

How to Pray II

Fred R. Coulter—December 30, 2000

I was thinking this morning, as I was preparing this sermon, the first time I ever prayed I read in the literature that Jesus said when you pray don't make public prayers, and don't blow trumpets and all this thing; but go in your closet. So, I literally went into my closet. It was a small closet and I had, over in the corner, my shoes and dirty clothes and things like that, so it go all hot and smelling and everything like that. It took me a while to understand that 'closet' is a quiet, private place; in other words a small, closed room where you can go pray. It doesn't necessarily mean go into your closet with all your shoes and dirty socks and everything else. '

Now, let's continue on where we were and let's understand concerning what God wants us to have as far as an attitude. We've seen that we need to always come to God in an attitude of repentance and yieldedness to Him. So, let's begin by going to Psalm 32. I might mention here in the Psalms, the Psalms is a good place for you to learn *how to pray* even more, because the Psalms are virtually, in almost every case, prayers. So what you can do, if you have a hard time praying, or you don't think you have the words to say or whatever, then go ahead and take your Bible, open it up, get on your knees and start going through some of the Psalms, and use the words of the Psalms as your words, so that it will help you understand *how to pray*. A little later we will go through and we we'll see with the model prayer that Jesus gave, that many of the Psalms follow the same, exact order as the model prayer.

Let's begin here, Psalm 32:1, because this has to do with your attitude, your forgiveness and yieldedness to God when you're praying. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.... [and that's what repentance does, as we saw last time. If you confess your sins, Jesus Christ 'is faithful'—that means *never fails*—'to forgive your sins'—and that is provided that ask forgiveness and you come to Him with the right attitude and the right heart.] ...Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputes not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (vs 1-2).

Just hold your place here and let's come back to the book of Romans, please, the fifth chapter. Romans tells us the blessedness of that. Tells us what it is with our sins forgiven, and shows us what kind of gift that God gives us. The forgiveness of sin is a gift through the sacrifice of Christ. The righteousness that He gives us—in other words, not imputing sins to us—is also a tremendous

gift that God gives. And let's see what it is here that Christ gives us.

Romans 5:15: "But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*? For if by the transgression of the one man many died... [that is through the sin of Adam and the *law of sin and death* in us] ...how much more did the grace of God, and the **gift of grace**... [We're going to see what that gift is. If you don't have the two sermons on *The Two Righteousnesses* be sure and write for it; you can also study that in the *Beliefs of the CBCG* booklet: the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of the law, and so forth.] ...which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many? And *should* not the free gift *be* like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment *was* by one unto condemnation... [all sin has come 'short of the glory of God'—that's what *condemnation* is. And the *condemnation* or *judgment* is that we have the 'law of sin and death' within us.] ...but on the other hand, the free gift *is by one* to the justification of many offenses. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the **gift of righteousness**... [Now, that *gift of righteousness* is that ***your sins are not imputed to you***. That's why *repentance* is so important! That's why these things are for us; the whole foundation and substance of our relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father.] (the gift of righteousness shall):...reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ" (vs 15-17).

Now, let's come back to Psalm 32:5—here again, we have agreement with the Old Testament and the New Testament: "I acknowledged my sin unto You, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah.... [Whenever you have *selah* it means *stop, think and meditate on this*. This ties right in exactly with 1-John 1, which we covered last time—confessing sin, faithful to forgive sin, thanking God for it.] ...For this shall everyone that is Godly pray unto You in a time when You may be found... [That's also very interesting. God is to be found at any time that there is repentance. But when there is not repentance, God cannot be found.] ...surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble... [and we'll see a little later on that God delivers us from trouble.] ...You shall compass me about with songs of deliverance" (vs 5-7).

Now, let's come to Isaiah 66, and here shows the attitude that God wants. In God's great and fantastic plan that He has, that we are going to be born into the Kingdom of God, the most important thing is our spiritual relationship with God. And the most important thing is how our attitude is.

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that you build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?'" We know that when David said he wanted to build a house, God sent Nathan the prophet and said, 'God will let a house be built, but you won't build it because you're a bloody man. But...'

So Solomon built the temple. God put His presence there. But what happened to Solomon and all Israel after they had a temple? *They began to trust in the physical things.* And what can you really build for God anyway? That's the whole point that He's making here. You can build a great and a marvelous edifice at the awe of anyone who sees it. Look at the temples that are today, some of the big Catholic cathedrals and the St. Peter's Basilica—people go through there and are just awed. I remember a man who said that he went saw the Sistine Chapel and he broke out in tears, it was so beautiful, he was overwhelmed! Then you've got the Taj Mahal in India, and you've got the Temples of Angkor; and you have the temples they used to use in Central and South America—these great cathedrals that men build to God. But God isn't interested in any of that. ***He created man to be a temple for His Holy Spirit, and He delights to dwell in them.***

Verse 2: "'For all those things has Mine hand made, and all those things have been,' says the LORD.... [because, in the final analysis, whenever you build something for God you take something He's already created. So, you make a building, you overlay it with gold, you put in the purple and the scarlet and all the colors we find there in tabernacle and temple, and we have see that the model of the tabernacle, and so forth. Yes, that's very beautiful. Yes, it's very inspiring. But, God is interested in creating what He has not yet created. And that's more important! He's created mankind on the earth, and He wants a relationship with each one, but they have to have this attitude. Therefore, then He can create in them His character.] ...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word.'" And this means to love God's Word so much that you would not break it.

