

Keys to Answered Prayer V Believe God/ Believe His Word—#2

Fred R. Coulter – September 30, 2006

Now let's come back here to Hebrews 11:6, and let's understand something concerning our relationship with God; because key #2 is *Believe God and Believe His Word*—and that's the key, important thing. Most religionists today—they don't stand up and say God is a liar—accuse God of being a liar, because they say, 'Well, He didn't mean this and He didn't mean that and He didn't mean the other thing. Oh well, Moses didn't write this. Isaiah didn't write it. Jeremiah didn't write it. The apostles didn't write the New Testament. Someone else wrote it centuries later.' So what they're doing, they're accusing God of being a liar; they don't believe God!

Let's read it here, Hebrews 11:6: "Now without faith... [And 'faith' could very well be translated *belief*, because faith is actually 'beliefizing'—if I could put it that way.] ...Now without faith *it is impossible to please God...* [And the whole thing that we want to do is to be able to do the things that please God, understand His Word, ask God to intervene and help us. But what we need to realize here is the second sentence:] ...For **it is mandatory**... [in other words, God requires this for you to be heard.] ...*for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists...* [Now, when it is 'exists' that means that *everything that God is, everything that God has said.*] ...and *that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*" So in order to believe God, ***you must believe God!***

- You believe that He exists
- You believe Who He is
- You believe what He said about Himself—that is recorded here in the Bible

—because everywhere in the Bible:

- God *said*
- the Lord *said*
- God *told* Moses
- *say this* to the children of Israel, all of the prophets
- *the Word of the Lord came* to Isaiah, *came* to Jeremiah, *came* to Ezekiel and all the other prophets
- and Daniel *wrote* that it was God Who revealed

So you must believe that God is, that He exists, in everything about God that He is, is absolutely essential when you come to God and start praying.

Now we saw last time the key, when you don't have the belief that you need to, is admit your

belief and ask God to help you overcome your unbelief. Like the man, when Jesus said, 'If you believe, all things are possible.' And he said, 'I believe, but Lord, help my unbelief.' So he had a measure to go in having the kind of belief that he needed. Then He told His disciples that the only way that comes is by prayer and by fasting.

Now let's come here to John 11—let's see how far this belief carries. Now I'm sure you've read this verse before. But let's go here and we'll read it again—this is really quite an astounding verse. This is after Lazarus died and Martha came and said, 'I know that he will live in the resurrection,' after Jesus said, 'Your brother will rise again.'

Now John 11:25: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he die... [Now that's very important—isn't it? In the grave you have no thoughts—correct? In the day that you perish, your thoughts cease. But if you believe and you die, notice what it says here]: ...**shall live again**; and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall not die forever.... [Because we're talking about the resurrection. Very important to understand here.] ...Do you believe this?'.... [And that's very important in our relationship with God.] ...'And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall not die forever. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, Who was to come into the world'" (vs 25-27).

So she believed part of it—this is almost like the man who said, 'Lord, I believe but help my unbelief.' And of course, you know the way it was with Lazarus—people looked to the physical things. And they said, 'Oh, if you would have been here, he wouldn't have died.' But Jesus deliberately didn't come knowing that he would die for this very purpose. And it's interesting, too, that he [Lazarus] was in the grave—how long? *Four days*. That's to go past the three-day legal limit that the Jews had on whether a person was alive or dead. So that they would make sure that no one was in a coma. So He deliberately did that.

Now, since we're here in John, let's come over here to John 12 and review this again. Now not only are you to believe in God and you are to believe in Jesus Christ. It's important to understand Who Jesus Christ was. And I'm going to, after I get done with this series on keys to answered prayer, I'm going to do a series through the *Harmony: Who Was the Man Jesus?* And what kind of man was He?—because too many people believe in a *false* Jesus.

You have to believe who Jesus was before He came; who He was when He was here; and who He is after His resurrection. Because if you don't believe that—if you believe in a one-God or a three-God—you don't believe in God the way that God says. It's that simple! Now it gets down to the point today that we have lots of literature, we have lots of tapes, we have lots of sermons on it so you can prove it. But the bottom line is, when you go off on these tangents, sooner or later you get to a point that you are denying and rejecting Jesus. And when you do that, your prayers are not going to be answered. God is not going to change what He has done, or His nature to please the philosophies and theories of men. That's why it says 'it's mandatory' to believe God. And that is the way that He said He is, who He is, what He has done.

John 12:44: "Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me.'" So you can't have one without the other. What did Jesus also say on the Passover night? He said, 'I am **the way, the truth and the life** and no one comes to the Father except through Me.' So think about that. And if you believe that Jesus didn't exist until He was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, you have joined the ranks of all the other religions of the world, especially the Jews and the Muslims who say He was a prophet. So you need to think on that!

