would; of course, it needs to be according to His will.

Not every prayer we pray is an automatic “yes.” Many of them are “no.” Some of them are “yes, but...” However, when you go back and you really examine it you will find that all the prayers that you really pray and have prayed in faith - now some of our prayers are our own self and kind of in vanity and things like that, because that's the way we are as human beings. Those things enter into it. But what we really ask in faith, you go back and see; all those prayers were answered, weren't they? The very prayer that you prayed the first time that there was heresy that you came across and said, “Oh God, what will I do?” That prayer has been answered over and over again, and you are here this day. That's part of the answer of that prayer.

So we will close by just saying, God has called you, God loves you, God cares for you, watches over you; you stand in the grace of God; He answers your prayers, and wants to give you eternal life. And that's what the covenant is all about.

End of Sermon

Transcriber Michael D. Schwartz

Scriptural References

Genesis 15:4-18
Exodus 12:40-41
Romans 4:17-25
Romans 5:1-5
John 14:1-3, *FV*
John 5:39-47

John 6:26-27
Matthew 7:21-23
John 6:29
John 2:23-25
James 2:17-22
John 14:15, *FV*

John 14:3-6, *FV*
Acts 5:12-25
John 14:12-13, *FV*

PASSOVER PREPARATION # 2

March 1, 2003

This is number two in the new series we are doing—Passover Preparation. And what we are doing, we are going through, verse by verse, John 14, 15, 16, and 17 because these contain the words of the New Covenant. And we will see that the whole basis of these chapters is based upon the love of God, plus faith, plus hope, and then what we might say: the intense love of God is found in John 17 in the Lord's prayer.

Now let's go back and review just a few things concerning faith. Now as we saw last time in verse 1 the word "believe" is used twice. "Believe" is the verb of the noun "faith." So "to believe" actually means "to faithize." And we're going to see that this belief and faith is also based upon love, as we get down a little further into it today.

Then we come down to verse 10, we find the word "believe" again. Verse 11 there are two "believe." Verse 12 is the third one. And this is exactly as it is when we are beginning our relationship with God—we are to believe. Then we will see how this is to develop.

Now let's look at a couple of Scriptures to help us understand this a little bit more. Let's come to Romans 1:17, which talks about faith. Faith and belief you can just equate as the same thing. Faith is the noun, belief is the verb. Let's pick it up here in verse 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that [believes]..." Now you see in the King James "every one that believeth." This means everyone who believes. It's a preposition. As I've mentioned before the Greek language is full of prepositions and whenever you see that in the King James just realize that's a present tense preposition.

"...To the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein [now "therein" means "contained in the Gospel"] is the righteousness of God revealed..." Now that's not only God's righteousness that He is righteous, which we are to understand, but also the righteousness of God, which puts us in right standing with Him. That's the kind of righteousness it's talking about, which the words of the New Covenant do, as we will see – to put us in right standing with Him and renew the New Covenant.

Notice: "...Is ... revealed from faith to faith..." Now the English word "to" is translated from the Greek word *eis*, which means "to, or into." So what we can see here is this: faith ultimately is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We have our part to believe. But to believe unto salvation has got to be the gift of God, a faith that God gives. So it is the faith that comes from God to the individual, and from the individual back to God. So it's faith into faith.

"...As it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16-17, *KJV*). And that's how we are to live. We live by absolute belief in God the Father and Jesus Christ. And that's why, as I have mentioned before, and after reading this thing on the apostolic constitution, which was written in the 300's and how they established the Catholic Church, you can surely see that a hierarchy cuts people off from God in the most unsavory way. The just shall live by faith. That's how we are to live our lives. And that's how we begin our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ—we believe.

Now Jesus also said, "If you don't believe Me that I'm in the Father, believe the works themselves," that He did. And we can say today if you don't believe in the way that you feel you ought to, then what you should do is study in-depth the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and learn what Jesus taught, see the miracles that He did so that you can believe. Because belief comes by the hearing of the Word. The more you hear, the more you learn, substantiates what you believe. And the hearing by the Word of God, this is why we have the Sabbath every

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week. This is why we have the holy days year by year. And the Passover is a very key, fundamental. As a matter of fact it is the beginning of all of our relationship with God.

Romans 10:8: “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee...” That is in answer to the question: Who’s going to go to heaven for us, who’s going to go down to the depths of the water for us to get the Word of God that we can hear it and do it? No, God has made it available in every language to almost the entirety of the whole world. “[It is near to you], *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart...” Now obviously not in carnal minded people is it there. But this has to do that it is in such a language that you can understand it. “...That is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Now this is a summary of the whole process of repenting, being baptized, receiving the Holy Spirit, walking in the way of God, and so forth. This is just a summary.

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [that is confession of sins]. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him” (Rom. 10:8-12, *KJV*). So God is no respecter of persons. And even people in the world, if they call upon Christ, He’s going to hear and answer their prayers. Maybe it’s not going to be a thing for salvation for them, but at least it would be a first step. If they would go beyond that and say, “Well, I prayed in the name of Jesus and my prayer was answered. Boy, I better find out more about this.” No, people generally are relieved from their distress and get up and go on and don’t pray again until another disaster comes upon them, you see.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” So there’s got to be preachers and teachers go out and preach and teach and explain the Word of God to people. “And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” That’s interesting. It’s not that they self-appoint themselves as too many do today. “...As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?” (verses 13-16). So he’s also showing here that even though there are those who are sent, even though the Word is preached, that people are out there and they don’t believe. They reject it.

“So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (verse 17). Now this operates in two ways. Now that we have the Word of God, that is what must be preached and taught. Also now that we all have the Word of God in the Bible, whenever you read the Word of God and you read it what happens? You are talking to yourself, are you not? And when you read these words who is actually doing the teaching? God is. So it builds the faith. And that’s what Christ wants us to do with the New Covenant in what we are going forward in the Passover Ceremony booklet here.

Now let’s come back to the Gospel of John and let’s look at belief just a little bit more here and we’ll look at a couple more Scriptures. John 20 and the very last two verses. And this tells why he wrote the Gospel. And also when you understand that in the Gospel of John (now this is quite a profound thing); in the Gospel of John the word “believe” is used 77 times, just in the Gospel of John. The word “believe not” is used 24 times. So that’s 111 times. Now also in the Epistle of I John “believe” is used seven times and “believe not” is used twice.

Now let’s come here and begin in verse 30. The last two verses. “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are

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written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ [that means the Messiah, the Savior], the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name” (John 20:30-31, *KJV*). Now this may be the very place where he finished the Gospel of John the first time. So all you have to do is put an “Amen” there and it sounds like the end of it, doesn’t it? And he probably added chapter 21 later, which I explain in the commentary.

Now let’s come back to our study paper here that we’re going through and let’s look at some other Scriptures just kind of in review that we didn’t cover last time in the first one. Let’s come to John 14:6 (*FV*): “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life...’ ” Now you see, the truth is this: true Christianity, though the call goes out to all, many are called but few are chosen, and few are chosen because few repent. But it is an absolutely exclusive way of life. It doesn’t mean that you exclude other people, it means that God has not called them at this particular time. But [to] those that He has called there is no ecumenism, there is no combining with Judaism, there is no combining with Protestantism, there is no combining with humanism or any of those things because the ultimate will come of it. Let me just read you this here: “...the truth is omitted, or obfuscated in most churches...” Because they don’t believe John 14:6: “ ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life: and no one comes to the Father, except through Me.’ ” Therefore the Jews cannot say, “We pray to the Father,” because they don’t even have the Father and they can’t get to Him since they reject Jesus Christ.

Protestants come about half-way because they believe in Jesus and grace but they don’t believe in commandment keeping. Catholics come about 3%. They use the name of Christ but they have all the pagan nonsense that they add to it. Moslems don’t even get to 0%, neither do the Hindus. But what is happening in the Protestant churches is really quite a fantastic thing. This is an excerpt from a book entitled *Can Christianity Survive the Organized Church?* “Let us list why the truth is omitted or obfuscated in most churches today. Replacing Biblical absolutes are...” Now we just read an absolute, didn’t we? This is an absolute statement: “I am the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Here’s what replaces it: “psychology, sociology, guilt manipulation, praise songs, repetition ad nauseam [and we could put in there swaying back and forth and all that sort of thing, you see], entertainment, drama, soloists, dead elders, dead pastors, over-educated pastors, ecumenical spirit, acceptance of any movement like Promise-Keepers [which is Jesuit backed, by the way], idolizing of famous preachers, modern Bible versions with their attacks on Christ, salvation message neutralized to make it palatable to the unsaved big givers in the church, pastors and elders who belong to esoteric organizations like Masons, acceptance of Roman Catholics as Christians, the unsaved Jews are God’s chosen people, the modern nation of Israel is preached from the pulpit as if we must genuflect before it for salvation, charismatic theology, signs, wonders, tongues accepted, women preachers, unqualified Sunday-school teachers. Do you get the point? I believe it’s too late to save the organized church from Satan’s deception because too many seminary trained pastors and elders are spiritual dolts and can no longer discern any more since the Bible is no longer their standard.” And I can add, nor is Christ their Savior. That’s why he made this.

Now let’s see what Peter said. Let’s come to Acts 4 and let’s understand something very profound to show that once you have repented and have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God you are in the way and the truth, and the only way you receive life is through Christ. Notice what he said here. I really like this account here. They arrested them, they put them in jail. Verse 5, they brought Peter and John forth and arrested the apostles: “And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John...” Now remember, these were the ones who condemned Jesus to be crucified. And remember, the high priest knew John, didn’t he? And remember, that Peter was there when he denied Christ three times, wasn’t he? So they knew the apostles.

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“...And Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy [Spirit] Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, *even* by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Now notice: “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men...” (Acts 4:5-13, *KJV*). That means that they didn’t go through any of their seminaries, if we could put it that way. They were not taught by any of the leading rabbis; they weren’t at any of the religious schools; and they surely weren’t ignorant, but that’s how they looked at them. So they couldn’t deny it. There he was standing right there, and they said, “What are we going to do?”

Now let’s come back here to John 14. Let’s read verse 7 and then we’ll get on with some of the other things here that we haven’t covered yet: “ ‘If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. But from this time forward, you know Him and have seen Him.’ Philip said unto Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and that will be sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long a time, and you have not known Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father; why then do you say, “Show us the Father”?’ ” (John 14:7-9, *FV*).

Now let’s go back to Hebrews 1, and with what we just read in mind let’s read Hebrews the first chapter again because in God sending His Son, and God becoming a fleshly human being to bring the Gospel to show the way to the Father, to open the way of salvation, this was a fantastic and marvelous thing, which the book of Hebrews, as we have been going through, really shows what a great and marvelous undertaking that God has done.

Now verse 1: “God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets...” And of course that was a tremendous thing wasn’t it, that God never left them alone. He always sent them a prophet, didn’t He? “...Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *His* Son [now it’s greater – far greater], Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *His* glory...” Now compare this to any prophet; compare this even to Moses, you see, which it does later in the book of Hebrews. “...Who being the brightness of *His* glory, and the express image of His person...” That’s why Jesus said to Philip, “If you’ve seen Me, you have seen the Father.” And yet most of the religions today believe in a pantheistic god, that God is in everything. God is in the wall, God is in the floor, the ceiling, all animals and so forth. And that’s why it’s so easy for a lot of people to get involved in Hinduism and reincarnation. No, God is a person. He is a being, just like Christ – the image of His person. “...And upholding all things by the word of His power...” Now you can’t get any higher authority. You cannot have any greater, as it were when we see here, “cleansing of sin.” And you cannot, when we go through the words of the New Testament, have any greater covenant to be in than the one that Christ has given. “...When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...” (Heb. 1:1-3, *KJV*). Now that’s who we’re dealing with.

Now let’s come back to John 14 and we’ll make some other progress through some of the other verses here and see some of the things that God wants us to do and to understand. Let’s come down here to verse 11: “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe Me because of the works themselves. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to the Father” (John 14:11-12, *FV*). Well, as we covered last time in Acts

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5, it was a phenomenal thing that people were healed even at the shadow of Peter just passed over them.

Now verse 13 is where we left off last time: “And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (verses 13-14, *FV*). Now this becomes a very important part of faith. Now we have faith coupled with prayer. Now we have faith coupled with asking Christ and asking the Father, don’t we? Yes.

Now notice, it doesn’t say: if you ask an apostle, or if you ask a pastor, or you ask a priest. “... Whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.” Now there is one major thing concerning that, which is this: it must be according to the will of God. That’s the basic prayer in Matthew 6, “Your will be done in heaven as is on earth.” If you ask anything according to the will of God He will do it.

Now let’s come to Mark 11, and this is really quite an interesting section here. Now you stop and think about it for just a minute, as I mentioned on the first one. Nearly every prayer that you pray God answers in the affirmative, doesn’t He? However, please understand this: that if you are praying and asking and you get up from your knees and say, “I wonder if God will answer this prayer?” Or, “I don’t expect God to answer this prayer.” You have just destroyed the prayer because you don’t believe. Expect an answer. When and how and under what circumstances, then becomes God’s timing. Now, know for sure if you don’t ask according to the will of God you’re not going to get that prayer answered because that’s based upon lust and covetousness. That’s your own will.

But let’s begin here in verse 20: “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto Him, Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursedst [which He cursed in the evening on the way out] is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God” (Mark 11:20-22, *KJV*). Now if you have a marginal reference it can read, “have the faith of God.” It is even more profound than that. It means “have God’s faith.” Now there are some people who say, “Well God doesn’t need faith.” Well God has faith because He can’t give a gift of faith unless He has it, right? Yes. Now this shows where we need to come to in our prayers. In other words, if God has said so we can believe it, trust in it, claim it, and pray for it.

Now notice, He takes it clear to the extreme: “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart [there’s the big problem that most people have – doubting in your heart], but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith” (verse 23). Now, God is not going to do this so people can go around and show their power and begin removing mountains here and there wherever they want to just to show off to the world. But if it’s necessary God will do that. And if it is His will, He will do that, but you have to believe.

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire [now it goes from the impossible down to the more possible], when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*” (verse 24). They will be answered. Now I’ve seen prayers that I’ve prayed that have taken years to answer. And then all of a sudden... Now since I do a lot of driving and so forth, many times this occurs while I’m driving. I’ll be driving down the road and I’ll say to myself, *Ding* “That prayer was answered.” This also helps us to, when we are praying, not to be frivolous in our prayers, but to ask for things realistic. If you are 90 years old God is not going to hear or answer, nor is it His will to make you 16 years old. It is God’s will that you die and He is going to answer that prayer even greater by giving you a spiritual body and a spiritual mind.

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Now wouldn't you rather have that than going back to being a 16 year old and having to live life all over again in the flesh? See, so that's an unrealistic, unwilled prayer of God.

Now notice there is another caveat that is here. Since we are in a love relationship with God, since we have the faith of God He wants us also to develop the character of God and be as God in this particular sense. Verse 25: "And when ye stand praying [which shows you don't always have to be kneeling]..." Now what if you are walking along beside a well and all of a sudden something happened. You stepped into the loop in the rope and the spring was activated, it pulled you up and threw you down in the well and there you are hanging upside down by an ankle caught in the rope? And you pray and say, "God save me." And God says, "You dummy. You're not on your knees and you don't have your hands in the right position." (*Laughter*) Of course not, you see.

Here's another quality: forgive. Everybody wants their sins forgiven, right? Yes, indeed. Everyone wants Jesus to be the advocate when they sin, don't they? Yes, indeed. Then part of the covenant that we have with God is this: we are also to forgive. If you have anything against another and if it's in such a way that you need to discuss it with them then you use Matthew 18, right? And go privately. And whatever Matthew 18 says you are to follow through.

Now here's the condition: if you don't forgive... See, it's not "Lord, I'll forgive him when he's straightens up." "Lord, I will forgive when she changes her attitude." See, maybe your forgiveness will inspire God to help them see and to change if you have a forgiving attitude. "...Forgive, if ye have ought against any: that [it means "so that" or "in order that"] your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive [even though you pray], neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (verses 25-26). So these are some of the conditions of prayer, correct? But we are to grow to have the faith of God.

Now let's look in the epistle of I John some other conditions for answered prayer. Let's pick it up in I John 3:18: "My little children [when John wrote this he was pretty old, so he could say "My little children"], let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him" (I John 3:18-19, *KJV*). Now you see and I might mention here, if you want a very interesting word study get out the general epistle where we go through every place where it is "to know" and "to understand" in the epistle of I John and I think you will be surprised how much we are to know. This epistle, though it is very simple, is written to those who know, who understand.

"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him." God wants you to have confidence, faith, and assurance. Not in the sense of arrogant pride of human nature, but in the sense of total belief in God. Verse 20: "For if our heart condemn us..." Now when do our hearts condemn us? When we sin and haven't repented. And a lot of people hold back and have a guilt complex and don't go to God. So he says to remind them: "...God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (verses 19-20). So therefore if you know you've sinned, God knows you've sinned. So that means go repent, get rid of the condemnation, get rid of the guilty conscience, let the blood of Christ cover it through the grace of God and then you will have confidence again.

Now verse 21. This is all part of the attitude of prayer of coming to have the faith of God as Jesus said. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him..." Now the conditions: "...because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (verses 21-22). So a person who is living in sin and doesn't repent and doesn't come out of sin cannot expect to have his prayers to be continually answered, correct?

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Now verse 23: “And this is His commandment, That we should believe [so there we go: prayer and belief ties right in with John 14] on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment.” And that’s the whole beginning relationship that we need to have with each other. Not only beginning but enduring relationship. And it’s difficult at times and the reason being is this: it’s because God has called different people from different walks of life that under normal circumstances we would never meet, we would never associate with, and we all have our problems hanging out, don’t we? So therefore we are indeed of all people most difficult to love. That’s why he mentions this, you see.

Now verse 24: “And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him [and that is in Christ], and He [that is Christ] in him.” That’s by the Spirit of God, you see. “And hereby we know...” Now this is something God does not want us in doubt concerning: “...We know that He abideth [dwells or lives] in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.” In other words you come to a point in your life that you know that you have the Spirit of God, you know that it is in you, you know that Christ is in you and you have no doubt of that at all. That doesn’t mean that you’re not fighting sin. That doesn’t mean that you don’t get discouraged from time to time. That doesn’t mean that you don’t have problems and difficulties because we all do. It means that with the Spirit of God you can go through all of these things and God eventually will resolve them according to His will if we do the things that are pleasing in His sight, keep His commandments, love God and love each other.