I've seen where the Jews literally take this and when they grab hold of, say, a scroll of the Old Testament, they literally shake themselves all over—

like they're trembling. Well, that's not the kind of trembling that God wants. He doesn't want that. So this is the attitude: "...poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word."

Isaiah 57:15—these two tie together, same thing. "For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity... [Now, one thing we need to really grasp and understand concerning prayer and when we're praying to God is this: As I said last time, we have direct access to the Sovereign Ruler of the universe our Father in heaven. In our life and the things that we do, there is nothing greater than being able to have access to God the Father; that He may create in us the very character, the very mind of Christ 'Who inhabits eternity'] ...Whose name is Holy; I dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." There God shows how He will respond, how He will react.

Let's go to Isaiah 55:6—this is all part of concerning prayer. "Seek you the LORD while He may be found..."—because that's what you're doing when you're praying:

- You're seeking the Lord
- You are coming to Him

You're asking for:

- His help
- His Spirit
- His guidance
- His love
- His faith
- His Truth
- His forgiveness

—all of those things.

"...call you upon Him while He is near..." And God is near. He says, 'Am I not a God Who is near? Am I a God that is far off?' *No! God is as near as the next thought you have in prayer*—that's how close God is.] ...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.... [Which He will!—no question about it—we'll see in just a minute.] ...'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (vs 6-9). So that's why it's important that we need to grow in the mind of Christ, grow in the Word of God, because the thoughts of God are contained where, for us? *In the Word of God! These are the thoughts of God! He tells us!*

Now, it's also interesting: When He says,

‘My thoughts are not your thought,’ many times we get in our mind that God thinks in a certain way, or we think we know what God is thinking. Now, you may or may not be right—and sometimes we are not right. Sometimes we don’t go to God to seek His will (and we’ll see a little later on), because we want our will. Then what happens, sooner or later, like David, you get caught! That’s what happened to David.

Let’s go to Psalm 51—let’s see the attitude of repentance that David had. There are times when you have to go to God just like he did here. All the time that David was going through his affair with Bathsheba, were his thoughts on God? *No!* Were his thoughts the thoughts of God? *No!* Was he in his own mind trying to justify what he was doing? *Had to!* It did occur over a long period of time—didn’t it? I mean, you consider everything that went on, it was pretty close to nine months, because shortly after, Nathan came to him and brought him to repentance with the message from God. The child was born. The question is: Did he leave God for that period of time? *Well, he certainly wasn’t with God,* because God is not the minister of sin. Do you think that he prayed during that time? *If he did it was probably just a ritual prayer;* or it was a fleeting thought; or whenever he had a guilty conscience he thought he could work it out. I’m sure he had a guilty conscience when she became pregnant.

So, he tried to assuage his guilty conscience by killing her husband Uriah the Hittite by putting him in the heat of the battle and withdrawing so he’d be killed. Comment was made that it was probably also because he was the king and he thought he could justify it because he had all power—he could do almost anything. And after the child was born, then died, he kept Bathsheba as his wife and had another son by her—Nathan. It’s interesting that the genealogy to Joseph, being of the house of David, comes through Solomon. And Joseph was not the father of Jesus, so there was no lineage from Joseph. You go back and you see that in that lineage, it comes through Solomon. So that tells you that that part of the house of David did not produce the offspring Christ, but it came through Nathan, the other son of David through Bathsheba. And that came down through Mary’s line. So that’s quite an interesting thing when you consider it.

It’s awfully hard to know what was on David’s mind during this time period, but the closest we can come to it is this: When we sin over a prolonged period of time, what do we do? Well, that’s probably what he did. He didn’t pray—if he did, not like he should. Or he prayed that God bless his attempts to work it out if he prayed at all—which He didn’t. And finally, it took someone—Nathan the

prophet—to come and tell him: ‘You have sinned!’ Sometimes we have to be confronted by someone.

Just to clarify—let’s go back to 2-Samuel 12. I said they had another son: Nathan. But I meant to say that was another son after Solomon. I’m sure because of Solomon’s sin, the genealogy down to Mary did not come through Solomon, but through Nathan. The first baby died, then was Solomon, then was Nathan. And I’m sure because of Solomon’s sin, therefore the genealogy down to Mary did not come through Solomon, but through Nathan. That’s the difference between the genealogies in Matthew. 1 and Luke 3.

Sometimes you have a hard time coming to see your own self. And that’s what happened here with David, so sometimes our attitude has to be corrected by someone else.