And I might as well add in here, too, while we're going along in what you believe: People come along and they try and bring in Hebrew names. Let me tell you something very clearly: The sacred names in the New Testament are just what Jesus said here: God the Father and Jesus Christ. Those are the sacred names for the New Covenant. The names that God had in the Old Testament were names for the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant has been set aside and the New Covenant has replaced it. Understand this as very important, too: Did the disciples know Hebrew? *Yes!* Did the apostles know Hebrew? *Yes!* Did the Apostle Paul know Hebrew? *Yes!* You can read in the book of Acts, chapters 21 and 22 where he went to Jerusalem and spoke to the Jews at the temple **in Hebrew**—right? If sacred names are a requirement, as sacred-namers say today, then why didn't they write it in the Greek when they wrote the New Testament? ***Because today you're in a family relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.*** That's why! And that's why Jesus said, as we read last time, 'If you don't believe that I AM'—you take that 'I AM' and you go back to Exo. 3 and the instructions that were given to Moses. He said, 'I have not appeared to the fathers—or revealed Myself by the name of Jehovah, but God Almighty or El Shaddai.' And then Moses said, 'Who will I say sent me?' He said, 'Tell them I AM has sent you.' So it's very essential to understand.

Think about it this way: If you do not believe God the Father and Jesus Christ the way that They have said, will They answer your prayers? Think about it! Is God under obligation to man, because man *thinks* he's doing good? *NO!* We're all under obligation to God—correct? *Yes!*

Now let's see it here—v 44 again: "Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me'" (vs 44-45). Now what is one of the theories of the nature of God? *The animate, transcendent God which is just a glob in the sky.* He has no face, no hands, no arms, no legs, He doesn't have any need for those things. And if anyone refers to it in the Bible that way it's only an amorphism—in other words a description to tell a story, because God doesn't have hands, He doesn't have legs, He doesn't have eyes. So here Jesus said, "If you've seen Me, you've seen Him." Now what did Jesus have? *He had a head, He had eyes, He had hands, He had arms, He had legs.* Right? And didn't He tell Philip, when Philip said, 'Show us the Father.' He said, 'Have I been with you so a long a time and you've known Me. If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father.' So God makes it very simple, but it's very straight forward. And it is very demanding of human beings. But once you understand that, it becomes very simple.

Verse 46: "I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe..." And that's what most people do today. You go into any 'Christian' church—the big mega churches, the little churches—all of the Protestant churches that meet on Sunday ***do not believe God's command for the Sabbath.*** So what do they do? *'Oh, we'll do it on Sunday.'* That's not what God said. He did not change it.

Let's come down here to v 48: "The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day." So you want to know what God thinks of your actions? You want to know what Jesus thinks of your actions? ***Read the Gospels!*** And since He was the Lord God of the Old Testament before He became Jesus Christ, read the Old Testament. And since He's the Head of the Church and inspired all the apostles to write what they wrote, read all the writings of the apostles. In short, ***read the whole Bible!*** There you go.

Now think of this for a minute—the one of Elohim Who became Jesus Christ, became a man on this earth and notice how obedient He was to God in doing what He did. How much more us! You think about it: As human beings, how much more is it

required of us because we're the ones that need saving. Jesus was the Savior that came—right? *Yes!* But notice how obedient He was to God. Notice how He believed the Father. He didn't come along and amend anything that the Father had told Him to do, did He? *No!* Think about it for a minute.

Verse 49: “For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak.” Now then, just a little pause for all who are teachers and ministers and so forth. Do you follow that? Do you preach the Word? Or do you have your own ideas that you're bringing along? The key is, is the way you develop the character of God is with **truth!** The way you overcome a deceitful nature is a constant input of truth—through prayer, through study, through reading the Word of God, through living the way that God wants you to live.

Now notice verse 50: “And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak **exactly** as the Father has told Me.” So question: Did Jesus have faith? *Yes!* Did He believe? *Yes!* Was He obedient? *Yes!* So that's the example we need to have to believe God and believe His Word. That's why we have it. And today, in this age, think how many billions of Bibles there are in the world. No one's going to have an excuse to say, ‘Oh God, if you were just here on the earth I would hear You.’ No you wouldn't. All the Israelites say, ‘Oh God, get us out of this slavery.’ He brought them out of slavery, brought them through all the trials that they had to get to Mt. Sinai, and He spoke the Ten Commandment—and they're easy to understand. There's not one word of the Ten Commandments that's hard to understand. What the problem is:

- It's hard for people to accept because they don't want to do it.
- It's hard for someone who believes in another god to give up his god.
- It's hard for those who are idolaters to give their idols.
- It's hard for those who take God's name in vain to stop it.
- It's hard for those who keep Sunday to quit.
- It's hard for those who disrespect their parents to become obedient.
- It's hard for those who are murderers to stop. Especially you read some of these things on the serial killers.
- So you tell them the next one—don't commit adultery. ‘Oh, we can't have that.’