Now let’s come over here to I John 5:14: “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will [now there it is], He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him” (I John 5:14-15, *KJV*). So there’s the assurance that we need. Now based upon that then, that’s why Jesus said, “You believe in Me, believe also in the Father. And if you ask anything in My name this I will do that the Father may be glorified.”

Now let’s come back to John 14. We’ll come to verse 15 and there will be quite a few Scriptures that we can add to it. Keep your Bible open to I John because we’re going to go there. Here is a key absolute verse that is just an amazing verse. Now as I mentioned before as we’re going through here, circle the “ifs.” Verse 2: “...if it were otherwise, I would have told you.” Verse 3: “...If I go to prepare a place, I will come again.” Ok, we come down here to verse 11: “...if not, believe Me because of the works themselves.” Now verse 14: “If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.” I beg your pardon, we missed one in verse 7: “If you had known Me...”

Now I’ve never done it. I’ve done some of it, but I’ve never taken a systematic study to look up all the 1200 “ifs” in the Bible to see all the conditions that God gives. But let’s understand something: all the conditions are upon us because we are the variable factor, not God. So that’s why here in verse 15 He says: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” Which is as literal of a translation as I could get. How many people say they love the Lord, they know the Lord, and don’t keep His commandments? Which means this: if you don’t keep the commandments of God you don’t love Him.

Now let’s add some Scriptures in here for this. Keep your place in I John because we’ll be there but let’s come to Matthew 22:34. You know it’s amazing. Just like we read off that thing there... Most religions that use the Bible have their time worn paths which they trod every Sunday. And they like to have it in such a way that it’s pleasing to everybody. Well now you do this: you show me which person that Jesus pleased just to please the person. Not one.

Now verse 34: “But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.” Now this must have been a sight – always gathering together to figure out how they’re going to answer it. “Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer

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[“Ok, we’ll trip Him up on this.”], asked *Him a question*, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?” See, because they wanted to nail Him for changing the law, right? “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” Showing that our devotion to God is a full-time complete dedication and devotion, you see. “This is the first and great commandment.” When we go through these I want you to keep in mind what we just read in John 14 and 15 – “If you love Me keep My commandments.” “And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matt. 22:34-40, *KJV*). Now when you have something that is used as the base point for hanging something on, all the law and prophets then is dependent upon what? Loving God and loving your neighbor. Jesus said in another place, “Therefore whatsoever you would that men do to you, do you even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12, paraphrased). Contrary to what most people think about harsh commandments and that you can’t keep them. That is completely an impossibility because if you have the Spirit of God you can keep the commandments, right? Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” Would He ask you to do something that is impossible to do? No, no.

Ok, let’s just ask some questions: Do you have another God before you? No. Do you have any idols? No. Do you take God’s name in vain? No. Are you keeping the Sabbath? Yes. Can you keep those commandments? Of course. Honor father and mother if they’re still living. Can you do that? Yes. Do not kill. Nobody’s killed. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness, and don’t covet. Are those impossible to keep? Of course not. So the argument that, “Why, God doesn’t expect you to keep the commandments today because no one can keep them” is really nonsense.

The comment was made that these two commandments are considered the golden rule and gold has the word “God” in it so therefore this is a godly rule. Very interesting way of looking at it.

Now then let’s come to I John 2. Now you see this is why in the proper original order of the New Testament the General Epistles come after the book of Acts and before Romans. Because when you read James, I-II Peter, I-II-III John, and Jude, you know you are to keep the commandments of God. However when you go from Acts to Romans and you start reading Romans, which is difficult to understand, you may begin to believe, because you do not understand it correctly or what the original really was, you may begin to believe that you shouldn’t keep the commandments of God. That’s not so.

I John 2:3, *KJV*: “And hereby we do know [now that is as affirmative as you can get, isn’t it?] that we know Him...” Now God doesn’t want us to be in doubt. “Maybe I know Jesus. Where are You Jesus? I think You are there.” No. Hereby we know that we know. Now that is the epitome of belief, isn’t it? You go from belief to knowing. And that’s the whole purpose that we’re going to see that God wants us to do.

Now notice here’s that little word again: “...if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (verse 4). Now those two verses are so basic and profound and powerful. What this does, it knocks into an absolute cocked hat all the so-called Christian professing religions in the world that say you do not have to keep the commandments of God. You can label them, without a doubt, they are liars. That’s what it says. That’s why John was one of the sons of thunder. See, going back to the “if,” it’s conditional. In other words this way, just like it says not only a liar if you don’t keep His commandments, you don’t know Him. “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” If the truth is not in you, you don’t have the Spirit of Truth, do you? Because it’s called the Spirit of Truth, isn’t it? And the Spirit of Truth is what’s going to lead you into all truth and going to lead you into keeping

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the commandments of God. It's all together. It can't be dissected. You can't have a perfect circle if you cut out half of it, can you? An impossibility.

Now notice he goes on and shows what is to happen: "But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected..." So this love of God then is perfected even more. It's something that is to grow, to be perfected. And by this growing in grace and knowledge and love and commandment keeping and so forth, the last part of verse 5: "...hereby know we that we are in Him." No doubt of conversion, no doubt of the Spirit of God, no doubt of where you're going, what you're doing. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (verses 5-6). And you go back and you analyze what did Jesus do, keep, say, pray, think, do as recorded in the Gospels and you have it.

Now let's look at something else concerning love. Let's come over here to verse 15. Here's part of loving God. You cannot have one foot in the world, though you live there. And that means you can't cling to the ways of the world part of the time and cling to God's way part of the time. Now: "Love not the world..." that's God's job. He can love the world because He has an overall plan. This means we are not to love the world, "...neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." In other words if you put the world and physical things before loving God – you love the world. "For all that *is* in the world..." And boy, I tell you what, all you have to do is just turn on your TV and there it is. "...The lust of the flesh [you see a lot of that on TV], and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, [it] is not of the Father, but [it] is of the world." Now who is the god of this world and feeds on and inspires this kind of thing but none other than Satan the devil? That's why you're not to love it. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that [the one who is doing] doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (verses 15-17). There again is the contrast. That's how important the commandments of God are.

Now then let's come to I John 5:2, again having to do with the commandments of God. So you see when we partake of the Passover every year and we come back and analyze all of these things and recommit ourselves to God through partaking of the Passover, what we do we go back to the very basic fundamentals and reassure ourselves that through Christ and the Word of God that what we are doing is the right thing and that we are in covenant with God. Now can anyone be in covenant with God and live in sin? No, that's a contradictory statement. That's like saying turn on the water so I can stay dry. Turn off the lights so I can see. I'm going to bed at sunrise so..., see.

Now here again is one of these "know" statements: "By this [by this standard] we know that we love the children of God, when we love God..." Now doesn't this sound an awful lot like Matthew 22? Yes. "...When we love God, and keep His commandments." So in other words if you don't keep His commandments you don't love God. It's that simple. It's like we covered here before. And we'll see that again when we get there. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments..." And of course that is the beginning relationship, you see. You're keeping His commandments, but as we'll see a little later on as we develop concerning hope and concerning love even further, that the love of God will develop into a deep and profound spiritual relationship between you and God. This is the beginning of it. Notice: "...and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:2-3, *KJV*). And that could read burdensome. In other words it's not a burden to keep the commandments of God. What burden is it to keep the Sabbath? It's a great blessing because God fellowships with you and you fellowship with God and you learn of His Word, and all of these things. It's a great blessing.

Now let's come to the little epistle of II John. Let's pick it up beginning in verse 4. There are no chapters because it's only thirteen verses all together. Verse 4: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth [again, Your Word is truth], as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new

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commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after His commandments” (II John 4-6, *KJV*). I mean when you put all these statements together and really line them up how can anyone possibly have the gall to say, in the name of Christ, that you don’t have to keep the commandments of God. It is just like it says, that person is a profound liar. And furthermore Jesus said the truth will set you free—free from sin, free from doubt, free from worry, free from all of these things, you see.

Now continuing verse 6: “This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (verses 6-9). Very profound.

Now let’s look at just a couple of Scriptures in Revelation 12. Now this is important because these are prophecies concerning the end-time. And this shows that there are going to be commandment keepers in the end-time. Let’s come to verse 17 (*KJV*). This is right when the great tribulation begins: “And the dragon [which is Satan the devil] was wroth with the woman [who is the church], and went to make war with the remnant [the remnant means “the rest”, not limited to just a few but the rest] of her seed, which keep the commandments of God [at the end-time there are people who keep the commandments of God, correct? Right], and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Which means they preach salvation by faith. They preach what we are doing because what we are preaching is the testimony of Christ.

Now Revelation 14:12 (*KJV*), right toward the end of the tribulation: “Here is the patience of the saints...” Now patience could also be translated “endurance” because commandment keeping involves enduring, doesn’t it? “Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” So it gets right back to the same thing that Jesus said, have God’s faith, have Jesus faith. That’s what they have. And if you keep the commandments of God you’ll be given the Holy Spirit of God, you will have the power to have the faith of Christ and of God.

Ok, let’s look at one more. Revelation 22, then we’ll come back to John 14 and make a little progress here. Now many translations have this: “Blessed are those who have cleansed their robes.” But that’s not what it is in the original Greek. That’s out of one of the spurious texts.

Revelation 22:14 (*KJV*): “Blessed *are* they that do His commandments...” So contrary to what most people say, most religionists say, “Oh you’re cursed when you try and keep the commandments.” No, you’re blessed if you do. Now notice what this does: “...that they may have right to the tree of life...” In other words if you don’t keep the commandments of God you’re not going to get eternal life. Do you think you’re going to live forever sinning in the universe? Of course not. That’s why Lucifer was cast down – because of sin. “...And may enter in through the gates into the city.”

Now let’s come back to John 14 here, and we are going to make a little progress. Verse 15, let’s repeat that again: “ ‘If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And [see, here’s a result of your doing the conditional thing – keeping the commandments of God, loving God] I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age...’ ” (John 14:15-16, *FV*). Now I explained at the beginning of this about the proper translation of “Holy Spirit,” that it is the power of God. It is not a third person. And understand this: all Trinitarians are cults. And the Trinitarians call us a cult because we don’t believe in the Trinity. Now I’m going to have to write, one of these days when I get done with the New Testament, I’m going to have to write something on that. They are all cults.

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Ok, verse 17: “ ‘...*Even* the Spirit of the truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you.’ ” Now we’ll come back and look at that in just a little bit. “ ‘I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day...’ ” Now notice this is a profound verse. “ ‘In that day...’ ”, and that means in the day when they would see the resurrected Christ. “ ‘... You shall know...’ ” Now with this verse we go from belief into knowing just like we did there in I John. “ ‘...You shall know, that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you. The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; 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) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘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. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me. I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you’ ” (verses 17-25, *FV*). Now then, we’ve got an awful lot here to reinforce what we’ve already studied, don’t we?

Now let’s see, because it talks about the Spirit, let’s come back to verse 16: “ ‘...I will ask the Father...’ ” What we are going to see is that the giving of the Holy Spirit is a joint project of Jesus Christ and the Father. “ ‘...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...’ ” And the world cannot receive it because of many reasons: 1) Satan is the god of the world and he is that spirit that is working in them. They cannot receive it: 2) because they don’t want to repent even though they hear the Word of God.

“ ‘...Because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you...’ ” Now notice there is a distinction – it dwells with you. All the time that Jesus was teaching them and training them, and all during His ministry the Spirit of God was dwelling with them. Then He says: “ ‘...and shall be within you.’ ” Now let’s look at the first part here: dwells with you. Let’s look at some Scriptures which show the operation of the Spirit to come to anyone.

Let’s come to Revelation 5 (*KJV*). Now there is one Holy Spirit of God but God has seven Spirits that also do additional work for Him, which I think is a prelude to receiving the Holy Spirit within you. Now we find here in verse 6: “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts [living creatures], and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God [so mark the seven Spirits of God – we’ll look at the function of those] sent forth into all the earth.” Now what do these Spirits do?

Let’s come first of all back to Revelation 3:1 (*KJV*) and let’s see again where Jesus is the one Who is in control of these seven Spirits: “And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works...”, etc. What do the seven Spirits do? Jesus controls them. They go forth into all the earth, as it says.

Now let’s come to Revelation 1:4 (*KJV*). We’ll see again it mentions the seven Spirits: “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne...” Ok. How do the seven Spirits work?

Let’s come back to II Chronicles 16 (*KJV*). Here’s how I think that the seven Spirits work. They do the work of God in finding out those who are seeking Him. Because it said they

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are sent forth into all the earth. What do they do in all the earth? What is their activity? Could they be likened to what we might say satellites? I don't know, but we find here in verse 9: "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth..." Well we know that the eyeballs of God are not running to and fro in the earth. So this has to describe the work of the seven Spirits going to and fro throughout the whole world. Now that's the only thing that we can connect with back there in the book of Revelation, the three places where it says the seven Spirits, and then there in Revelation 5:6 that they are sent forth into all the earth. Here's what they do: "...to shew Himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward Him." In other words looking for those who are seeking God. That's why, remember the account of Elijah? We mention this every once in a while to show that God is doing more with people that we don't even know of. Elijah was moaning and complaining to God that he was the only one left, and God said, "Now, now Elijah. I have seven thousand that haven't bowed the knee to Baal." How does God do that? He has to do it through the seven Spirits, which are the eyes of the Lord sent forth and that run to and fro through all the earth.

Now come over here to chapter 15. Let's pick it up here in verse 1: "And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin..." Key profound verse: "...The LORD *is* with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you" (II Chron. 15:1-2, *KJV*). So this has got to be how God finds out who on earth that there are who are seeking after Him. God obviously is not going to be busying Himself with that. He's going to let the seven Spirits do that. And when there's someone who's of a repentant heart then I am sure that the Holy Spirit comes to be with that person. The seven Spirits are the eyes finding out where they are. That's not an operation of the Holy Spirit of God. These seven Spirits are separate and different from the Holy Spirit of God. But then after they find the one who is seeking God then God sends His Spirit to be with them just like Jesus told the disciples. The Spirit is with them. And the best way I can explain it is this: if you seek God...

Now let's come back here to the book of Matthew. Hold your place there in II Chronicles because we'll come back there in just a minute. Let's come to Matthew 7:7. Here is a promise of God, which ties in with what we've been talking about earlier: "Ask, and it shall be given you [there we're talking about prayer again, aren't we?]; seek, and ye shall find..." Now we just read that these eyes of the Lord go to and fro through the earth to find those who are seeking Him. This is how an ordinary person anywhere in the world, if they want to know about God, if they just ask and pray, "Oh God where are you? I want to know about you." The seven Spirits are the ones who do the work to then convey this to God so that if they are really repentant and really want to know about God then God will send the Spirit to be with them. That's the start of a calling. If they continue seeking (and lo and behold there is a Bible available to almost anyone who wants it in the world) and they start looking in the Bible and they start seeing there are things that they need to do. Everyone will have an experience similar to that. For example it was said that [a man] in trying to find God, went to different churches: Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and so forth. Finally went out to a park one afternoon and said, "God, where are You? I want to know where You are." And at that point God did something. You may not have realized it, but He did. I can say the same story. You can say the same. Every one of us can say the same thing. Now notice verse 8: "For every one..." Notice that is all inclusive, isn't it? That's not eliminating anyone. "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matt. 7:7-8, *KJV*).

Now let's come back here to II Chronicles 15 and let's see what happened because this is very profound. And it also has to do with entering into a covenant with God which is what we are studying here, the words of the New Covenant to eternal life that we are to follow, you see. So let's continue on in verse 3. Azariah said to him: "Now for a long season Israel *hath been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law." You could apply that to

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individuals in the world. How many people are out there just in the same way? They don't have the true God. They don't have anyone to teach them, and they don't have the law of God. "But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD ..." That's why there's going to be a big harvest through the tribulation. See, they're going to turn to the Lord. "...Unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought Him, He was found of them. And in those times *there was* no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations *were* upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak..." This is a call to repentance, isn't it? Yes. Now you respond to God. "...For your work shall be rewarded" (II Chron 15:3-7, *KJV*).

"And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin..." Now that's repentance, isn't it? You destroy idols. "...And out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that *was* before the porch of the LORD. And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God *was* with him. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa" (verses 8-10). Now this third month was probably somewhere around Pentecost, which goes back to the time that the Ten Commandments were given, and so forth. So there's great meaning in all this as we go through.

"And they offered unto the LORD the same time, of the spoil *which* they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. And they entered into a covenant..." You see, that's what we enter in to when we are baptized. And every year when we keep the Passover we renew it. And we do so, so that we will not fall victim to what Asa did, as we'll see here a little later. "...They entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers [now notice] with all their heart and with all their soul; that whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death [here in this case they had no choice about it, right?], whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought Him with their whole desire; and He was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about" (verses 11-15). You could say in the New Testament "and God gives you grace." God gives you rest from your sins. God gives you rest from your enemies.

"And also *concerning* Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped *it*, and burnt *it* at the brook Kidron. But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days. And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels. And there was no *more* war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa" (verses 16-19). Then what did he do? He entered into a covenant with Ben-hadad, the king of Syria. Now when he did that then again another prophet came.

Let's come over to verse 7, chapter 16: "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him..." Now notice what happens when you turn back. Notice when we come over here and compare that with chapter 15, verse 2, "If you seek Him He will be found of you, if you forsake Him He will forsake you." So there's a lesson for us today too.

"...Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God..." You can draw many parallels there too with our spiritual life, if we go back relying on physical things and so forth, going back into the world and not trusting in God. "...Therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims

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a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, He delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth [we read that], to shew Himself strong in the behalf of *them* whose heart *is* perfect toward Him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. Then Asa was wroth with the seer..." Now that happens lots of times when a person comes up and shows his sins to someone. He was mad. "...And put him in a prison house; for *he was* in a rage with him because of this *thing*. And Asa oppressed *some* of the people the same time" (II Chron. 16:7-10, *KJV*). And then it shows what happened.