2-Samuel 12:1: “And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him...” Even he brought this up in a way; the only way you could read David. Sometimes you can’t reach a person by just saying, ‘Hey, you’re living in sin—don’t you know that?’ What you have to do, you have to let some circumstances work out and bring it out in a different way. And also, he was going before the king! Remember, kings have absolute power—it’s off with your head, it’s gone!

“...‘There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveler unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.’ And David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man... [Sometimes you have to come to see the sin in something else, then you recognize that it is your sin. That’s what Nathan did here.] ...and he said to Nathan, ‘As the LORD lives... [So he didn’t forget God entirely—did he? *No!*] ...the man that has done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity’” (vs 1-6).

Now, look at what he did; and this happens, too, when you have sin—you still use God’s name—don’t you? But what do you do? *You look at other people’s sins.* And that’s what he was doing here in this case. ‘Well, they deserve it, let them die! He stole the lamb, let him restore four-fold.’

Verse 7: “And Nathan said to David, **‘You are the man...** [There’s one key about repentance when it comes to prolonged sin such as this. Put in your notes: the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15; and the key thing with him was this: He had to *come to himself*. In other words, he had to admit to himself what he had done. And so, David then had to admit it.] ...‘You are the man. Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul; and I gave you your master’s house, and your master’s wives into thy bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto you such and such things.... [Again, this shows God is not concerned with things, but with your attitude, your character and how you live.] ...Wherefore, have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon”” (vs 7-9).

When you sin sometimes there are penalties which come along. This was a great sin—all of Israel knew about it. Just like today with our infamous, soon past, President—Bill Clinton—didn’t all the world know about it? Didn’t all the nation know about it? And has it not affected all the nation? *Yes!* Even today, they’re finding a great number of teenagers now—because Bill Clinton has said that he never had sexual relations ‘with that woman’ that if it is not sex relations with a man and woman then it is not sex, so they’re into all sorts of deviant sex practices now; which with come along a lot of venereal disease with it. So what David did affected the whole nation. The whole nation knew. So therefore, he’s going to have a little punishment here:

“Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house... [always going to have trouble] ...because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house...’” (vs 10-11)—and that he did. You can read the rest it from there on—beginning with incest with Absalom and Tamar.

“...and I will take thy wives before your eyes, and give them unto your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun’.... [Now, that’s quite a sentence and punishment upon him—though He forgave.] ...And David said unto Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the LORD.’ And Nathan said unto David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you

shall not die. Howbeit, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto you shall surely die”” (vs 11-13). I think we can get a great lesson from this. Let’s look back at our church experience. Let’s look back on the things that went on in the Church that we left—and did not the same thing happen? *Yes, indeed!*—only even worse.

Now, let’s come to Psalm 51, which is the repentance that he repented. Remember, he fasted and prayed until the baby died. So David’s life from that time forward was really not very good. I think He had a little mercy right at the end, but that was about it. Notice how deep and heartfelt this prayer really is. So we can understand if we sin something of great magnitude, and this is was we need to repent. This is the model of repentance. God heard his prayer. God had blotted out his sins. Nathan said, ‘Your sin has been forgiven’—but notice:

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your lovingkindness... [what happens when you begin repenting and confessing your sins in this way? Then you begin to understand how evil human nature really is, and you’re looking to the goodness of God. And while you’re sinning, you’re not looking at God that way.] ...according unto the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.... [Again, this ties in with 1-John 1—Christ is the only One Who can cleanse us from sin—through repentance and confession.] ...For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.... [He tried to put it away from him by ignoring it. So if you have a sin that you are trying to put away from you, that you are just trying to ignore, you can only do it for so long. Sooner or later it’s going to come upon you.] ...Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that You might be justified when You speak, and be clear when You judge” (vs 1-4). Now then, he was looking back at his whole past life.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.... [He didn’t come from an adulterous relationship. This is just showing that he’s understanding that the whole human nature is sinful from conception.] ...Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts...” (vs 5-6). And that’s the whole key! All of us deceive ourselves—don’t we? All of us fall short in that—don’t we?

Let’s come to Colossians, the third chapter. ‘Truth in the inward parts’ is hard to come by. Why is that? Because ‘the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things’ (Jer. 17:9). Do Christians have a hard time putting it away? *Of*

course! Yes!

Colossians 3:8: “But now, you should also put off all *these* things: wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another... [you can fall into that trap very easily; and you can justify it very easily. But what do you have to do? *You have to put off all these deeds.*] ...*seeing that* you have put off the old man together with his deeds... [that comes through repentance, acknowledgement, going to God, like David did] ...and have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him” (vs 8-10)—and then you have to do something greater. When you put something out, you must replace it with something else. So you put out the evil through repentance and confession and asking God to block them out.

Verse 12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God... [You put these on or in] ...Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*. And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection.... [Then what begins to happen is this]: ...And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...” (vs 12-15).

Now, let’s come back here to Psalm 51:6, and let’s see how this same element goes right along here after he has repented. “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts... [and that’s how you get it. All of this then can make your study even much greater. When there is repentance, your study becomes of greater value to you, because now you’re in an attitude so you let God’s Word speak to you, God’s Spirit lead you in this.] ...and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop... [that’s just like steel wool] ...and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness... [that’s the peace that comes from Christ.] ...that the bones which You hast broken may rejoice. **Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities**” (vs 6-9).

Now then, he’s ready for what God wants to do. As I mentioned, God is not interested in something He has already created like the inanimate objects. He is interested in what He’s created in you and what He will create in you upon this kind of repentance and yieldedness to God, for the attitude you need in prayer.

Now notice: “Create in me... [so that’s something only God can do] ...a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.... [a right attitude, a right spirit] ...Cast me not away from

Your presence; and take not Your Holy Spirit from me” (vs 10-11). So he really began to understand and realize that he was right at the edge—wasn’t he? I just wonder how many people that there are that are out there—wherever they are, the brethren—that are right at the edge. That they can go over the edge and lose it, or they can draw back and repent. God only knows.

“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with Your free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto You. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness... [which then is first degree murder!] ...O God, God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For thou desire not sacrifice; else would I give it: You delight not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (vs 12-17).

So there it is! Now, we’ll talk about forgiveness again a little bit later on when we come to the section there in the ‘Lord’s Prayer’ about forgiveness. Now, when we pray, what we have to do is, we have to seek the will of God. Let’s go to Matthew, the sixth chapter; we’ll just touch on it, because we’ll come back and we’ll analyze the model prayer—or the outline of how to pray in Matthew 6 and Luke 11. Let’s just go to this one place.

Matthew 6:10: “Your kingdom come... [and that’s what we’re always to be looking for—the Kingdom of God.] ...**Your will be done** on earth, as *it is* in heaven.” Now, let’s understand something very important here. God’s will is going to be done in two ways. It’s still His will.

1. If you are yielded to God; if you are growing and overcoming; and if your sins are covered, then you’re going to seek to obey God and do His will in your life. And God’s will in creating in you, that Christ be formed in you, will be accomplished.
2. The will of God is going to be done in sinners.

How is that going to be done? *The ‘wages of sin is death!’* And that is misery and destruction all along the way until there is death. That is also God’s will because that is the *living punishment for sin*. Just like there are living punishments for sin there are also *living rewards for blessings*. Sometimes people get to the point that they want to make their will God’s will.

Let’s come back to James, the fourth chapter, and we’ll see where that was one of the

mistakes that those that James wrote to—the 12 tribes—that that’s what they were doing. They were asking incorrectly. And they were asking God to engage in their own battles, I guess. And this is exactly what’s happening in the Middle East today. I heard someone commenting about peace in the Middle East and they said, ‘Every time they get close to a peace pact, it always breaks out in fighting.’ And that’s been the history of it since 1948. Every time they get close, it breaks out again. And each one thinks God is on their side. God is on the Palestinian side, and a lot of people think the Palestinians are Muslim. Most of them are Catholic. They are not Muslims. There are some Muslims, too, but many, many of them are Catholic. So, you’ve got a mix of them. You’ve got the Catholic Palestinians thinking that God is on their side. You have the Islamic Palestinians thinking God is on their side. And you have the Jews thinking that God is on their side. When you think that way and you act that way, then here’s what happens:

James 4:1: “*What is the cause of quarrels and fightings among you? Is it not mainly from your own lusts that are warring within your members? You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask*” (vs 1-2)—and they’ll say, ‘all right, we’ll ask.’

The Jews are convinced that it is theirs because they were centuries before the Palestinians. But it’s awfully hard to go back and claim real estate after you’re no longer there—and especially if you come in and take it by force and don’t pay for it. Put it in this perspective: Suppose that the Indian tribes that owned the land where your house is sitting on, they all showed up in force one day, around your house, and began shooting you and driving you out and claiming that that was their property. Because, ‘after all, we lived here first.’ Now the big problem in the whole thing is this: God gave it to Israel, but God took it away. And until God gives back it is not theirs. So that’s why they have all the wars.

“You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain... [isn’t that what is happening? They go and destroy these villages, tear them down, build up Jewish settlements all along the West Bank and so forth, and then you don’t ask, so then now you get religious and]: ...you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, **because you do not ask**. Then you ask, and you do not receive... [So you have two things: you don’t ask and you don’t have—because you don’t ask; and then you ask and you don’t have, because you’re not asking in the right way.] ...because you ask with evil motives... [no attitude that we just read about] ...that you may consume *it* on your own lusts....

[and this is what happens. When people get far from God then they begin to go back in the world.] ...*You adulterers and adulteresses, don’t you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God*” (vs 1-4). So that’s what was happening here. They were going out and acting like the world, doing like the world, thinking like the world—killing, fighting, warring and taking.

Has that not also been the history of the world views upon as the Christian religion—that is: Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant—fighting and warring. They had a hundred-years war after the Reformation began—a hundred years of war; killing and just slaughtering; terrible consequences, all in the name of God!

Question is: What about the way that we got this country in taking it from the Indians and killing them; and you might as well include the Spanish in Central and South America, too.