"And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great*: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign" (verses 11-13). Now you have the whole picture here with this, from coming to the point of seeking God to the point of rejecting God.

Well, we'll pick it up there next time.

End of Sermon

Transcriber Carolyn I. Singer

Scriptural References

John 14:10-12
Romans 1:16-17
Romans 10:8-17
John 20:30-31
John 14:6-9
Acts 4:5-13
Hebrews 1:1-3
John 14:11-14
Mark 11:20-26
I John 3:18-24

I John 5:14
John 14:2-3, 7, 11, 14-15
Matthew 22:34-40
Matthew 7:12
I John 2:3-6, 15-17
I John 5:2-3
II John 4-9
Revelation 12:17
Revelation 14:12
Revelation 22:14

John 14:15-25
Revelation 5:6
Revelation 3:1
Revelation 1:4
II Chronicles 16:9
II Chronicles 15:1-19
Matthew 7:7-8
II Chronicles 16:7-13

PASSOVER PREPARATION # 3

March 8, 2003

This is Passover Preparation # 3 and we have come to John 14 and we have come down here through verse 16 and 17, and we covered about how the Holy Spirit works, and so forth. Now let's pick it up here in verse 18. This may be just a little bit of review. " 'I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also.' " Now these are the words and the promises of eternal life. That's why these are also the words of the New Covenant. " 'Because I live [now, He is talking about that He is going to be living eternally], you shall live also. In that day [that's the day that they saw Christ resurrected], you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you' " (John 14:18-20, *FV*).

Let's go to Luke 24 and see what an astonishing event that was. This was the day that they knew. And then from that would spring, "You shall know that I am in the Father and you are in Me and I am in you." And all the rest of the words of the New Covenant that we have to do with through John 17 are keyed on this sentence. That's the whole key. Now notice what happened, verse 36 (*KJV*): "And as they thus spake [that is the two who came back from Emmaus and said, "We've seen the Lord."], Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you." Now I don't know how they felt. I don't know how excited they may have been. I don't know how their adrenaline glands may have went *squish*, you know, because when you see something startling that's what happens.

But I can tell you this: as a kid when I was delivering newspapers I had to deliver to a mortuary, and also the apartments that were connected to the mortuary. So during the week I would go up to the apartments and I would deliver the papers and come down by the door which went into the apartments, then I would go into the front door of the mortuary and put the newspaper on the counter. But on Sunday they told me to go up around and down the stairs and down through the mortuary and then come and leave the newspaper on the front desk and walk out the front door and it would lock itself. Well you know it's quiet in a mortuary, and I was curious. And here I am about twelve years old, I think it was. And so I come down the steps and I see these various parlors with the coffins in it, and so forth, so I look in one and I look in another and then I'd look at another, and just right at that time, and you know corpses will do this, they will groan and have muscle spasm. And that's what happened. I looked in there and there was a groan and this corpse sat up. Man, did that scare me to death. Boy! And that's the only way I can relate how they must have felt when they saw Him. And I ran down the stairs. I ran out into the foyer. I took the Sunday paper with everything that is there and I threw it up on the counter and it scattered all over the office desk and everything, and I ran out the door scared to death.

Well, can you imagine if you saw someone die and you knew he was dead, and you figured that even though Peter and John saw the grave clothes and everything, it was John who believed. The rest of the disciples didn't even know. So here's they're all gathered together, it says in John 20, for fear of the Jews and then Jesus stands in the midst and said, "Peace be with you."

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." I guess. Totally astonished. Now this is "that day" that Jesus was talking about. "And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see..." And they did because in the first chapter of I John it says, "That which we have seen, that which we have gazed upon, that which our hands have handled, the Word of Life." (I John 1:1, paraphrased). "...For a spirit hath not flesh

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and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them *His* hands and *His* feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any [anything to eat] meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took *it*, and did eat before them” (verses 37-43).

And then He must have spent most of that night opening their eyes to the Scriptures, going through it. “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning Me.” Which then is a complete endorsement of all three sections of the Old Testament, you see. “Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures...” (verse 44-45). And as we’re going to see the function of the Holy Spirit today is to do exactly the same thing. That’s why it is important that we understand John 14, 15, 16, and 17 is the basis of our personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Now let’s come back here to John 14. Now I will mention again as I did last time, in the General Epistles book you can go through the special word study section and go through all the places concerning the things we are to know in the epistle of I John. There are 47 things that we are to know as mature Christians. God does not want us ignorant. God wants our belief based upon knowledge. The knowledge then gives us the faith. And then this gives us understanding. And this gives us hope. And this gives us love. Altogether, you see. And that’s why I believe today God has scattered the church so He’s going to put everyone on a one to one basis between Him and Jesus Christ. Every person, see. And this is the way that you can grow the most. This is the way that you can overcome the most because now you can have that trusting relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father with no man in between.

Now let’s come back to John 14 of the study paper on the Words of the New Covenant. “...You shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you. The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me...” And we covered last time there is no way that you can love God if you do not keep His commandments. Now you may have a fuzzy warm feeling in your heart, but a fuzzy warm feeling is not the kind of love that endures unto eternal life. “...The one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father...” (John 14:20-21 *FV*). Now underline that. God the Father Himself loves you. No doubt. No question about it.

Let’s come to John 16:26. He says this several times. Now this is important for you to understand, especially when you have a trial that you’re going through, or in the case that’s going to happen with a lot of us because we are getting to be not just senior citizens, but senior, senior citizens. And God has given us extra time and we are going to have to face the trial of our lives which will be looking for the place of rest in the grave. And when you are in those conditions, when you’re old and grey-headed God says He won’t forget you. And when you’re in pain and suffering because you are looking at death’s door, God loves you, the Father loves you. Never forget that. And with Christ in you He is likewise suffering with you. That’s important to understand. God has not abandoned you. He loves you. Whenever you then are in a trial and you come to a point where you are at the very bottom, and as I’ve mentioned before all of us are going to come to that point. You might get the sermon that I did in the I John series, “When All Else Fails – God Loves You”. Men will fail you. The world will fail you. But God will never fail you.

Now: “ ‘In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, **for the Father Himself loves you**, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God’ ” (John 16:26-27, *FV*). That’s why I have said that this whole section of the words of the covenant, John 14 through John 17, is based upon faith and love, hope and love, and then we will see in John 17, love and love. So always remember that.

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Let's come back here to John 14:21 (*FV*): “ ‘...Shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.’ ” So not only does the Father love you, Jesus loves you. And as we'll see a little later on that's the very reason that He laid His life down for you.

Now verse 22: “Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ ” See, because at this time they didn't understand about the coming resurrection. But also this has to do with us. How does God manifest Himself to us and not to the world, because the world would say, “Well what right do you think that you have that you can say that God is with you and not with us?” And here's the secret. It's a very simple thing. Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, “ ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him...’ ” Now we have it there three times at least. We'll probably see it again. But here we have three times the Father loves us, right? Yes. Keeping the Word of God is the key. Because a spiritual something, as we mentioned last time, happens to anyone who begins keeping the Word of God. That doesn't necessarily mean that they are all called unto salvation. But God is not a respecter of persons and those who follow His word, to whatever extent they do, will receive the blessing for following His word to that extent, whether or not they are called to salvation.

Those who are called unto salvation then come into a different category. We come into the category that the Father loves us, that Christ loves us, and now we have a unique thing take place when we receive the Spirit of God. Let's see it, the last part of verse 23: “ ‘...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.’ ” Now the abode is a dwelling place. Now notice it is “We” and “Our” abode. Now “Me” and “My” abode.

Now let's look at some other Scriptures here. Let's come to I Corinthians 3. And this is what God delights in. Those who are converted and receive the Holy Spirit (and we'll talk about the Holy Spirit here in just a bit because he explains then with the coming of the Holy Spirit how it is that both of them are going to dwell in you). Because the greatest of God's creation is mankind, and the purpose of mankind. That's why buildings are meaningless, temples are meaningless, rituals are meaningless, all of these things are meaningless. See, because God wants something greater than that. He has prepared us to receive His Holy Spirit.

Now I Corinthians 3:16 (*KJV*). Isn't that interesting? If you want an interesting Bible study sometime, go through the different epistles and gospels and look up 3:16. They won't all hit right on, but John 3:16 says what? “For God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.” I Timothy 3:16 says God was manifest in the flesh. I John 3:16 tells us how He loves us. Now here we have I Corinthians 3:16: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God...” That's where God wants to reside before you're resurrected. This is a spiritual operation. This is part of the covenant. When we take the Passover this is what God is telling us and this is what we are telling God that, “Yes, we love You and. We want to be in Your family. Thank you for calling us. Thank You for forgiving our sins. Thank You for being gracious to us.” “...Ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” That's where God desires to dwell. And as we will see when we go through the book of Hebrews, to have His laws written in our hearts and written in our minds, and that we come to have the mind of Christ. That's what it's all about, brethren. Everything else in the world, all the trials, all the difficulties, everything else is meaningless because unless you understand that all the prophecy in the world isn't going to save you. All the physical things in the world will not save you. It's the Spirit of God. That's what God wants. That's where He wants to dwell. That's what He's concerned about.

“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy...” So we are down to the nitty-gritty, aren't we? And from baptism forward for those who truly receive the Holy Spirit of God, it is either – or. That's what He's talking about here. “...For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in

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this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise” (verses 17-18). See, to truly understand the purpose of life and the purpose of God, that’s what’s important.

Here, let’s put into the equation Isaiah 66. And I think in view of the possible situation which may happen in Pasadena—because I remember when a proposition first came up where Herbert Armstrong said, “We need to build a temple for God.” How many remember that? “And we all need to sacrifice, and we all need to give extra money.” And I think we can all learn the lesson from the Bible, can’t we? Whoever builds a temple for God gets himself in d-e-e-p trouble. God was willing and obliged Himself to honor David and let Solomon build the temple. And He did put His presence in it, which is known by the Jews as the Shekinah. But that’s not the ultimate. As long as the people would obey God, He would keep His presence in the temple. But God is not interested in a temple on the earth. Notice what He says. Here he predicted the destruction of the whole system. And this is only one of many.

“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto Me? and where *is* the place of My rest?” Since God made us what is man going to do for God? That’s why God’s greatest delight is to dwell in us, because that’s why He made us. Not just in a building. “For all those *things* hath Mine hand made...” (Isa. 66:1-2, *KJV*). All the gold, all the stones, all the silver, all of the whatever paraphernalia they made for the temple, all the ritual, all the altars and everything. God made everything to begin with. So you have all of that and you go back and read all the rituals. And you’ve seen the video showing the tabernacle in the wilderness, which is quite a wonderful thing to look at and see the way that that was done. And the temple, obviously, was a magnificent place, and so forth. But unless there is the Spirit of God, unless there is the love of God, unless there is the belief in God all of that is absolutely worthless and to be destroyed. And that’s why God destroyed the temple.

“...But to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.” That’s another way of saying, “You believe in God, believe in Me.” And then He says, “He that killeth an ox...” Now if you have a right attitude God would accept it, but that’s not unto salvation as we will see in the series on Hebrews. “He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog’s neck...” I tell you, isn’t that interesting? I wonder what these false lambs of God are to Christ but nothing but dogs. You think about that. Is it not even a greater sin to take the Word of God and twist it and pervert it and use it for selfish, carnal ends and means? Is that not even a greater sin than building a temple and ignoring God? Yes, it is. “...He that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine’s blood...” And that’s what was the abomination that Antiochus Epiphanies did. And furthermore, more than that, more than offering swine’s blood on the altar and just walking out, they made that a place for harlotry, they made that a place... And they took the Temple of God and wrote graffiti all over it. And God was saying, “You mistreat Me in My temple, I’m going to desecrate it because you’re desecrating Me.” “Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations” (verses 2-3). You go back and you read what Israel did to the Temple of God and how they absolutely profaned it and blasphemed it and put in idols and all that sort of thing.

So he’s chosen a different way: “I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before Mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not.” So then it comes right back to what God delights in. “Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed” (verses 4-5). We’ve all experienced that, haven’t we? And did this not happen with the apostles in relationship to the Jews? Yes, it did. Were they not chased asunder from the temple? Yes, they were. Quite a thing.

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When it says “We will make Our abode with him”, now let’s come back to John 14:23 and let’s look at that again—“We”. Now how are they going to do it? We’re going to see it’s by the Spirit of God. I’ll just summarize that here.

Let’s come to Romans 8. Through the power of the Holy Spirit there is the function of the Father. And we will see there is also the function of the Son because both “We will make Our abode with you.” So Romans 8 tells us the two aspects of the Spirit of God. Let’s pick it up here beginning in verse 9: “But ye are not in the flesh...” Yes you are. You’re still here in the flesh, aren’t you? But that is before God. Because with the Spirit of God and your seeking after the things of the Spirit and not the things of the flesh, you are not of the flesh. See, because God is looking at you as His Spirit sons and what you will be at the resurrection, because He calls those things that are not as though they are.

Now notice as we’ve been going through, circle the little “if”. “...If so be [and God is the one Who knows, right?] that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” Remember, He said, “We will make Our abode with him.” “...If the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ...” Now notice the difference there. You have the Spirit of God, and you have the Spirit of Christ. Since the Father and Christ are one, this is one Spirit that they send but two functions of the one Spirit. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ *be* in you...” Do not confuse this with the seven Spirits of God, as we covered last time. That’s how God keeps track of what’s going on in the world, and those who are seeking Him, He originally begins dealing with him with those. Now that has nothing to do with what we are talking about here – the Spirit of God, which is of the Father and is of the Son and is in us. The seven Spirits God uses to deal with the world. The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ He uses to deal with us and in us so that He dwells in us.

Now let’s pick it up here the last sentence of Romans 8:9: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” God doesn’t make any mistakes. Now there maybe some people who were baptized but never received the Spirit of God. That’s God’s decision because God knows the heart. “And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin [that’s through the operation of baptism that you no longer serve sin]; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness” (Rom. 8:9-10, *KJV*). Because you are in right standing with God, and God imputes to you the righteousness of Christ. And that’s a tremendous blessing to be in that position, brethren, that God the Father will do this for you. That’s what’s so profound. And if you can just see some of those pictures of the universe and how absolutely marvelous and great it is, and to understand that the ruling Sovereign, God the Father, of this universe loves you and has given His Spirit to you. There can be nothing greater in life. All the physical circumstances and things that we go through aside from that are to be counted as nothing. Because in reality they are nothing. They are just temporary.

Now verse 11: “But if...” There’s that word again—go ahead and circle it. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you [now then, that’s from the Father, isn’t it?], He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Now that is the function of the Father—to beget you with the Holy Spirit so that you at the resurrection will become His literal, bonafide, Spirit son and daughter. That’s the function of the Holy Spirit from the Father to beget you for eternal life for the resurrection.

The function of the Holy Spirit, being the Spirit of Christ, is that you have the mind of Christ. So we have the two aspects of the function of the Holy Spirit within us, you see, that you have the mind of Christ. And that’s the whole purpose what we will study in the book of Hebrews. That’s what it’s all about. Yes, we are going to have trials to overcome. Yes, we’re going to have human nature to overcome. Yes, the world is going to be contrary to us. Yea, and

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we'll even see Christ promised us it would hate us. And after all, who needs friends in the world if God is your friend. I mean think on that for a while.

Let's come to Philippians 2:1. This is why we are to grow in grace and knowledge so that the mind of Christ can be in us. The way you do that: "If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ [that is considering all that Paul was going through as he wrote in the first chapter of Philippians here], if any comfort of love..." And notice it all gets back to love, and we're going to also see that the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter, so there is the third function of the Holy Spirit. The first function is of the Father, the second function is of the mind of Christ, and we will see the third function is the Comforter.

... "If any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies..." Now "bowels" means deep inner affection. You are affected by things deeply. "...Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded..." Boy, I tell you what, if he were resurrected today and looked at the church I can imagine what the apostle Paul would say. I imagine there would be a lot of strong and stout words from the apostle Paul very similar to I Corinthians where he would go through and many times he would say, "WHAT?" (*Laughter*) Yes, that you be likeminded. That's the whole goal of what God wants, you see, to be likeminded with each other and to have the mind of Christ. "...Having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:1-3, *KJV*). God has a purpose for each one. That's why we are not to go around judging, condemning, criticizing each other, and all that sort of thing. Look, we all have enough problems ourselves we're all well aware of without someone else having to heap upon us all their criticisms from those that are to be our brethren. As we're going to see a little later on, God has brought us altogether and really when you understand it because of our backgrounds and where God has called us from, the toughest job is to love each other, isn't it, because we are in a situation where we wouldn't normally love each other because everyone loves his own. That makes a difference. So in loving each other an coming to have the mind of Christ we all have a lot of work to do. As a matter of fact, it's a lifelong project, isn't it?

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Consider the other, as Christ did. Then he says: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus..." (verses 4-5). That's the function of the Spirit of Christ to have the mind of Christ.

Now as we've seen in Hebrews, it is to write His laws in our hearts and in our minds. Now if you want to follow-up on that you go through and study the whole Psalm 119. And I tell you if you study it the way you should it will take you a long time to get through Psalm 119, but I'll just summarize it this way: I believe Psalm 119 is prophetic of how Jesus Christ viewed the laws and commandments and statutes and judgments of God. And how then, if they are to be written in our hearts and our minds we also ought to view the laws and commandments of God. Because if they're going to be written in our hearts and our mind by the Spirit of God so that we have the mind of Christ, so that we function by those things, so that we think with the Word of God, then Psalm 119 gives us the completed task.

And with that let's just look at one verse there, Psalm 119. And this is my favorite verse in it because this is the summary of the whole thing. You know, it's kind of like Solomon said in the book of Ecclesiastes: "Let us hear the conclusion of the matter—fear God and keep His commandments." Now let's look at the spiritual thing concerning to conclusion of the matter of Psalm 119. Let's pick it up here in verse 127. Now as you go through it you will see that Psalm 119 is broken down in even sections of eight verses according to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. And in Hebrew each verse begins with the Hebrew letter that is listed over the top of the eight verse section. And this was one of the songs of degrees that they would sing. But notice verse 127: "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.