(go to the next track)

When you really study those cultures and really understand what happened, it was really that it was God’s hand of judgment against them for their terrible and hideous religion—human sacrifice and cannibalism. So now that God has given us the land and we are living in it and we are abusing it, He says that ‘the stranger is going to rise up very high above us.’ I made the comment clear back in the summer of 1965 about the stranger getting ‘high above us’: Wouldn’t it be something if all these Indian tribes came back and claimed their land? Well, what are they doing? Are they getting it back? *Yes, they are!* And they’re going to get very ‘high above’ us and take us ‘low.’ They’re running casinos everywhere. They’re making millions and millions! That’s God’s judgment upon us in our own corrupt way. Those things happen because God’s judgment is there, and it always works out that way. Did that not happen to the children of Israel after they drove out the Caananites? *Yes, indeed!* Did they take it back? *Yes, they did!*

So, we need to really hear and fear with that kind thing. So we’re probably going to see more lawsuits of Indians reclaiming land and reparations for prisoners of war and reparations for slaves. Even though we’re 135-years-plus removed from it, somehow we’re guilty and we need to give them money. Well, all that is is punishment to the nation

- for turning their back on God
- for not looking to God
- for changing His laws

You can add in there all the Sunday-keeping and

paganism and occultism that is going on now. So all that's going to come. They didn't seek the will of God.

Now, let's come back to John, the fifth chapter here. This shows us what Jesus *always did*. In our prayers this is what we need to seek. Many times we go to God and it's a shopping list of what we want. We do have needs. We do have things that are realistic in our lives.

John 5:19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder'" (vs 19-20). We can also apply that to our lives. Does the Father love us? *That's why He called us!* Does He want to show us all things? *Yes, as much as possible out of His Word*—true, no doubt! At the resurrection, yea, *all* things.

Verse 30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself... [When you think about it as a human being, really, what do you really do? All we do is what God built in us to do, anyway, regardless of what it is. We see because God created us so we can. Those who are blind, can't. We walk because God made us to walk. We breathe, we eat, we sleep all because of what God put in us. So literally, when you get down to it, the self is really quite a thing— isn't it? Then it gets to thinking about how great it is, how marvelous it is and everything that you have God has given! But as Christ said, 'Of My own self I can do nothing.'] ...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me." That's what we need to seek in our lives, because that is the ultimate goal of being in the Family and Kingdom of God. Everything else is secondary, subordinate, tertiary—however you want to call it—to that.

1-John 3:20 ^[corrected] and let's see how our prayers are answered. We can have confidence in that. Here's something to remember whenever you have a guilty conscience—and when you sin you have a guilty conscience—and lots of times you do things which are not sin, but you still have a guilty conscience. Well, don't condemn yourself in it if you haven't sinned. Why should you have a guilty conscience if you haven't sinned? I've heard a lot of people say, 'Well, I feel so guilty about this.' Why do you feel guilty about it? Analyze it! Notice, John addresses this:

1 John 3:20: "If our hearts condemn us... [which is what happens when we're guilty; what

happens when we see that we have sinned] ...**God is greater than our hearts**, and knows all things...." In other words, if you have a guilty conscience or your heart condemns you (as it says here) *repent!*—because God is greater! God is able to forgive. That's the whole purpose in prayer; that you take it and you lay it before God. Lot's of times when we don't, what are we really saying? We don't say it, we don't think it, but the very act of it does bring it about—which is this: We are saying that Christ's sacrifice 'can't cover my sins.' So, we go around with a guilty conscience and bear it and carry it! Now then, when you have repented, or you're not living in sin:

Verse 21: "Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God.... [If your heart condemns you, you don't have confidence and you don't want to go to God. But remember, God is greater than you, so you have to grab onto that and go repent and go change.] (But): ...if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence..." Isn't there a greater difference in your prayers when you know that your sins are complete lifted from you? When you know that you're doing what is right? Do you not have greater confidence in your prayers? *Yes!* It's what he's talking about. Then we have confidence toward God.

Verse 22: "And whatever we may ask... [according to His will] ...we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight." So, this tells us the whole package here—doesn't it?

- This talks about repentance.
- This talks about faith, which is confidence.
- This talks about asking, that we will receive.

"...because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight." Now then, what David did with Bathsheba surely was not pleasing in the sight of God, so he had to repent of it. But many other things *were pleasing* in the sight of God that David did. So likewise with us.

"And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us. And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him, and He in him; and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us" (vs 23-24). So, we also need to know that, too—that Christ's Spirit is in us; that we are begotten of the Father.

Now, let's come to 1-John 5:13: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that

you have eternal life, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God.” That’s so important. We’re going to talk about *belief* here in just a little bit, because *belief* becomes so very important. *Belief and trust* run together. When you have that belief, and you have that conviction, and you know that you know, and you have God’s Spirit in you, and you are growing and overcoming in spite of your sins, then notice:

Verse 14: “And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: **that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him” (vs 14-15).