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Therefore [here's the conclusion of the whole matter] I esteem all thy precepts..." Not only just Your laws and commandments and statutes. Every precept of God. Since God is perfect and God is Holy and God is love, everything that God does is right. "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts *concerning all things to be right...*" And then what happens when you begin to have the mind of Christ? "...I *and* I hate every false way." Not the person – the way. Every false way. Why? Because that is sin.

Now let's go to Hebrews 1 and see how that's carried over concerning Christ, and why He is going to inherit the kingdom as the King. Let's begin in verse 8: "But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of Thy kingdom. ⁹Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity..." (Heb. 1:8-9, *KJV*). And as we will see, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that's why we get rid of leaven. It pictures sin. Because if we hate iniquity, we love God, don't we. Don't hate the person. Christ died for the person. And just remember, when you were carnal you couldn't help it either, could you? So likewise, do not judge and criticize people in the world. You can judge and criticize their actions of iniquity and hate that. And if it gets to the point that they are doing things which transgress the laws of the land, well then the authorities of the laws of the land have the responsibility from God to take care of the problem. And God will work it out.

Now let's come back here to John 14. So those are the functions of the Holy Spirit – of the Father and of the Son. Now with that then another function takes place, which we'll see in just a minute. But let's come here to John 14:24 (*FV*), because this is also a very definitive Scripture: "The one who does not love Me does not keep My words..." There is the standard. Up here He said, "If you love Me you will keep My word. The one who doesn't love Me will not keep My words", let alone believe Him. "...And the word that you hear is not Mine..." Now this is why the New Testament is so astounding.

Ok, we ran out of tape on the other side so we'll go back and pick up verse 24 again here: " 'The one who doesn't love Me will not keep My words, and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me.' " And that's what the New Testament is. And yet the world considers it a collection of folklore and myths.

Verse 25: " I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you. But *when* the Comforter *comes*..." That's the other function of the Holy Spirit—to comfort you. Comfort you in many ways. And we'll see a little bit later on that it will teach you. So there's another function of it. But it's actually the Father Who is teaching you, Christ Who is teaching you through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now in the study paper that we did for this Passover preparation, I've got a full section there showing how and why the Holy Spirit is the power of God and why it was translated this way in the translations, so I won't get through that but I will leave it to you to go ahead and study that section.*

Verse 26: " 'But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name...' " So they do it together, you see. "We will make Our abode with you." Follows right along with it. " '...That one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you.' " Now let's understand something. You can be ever so intelligent, you can have ever so many credentials that you desire, but you will never understand the Word of God unless the Holy Spirit teaches you. And the Holy Spirit will not teach anyone who does not keep the words of God. Now that's how God is able to teach His people. And yet with the same book, the same words, without the Holy Spirit, to close the minds of those who consider themselves to be the experts. It's a phenomenal thing that God has done.

* Please see Appendix H "Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase 'the Holy Spirit' as Antecedent in John 14, 15, and 16" page # 762 in *The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*.

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Now this is a promise: “ ‘...That one shall teach you all things...’ ” Now that’s why when you study and you let God speak to you because these are the words from God the Father. That’s why it’s important, you see. That’s why it’s profound. Who’s speaking to you? The Father is. And He gives you the power through the Holy Spirit to be taught.

Now let’s tie this in with another verse from John (John 6) and it goes right back to one of the very basic Scriptures that we have known and we’ve understood – John 6:44-45. And then we’ll see that John even repeats this again in I John 2. So this is quite a phenomenal thing, you see. So even though someone can read the word and explain the words and teach them to you, it’s not the operation of a teacher which really teaches you. It’s the operation of God the Father so that anyone who is doing the teaching is teaching the Words of God with the Spirit of God and you are hearing the Words of God, which builds your faith, as we have already covered, you see. And that it’s the Holy Spirit that is actually giving you the teaching. And it is actually God the Father Who is the one Who is teaching you. Now that is quite a phenomenal thing. Because if these are His words, which Jesus said they are, aren’t they? And if the Holy Spirit is going to teach you, it’s going to teach you the Father’s words.

Now here, John 6:44: “ ‘No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.’ ” Now since God is not teaching the whole world yet this applies to all those that God has called. They shall all be taught of God. See, that’s why Paul told Timothy, “Preach the Word”, because that’s going to teach you God’s way. How are you ever going to have the Word of God written in your heart and in your minds unless you’re taught the Word of God? And how is it going to stick there unless you have the Holy Spirit to put it there and put it in you? It isn’t going to be. That’s why the Protestants are forlorn over all of their great evangelistic campaigns and everything that they have. Six months after they have the people come forward and give their heart to the Lord they’re right back out in the world. So in order to retain those that they have, they have to say, “Well, you don’t have to keep the commandments of God,” and that pleases the carnal person, doesn’t it? But Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” It’s just the opposite, see, because they’re not being taught of God.

“Every man therefore that hath heard...” And you can put in there Romans 10:14 (*KJV*): “How can they hear without a preacher,” see, faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God. And the true teacher... You see the key to it is this: it’s not the man who is teaching. It is the one who is teaching using the Spirit of God and the Word of God to convey to you the Word of God so God the Father likewise can teach you. That’s what it’s all about. And that is the covenant that God has made with us through Christ. “Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father [not only learned information about Him, but learned from the Father], cometh unto Me” (John 6:44-45, *KJV*). That’s why for those who really want to know about God, and hunger and thirst after God, if they seek they shall find, if they knock it will be opened, Christ will deal with them, Christ will lead them. And you go back in your life and you think this: Why did one day the thing happen to me which brought me into the church of God? Why did that happen? Well, because God chose you. God sent part of the seven Spirits of God to be with you and lead you. God leads you to repentance. God leads you to baptism. God then gives you the begetting of the Holy Spirit from the Father and then you begin to develop the mind of Christ, you are taught of God the Father. That’s a tremendous thing. Now in view of that, let’s understand how important Sabbath services really are, and how important the Word of God really is.

Now let’s come back to 1 John 2 and let’s see what John wrote of concerning this very thing when confronted with the anti-Christ teachers. Now some people misconstrue what he’s written here, but it’s all in light of the anti-Christ who were going out and teaching the things contrary to the Word of God. Now isn’t that amazing? You can take the Word of God and teach things contrary to the Word of God, even use the Word of God in the wrong way and be an anti-

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Christ. That's because they add to and take away from, and give their own interpretation thereof.

Now I John 2:18: "Little children [now I suppose at about 90 years plus of age he was allowed to do that to the rest, right – little children?], it is the last time..." And the last days began when? When Christ came. "...And as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists..." And boy are they multiplied over and over again from then. "... Whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction..." which is an anointing of the Holy Spirit. That's what he likens to it when you receive the Holy Spirit. "... From the Holy One, and ye know all things" (I John 2:18-19, *KJV*). Now obviously you don't know all things that there is to know in the world, but you know all the things concerning the things necessary for salvation. And he's writing to those who have been in the church for years, and years, and years, and years. So if I could ask you a question: Do you know all the basic things concerning salvation? Yes, you do. Are there still more things to learn? Yes. That's what he's talking about here.

And he says: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." Now when he goes through all of this he explains even more here. Let's pick it up here, verse 26: "These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you [that is deceive you]. But the anointing which ye have received of Him [that is God the Father] abideth in you, and ye need not that any man [meaning of the antichrists] teach you..." because what will they teach you? They will teach you lies. "...But as the same anointing teacheth you of all things..." That's what we just read. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit will teach you all things. And it's really God the Father Who's teaching you through the power of the Holy Spirit, you see. "...And is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him [the Father]. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (verses 21-22, 26-28). So you see there is a special education that you go through.

Now with that let me ask you a question, if you understand this. Will you have incentive to study? Because if you do the Holy Spirit is going to teach you. Now there is a very interesting ad put out by the LDS's, which is quite clever, which has a note of truth. It shows starting out a baby, and then they show it growing up into an adult. And they're advertising the King James Bible but the kicker is they also want to send you the book of Mormon. So there's the deception in it. But what it does, it show this person through life and it's projected. You know how they can do on computers and show the age of the person. So this is what they did to this little baby clear up into the 70's. And the caption was, "So, you've had no time to study My word", showing a whole wasted life. But if you have the Spirit of God and understand that through the Spirit of God, God the Father is going to teach you, do you not have great incentive to study? Do you not then desire to study? And how silly, then, are our excuses that we didn't have time. Now wouldn't we be upset if God said, "I don't have time for you."? Well, with God dwelling in us through the power of the Holy Spirit then when we tell God we don't have time to study your Word, when it's the most important word possible because it comes from God the Father, see? So this will give us greater incentive.

Ok, now let's come back to John 14 (*FV*). We'll make a little progress here. After we get through about half way on John 15 we'll make pretty quick progress. But all these things are important, you see, because this is... When we come to the Passover and when we read these words for the covenant of the Passover, it's good that we understand them in the way that we are now so that we realize the whole meaning of the covenant and being renewed in that covenant on the Passover.

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Now we'll finish off verse 26: "...And shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you." And that's how the New Testament was written. Since they're the words of God, God the Father inspired them to write the words that He wanted. And as John said maybe they could have recorded every miracle that Jesus did and the world wouldn't be able to contain all the books. So we have everything that's essential here.

Now let's continue on, verse 27. Now with this we shift from faith into hope. Now that we have the Holy Spirit of God this gives us hope. Therefore he kind of repeats himself again here being in verse 27: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give *it* to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it fear." That's exactly how he started out in John 14:1: "Let not your heart be troubled." God doesn't want you to have worry, and fret, and stew, even though you have difficulties. Now we need to be concerned enough to do something about it – to pray about it, to study about it, to take action concerning whatever it may be. But He doesn't want us to be in anxiety and fear and let these things keep bothering us. Because remember, perfect love does what? Cast out fear. Now if the church of God, which it is supposed to be teaching the love of God, which it should, can you now understand how a terrible thing it is in God's sight if an organization claiming to be the church of God runs it by fear and not by love? Yes, because you're squelching love.

Ok, let's continue on, verse 28: "You have heard Me say to you that I am going away, and *that* I will come to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, 'I am going to the Father' because My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe." (verses 28-29).

Verse 30 is another big key: "I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming..." We're going to see a little bit later on through the Passover and the crucifixion, the ruler of this world was judged. Now he's also called Satan the devil that deceives the whole world, isn't he (Revelation 12:9)? You can just right these down as notes and put them in later. He's also called the god of this world, isn't he? Yes, indeed (II Corinthians 4:4). He's also called the prince of the power of the air, isn't he? Yes, that spirit that is inner-working in the children of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2-3).

We have a promise. Though we have to fight and war against the principalities and spirits and wicked spirits in high places, we need not fear. See, because it's much like what happened to Peter. Let's come to Luke 22:31. Now this is right during the Passover, see. This is what He told Peter: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat..." Now he did give in to Satan a couple times, didn't he? Yes, he did. "...But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Now that was not enough. To prove the point that Satan was after him He said, verse 33: "And he [that is Peter] said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death." Now could you accomplish any greater work for the Lord than doing that? Is this not willing to give up everything and even your life? Yes. Are we not supposed to be willing to give up our lives? That's true, yes. But this he was saying of himself, which means this: anyone of his own or her own self is not going to do anything for God separately from what God desires the person to do. What great work can we do for God? That's what it gets down to. If you go to prison because you've kept the commandments of God, that's one thing. But if you volunteer from a carnal point of view—"I'm ready to do this. I'm ready to do that. I'm ready to do the other thing." You know much like the suicide bombers of the Palestinians and the terrorists today. So what did Jesus say, verse 34: "And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me" (Luke 22:31-34, *KJV*). Did he learn a lesson from it? Yes, he did. Did he do it? Yes, he did. Did he repent of it? Yes, he did.

Now then, even though he did that and even though he gave in to it, this was not a sin unto death because he repented. However, we have a promise back here in I John 5, that if you

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yield to God and have the Spirit of God, Satan, though he may destroy the body cannot touch you. Remember what Jesus said? Don't fear him who is able to kill the body but is not able to kill the life. Fear Him Who is able to kill the body and the life in Gehenna. So even though we may go through the trials and troubles and tests and things even as Peter did and was prophesied by Jesus that he would, here's what we can count on, I John 5:18, *KJV*): "We know that whosoever is born [begotten] of God..." He says "begotten" down here in the next sentence and it's the same word. A little different tense of the word, but it means begotten. "...Of God sinneth not [that is he doesn't practice sin]; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself [that means in the way of the Lord], and that wicked one toucheth him not." So though we have to fight against Satan, fight against the world, fight against all these things, Satan can never really get to us. He might tempt us, he might try us, he might even get us to do sin, but then if we are truly Christ's and repent he can't touch us. In other words God has given us this assurance: Satan cannot take you from Him. That's something to remember. That's something to really know and understand and consider and realize that that's the assurance that we have.

Just like Jesus said of Himself back here to John 14:30 now: "...The ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me." And I imagine that Satan and all the demons figured, "Man, when Christ died we have foiled God's plan." But no, that which looked like utter defeat turned out to be the triumph over them because He was resurrected from the dead, correct? Yes. "Doesn't have a single thing in Me." And with Christ and with God the Father and Jesus Christ in us by the power of the Holy Spirit the wicked one doesn't touch us. And if we are in right standing with God and in covenant with God, he doesn't have a single thing in us.

Now you remember the account of the children of Israel in the wilderness? How they provoked God? How many times did they provoke God? Now let's look at an astounding thing here. Let's come to the book of Numbers with the account of Balaam. And you know that Balak hired Balaam to come and curse Israel. Now I am sure that we can look at the parallels here. And he finally had to tell the truth to Balak. And Balak said, "After all this money I've given you, you can't curse them?" But he did counsel him afterwards. "I can't curse them but you can send all of your beautiful women over there and entice them to commit adultery and eat things sacrificed to idols, and then God will have to correct them, but I can't curse them." You get that rest of the story in the book of Revelation 2.

But here in Numbers 23:20: "Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless: and He hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it." And that's an operation of grace. Now notice verse 21 after all that Israel did in sinning: "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel..." Now you see when God forgives sin that's the way He forgives it. Isn't that something? And that's the way God deals with us in relationship to Satan the devil. Because when we stand in the grace and we are under the grace of God there is no sin that Satan can accuse us of. That's why people who take grace and go out and make it lawlessness are going so contrary to God. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel [that's quite a statement after reading all the troubles they had up to that point, isn't it?]: the LORD his God *is* with him, and the shout of a king *is* among them. God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely *there is* no enchantment against Jacob, neither *is there* any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" Now also we can look at that as a prophecy of the church, can't we? Yes, indeed. Are we not the true Israel of God? Yes, indeed. "Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat *of* the prey, and drink the blood of the slain" (Num. 23:20-24, *KJV*). Just makes you wonder with physical Israel, is that what is going to happen in Iraq? Who knows. It also says in another place concerning physical Israel and Joseph in particular, that though the archers have shot sorely at him they weren't able to get him. See, it sounds like the world is ganging up on us to do that.

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Ok, let's come back here and we'll finish chapter 14 and we'll go ahead and end it here for today. So we have protection from Satan. Claim that protection. Ask God for that protection. The question is: How do we have the battle and yet we're protected at the same time? Very simply – God gives us the spiritual power to overcome it. And see, they will try and get us just like Balaam tried to curse Israel. And yes, we may go through difficulties. Yes, we wrestle against wicked spirits in high places and so forth like that, but they can't get us. We wrestle and fight back against them through the power and strength of Christ and the Holy Spirit, and that's how they cannot touch us. Though we wrestle them, though we battle them, they can't take us. "Touching" doesn't mean that we don't wrestle and fight against them in that particular sense. I think that "touching" there has from the point of view to have spiritual power and control over to nullify the Holy Spirit. That's what that would have to mean otherwise it would be a contradiction in itself.

Now verse 31, the last verse of John 14: "Yet *he comes...*" And why? Now did Satan get to Christ? Yes, he did. Did he kill Him? Yes, he did. Did he use human instrumentalities to do it? Yes, he did. But did he get to Him spiritually? No, he didn't. So that's the same example that we look to here, you see. So Satan cannot touch us spiritually. He can physically, but not spiritually. And yes, it may be a great trial to wrestle against wicked spirits in high places. See, but that's so that we turn to God and look to Him and claim His promises, and ask for the power of the Holy Spirit to be with us so that regardless of what Satan may attempt to do, or if people inspired by him may try to do and yea and even in some ways succeed in doing some things, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose and God will see us through it.

So I don't mean to imply by that or mean by any sense of the word that we are going to live a blissful life of non-combativeness against the wicked spirits of this world. No, we are in a spiritual battle. But as long as God is on our side and fighting for us and we use the tools of God and we use the sword of the Spirit, as it says there in Ephesians 6, which is the Word of God, they will be defeated just as surely as Balaam was when he tried to curse Israel, though Israel had all their sins and difficulties. So we can say likewise Satan is not able to really get to us, though we have our weaknesses and our sins that we lay before the altar of God and covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, he is not able to bring accusation against us though he tries. It says he accuses them day and night before the throne of God, but does God listen to him? No. Who does God listen to? To Christ who is advocating, correct? Yes. And if God the Father's Spirit and Christ be in us we shall overcome. There can be no question, no doubt about that.

Now it may take some time. That's why we have the experiences that we go through. And that's why God has given us the time that we have right now to go through the things that we are going through. And many times when we're fighting these battles and wrestling with these problems and difficulties we don't see the end. But with trust and faith in Christ and the promises... Now realize this: God does not lie. We can claim His promises. And when you come to a situation that you don't understand and you can't comprehend, you have to go to God and ask for understanding, see. You have to ask God to open your mind and give you understanding. "What is the lesson? What am I to learn? How do these things apply in my life?" And that's an awful lot of my prayer right now personally: "God, where are we? Where are we going? What are we doing? What do you want us to do? How do you want us to do?" Because one of the lessons that we have learned is this: we don't say, "This is the work of God," and run down the road and say, "This is the work of God, this is the work of God. And by the way God, since it's Your work You better bless it." No, we have to make sure that we're doing the will of God before we start down a road, and doing the things that please God. So that's why these things come upon us. So it all fits together. One is not a contradiction of the other and that's why we go through these things.