So that’s how to have prayer answered. It’s not some magical thing. That’s why any physical thing (if we could put it that way) like beads or rituals or something like that—you know how the Catholics do, they do the sign of the cross; and if you’re orthodox you do it the other way. I don’t know what other people do. I think Muslims take and roll their hand down from their forehead as bowing down. Others prostrate themselves on the floor. Many of them fold their hands in the ‘church steeple’ kind of thing. The Jews think they’re heard by rocking back and forth. Whenever they’re reading the Scriptures, they’re rocking back and forth. **All of those physical things have *nothing to do with belief!*** Belief is in your heart and in your mind and your attitude. And that’s what God wants!

Now, let’s talk about *belief* and *faith*. They’re actually very similar words. Let’s come to James, the first chapter, and we have all done this. You pray a prayer, you get all done with it and you get up and you say to yourself: ‘I wonder if God’s going to answer this prayer?’ And if—when you get up from your prayer, that you say, ‘I wonder if God heard me?’ or ‘I wonder if God is going to answer me?’—then you’ve already created a doubt.

Notice what James says here concerning *faith*: James 1:1: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings! Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces [patience] endurance” (vs 1-3). So there’s a process of growing and overcoming in faith. It doesn’t come just instantly. It doesn’t come by saying, ‘I need patience; God, give me patience.’ In the next instant you have patience. No! because you’re wondering why you didn’t get it. Doesn’t work that way. Patience comes through trials and difficulties. Have we had trials and difficulties? *Yes!* Some of them of our own making? *Yes!* Some of them not our own

making? *Yes!* Some of them, as they impinge upon us because of other people? *Yes!* But nevertheless, they’re all trials—aren’t they? Have we learned some patience? *Well, I think we’ve learned some!* Be hard to say we are the epitome of patience.

“But let endurance have *its* perfect work... [patience takes time, it’s got to work.] ...so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely... [Nothing wavering; and this is what happens with many prayers. Lot’s of times you do ask in faith, but it takes a long time for the answer to come. And you also may have another trial or two involved with it. It also may be something (as we’ll see a little later) that you must be persistent in; that you keep asking God.] ...and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the sea* that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*” (vs 4-6).

I think about this every once in a while when I’m doing my water exercises—especially when I’m in the pool alone. I do my various leg kicks and so forth, and the water gets really going and there are waves. And then when I do my full squats, boy! the whole pool is just rising and falling and splashing up over the edge and everything! Isn’t that the way it is with human nature? We’re just like water. As long as everything is peaceful around, it’s just smooth as glass. Then when troubles come—guess what? *You get upset and cantankerous*—the water is flopping and everything. ***You can liken that unto your temper—‘tossed to and fro.’***

Verse 7: “Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.... [Because we have to believe. So here’s a key: If your prayers have not been answered, perhaps you fall into this category, you’re really not believing. Or you’re not letting patience have its ‘perfect work.’ Or you’re not learning from the trials and difficulties that you go through. And sometimes many trials are repeated over because you only learn in degree. So then you learn again, and then you learn again, then you go through the trial again. Finally, you come to the point that you ***get it!*** Yes!

Now then, if you don’t, v 8: “*He’s* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” Two-minded! And I think that was expressed very well at the conference. Glenn Daniel made the comment: ‘There are some people who have just enough religion. Just enough so if trouble comes they can go to God. But just enough so that they can still have a foot in the world.’ And that’s where people are. They don’t want to go beyond. That’s how a person becomes ‘double-minded.’

As I mentioned, sooner or later as you walk down the road—if you have one foot on one on the other side—it’s like a crack that’s running down the middle of the road. It starts out as just very little, but the further you go, the wider it gets; and the further you go, the wider it gets. Right at first you can straddle that pretty good. But then when it gets to be a foot apart, it’s a little more difficult; two feet apart it’s really getting...three feet apart, now you’re really doing the splits, four feet apart you’re falling in the ditch. And that can happen that way. Now, I suppose someone who’s practiced ballet for a while could go maybe four and half feet. Maybe for a while you could jump back and forth from side-to-side, if you can jump four or five feet or six feet. But sooner or later you’re going to come to the point that you can’t walk it and you can’t jump it.

So now then: how to avoid that. Let’s come to Hebrews, the eleventh chapter. You do so by *faith*. Remember, the apostles came to Christ and said, ‘Increase our faith.’ So He gave them the parable, and He finished by saying, ‘When you’ve done all that you’ve been commanded, you’re an unprofitable servant.’ In other words, if you only do what you are commanded to do, then you’re not going to have very much faith. That’s what He was saying.

Here is what *faith* is, and it comes from God, and is actually *God’s faith*. It is a gift of God. Remember, Gal. 5. Faith is a gift of God! That’s part of the grace that God gives us. More than that—Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is *the substance*... [the Greek there is ‘hypostasis’ meaning *the spiritual substance that comes from God*. It has to come from His Spirit.] ...of *things* hoped for, *and the conviction of things not seen*. For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the Word of God*, so that the things that are seen were made from *things that are invisible*” (vs 1-3). And that is true today.