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Ok, let's finish the last verse here. "Yet *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father..." And sometimes you have to prove your love by giving your life. And isn't that the whole story, "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay his life for his friends."? We'll see this in chapter 15. "...And that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me. Arise, let us go out." So they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Well, we'll go ahead and end this tape here and see if we can make a little more progress next time.

End of Sermon

Transcriber Carolyn I. Singer

Scriptural References

John 14:18-31

Luke 24:36-45

I John 1:1

I Corinthians 3:16-18

Isaiah 66:1-5

Romans 8:9-11

Philippians 2:1-5

Psalms 19:127-128

Hebrews 1:8-9

John 6:44-45

Romans 10:14

I John 2:18-22, 26-28

Revelation 12:9

II Corinthians 4:4

Ephesians 2:2-3

Luke 22:31-34

I John 5:18

Numbers 23:20-24

PASSOVER PREPARATION # 4

March 15, 2003

This is Passover Preparation # 4 and we finished last time through John 14. We're going through John 14, 15, 16, and 17. In chapters 14 and 15 we'll go in much more detail than we will the others and in particular John 17 because John 17 is Christ's prayer and there's not too much in the way of comment that you want to add to that, after all that is His prayer.

So let's begin in John 15 (*FV*) and what we need to understand is this: that God wants us to have a direct living relationship with Him through the power of the Spirit. That's what God wants, based upon faith, based upon hope, based upon love. That's what God desires. He doesn't want religion because religion then puts you into a corporate relationship with a church entity and puts you into a laity ecclesiastical hierarchical relationship with the church leaders. God doesn't want that. He wants a direct, living relationship with Him by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, through prayer, through study, through how you live, how you think, how you conduct your life, in all of that. And within all of that you see, we are going to see as the Days of Unleavened Bread teach us that it is all a part of being perfected, and that's the important thing we need to understand.

Now let's begin in verse 1: " 'I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.' " So it is a collective work that they do together, as we showed last time, through the power of the Holy Spirit. " 'He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit...' " Because you see, with a living dynamic direct relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ you are going to be continually growing, continually overcoming. He does not want you to stagnate. God is the one Who handles all of these things and these problems, you see. God is the one Who makes the decision ultimately. That's why, as we'll see a little bit later on when we come to chapter 16, that if someone is excommunicated out of a synagogue or out of a church that doesn't mean they're cut off from God. In some cases it may mean the opposite. So God is the one Who does the final work. No man is going to do this work of God because Christ is the vine, the Father is the husbandman, and: "...every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit..." He takes away. " '... But He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit' " (John 15:1-2, *FV*). And you might put there that is the whole purpose and object of trials.

Now around here, living in the wine country, you're very familiar with the vines. And every year they trim back the vines. And you can tell how old the vineyard is by the size of the trunk of the grape plant. The bigger the trunk the older the vineyard and probably greater the quality of the grapes and hence the quality of the wine. But if you take a grapevine, of which we have one that we have for kind of an arbor over a little garden area that we have in our back yard. We just let it grow so we have shade and it covers [it] so we have these 20 foot long vine branches going out. Well, every year *bingo* – here come all these new green grapes. But they never produce anything because the vine has not been pruned. So the pruning that God does is to get rid of human nature so that you can produce more spiritual fruit. And it's so simple that He puts it in the terms of the vineyard.

Now let's look at our part on cleansing. Let's come to I John 1. We have our part. He stirs us up with the Holy Spirit. He takes away our sins when we repent. And here's how we are cleansed. And the cleansing is not a haphazard thing. It is not a partial thing. If your attitude is right and you're wholehearted toward God and you love God, it's going to be a complete work. As we all need to realize we are all a work in progress. And every year, just like the husbandman goes out to the vineyard and he trims off all the old dead branches so that it can have new branches in the spring and hence new fruit, so likewise every year we go through the same process with the Passover, don't we, so that we renew the covenant and we have that [right] standing before God.

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Now let's pick it up here in I John 1:6 (*KJV*). And this becomes a very important thing in relationship to whether you have a personal one-to-one direct living relationship with God, or whether you play church, or attend church, or have religion, or whatever it may be, you see. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth..." Why? Because if you walk in the light you're going to be doing something very profound.

Hold your place here and come to John 3, because there is something that you will always be doing regardless of your sin, regardless of your fault, regardless of your trial and difficulty that you are going through. Here is what you are always going to be doing: you're not going to be walking in darkness. Now let's pick it up here in verse 17: "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." That's the whole goal of what God wants. Ultimately the unrepentant sinners will have condemned themselves. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." So you can't be walking in darkness and saying that you have fellowship with God (you cannot be a Buddhist and have fellowship with God; you cannot be a Moslem and have fellowship with God; you cannot be a Catholic and have fellowship with God; and the Protestants probably have a half-hearted beginning fellowship with God, etc), because Christ is *the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life and there is no other way. And He also says what? "I am the light of the world."

Now notice: "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light..." Now we'll talk about hatred a little bit later on here. "...Neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." Because he doesn't want to change. Or as it could be: discovered. He does not want to discover that his human nature is inherently evil and poisonous by nature and that it needs to be changed. Now notice verse 21: "But he that doeth truth [that means practices the truth or does the truth] cometh [is coming] to the light..." Now this shows it's a continuous ongoing thing that you do. You are doing the truth, you are practicing the truth, you are coming to the light, and Christ is the light, you are continually coming to Him. And this is what it's all about. And this is what the New Covenant is all about and this is what our relationship with God is all about, you see. He's coming to the light: "... that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John 3:17-21, *KJV*). In other words the fruits of the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22); love, and hope, and joy, and peace, and longsuffering, and temperance, and goodness, and meekness and so forth, against such there is no law.

Now let's come back to I John 1 and finish this section here concerning cleansing and so forth and how God does this. It's really a wonderful and marvelous thing. And this is all a part of our relationship and standing with God. Now verse 7: "...but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light [and we might put in brackets John 3, because we are coming to the light], we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin [or every sin]." And that's the whole purpose of the Passover, that's the whole purpose of the words that Jesus is talking about – to cleanse you, but more important to keep you in a covenant relationship with God so that you have opportunity to have your sins continually cleansed through Christ Who is our propitiation. And that is the act of grace under which we live, you see.

"If we say that we have no sin [that is, we don't have a sinful nature], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And isn't it interesting that those people who believe that men are inherently good rather than inherently evil, they have no room for the truth of God.

These are living things. The Word of God is living. It applies everywhere, at all times, in all circumstances. "If we confess our sins [and this does not mean to the priest, but to God], He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John

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1:7-9, *KJV*). That's how the relationship with God works. That's why Jesus said, as we'll read in just a minute, "Now you are clean through the words which I have spoken." because you believe them, because you act upon them, because you live with them and it's part of your being. So that puts us in the standing with God that there is no condemnation [in spite] of the fact that we have human nature.

Now that's the individual work, you see. Now there's the also the collective work. Jesus said, "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, teaching them whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you till the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20, *paraphrased*). And it's still being done through the Word of God. If we are preaching what God has spoken, then we are giving you what God would give you if He were to talk in your ear, you see, and likewise with the words of Christ and the writings of the apostles, because He said that, "You would be witnesses for Me to the ends of the earth." And that could only be accomplished through having the New Testament written, because they didn't get to the ends of the earth. They covered a gigantic area, but even they didn't know until a few years before they died, with the exception of the apostle John, that time was going to go on way beyond their lifetimes. They didn't know that until the last few years.

Now let's come back to John 15 (*FV*). So this is why God does it. So when you have a trial or you are overcoming human nature and you have this spiritual battle within, know that God is doing this to cleanse you. That's why there is repentance, that's why there is prayer, that's why we ask every day, "Forgive us our sins and our debts." Now verse 3: " 'You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you.' " Now how does that work? How do the words cleanse you? It's accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now let's look at two things in how that's done. Let's come to John 7 because the Holy Spirit is likened unto water. Let's pick it up here in verse 37: "In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:37-39, *KJV*).

Now let's come to Ephesians 5 and see what the Holy Spirit and the words do together and how it's phrased here in Ephesians 5. Very interesting expression. And he's talking concerning Christ and the church. Let's pick it up here in verse 25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify [it]..." So here's what Christ is doing to the church: sanctifying her, or that is making it holy, "...and cleanse it [He said, "Now you're clean through the words which I have spoken] with the washing of water by the word..." (Eph. 5:25-26, *KJV*). Very interesting process that takes place, isn't it. Why? When you confess your sins and repent to God, you study the Word of God, you feel relieved. Have you ever felt greatly relieved when you really know that you have repented? What is that relief? That is a cleansing. That's what that is.

So when Jesus said, "You are clean through the words which I have spoken to you," now because of that then here is a direct living relationship. And from verse 4 down through verse 11, all of this is building to what we find in John 17. Now let's begin here, John 15:4. I don't mean to throw around so many scriptures that you get lost as to where we are. I don't want to do that.

" 'Dwell in Me...' " So it's a living and dwelling relationship. It's direct because He is the vine and we are the branches and we are dwelling in Him. I mean you can't get any more direct than that, can you? No. " 'Dwell in Me, and I in you.' " And as we've seen that's by the power of the Holy Spirit. " 'As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself...' " And that's interesting because it means the impossibility of having the power to produce any spiritual fruit on your

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own. It can't do it of itself. " '...But only if it remains in the vine [and He's the vine], neither can you bear fruit unless you are dwelling in Me.' " So I want you, as we go down, circle the word "dwell," "remain," "dwelling," because all of those are reflective of the same Greek verbs.

Verse 5: " 'I am the vine, and you are the branches.' " And many people never understand that and come up and proclaim that they are God. You know like Yahweh ben Yahweh, remember that down in Florida, what 15 years ago? He ended up that he really thought he was God, and he authorized other people to kill people that he didn't like. No, "I am the vine, and you are the branches." You know, the Pope ought to learn that. He's not in place of Christ. As a matter of fact he's another plant. You might say the wild vine, not connected to Christ at all.

" 'The one who is dwelling [there it is again] in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit [all the fruits of the Spirit, all the things we need to do]; because apart [or that is, severed] from Me you can do nothing.' " (John 15:4-5, *FV*). That's why no one can do the work of God without Christ in him. Now many have tried to do the work of God. Let God do the work in you, and then let Him do His work through you if that's what God wants.

Now let's look again at this situation concerning "dwelling in Christ." Now sometimes dwelling in Christ we find ourselves in a nonproductive way, don't we? And that also fits into the parable that the ten virgins, they all slumbered and slept. And this shows that there is sometimes need for a revival. Luke 13:6: "He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold [Look] these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it [why does it take up the space in] the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it..." So sometimes we need some digging and dunging. And God will inspire us to do that if we go astray from God for an extended period of time. Now notice here it's three years he's been coming. But the digging and dunging also shows the mercy of God, that He doesn't want to give up on us. And you might say that the man who owned the fig tree in the vineyard was God the Father, and the man who was tending the garden was Christ. See, so Christ says, "No, don't cut this one off yet, don't dig it up yet. Let's dig and dung." So if you need a little "d-n-d" in your life, dig out the sin and dung in the Word of God, as it were, for a spiritual fertilizer to get you to produce some good things. "...And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down" (Luke 13:6-9, *KJV*). So this ties right in with the parable concerning God the Father, because when we started out here it says, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away." So this is of God the Father.

Let's come here to John 15 (*FV*) again and let's continue on in verse 6. Now here again we are going to see some more "if's." And as I have been mentioning, as we go through circle the little "if's." Verse 6: " 'If [there's one of them] anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up...' " And we've seen this operation take place within the church of God, haven't we? Yes, indeed. See, the scattering can be likened unto the hoeing and dunging. And how are the fruits going to be produced then? What is going to happen, and if you are not in Christ, see: " 'If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up...' " And we've seen that happen to people too, haven't we? Because in the history of the church that I read in a book by Gipp (and he is a staunch Baptist that believes that there is absolutely nothing wrong whatsoever with the translation of the King James Version), but he has a good insight in the churches, which is this: Churches start out evangelical, that is, like going and preaching the gospel to the world and so forth. And then they grow. They reach a certain stage of growth. And then they begin developing into institutions. That is, they begin building buildings and schools, and people are attracted to these things because it's an institution. Well that happened to us, for those of you who were in Worldwide Church of God, correct? Yes. And it became an institution and people were attracted to the institution rather than being called of

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God. So you had a lot of branches hanging in there that weren't rooted in Christ, but they were rooted in the institution and in the corporation. And they were not only members but also ministers, because then the ministry became a job rather than a service to the people, you see. And it was for the value of a living and paycheck rather than for the value of teaching people the way of God. So there has to be these pruning and trimmings. There has to be these hoeing and dungings because that's the way we are going to be tested and tried and proved, or disproved.

And sometimes when you meet people who have been cast off as a branch and have withered up, and you meet them and talk to them (maybe you meet them in the mall, you're shopping, or in the grocery store) and it is just like talking to a dead branch, isn't it? And sometimes – even the comment has been made by some who have known severe cases of this – that you look into their eyes and their eyes are virtually dead. So these are living things that we are going through.

So if you are not dwelling in Christ... There's that word again. We can circle that. We are going to have a lot of circles, aren't we? Well, make some squares, some circles, you know what ever you need, some underlines. “ ‘...Cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned.’ ” Now verse 7: “ ‘If you dwell in Me (the branch and the vine), and My words dwell in you...’ ” So that's where it has to be because that's the whole purpose of the covenant, isn't it? Isn't that the whole purpose as to why God has called us? That's the reason we renew the covenant so that the words of Christ can dwell in us, because humanly speaking without the Spirit of God there is no place in our minds for the Word of God, because our carnal nature is made of such a way that unless we are converted there is no room for God.

Now let's go to Hebrews 10. “My words dwell in you.” Now there's a way that they get there. And I'll tell you one thing, you never have the Word of God dwelling in you unless you study it, can you? How do you get what is in your mind unless you put it in there. I have not baptized anyone yet and attached a funnel hole so that after they are baptized we can stick a funnel there and just run it in. It doesn't happen. It's a process. It is a perfecting. That's why it is a living relationship. But here in Hebrews 10:16 it says: “...This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them...” And you might put – if you desire them. God isn't going to force it upon anyone. He's given that choice to us. If we choose to do so He will write them in our hearts and our minds. Now notice in verse 17: “...and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more [animal] offering for sin.” That's the meaning of it because you have the sacrifice of Christ. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh...” (Heb. 10:16-20, *KJV*).

See, so this again shows a living relationship. And if the words of Christ are dwelling in us, or living in us, and they are written in our hearts and our minds by the washing of the water of the word through the power of the Holy Spirit by prayer, by study, by faith, and by living God's way, that's the whole process of what you call conversion. Now that's different than belonging to a church where you zoom in and in 45 minutes all is said and done and you are out the door and that's it until next week. That is distinctly playing church. It's not what you do when you come into the assembly of the building called a church, because you as part of the vine are the church. It's what you do constantly with your life every day. So this is quite profound. Quite profound.

Back to John 15:7 (*FV*) now: “ ‘If you dwell in Me and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire...’ ” And of course that has to be according to the will of God. You don't ask God to sin for you, if I could put it that way. You don't ask God to do something that, if you did, would be sin. You don't say, “God, kill my enemy.” You say, “God, I commit

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to you the judgment of my enemy.” It’s a different thing, isn’t it? God will take care of the enemies. I’ve had enemies come after me. God has taken care of them in His own way. So this “whatever you desire” has to be according to God’s will. But the greatest desire that we need to have is what? What is the greatest desire? To be in the kingdom of God, right? That’s the greatest desire above everything else. “ ‘...And it shall come to pass for you.’ ”

Now verse 8: “In this [or herein, or by this means] is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.’ ” And of course we’ve already covered that. There’s the individual fruit of personal growth and overcoming. There’s the individual fruit of doing the work that God wants done by those who are teachers and leaders and so forth.

Now, once the fruit has been produced let’s not make a mistake. Here’s the Laodicean mistake and it has disastrous results. Luke 12:15: “And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness...” And boy, that’s something we need to be aware of today more than anything else, because there’s more things out there you desire that can be had that you can get. So if you have them don’t set your heart on them. Be thankful, appreciate them, take care of them, thank God for them, but don’t set your hearts on them because they’re all temporary. “... For a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Boy, is that talking about our age or not? Yes, it is. “And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully...” See, so when we have an increase in fruits or growth or whatever, let’s not do as the rich man did. Instead of giving credit to God and maybe perhaps giving it to those who had need, he became very selfish. It’s like the one man that I related to you that I was riding in his car, which was a Rolls Royce, the big expensive model, and he looked at me and said, “I don’t believe in tithing.” I about fell on the floor. Very similar attitude here, isn’t it?

“And he thought within himself...” He didn’t pray to God and ask for guidance, did he? Now we’ve all done it, haven’t we? We’ve all thought within ourselves and made our own decisions without praying about it and what happens? It doesn’t come out right, does it? “...Saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow [store] all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul [You’ve got it made buddy.], Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.” Now we’ve seen that on the stock market recently, haven’t we? Everybody poured their money into all of these things and it was all a lie, and all ballooned up, and many people said, “Hurray, I’ve got it made, I’m going to retire.” And *bam*, it’s gone. See, a very similar thing. “But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” Who are they going to go to? And a rich man never wants to leave it, but he can never take it. And even the Pharaoh’s who figured, “Well, I’ll take it with me in my pyramid.” The thief figured out how to get in and take it anyway. At the funeral of a rich man someone said, “Well how much did he leave?” And someone looked at him and said, “All of it.” See, so then here’s the lesson: “So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself [that’s how he is], and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:15-21, *KJV*). So you have to be rich in faith. It doesn’t matter what your personal wealth is. See, personal wealth is not going to get anybody into the kingdom of God. Spiritual riches will.