You look at all the things that are made and even down into the minutia that man has been able to discover concerning the parts of atoms. They know now that atoms are made of parts that are even smaller than the atoms. And all of it is substantiated by this verse right here. That they’re made of the things ‘which don’t appear.’

Now then, it gets down to some concrete actions. Verse 4: “By faith... [he was obeying] ...Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he* is yet speaking.... [so that is actually telling us that the account there of Abel and

Cain recorded in Gen. 4 is when he says ‘speaks’ that means it is the Word of God, which is speaking of what it is all about.

Recently, a man wrote me a paper which was quite good. He was talking about the *way of Cain*. He was saying that probably Cain brought Him an offering of something that he raised out of the ground, very expensive, maybe very exotic, maybe something that he really put a lot of work and dedication into, and God didn’t accept it, because it wasn’t according to His commands. It wasn’t by *faith*. Then he extrapolated out a little bit further. And isn’t that exactly what happens in religion. There are those who want to follow God and do what is right, they’re persecuted internally by those who disbelieve God.

Now, look what happened with Christ and the apostles’ relationship to Judaism. Look what happened to the Protestants in relationship to Catholicism. Same thing! So Abel was killed by Cain because Cain was threatened by his righteousness.

Verse 5: “By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death... [we know by v 13 that he died, because it says these all died in faith; so he was just taken] ...and was not found because God had transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God.” Now, what is it that pleases God? *When you keep His commandments and you also do those things that are pleasing to Him*. Because what you do then is based on faith; it’s based on belief; it’s based on the love of God.

Verse 6 is the key—here is the whole faith and belief, and belief and faith are, you might say, Siamese twins. “Now without faith **it is impossible** to please *God*. For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists... [and that means *he’s obligated to believe*. That’s why it’s so important; that’s why the model prayer starts out: ‘Our Father Who is in heaven, Holy is Your name.’ By that you are acknowledging the existence of God and the power of God and the glory of God. And you are coming to Him believing that **He is**.] ...and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Which then tells us how we need to be conducting our lives in relationship to God.

Not like the Protestants who go to church maybe on a Wednesday night Bible study and then they go to Sunday services, and of course, when they go to Sunday services they have what? *They have 45-minutes of songs and singing and then they have about a half-hour story-telling sermon*. And that’s about it and God is in their ‘hip-pocket.’ Or like the Catholics: God is there at the sign or at the trip

around the beads or whatever. It's interesting: You have what? *The Mafia!* Some of the worst criminals in the world what? *Are devoted Catholics!* They are not believing *God is*. They've got a corporate hierarchical church between them and God. And so, if they *please* the hierarchy, then they can do anything they want to do.

You've got to be *diligently* seeking Him; doing those things that please Him—because if not, it's impossible to please God. So if you pray and say, 'I wonder if God's going to hear this prayer,' you need to repent of that thought immediately, because you're disbelieving God. Sometimes you just have to 'hang in there'—because it takes a long time.

Now, let's go back here to Romans 4:17. Remember, Abraham went ten years after he was called out of Ur of the Chaldees. Someone sent in a little interesting thing that United Religions is 'UR'—Ur. That's what it was back then with Abraham. He went ten years sojourning in the land that God said He would give him, and He would give him seed. Then He gave him the covenant in Gen. 15 that He promised that he would have his own son from his own self—from him and Sarah. Well, Sarah didn't quite believe that, so she said, 'Let's short-circuit it with Hagar.' Trying to work out God's way yourself. Number one lesson: ***Don't try and work out your prayers yourself!*** It won't work! You're just going to end up with a passel of trouble like the whole world is still saddled with the problem between the Arabs and the Jews today. So then he went another 15 years.

Romans 4:17: "...I have made you a father of many nations.'.... [basically the only one he saw was Isaac. I think Jacob and Esau were born two years after Abraham died, or maybe two years before he died. So it's possible he may have seen them as infants. But that's it! Now, if it's a maximum of three, that's surely not a great nation—is it? And that's surely not blessing the whole world—is it? In his lifetime!] ...before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are." That's the kind of faith and hope you need to have. But even if it's not, it is if you have faith in God and it's according to His will, He is going to provide.

Comment was made that for those who don't believe in the Bible, they can point to the fact that Abraham didn't receive the promises; so therefore, you can't trust in God. But the thing is, the promises that were given to Abraham went way beyond him, clear into eternity! Another thing, too, God looks upon Abraham as he is going to be at the resurrection. That's why it talks about here: 'who quickens the dead, and calls those things that are not

as though they were.'

Sometimes in your life you come to this—v 18: "...who against hope believed in hope... [He believed in God because ***God was his hope***. But sometimes that's the only thing you have to believe in—is ***hope!***] ...in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, 'So shall your seed be.' And he, not being weak in the faith... [We still saw some of his own human weaknesses, though—didn't we? Human weaknesses do not necessarily mean *weak in faith*. So sometimes you may think that you are weak in faith when you're dealing with your human weaknesses. But that may not be necessarily be so. You can be very weak, but have faith in God. After all, did not God call 'the weak, the despised, those things that aren't'? Are we not be strong in faith? ***Yes!*** So he wasn't weak in faith.] ...[and] considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah's womb" (vs 18-19).

Now, that's got to be hope in *hope*. In other words, sometime in my lifetime, though 'I'm a hundred and thought you're ninety, my dear, God is going to fulfill His promise.' And sure enough, one day God came. He said, 'This time next year, you're going to conceive.' And Sarah laughed! And He says, 'You laughed!' And she says, 'No, my Lord, I didn't laugh.' He said, 'You did laugh. Nevertheless, you laughed.' That was not necessarily a weakness in faith, but that was a weakness of her, what you might say, looking at the circumstances, because God is able to do the impossible! That's what we need to understand. And if we look to God for that, not that He's going to work everything in our lives that are impossible and make them right—but He can certainly intervene and do the impossible. I think when you start looking at the things we've gone through, we've gone through a lot of impossible situations, but God has made it happen. Not like this, though.

Verse 20: "...he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God; for he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do" (vs 20-21). Now then, in between the time of the promise and the fulfillment, there is a blessing for belief though it has not happened. Here is the blessing:

"As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness" (v 22). Which was imputed to him for righteousness 15 years before Isaac was born. So that gives you an imputation of righteousness because you believe God in spite of the fact that you cannot see it, and in spite of the fact that the circumstances look impossible, that you believe God at His word that He will do it. ***And he will!*** Now,

none of us are confronted with exactly the same thing. But nevertheless, we have the principle that we follow in our lives.

“But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him... [that was an example for us] ...rather, *it was also written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the dead*” (vs 23-24). That’s why it’s so absolutely important to not only to *believe in God*, but to *believe in Jesus Christ* and to *believe that He died for our sins*, and that *He was resurrected from the dead!* And when we’re confronted with all these religions—which we will be—that is the one which separates Truth from error.

Several years ago I made the comment on Satan’s global church. I said that what they need, they’ll come up with a ‘new’ scripture. They’ll come up with a ‘world-Bible,’ and they’ll combine all the writings of the different religions together. And that’s how the world is going to be deceived in this great ecumenical thing. Well, I didn’t know at the time that I made that statement—which must have been three or four years ago—but in 1985 ‘Rev.’ Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church ^[transcriber’s correction], commissioned that that be done. 1991 they got their first draft. Now they are ready to publish the book, and it’s quite a thing! And it’s going to ‘blow away’ all of the nominal ‘Christians’ in the world. It’s going to blow them right into the ecumenical movement, because they will not have the ‘eyes to see.’ Remember, because they didn’t love the Truth—what is God going to do? *Cause them to believe a lie.* And I’m sure that this big 925-page ‘world scripture’ (as they call it) is one of those big lies which they will believe. It’s something! That’s why I’m emphasizing it here.

You have to “...believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the dead*; Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification” (vs 24-25). There are going to be many things in there. I’m going to get the book, and I’ll probably give several sermons out of it. But there’s one thing I’m sure that’s going to separate it all:

1. Christ came to reveal the Father
2. He’s the only One Who has been raised from the dead—back to being a glorified spirit being.

Not only that; of all of the religions that are in the world, none of them had it where God came in the flesh to die for their sins. So now we’ll be able to understand even more and have more faith in what we believe in the Bible. And we’re going to do just like Patton did with Rommel.

I’ve mentioned this before: When Patton got Rommel to go into his trap—if you’ve seen the movie *Patton*—Rommel had his tanks and troops coming up the valley and he had his tanks and troops back over the edge so that they couldn’t see them. Patton was up there looking through the binoculars and he said, ‘Rommel, blankity-blank, I’ve read your book!’

So that’s precisely what we’re going to do with these things. We’re not going to run and hide from them. We’re going to read that book, because we’re going to have to show people how much superior that Christianity is, and it is *the way*, because they’re trying to get it all down to just a big mish-mash of just wonderful sayings of wonderful people, and we’ll avoid all controversy. It’s going to be something!

Old Testament Scriptures from the *King James Version*
New Testament Scriptures from *The New Testament in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 32:1-2
- 2) Romans 5:15-17
- 3) Psalm 32:5-7
- 4) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 5) Isaiah 57:15
- 6) Isaiah 55:6-9
- 7) 2 Samuel 12:1-13
- 8) Psalm 51:106
- 9) Colossians 3:8-10, 12-15
- 10) Psalm 51:6-17
- 11) Matthew 6:10
- 12) James 4:1-4
- 13) John 5:19-20, 30
- 14) 1 John 3:20-24
- 15) 1 John 5:13-15
- 16) James 1:1-8
- 17) Hebrews 11:1-6
- 18) Romans 4:17:25

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 John 1
- Psalm 51
- Luke 15
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Galatians 5
- Genesis 15

Also referenced:

- Sermon: *Two Righteousnesses*
- Book: *Beliefs of the Christian Biblical Church of God*

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 12-01-09