Now let’s come back to John 15 (*FV*). So if you bear much fruit give God all the credit because you couldn’t do it without Him anyway. And besides, you know, if we understand that we’re just sojourners here in the earth, and that is we just have custodianship over what has been given. In other words we’re just stewards. God owns it anyway. You can hold and possess gold and silver but God says, “All the gold and all the silver is Mine.” You can own lands and properties and houses but God says, “The earth and the fullness thereof is Mine.” So if we produce fruit spiritually then that is a great and marvelous thing and so shall you be the disciples of Christ.

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Now let's come to verse 9. Notice then how He gives us hope through His love: " 'As the Father has loved Me [now you can't have any greater love than that], I also have loved you; live in My love.' " Now that has the same meaning as "dwells." We have dwell, remain, dwelling, dwelling, dwell, dwell, dwell, now we have live. Live in My love. That's the ultimate of what we are to do, you see. That's what the perfection of things that we go through are to do. When you go through sorrow and difficulty and problems and traumas and desperations, that is all to teach you the value of the love of God, because then you realize that the love of God is the only great and remaining and lasting thing that there is. Isn't that true? Yes, indeed.

Ok, verse 10: " 'If you keep My commandments...' " Now that goes right back to chapter 14 and verse 13, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." " 'If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love...' " Because it's an ongoing thing. You know, I John 5 says, "Herein is the love of God, that we love the children of God and keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:2-3, *paraphrased*). This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. " '...And [you] live in His love.' " And that's the hardest thing because we as human beings have a nature that is bent on carnality and hatred and sin, and so this is a complete opposite thing that God is expecting us to do, which He knows that we can't do without His Spirit, and that we can't accomplish without living within Him and always remaining in the vine, you see. " '...Just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love.' " So that's the relationship.

" 'These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you...' " So we're going to be dwelling in Him, His Spirit in us, His words in us, and now His joy in us. " '...And *that* your joy may be full. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you.' " And He said that back in John 13:34. So the commandments fall in this order: love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being; love the brethren as Christ has loved them; love your neighbor as yourself; and love your enemy. Now there are the four descending orders of love from God. And all of those require keeping the commandments of God, you see. And that's to bring us the joy, that's to bring us the love.

Now here then becomes the epitome and the ultimate of it, verse 13: " 'No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.' " He's talking about Himself and what He is going to do. How He is going to do it. Proverbs says a friend loves at all times. Proverbs also says the wounds of a friend are to be desired rather than the kiss of the enemy because it's to help you.

Now verse 14: " 'You are My friends, if ...' " There's that word again. We've got actually four of them. Verse 6, verse 7, verse 10, and now verse 14. " '...If you do whatever I command you.' " I mean this is a great and tremendous thing. We are the friend of Jesus Christ. Abraham was called the friend of God. We are the friends of God. You know, why should you ever be discouraged and down to the point that you are ready to throw in the towel and give up when you realize that Christ is your friend. No, never. And that's all a part of the New Covenant and the relationship that we have with God.

See, what is so important is this, brethren: When we look at what Christ is teaching us here, if you as a branch remain in the vine, guess what? No man can take you away. The only one that takes away is the Father. And that's important. This also shows us something very profound too. That there is such a thing as a falling away or a drying up, and there is such a thing as a lake of fire because the branches are burned, correct? Yes, indeed. So all of these are very profound and important in connection with our relationship with God. And in connection with how we respond to God and live in Christ and dwell in His words, and His words in us, His Spirit in us, and all of this together, you see.

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Ok, let's continue on here. 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.' " And that is obviously all the things necessary for salvation. Verse 16 is the key: " 'You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you...' " This helps end the argument about someone appointing himself to do the work of God. You don't choose God to do a work for Him. You don't choose God so that He must save you. God chooses you. " '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 [there it is again] you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you.' " So here's the fourth promise of answered prayer right within the chapters that we have, you see. And this becomes an essential and profound part of what we are doing in our relationship with God.

Now then, does this mean that no one can seek God? No, it doesn't mean that at all. Let's see some other things here that Christ has taught that we find here. Let's come to Isaiah 55. Let's see something very important. Yes, we can seek God. And yes, He will hear us and answer us. And yes, if we repent and yield to God, He will choose us. But we can't demand of God, we can't force upon God, we can't command of God, but we can seek God. And we seek God on His terms, not on our terms. A lot of people like to seek God on their terms. "God, if You'll do this for me, I'll repent." That's backwards. Repent and then let God decide what He's going to do.

Now Isaiah 55, let's go to verse 1 because here's the invitation: "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters..." Christ is the living waters, isn't He? Yes, He is. "...And he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat..." It costs nothing to do the things spiritually. The Holy Spirit of God is a gift. And after all the whole purpose and the whole meaning as we know of concerning the Passover is eating and drinking Christ, isn't it? Yes, it is. He said, "I am the true bread which came down from heaven. And any man that believes on Me shall never hunger and shall never thirst." So this is what it's talking about here. This is a prophecy of the gospel. "...Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Now this is all spiritual. You have the strong meat and the strong drink, don't you? You also have the milk – the milk of the word for babes.

"Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread?..." That's for people chas-ing off on religions that have nothing to do with God. "...And your labour for *that which* satisfieth not?" And I think about labor here in this particular situation... How many have seen on some of these documentaries showing, say, like the Tibetan religion. Now there is a certain pil-grimage that different of the men do which is this: they put on certain garments and they have certain things to cover their hands and their knees, and they walk so many steps while they are praying. And this prayer is just kind of a repeat, you know, *mla-mla-mla-mla-mla*, and then they prostrate themselves on the ground and say another prayer. And then they get up and they take a few more steps, and they do this for mile after mile, after mile, after mile, which is labor. Wouldn't you say that is labor? Labor for something that profits not, and you finally end up at this big Tibetan temple.

Or, you can say the same thing even in churches that call themselves Christian. How many have been so busy with activities – and part of the psychology of keeping people locked into a status of playing church, or living church, or being part of a church is to give them work to do. Keep them busy. Have this activity going, put so-and-so in charge of it, and do this and do that and do the other, and get them so busy that they forget about God even in a church which professes God. And that's why there is a great movement even among Protestant churches to stay at home. You can go on-line and read about "Home to Home," or "House to House." I forget what it is. But anyway that's why when we finally get around to doing "Church at Home" there will be a big nitch for it to fill. We're not going to be like the others. We're not

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going to talk about things that human beings relate to in griping and complaining about the church that they just left because they're almost as dead at home as they were when they were in this church that they are complaining about. No, we're going to tell them that at home what you need to do is right here – seek God. And we'll show them what the Word of God is. We have to start out with the milk but we're going to bring them up to speed as quickly as we can. We'll go from milk into chopped liver and then into steak, if I can put it that way.

Now notice, here is what you do to solve the problem of “laboring for that which satisfies not.” “...Hearken diligently unto Me...” Listen to God. And of course that's the whole thing through the whole Bible – “If you will hear My voice.” “...And eat ye *that which is good*, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” Now that is in the richness of the Word of God. “Incline your ear [don't be hard-headed and unwilling and stubborn], and come unto Me [so you have to come to God]: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.” Now that's really a bargain, isn't it? God is saying, “I'm going to give you eternal life and it's not going to cost you a cent. It's going to cost you yourself.” That's what it's talking about.

Verse 4: “Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people [who was also a type of Christ]. Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.” Now this goes into the glorification of Christ, preaching the gospel and all of those things going out to the Gentiles who then become grafted in, etc., etc. All of those things are there in this verse.

Now verse 6: “Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near...” So we can seek God. God is near. He's not way off. And here's how you do it: “...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts [showing repentance and conversion and change of mind and change of heart and that's what it's all about]: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” Now that's a great and fantastic promise, isn't it? Now this is not the way that people normally think. So that's why He says in verse 8: “For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways My ways, saith the LORD.” So it's kind of foolish if we think we are going to do something for God our way, right? I mean when you really get in and go through the Bible and understand it, it makes everything clear, doesn't it? Yes, indeed.

Verse 9: “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” See, that's why the Word of God is spiritually understood. That's what's important. There is no way, which they have tried to do in the *Contemporary Bible*, remember I brought that to you and read a little bit out of that. That contemporary message is absolutely blasphemous. But what they try and do in the translations is this: instead of faithfully translating the Word of God so that it conveys what God wants, what they do, they say, “We have all of these unbelievers out here that don't know the Word of God, so how can we convey it to them in a contemporary language that they will receive it?”

Well, what is happening when they do that then is that they are taking away the spiritual power and punch and meaning from the Word of God to try and make it comprehensible to someone who is antagonistic against the Word of God. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. That's why in translating, it needs to be that the words are faithfully translated because the words that were originally given were given in such a way that it universally applies to all people at all times in all circumstances in any part of the history of the scope of man. Then let God do His work with His Spirit of calling people.

Now God is not going to be left out of the equation at all because He says verse 10: “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the

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earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth..." And that's the whole point of anything concerning the Word of God. These are the Words of God that came out of His mouth that He inspired to be written, therefore they should be translated in such a way that it still projects the Word of God. "...It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:1-11, *KJV*). God is going to make it happen.

Now let's come back here to John 15. No, no we are not going back to John 15 yet. Let's talk about seeking God. That's what we're looking to. Let's go to Psalm 63. Here's how we are to seek God. This is the attitude. When we come to this understanding, which is very important and profound that we need to come to, which is this: every day is a new day. Everything we did yesterday has already been spent and exhausted and there's nothing more we can do. What we do today will affect what we do tomorrow, but you can't wait until tomorrow to do everything. So in relationship to God here's the best way to do it: take each day as a new day, and each day if possible, as if you're waking up in the middle of a desert.

Now let's begin Psalm 63: "O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek Thee..." This needs to be the attitude. There is no person on earth who attempts to seek God in this manner and will not find Him. I don't care where he is, what nationality he is, what the circumstances are in his life – if he truly does this, God will answer because God is God. Remember how we showed how that the seven Spirits of God are going through the earth seeking those who are seeking Him? Yes. "...Early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is..." (Psa. 63:1, *KJV*). You know, you can tie that in with what we read there... Here hold your place here. We'll come back to it.

Let's come to John 6 because here's the answer of that. Christ is the answer. You've heard, you know Billy Graham has said. "Christ is the answer." And then he tells you that the church of your choice you attend is the answer. Christ *is* the answer, but here is how this is fulfilled, you see. John 6:35 (*KJV*), you come to Christ. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." So if you are coming after God, as it says here in Psalm 63, as in a dry and thirsty land, you are going to be filled. Your thirst is going to be quenched. The satisfaction of God's Spirit is going to fill you.

Now notice he says, "where no water is." And that's just the way this world is. It doesn't have any of God's Spirit. It's out there just like a dry vast desert. But here's what he wanted to do. He wanted the eternal life. See, that was his driving force. And that's what we need to have concerning the New Testament and renewal of the New Covenant when we take the Passover. The driving force behind it is eternal life. And that comes through Christ. And that must always be in front of us, just like it is here, you see. "...[That I may] see Thy power and Thy glory (and we know Revelation 22 says we're going to see Him face to face), so *as* I have seen Thee in the sanctuary. Because Thy lovingkindness *is* better than life..." It is better to know God, better to have the love of God, and to have the lovingkindness of God than to live in the world. Or as it says there in the Proverbs concerning a poor man that has his bread, but righteousness, you see.

"Thus will I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in Thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as *with* marrow and fatness (and that is just talking about the depths of the understanding of the Word of God); and my mouth shall praise *Thee* with joyful lips: when I remember Thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on Thee in the *night* watches." See, many times you will have tremendous spiritual experiences at night. That will happen. "Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after Thee..." That's how we need to follow God. Not in a lazy hap-hazard way. Come-see, come-saw. "Well,

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if I pray that's ok. If I don't pray, that's ok. Well, if I study, that's ok. If I don't study, that's ok." No. "My soul followeth hard after Thee: Thy right hand upholdeth me" (Psa. 63:2-8, *KJV*). See, that's the attitude that we need to have.

Now turn back to Psalm 62 and see what this leads to. Let's pick it up in verse 5: "My soul, wait thou only upon God..." Notice the single-mindedness. Notice the attitude toward God. "...For my expectation *is* from Him. He only *is* my rock and my salvation: *He is* my defence; I shall not be moved." See, that's something. Do you have your mind set that way, that you will not be moved? That's what we need to have. "In God *is* my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, *and* my refuge, *is* in God" (Psa. 62:5-7, *KJV*).

Now hold your place here and turn back to Psalm 57. And here's where we need to come in our lives and our hearts and our minds toward God, you see. Notice what he said here, Psalm 57:7 (*KJV*): "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed..." See, you believe God to the very depths of the morrow of your bones. See, "My heart is fixed."

Now come back here to Psalm 62:8 (*KJV*). When your heart is fixed then you have faith, and faith from God. And you will do this: "Trust in Him at all times (that means regardless of whatever the circumstances may be); *ye* people, pour out your heart before Him (always go to prayer to God): God *is* a refuge for us." Now when you do that then you will come to a situation that is most profound. You will understand the world. And you will realize that the spiritual things of God are forever, and everything else doesn't count. Notice verse 9: "Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of high degree *are* a lie (We've seen that, haven't we? Yes, yes): to be laid in the balance, they *are* altogether *lighter* than vanity." You'll understand that's the way the world is. "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them.*" We've already talked about that. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power *belongeth* unto God. Also unto Thee, O Lord, *belongeth* mercy: for Thou renderest to every man according to his work" (verses 8-12). So all of those things have to do with seeking God, and those are the ones that God is going to choose. Because as Christ told them, "I have chosen you, you have not chosen Me." Well this then is how you seek God, and how God makes His choice. He does it because of this attitude and this seeking of God.

Now let's come back to John 15:16 (*FV*): " '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...' " And this is meaning "unto eternal life" because if it doesn't result in eternal life then it's at the end whenever we pass on. " '...So that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you.' " Verse 17: " 'These things I command you, that you love one another.' " Now notice how many times He said, "Love one another." Now He said that because it's not an easy thing to do with those that He calls. Why? Because we're all called from different backgrounds, different walks of life, different everything. And when you get – and I hate to use the word "diverse" because that is a politically acceptable word in the world today – but when you get a composite of many different people from many different backgrounds, with many different personalities and many different ages and experiences and types of work, it is difficult to love one another. It's easy to love your own flesh because they're part of you. It's difficult to love someone else that is not loveable. And many of us are not loveable because God called us because we are weak, you see. So that's why we need to work on loving one another constantly. Love doesn't come naturally, but God has put us in a situation where that according to the circumstances of the world and our natural inclinations we're going to be what? In a very unnatural situation, aren't we? So it's the Holy Spirit of God that gives us the love of God and also gives us the love of each other. So what we need to do is constantly ask God to help us love Him and love each other. And part of that includes what is called the word "forbearance." You know what forbearance is. Forbearance is putting up with the idiosyncrasies of someone else that you don't particularly care for those idiosyncrasies because they don't hit you just right. You know what I mean?

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So how do we handle it? We have forbearance. We have understanding. And if we love each other maybe some of those things will change, won't they? It's like anything else – if you know you're loved, your behavior is different, isn't it? If you know you're not loved, your behavior is also different, isn't it? So that's why He told us, "Love one another." He said, "This I command you: love one another. Love one another as I have loved you." And the reason He said it over and over again is because it's a difficult proposition for the people of God to really do. So we need to really take that to heart and really have the forbearance, and have the love, and have the understanding, and accept each other for what we are and let God do the changing for the things that need to be changed. God can do that. There is no problem with that, you see.

Now verse 18: " 'If (and of course there's another one of those "if's") the world hates you (and you know that it will), you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own.' " And you see, that is what is so blasphemous and damnable about the *Contemporary Message*, the new Bible just put out. And by the way it's sold by CBD. Amazing! I wonder if they'll sell mine? (*Laughter*) Probably not. I'm not concerned about it.

But you see, they want to get it to a world where then the world will love what that says because it's not really the Word of God. "The world will love it's own." So you need to understand this: don't go out of your way to offend people, but just realize that sooner or later differences and problems are going to come. You know, like the first thing when people find out that you keep the Sabbath and holy days, what's the first thing they ask you? If they find out about the Sabbath first they say, "Are you Seventh-Day Adventist?" Then they find out about the Passover and the holy days and they say, "Are you a Jew?" Then you tell them you're not and they're completely frustrated. They don't know what to do because the world is used to hearing what it has been told. And you may lose some friendships over it, you see, because the world will love it's own.

" 'However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this' "(verse 19). Now as long as they perceive us as nice and good and kind and that sort of thing, that's fine. But you see, when you go out and start preaching the truth of God there's going to be some hatred come along, is there not? Yes, indeed. When you stand for the truth the world's going to hate you. So isn't it something if the world hates us and we don't love each other, we're really in trouble, aren't we? I mean think about that. That's why He said, "Love one another." And then He said, "The world's going to hate you." The world's not going to love you. So the message is, is that if you don't love God and love each other – question: How much love is in your life? See, none. And we've experienced trying to play church without love, haven't we? And we've experienced trying to play church by law rather than grace, haven't we? And it's manifest: the letter of the law kills, but the Spirit gives life. And that's what we're talking about in all of this here. You see this is so important.

Now let's come to I John 4 and see about the world loving it's own. And if you want a message that is accepted by the world you've got to preach the way the world preaches. That's why when they heard Christ preach they were astounded because He spoke with authority, not as the scribes. And wherever the apostles went to preach the Word of God, what was it said of Paul, "Here come these men that turn the world upside down." Yes, the world likes to hear what it wants to hear. But when someone comes along and says, "God says, and this is what God means, and this is what you are commanded to do," then the world hates you.

Now notice what the world likes, and it comes from false spirits. Let's pick it up here in I John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God (because Satan appears as an angel of light and all that sort of thing): because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Which says what? False spirits come with false prophets. That's why they have a spiritual impact. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that

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confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist..." which then is the spirit of the world. The spirit of the world is the spirit of antichrist. "...Whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them..." So if you have come out of the world, you've overcome them, don't go back. "...Because greater is he that is in you (that is Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit), than he (Satan the devil) that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Now we're not of the world. That's why we're hated of the world. "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we (that is, perceive and understand) the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (or the spirit of deception)" (I John 4:1-6, *KJV*). That's how we understand, you see.

So, let's go ahead and end here and we'll pick it up next time beginning in verse 19.

End of Sermon

Transcriber Carolyn I. Singer

Scriptural References

John 15:1-19
I John 1:6-9
John 3:17-21
Galatians 5:22
Matthew 28:19-20
John 7:37-39
Ephesians 5:25-26

Luke 13:6-9
Hebrews 10:16-20
Luke 12:15-21
I John 5:2-3
Isaiah 55:1-11
Psalm 63:1-8
John 6:35

Psalm 62:5-12
Psalm 57:7
I John 4:1-6

PASSOVER PREPARATION # 5

March 22, 2003

This is number five in preparation for the Passover. What we are doing, we are covering the words of the New Covenant as found in John 14, 15, 16, and 17. And you can also look at this, as we have seen, as a letter from Christ. You can put another way, this is a “love letter” from Christ, as well as instructions to us on how we are to live. Because once we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, then we are to develop through prayer, study, and living – a direct, living, relationship with God. And as we have seen in the first part of John 15 (*FV*), that this is hope and love. He tells you to, verse 9: “ ‘...Live in My love. If you keep My commandments you shall live [or that is abide, and remain] in My love...’ ” And that’s something you have to do. And you have to work at it. Love is not natural to the carnal mind. That’s why the fruits of the Holy Spirit – let’s go back to Galatians 5 and let’s see. Yes, people can have a carnal love of family, of nation and so forth, but not the kind of spiritual love that God wants us to have; and we are to live in that love. What comes naturally, and the love that comes from the world then is all the things which come out of human nature.

And so in Galatians 5:19 it talks about the works of the flesh, which are the things then we are to overcome in this living relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” And we need to understand that we cannot produce in our lives without the Spirit of God, and without a direct living relationship, we cannot produce the love of God, unless we are constantly going to God, constantly yielding to Him, constantly repenting and changing and growing.

Verse 22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love...” So that can only come from God. That true love, love of the Father and so forth, love of each other, can only come from God. And as I mentioned last time, there are four categories of love: 1) Love toward God. You love Him with all your heart and mind and soul and being. 2) Love toward the brethren, that you are to love them as Christ has loved them, which requires an awful lot of forbearance. Because from the different backgrounds, and the fact that we are the weak of the world, it is difficult for us to have love period, let alone love each other. Because in the world it is more natural to judge, to criticize, and all these things; as Jesus said, “Judge not, lest you be judged. For with what judgment you judge you’re going to be judged” (Matthew 7:1-2, *paraphrased*). And that is all carnality. God wants us to have forbearance. If God has called someone with a problem, does God know it? Well of course. That’s a silly question. How are we to handle it? We are to have forbearance.

So let’s finish the fruits of the Spirit here, and then we will amplify that a little bit more. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering...” And that’s part of forbearance. We are to forebear each other in love. “...Gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance [then which is self-control]; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” And that’s a daily thing we need to do. And human nature is going to be there, and it’s going to rear its ugly head, and so forth, and it’s going to keep coming. But we need to keep going to God in repentance and yieldedness to God; acknowledge our faults and our mistakes, and confess to God. He forgives them, and we need to do likewise with each other.

Now notice verse 25: “If we live in the Spirit [that’s how we are to live], let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:19-25, *KJV*) That’s why the relationship with God cannot be just study and prayer, but it has to be living. And in the living comes the difficulty, the mental diffi-

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culties, because we all live between our ears in growing and overcoming, in bringing every thought into captivity to Christ, and having the Word of God written in our hearts and our minds.

Now let's come back to John 15 (*FV*) and let's come down to verse 17: "These things I command you..." Now you go back and you can read the rest of it there what we have covered on number four. "These things I command you, that you love one another." Now that's a command. If you think the Sabbath is a command, try this one on. This is greater, is it not? If you think we ought to keep the holy days, this is greater, isn't it? Yes. So what do we need to do when we see someone who is a brother or sister in Christ that has a fault or a problem? Let's come to I John 5. Let's look at that. Here's what we are to do. Sometimes it will take a lot of prayer. Sometimes it will take quite a while to do it. Things are not accomplished overnight. Everyone that God has called is a work in progress, in varying degrees or other. But God still loves us, because Jesus said that He loves us, and He said the Father loves us, and so that is where we retain our faith and our hope and our love, because it comes from God and is of God, and that's the whole purpose of our covenant, which the Passover pictures. This is why He gave these words on the Passover night.

"If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death..." Now that's anything but the unpardonable sin. What are you to do? Judge them? Criticize them? Talk behind their back? Talk to each other about it? Complain about it? Criticize it? What are you to do? "...He shall ask..." That means he shall pray for the individual. Perhaps not even let the person know that you're praying for them. Now if they come to you and say, "Hey, I've got this problem, will you pray for me?" Well by all means do so. And it's the hardest thing in the world to admit problems, to admit difficulties. We'll see that in just a minute here, and see what the unloving attitude really does.

"...And He [that is, God] shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." No, that's the unpardonable sin. "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is [as it should read 'is begotten'] born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one touches him not" (I John 5:16-18, *KJV*). Now we will talk about the wicked one here in a little bit and how that affects us. But it means the wicked one cannot take you away from God. It doesn't mean that there will not be problems and difficulties coming from Satan's side, because there will. But we'll cover that in just a bit. So that is what we are to do.

Now let's go to Luke 18 and let's answer the question: Why is self-righteousness so hard to see, and why is it so destructive to love? Let's pick it up in Luke 18:11. And it is. It is destructive to love. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men *are*..." First of all, there's the comparison: "I'm better than the other person," look down on the other person. "...I am not as other men *are*, extortioners..." Of course you shouldn't do that. You can read the newspaper and condemn every one in the world for all the things that they do, can't you? Sure you can. "...Unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." So there's a comparison. And it is a self-righteous thing in criticizing, condemning, and putting down, because that's what this is. Christ wants us to overcome that. That's why He has commanded us to love one another. And that's very profound and important. And also in that, He makes it also very clear that in loving you are also to forgive. Because He makes forgiveness of your sin contingent upon your forgiving others their sins. That's very important, and it's easy to forget.

Now look, here is this Pharisee. He pretty well figures that he's doing right. Notice then, in comparing himself he says: "I fast twice in the week..." Boy, that's a great religious sacrifice, isn't it? "...I give tithes of all that I possess." Now what is so important here is this, is that you

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can be right without love. You can be right without love, and that is self-righteous hate when you come to understand that. Now the publican, [is] obviously to be condemned, and even he himself knew it. And what this tells you is this – you can never read another person’s mind. And that is where we do get into trouble and difficulties, isn’t it? Yes, we do. “And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself [and we could just put in there, ‘over the criticized dead bodies of others’] shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:11-14, *KJV*). So in our direct living relationship with God, love ought to bring us humility and loving each other rather than condemnation and all the other things that come out of human nature. So that is a command. So as we come in preparing for the Passover we need to ask ourselves, are we loving each other?

Now let’s come back to John 15 (*FV*). We should be able to make pretty good progress from here. Verses 18 and 19—here are two more “if’s”: “ ‘If the world hates you...’ ” And the world will. You can’t please the world. “ ‘...You know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own’ ” That’s why we’re not to be part of the world. That’s why it’s an impossibility, as we see with the experience of several of the churches in Revelation 2 and 3, it’s an impossibility to marry Satan’s way to God’s way; in the case of Pergamos and eating things sacrificed to idols, and the Nicolaitans. And also it’s impossible to have one foot in the world as the Laodiceans do and one foot in the church. So we need to understand that. The world, when it gets down to it, will hate us. And if we are of the world, the world would love its own. “ ‘However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this.’ ”

Right now we live in a time when it’s not as manifest as it will be. But you can be guaranteed that it will be. And of course the apostles and disciples lived it immediately, didn’t they? Yes, they did. “ ‘Remember the word that I spoke to you: a servant is not greater than his master.’ ” And He said that a servant is not greater than his master, neither a messenger greater than he who sent him. Now I hope you’re circling all these “if’s” as we go through here. “ ‘If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also.’ ” That will happen. Now on the other hand, we cannot go out and be carnally instigating this kind of thing because He also said we need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. That’s true. But the persecution will come. But here’s the other side of the coin: “ ‘If they kept My word, they will keep your *word* also,’ ” in talking to the apostles, meaning “what you would be teaching and preaching.” And of course we now have that in the Scriptures so we know what we are doing.

“ ‘But they will do all things to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have nothing to cover their sin.’ ” In other words, they have no excuse because Christ came, and particularly to that generation, and in particularly to those that were promised to receive Christ first. Then they have no excuse for what they did. Now likewise with us, once we have Christ, our “cover” is with Christ. We do have that.

Now verse 23: “ ‘The one who hates Me hates My Father also [because you can’t have one without the other]. If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done...’ ” In which John said at the very last that if everything that Jesus ever did were written in books, he said, “I suppose that even the whole world couldn’t contain it.” “ ‘...They would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this has happened so that the saying might be fulfilled which is written in their law, “They hated me without a cause.” ’ ” So what we find here is, hatred is of the world, and hatred is against God, because you cannot love God and hate your brother. You are to grow in faith and hope and in love. And so He makes it very clear here.

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Now here is how it's to be done: " 'But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the truth...' " And that's what we will have when we receive God's Spirit. That's what we have. " '...Which proceeds from the Father...' " And I've already covered concerning the facets of the Holy Spirit on previous tapes leading up to this. But this means that you have direct connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above, as we've been going through in the series in Hebrews. " '...That one shall bear witness of Me. Then you shall also bear witness, because you have been with Me from *the* beginning' " (John 15:18-27, *FV*). So what did they do? They went out and they preached, and their writings were preserved. So they are bearing witness according to what Jesus said there, "unto the ends of the earth," still to this day. Isn't that an amazing thing? That's why we have the Word of God.

Now let's come to John 16:1 (*FV*). And here we're going to find part of this continues on hope, but you could put there, "in the midst of trouble." " 'I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended [because now it's going to get rough]. They shall cast you out of the synagogues; furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you will think that he is rendering service to God.' " (John 16:1-2, *FV*). And of course, the highest mass in the Roman Catholic Church is the Inquisition mass and the death of heretics, thinking they're doing service to God. Question: When Saul was persecuting the church, did he think he was doing service to God? Yes. When he killed them did he think he was doing service to God? Yes. There is a prophecy of this in Isaiah 66:5. Let's go ahead and turn there, and let's see how that happens. And it will even happen to those – let's put it this way – those who claim to serve God will do it to you because they do not know God. And either that, or they have been so compromised with the truth that they count you as an enemy.

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isaiah 66:5, *KJV*). So it shows that not only is the world going to hate you, but those who claim they know God are going to go even further. So here you have the viciousness of religious persecution, if we could put it that way, unto death.

Now let's come back to John 16:3: " 'And they shall do these things to you because they do not know the Father, nor Me. But I have told you these things so that when the time comes, you may remember that I said *them* to you. However, I did not say these things to you at *the* beginning because I was with you.' " So now the whole thing is going to change. Verse 5: " 'But now I am going to Him Who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, "Where are you going?" But because I have spoken these things to you, grief has filled your hearts. But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away; because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you.' "

Now this is the operation of the Holy Spirit. It does it in two ways: to the world, to the church, and so forth. Verse 8 is the key: " 'And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment: concerning sin...' " So there are three phases to this – sin, righteousness and judgment. " '...Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me...' " So you know that's quite astounding isn't it, that if you don't believe in Christ, that is a sin, is it not? Never thought of it that way, but it is. " '...Concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me...' " As we have covered and will cover on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that we receive the blessing of this righteousness, which is right-standing with God the Father in heaven above. Not just law-keeping in the world, or the laws of the world, but this is the righteousness of God, and the Holy Spirit has to bring that conviction. And 3: " 'And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged' " (John 16:3-11, *FV*). And we know that he will be removed.

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Now let's see the final act of this judgment coming. Let's go to Revelation 12, and we will see that Satan is there to try and bother us and cause us difficulties and so forth. And what we need to realize is that since we are not of the world, how we overcome the world, how we overcome Satan the devil even in spite of his accusations against us. And here's the final act of Satan the devil. He'll do the things of the great tribulation, but this is the final act as far as the final judgment coming upon him. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels [that is, the demons] were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down..." Now remember we said that the wicked one doesn't touch you. Doesn't say he can't bother you. But he can't take you away from God, even though he accuses you. "...Which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb [that is, through repentance and justification and righteousness that comes from God], and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:9-11, *KJV*). And so that ties right in with what Jesus was saying here on the Passover night.

So the ruler of this world has been judged. Satan was defeated when he tempted Christ, as we see in Matthew 4 and Luke 4, overcame him completely. And he has been judged, and his judgment is going to be finished when Christ returns.

Now let's come back to John 16:12: " 'I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth...' " (John 16:12-13, *FV*). So what do we have revealed here in these chapters? First of all in John 14:6 – and you just put this in your notes right there – Christ is the way, the life, and the truth. He is the truth. Then we have right here, it says, "even the Spirit of truth." Then we have John 17:17, "Your word is the truth." Now therefore, you combine all of these things together and this gives you the understanding, not only of the Word of God, but the power of God, your relationship with God. You can believe God, you can trust God, you can hope in His promises continuously. "Will lead you into all things."

Let's come to Romans 8:14. Not only is it to just lead the apostles, but it is to lead us and all things in our lives, isn't it? Yes, it is. And also it is a proof, an internal proof having the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of God leads you. Now that doesn't mean you're not going to make mistakes. That doesn't mean that your human nature is not going to rise up against you from time to time, which is all part of overcoming. But here, Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." So not only will the Spirit lead you into all truth, it will lead you into all the truth that is necessary for you to be saved and to enter into the kingdom of God. It led the apostles into the truth that needed to be preached and taught and written. And it is a fantastic thing to be able to have the Spirit of God.

Now verse 15 says: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear...", because that's the spirit of the world. To bind you in fear, and bind you in superstition, and hatred, and malice, and wickedness, and all the things of the fruit of the flesh. But contrariwise: "...you have received the Spirit of adoption..." (Rom. 8:14-15, *KJV*), which should read "sonship." And that is the whole goal and key that we need to keep our minds focused on. If we have received the Holy Spirit and are led by the Holy Spirit, we are the begotten sons of God. And in this life there can be absolutely nothing greater than that. And so what Paul brings out here in the rest of the chapter – which we won't go through now, that's for another time – is to never let that get out of your thoughts. Let that inspire you, give you faith, give you hope, give you understanding, give you endurance in trial, and all of these things. If you are led of the Holy Spirit because you are and have received the Spirit of sonship and are the son of God.

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Now let's come back here to John 16, let's continue on. So we have the Spirit of truth, the Word is truth, and Christ is true. Now when He says the Holy Spirit, John 16:13: "...because it shall not speak from itself..." because we know it's the power of God. So whatever it does is the power of God. It's going to convey to you what God wants done. "...But whatever it shall hear, shall it speak." And as we have mentioned, just like sound going out, that's what it is. "...And it shall disclose to you the things to come." Which it did. And in particular concerning the apostle John with the book of Revelation. "...That one shall glorify Me, because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me." So this is why a continuous, constant, living relationship with God and the covenant that we are in, which we renew every Passover, is so very important.

Now let's continue on. We can finish here, and I think we'll be able to get through everything today. Let's hope so. John 16:15: "...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." Now that's necessary, because Christ would not be there any longer. So He begins to explain that to them. And He says, verse 16: "...A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me, because I am going to the Father." Then *some* of His disciples said to one another, "What is this that He is saying to us, 'A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me,' and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" Therefore they said, "What is this that He is saying, the 'little *while*'? We do not understand what He is saying." Then Jesus, knowing that they desired to ask Him, said to them, "Why are you inquiring among one another about this that I said, 'A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again A little *while*, and you shall see Me'?" They didn't understand about the resurrection that was going to come.

Now verse 20: "...Truly, truly I tell you, you shall weep and lament [that is, when He's crucified and died], but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be grieved, but your grief shall be turned into joy." And I imagine so. Because they were to be the witnesses of the resurrection that He did in fact rise from the dead. Now then He explains this joy: "...A woman when she is giving birth has grief, because her time of *travail* has come; but after she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. And likewise, you indeed have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and no one shall take your joy from you" (John 16:13-22, *FV*).

Now then, let's look at what happened here. Let's come to Luke 24. We will see what happened. Now remember, after Jesus was crucified they were hiding for fear of the Jews. And they didn't know what to do. And the only one who truly believed, when he saw the things at the tomb that Jesus had been raised from the dead, was John. The others didn't. Even Mary Magdalene said, when she saw Jesus and thought He was the gardener, said, "Well where have you taken His body that we may get it?" Because never in the history of the world has anyone been resurrected from the dead to eternal life, except Christ. Now He previewed some of this by resurrecting and raising from the dead the son of a widow, and a daughter of a leader of the synagogue, and Lazarus. Then after His crucifixion and resurrection then many who recently had died rose out of their graves and went into the city. Now none of them received eternal life. They were just resurrected back to a physical life. But Jesus was raised to eternal life. And He could then, as one born of the Spirit, go wherever He desired. He could walk through walls, He could walk through doors, and all of that sort of thing.

Now let's pick it up here in Luke 24:36. "...And as they thus spake [that is, the two disciples that came back and said, 'We've seen the Lord'], Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them..." "...Now yet in a little while you shall not see Me, and yet in a little while you shall see Me." Now here it is fulfilled right here. He died on the Passover day, was buried just right at sunset, and put in the tomb. He was in the tomb three days and three nights, resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, and ascended into heaven to be received of the Father [on the wave sheaf

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offering day]. Then at the end of that day He came and appeared to the disciples who were assembled for fear the Jews. So here is the “little while” that they would see him.

“...And saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit [that is, a demon]. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me and see...” and so they did. Because John said, “That which was from the beginning, that which we have seen, that which we have handled...” So John and the apostles did handle Him. “...For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have.” So He was able to manifest Himself as He was, as a human being, to prove to them that He was Who He said He was. “And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them *His* hands and *His* feet.”

Now notice verse 41: “And while they yet believed not for joy...” Now didn’t Jesus say, “You’re going to grieve, but you’ll see Me again and your joy shall be full”? There He fulfilled it right there. “...Yet believe not for joy, and wondered [I guess so], He said unto them, Have ye here any meat [or that is, any food to eat]? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took *it*, and did eat before them. And He said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning Me.” That shows the three divisions of the Old Testament, to this day, which we have. And I’m going to mention here that there is a big move to reinsert the Apocrypha books back into the Bible. As a matter fact, most of those that the American Bible Society are printing out now have the Apocrypha put back into it. So what you really are getting is now a Catholic Bible without the name “Catholic” on it. That is the ecumenical bible. But Jesus made it very clear that it was the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

Now verse 45: “Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures...” And that is the key thing of the working of the Holy Spirit, to open your mind to understand. And since Christ is directing it, when you read and study the Bible and you understand it, He is opening your mind. As we read before, it is the Father Who is teaching you. So these are very profound things, brethren, just tremendous.

“...And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved [or that is, it was obligatory for] Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day...” Why not the second day? Why not the first day? You can read in the Passover book why. “...And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” And that’s what it’s all about, repentance and remission of sin, and your relationship with God – direct relationship. That’s what it’s all about. “And ye are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:36-48, *KJV*).

Now let’s come to Acts 1 and see what happened. No, let’s come to I Corinthians 15, then Acts 1. So if you’re there, just go ahead and keep your place there. We’ll go to I Corinthians 15, because here in I Corinthians 15:3 we find out that more than just the apostles saw Christ. As a matter fact, it was really quite a contingent of people. “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures [that’s both Old and New Testament at this point]; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve...” And remember He said, “Go into Galilee and meet Me there on the mountain that I appointed you.” “...After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once...” Now that was an astonishing meeting. And this is the only place that we have it recorded that that meeting took place. “...Of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles [that is, all the apostles again]. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time” or due season (I Corinthians 15:3-8, *KJV*).

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Now let's come to Acts 1, and let's see not only this private meeting that He had with the apostles, and the public meeting He had with the five hundred, but He did other things too.

Now let's begin right in Acts 1:1, because this then fits right in with what we're talking about. "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy [Spirit] Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen: to whom also He shewed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days..." Now that's why their joy remained because Christ showed Himself for 40 days, did many things; gave them extra instructions, didn't He? Because it said: "...and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God..." So He gave them a lot of instruction during that 40 days. "... And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saieth He*, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy [Spirit] Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

And that's what everyone has wanted to know from that time until this. "And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power [or that is, authority]." That's not the important thing. Prophecy is always interesting. Prophecy is always titillating; and especially when you can see some of it fulfilled before your very eyes, which they did with Christ. Here's the important thing: "But ye shall receive power [Now that is, *dounamis*; that is energetic power of God.] after that the Holy [Spirit] Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Now obviously the apostles didn't get there, did they? No. That's why we have the written word. The written word has gotten there.

Now then, here was their last great experience before Pentecost: "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men [who were angels, of course] stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:1-11, *KJV*). And the message was, "Go, get busy and do what He said." In other words, this was a graduation speech: "Now is the time." And so on Pentecost after they received the Holy Spirit, that was the time; and they did the preaching, and that's why they had the joy. That's why they had the conviction. That's why they had the hope. That's why they had the faith and the love of God. So they went through unique experience because they were apostles.

Now let's come back to John 16 and let's continue on here. Now here's another promise concerning prayer. Now notice all the way through, we've seen the promises that God has given concerning prayer. That's why prayer is so profound and important. Prayer is, with the leading of the Holy Spirit, that direct link between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ. Now granted, it's easy to get discouraged; granted, it's easy to let human nature come along and drag you down, and so forth. But I want to emphasize how important that it is. And when you pray you need to understand the significance of it.

Now let's come back to John 16:23: " 'And in that day [that is, the day that He ascended to heaven that we just read of] you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you.' " Now all you have to do is go through and read the first part of Acts and see what they did. Absolutely fantastic. But here is also a promise given to us. Whatever we ask, of course it has to be according to the will of God, and it has to be upon our repentance, and forgiveness of God to us, and us to others. All of those things play

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into it. So this is an over-all blanket statement where the other factors come into it. “ ‘...Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you.’ ” Who answers prayer? The Father does. Isn't that amazing? That's something. That's why prayer is so significant.

“ ‘Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.’ ” That's the way God wants it to be. And overcoming human nature really, then, is a joyful thing, though the struggle is difficult. That's why He brought out here about the woman having a child. There's pain and there's grief. But once you get through the trial, and once you get through the difficulty, and once you see the love of God, and everyone's going to go through that. I guarantee that one thing that all Christians are going to do, they are going to come to the very bottom of the valley of the pit of despair. And God will let you go there so that you can look up to Him and realize there's no way out but His. That's what God wants you to understand. So remember, the Father is directly involved in your life. And you are a brother and a friend of Christ. That's all a part of the words of the covenant.

Now let's continue on, verse 25: “ ‘These things I have spoken to you in allegories; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in allegories, but I will plainly disclose to you *the things* of the Father. In that day, you shall ask in My name...’ ” So He says it twice—you ask in His name, verse 23 and verse 26. “ ‘...And I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.’ ” Now that's quite contrary to the Catholic doctrine, isn't it? That supposedly the saints intercede, which they don't, because they are dead and buried. Christ does intercede for us as our High Priest, but supposedly Mary makes intercession for us because she supposedly knows Jesus better than we do; so therefore she can have more influence with her son than your prayers. All of that is a bunch of gobbledygook nonsense and contrary to the Word of God. Jesus said you pray to the Father in His name, and the Father Himself loves you, and He's going to answer that prayer. Now however He does it, He will do it. “ ‘For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God’ ” (John 16:23-27, *FV*).

Now let's come to I John 3 and let's see another glimpse of that relationship and how we need to really keep that in the forefront of our minds always. Living in the world the way that it is, you have got to have something so firm in your mind with it there by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that nothing is going to move you from God. And this is it, I John 3:1: “Behold, what manner of love [or that could mean glorious love] the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...” When we were, as it were, led of the devil and out in the world if we could put it that way, right? Yes, now we're called the sons of God. And it's very profound here. The Greek word for “sons” is *teknon*, meaning “own children.” Now granted, Jesus Christ was the only begotten, unique Son of God, born of the flesh and resurrected from the dead. But we are also the children of God by begetting for the family of God. That's what God wants us to really grasp and understand. Never let that leave your mind and thought, ever. And especially when you get to the bottom of the valley of the shadow of death, remember that.

“...[That He] hath bestowed [His love] upon us, that we should be called the sons [children] of God: therefore the world knoweth us not...” That means it can understand us:

“You're a Christian?”

“Yes.”

“You go to church on Sabbath?”

“Yes.”

“Are you a Jew?”

“No.”

“Why don't you keep Christmas?”

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“Because it’s pagan.”

“You’re kidding. How could that be? You mean you don’t keep Christmas or Easter?”

“No. I keep Passover and the holy days.”

“You’ve got to be a Jew.”

“No, I’m not a Jew.”

They don’t know us. They don’t know what motivates us. They don’t understand these things, and that’s why eventually the world is going to hate us. And you can be guaranteed that the laws are already on the books under the Patriot Act I and II, to where all they have to do is just redefine who the enemy and terrorist is. And you wait and see, lo and behold, sooner or later we’ll be entered in on the list. You can be guaranteed that. So that’s why you’ve got to keep this in mind.

Verse 2: “Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be...” Just like when a woman is carrying a child, you don’t know who it’s going to look like. Even though you can do one of those ultrasounds and tell whether it’s a boy or girl, you still don’t know what it’s going to look like. Same way with us today. Having the Spirit of God and growing and overcoming and having the physical body that we have, we still don’t know what we’re going to look like until the resurrection. What is it going to be like to be a spirit being? What is it going to be like to get rid of all the weaknesses of the physical body and the physical flesh? What is it going to be like to be resurrected as a spirit being, though you died in the ignominy of physical death? It’s going to be something.

“...It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know [we can count on this] that, when He shall appear [and we’re resurrected], we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (I John 3:1-2, *KJV*). And that’s the whole purpose that God wants us to really keep right there in the forefront of our brain, and let the Holy Spirit lead us in that continuously. That’s why He is our Father, and He gives us direct access to Him. That’s why Paul said we cry, “Abba, Father,” correct? Yes.

Now let’s come back to John 16:28: “ ‘I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father.’ *Then* His disciples said to Him, ‘Behold, now You are speaking plainly and are not speaking *in* an allegory.’ ” They said, “Now we can understand this. That’s different from, ‘a little while, a little while, a little while.’ ” “ ‘Now we know that You understand all things, and do not need to have someone ask You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Do you now believe?’ ” That’s a good question, isn’t it? And He knew that. Because even Thomas – remember Thomas said, “Well, I’ll believe it when I see His hands and His feet and His side.” So eight days later when Jesus appeared He said, “Thomas, come here.” He says, “Oh, my Lord, my God!”

“ ‘...Do you now believe?’ ” The truth is, until Christ was resurrected their belief was not complete. And He explains that: “ ‘Listen, the time is coming, and has already come that you shall be scattered each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone [and even Peter denied Him three times]; and *yet* I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace...’ ” You are not going to have peace any other way. You are never going to have peace without Christ. You are never going to have peace until you make peace with God through repentance, and prayer, and study, and yieldedness to God. But in Christ you may have peace. “ ‘...In the world you shall have tribulation [that is true; and they did]. But be courageous! [It says in the King James, ‘be of good cheer’] I have overcome the world’ ” (John 16:28-33, *FV*).

Now we do have tribulations in the world. And I’ll tell you what, the difficulties and problems we’re going through now I am sure are not to be compared to what they’re going to

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be in the future. I mean, as we're going through this on this Sabbath right now the American forces are in Iraq along with some other contingencies of other nations with them, and look at what they are going through. And you look at how the world is hating us more and more. And you know the time is coming when they are going to be itching to carry out their plans to do to us the very same thing. And we will be the "cause" of it because we will not accept the Beast and the false prophet. And we will not accept the false religions of this world. And we will not take the mark of the beast. And we will not submit to these things. So if you think you have difficulties now, stick around. These may be only kind of strengthening us and building us up for the things to come.

Now on the other hand, don't go out and ask for it. I walked into a local supermarket here, and as I walked in, here is all this display of all the Easter things, little Easter bunnies, and little baskets, and all this sort of thing. And my human nature said, "Boy, that would be so good to just get up there and just throw them all off, and break them to pieces and tell the world what an absolute deception this is." Well needless to say, I didn't do it because I'm here and not in jail. But when it comes time for that it will happen. And how far down the road it will be, we don't know. But one thing for sure, they will have the ability to know where everybody is at all times, period. You can see that coming. It's going to be one of those things. There is no escaping the future when it comes to you. It will happen. Now just look at the trials and tribulations you're going through now as very minuscule. He has overcome the world, and through Christ we can overcome the world.

Now let's come to John 17. John 17 reflects not only faith and hope, but love; very profound love, because this is Jesus' personal prayer for us. Did you realize that? It's Jesus' personal prayer for us. This truly is the Lord's prayer, because this is the prayer that He prayed. The Lord's Prayer, so called in Matthew 6, is a sample given by Jesus on how we need to structure our prayers. That was not His prayer. This is His prayer. Now verse 1, He was out in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed this prayer. And these are the things – here, let's come to Luke 22, I believe it is. Let's turn there – Luke 22:39, "And He came out, and went, as He was wont [and 'wont' means 'as known'] to the mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place [a particular place in the Garden of Gethsemane], He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done." And this is a perfect example of how we need to pray. It was God's will that He go through that. And He's just reaffirming it. Verse 43: "And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:39-44, *KJV*). And so when we read this prayer in John 17, this is part of what He went through.

Now let's come to John 17 and see the true Lord's prayer. This is what the Lord prayed. And it's interesting that John was inspired to write this. No one else wrote this prayer, not even part of this prayer; only John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come [it's here]; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send.' " That's the whole purpose of it, to know God and at the resurrection to see Him face to face. That's profound.

Verse 4: " 'I have glorified You on the earth.' " through the whole ministry, through His life, through never sinning, through overcoming the world, calling the apostles, everything that He did. " 'I have finished the work that You gave Me to do' " (John 17:1-4, *FV*). Yet He still had one part of the work that He still needed to finish, right? And we're going to see that there

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are two finishes. Let's look at them – John 19:30 (*KJV*). Because the very last thing that Jesus said, the next to last thing that He said: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the [spirit] ghost.” When it says in John 17 that He finish the work that He gave Him to do, He was also including the coming crucifixion, beginning with the trial that He was soon to have when He was arrested.

Now let's look at the other “finished.” Let's come to Revelation 21. So there are two phases to finishing the work: 1) the work to provide a Redeemer, and the way of salvation; and the other one to finish the whole plan of God. Now let's pick it up here in Revelation 21:5, “And He that sat upon the throne said [now that's the Father, isn't it?], Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done [Or that is, it's finished. In the Greek it's the same]. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:5-7, *KJV*).

So we're looking for that second finishing line, aren't we? Now let's come back to John 17. So there are two “finishes.” Through the crucifixion redemption and salvation was opened, and the second “finish” is when it's all done. It's finished. And when that is finished, then the whole plan of God going out to all eternity goes forward from there. And that's going to be very exciting, isn't it? Have you ever thought about traveling out in the universe?

Now John 17:5: “ ‘And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed...’ ” And that is precisely and exactly what the Greek means. “ ‘I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours [we all belong to the Father], and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word.’ ” Because all the words of Jesus were the words of the Father, right? We've already covered that, haven't we? Yes. “ ‘Now they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me.’ ” That's the whole process of faith that we are to come to also.

“ ‘I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. All Mine are Yours, and all Yours *are* Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, even as *We are one.*' ” Now this is the whole purpose of God. And notice what Jesus kept His mind on when He was facing the crucifixion. He is keeping His mind on the whole purpose. He was keeping His mind on finishing the work that the Father had given Him to do. And the ultimate purpose, that they may be one as He and the Father were one. That's the whole prayer. That's the whole purpose of why we are here; the whole purpose and reason why we take the Passover and renew the covenant, and go through the things that we do.

Verse 12: “ ‘When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. I protected those whom You have given Me, and not one of them has perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them [internal joy]. I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them 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 [so that's not going to happen], but that You would keep them from the evil one.’ ” And as we have already seen the promise given there, though Satan accuses us day and night, he can't take us away from God. “ ‘They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your truth; Your Word is the truth.’ ” And that's what we are to have written in our hearts and in our minds, so we have Christ in us, Who was the truth; we have the Holy Spirit in us, which

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is the Spirit of truth; we have the Word of God in us, which is the truth. And that sanctifies us. That sets us apart. That makes us holy before God.

Verse 18: “ ‘Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* truth.’ ” There it is again – “sanctified in *Your* truth.” Have you ever thought about the fact that you are holy brethren? What makes you holy brethren? Having God’s Spirit means you’ve been sanctified, and sanctified by the Word of God and in the truth of the Father.

Now here is a prayer directly for us: “ ‘I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word...’ ” – preaching of the gospel going out. This is always continuously being fulfilled in our lives. So never think that God is against you. God is for you. God wants you. God loves you. God has called you to eternal life. He wants you to overcome. He wants you to put away the deeds of the flesh. He wants you to grow in grace and knowledge. He wants you to be in the resurrection. That’s what this prayer is all about. And again, the final goal, verses 21 through 24 tie directly in with the fulfillment of Revelation 21 and 22. So you have verses 21 through 24, you can just put in the margin there Revelation 21 and 22.

Now here’s the prayer for us, all that are Christ’s: “ ‘...that they all [not excluding anyone] may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one 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...’ ” That’s the ultimate goal. Now this is why—if you don’t have the series on why God hates religion, you send for it. Because God truly does hate religion. Because religion places men in a position of God over people and cuts them off from this knowledge in relationship with God. Now verse 23: “ ‘...I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one...’ ” (John 17:5-23, *FV*).

Now let’s come to the epistle of I John 2:5 (*KJV*). That’s why we are a work in progress. We are to be perfected. “But whoso keepeth [is keeping] His word, in Him verily [or that is, truly] is the love of God perfected...” That’s how we are to be perfected. And it is the love of God that does that, and it’s through the Spirit of God that this is accomplished. “...Hereby we know that we are in Him.” That goes back as a direct part of what we have just read in John 17.

Now let’s come to 1 John 4:10, and here is how we are perfected: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us [and the Father says directly He loves you], we ought also to love one another.” There again, repeating the very words of Christ, right? “No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us [a process]. Hereby we know that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” And that’s a tremendous thing, brethren.

Now let’s come down here to verse 16: “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love...” And that’s what the whole thing concerning the Passover and renewing of the New Covenant is all about. “...And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” As we just read. “Herein is our love made perfect [so there are a lot of rough edges to knock off, aren’t there?], that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us” (I John 4:10-13, 16-19, *KJV*).

Now back to John 17, and we’ll finish there. That’s all part of Christ prayer. 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

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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. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; 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 which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them' ” (John 17:23-26, *FV*).

So those are the words of the New Covenant. It is a covenant, and actually when you go back and you review each of the chapters here you will see that in these chapters—John 14, 15, 16, in 17, these four chapters—it's also an encapsulation of our life and relationship with Christ, the things that we will face and be confronted with, the difficulties and problems that we will have in the world, and how the ultimate goal is to be in the family of God as a son of God. And that's what the Passover is all about.

End of Sermon

Transcriber Michael D. Schwartz

Scriptural References

John 15:9
Galatians 5:19-25
Matthew 7:1-2
John 15:17
I John 5:16-18
Luke 18:11-14
John 15:18-27
John 16:1-2
Isaiah 66:5
John 16:3-11
Revelation 12:9-11

John 16:12-13
John 17:17
Romans 8:14-15
John 16:13-22
Luke 24:36-48
I Corinthians 15:3-8
Acts 1:1-11
John 16:23-27
I John 3:1-2
John 16:28-33
Luke 22:39-44

John 17:1-4
John 9:30
Revelation 21:5-7
John 17:5-23
I John 2:5
I John 4:10-13, 16-19
John 17:23-26