They're clear! They're easy to understand. People don't want to do it. So this is all a part of believing.

Now let's come here to John 20:24: “But Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not

with them when Jesus came.... [That's the first time, related a few verses earlier.] ...Then the other disciples said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger into the nail marks, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe at all.’.... [Well, since he was one of the chosen apostles, Jesus had a little surprise for him.] ...Now after eight days, His disciples again were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus came after the doors were shut, and stood in the midst... [all of a sudden, there He is] ...and said, ‘Peace *be* to you.’ Then He said to Thomas... [He knew what He had said—right? *Yes!* So when you say those things, does God know it? *Yes!*] ...‘Put forth your finger, and see My hands; and reach *out* your hand, and put *it* into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing” (vs 24-27). I think the *King James* says ‘be not faithless but believing.’

Now let's come to Mark 11—now here's a promise. As we go through, ***Claim God's promises!*** That also helps unbelief. ***Claim God's promises!*** We'll look at some of those and analyze them a little bit more. This is where He cursed the fig tree—when they came back and saw the fig tree, in the morning: Mark 11:20: “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, ‘Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Have faith *from* God.... [Now the *King James* says: ‘have faith in God,’ but it really means *from* God—that's the best way to translate it into English, because you need ***the faith of God, which comes from God.*** Now notice what that faith can do:] ...For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, “Be taken away and be cast into the sea,” and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say” (vs 20-23).

Now let me tell you something that is harder to do than move a mountain. Moving a mountain or moving a tree, or cursing a fig tree does not accomplish anything spiritual. But what is harder to change is ***human nature.*** What is harder to change is ***people to be convicted in mind*** of what God says. That's harder than moving a mountain. So likewise, He says here—v 24: “For this reason I say to you, ***all***... [you might circle that] ...***all*** *the* things that you ask *when* you are praying, believe that you will receive *them*, and *they* shall be *given* to you.” Very important. Now notice He does not tell you they will happen instantly. That's why (as we'll see a little later) we have to be earnest and consistent in prayer. There are some prayers that you pray that you don't have an answer until sometime later—sometime years down the road. And what is the greatest goal

that you're seeking? *Eternal life*. When is that going to happen? *That's going to happen when Christ returns at the resurrection*. So you need to think long-term.

Now just put it in your notes—Gal. 5:22: fruits of the Spirit are: love, joy, faith, peace, etc. So God's Spirit *gives* you faith. That's why He says have the faith *of* God, or the faith *from* God. Now continuing, v 25—now He shows here something very important. We'll cover this a little bit later, but we'll just interject it here since it's in the context. "But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, **forgive...**" You think about that! *Forgive*—why? Because even though you are right in your hatred and bitterness and grudge against them, because they have done wrong, **forgive them for what they have done to you and put them in God's hands**.

Now, let me ask a question: If your prayer for them is, you put them in God's hands, you clean your mind for everything that has happened, you cleaned your mind of all the bitterness and hatred and things that have been caused because of it—and everyone of us have gone through things where we have, what we might say, human cause to think that way. Put them in God's hands. God will take care of it. Now think about this for just a minute. Let's use two examples:

What did Jesus say just before He died? *'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.'* And how many of them were forgiven on Pentecost when they repented and were baptized, who were standing there when Jesus was being judged and they said, 'Crucify Him! Crucify Him!' Has anyone done anything worse to you? Have you suffered any more than Jesus? What right then do we have to hold bitterness and grudges against people? We can forgive them, but we can be very cautious and learn a lesson. That doesn't mean that we bring them into our bosom. That just means that we forgive them and put them in God's hands. And in many cases say, 'God, keep them away from me, please.' God will do that. Is God able to take care of them more than us? *Yes!* Now we will see some of the prayers in the Psalms. Sometimes you have to pray for God to intervene and literally destroy them!—because of what they are and who they are and what they are doing. There are some people, as it says in the book of Jude, who have been made to be taken and destroyed. Now that's out in the carnal world.

When we're dealing with brethren, we need to do what we are understanding here. Now here's the key—v 26: **"For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who is in heaven forgive you your offenses."** Everyone wants to be forgiven. But how many people want to forgive? Now, sometimes

there's forgiveness that has to come with a little discipline, like when children do wrong. You discipline them and then you give them instructions what they need to do—though you've forgiven them—so they don't do it again; likewise with adult behavior. If people do things that are wrong and they're forgiven, you say, okay, you are not ever to do this again. And you need to set yourself a course and set yourself a personal discipline and yield to God so you're not going to do it. And if that would have been done with a famous evangelist who had adulterous affairs with hundreds and hundreds of women, and really nipped in the bud when it first took place, it would not have continued. Forgiveness does not mean that you become stupid in your relationship with that person because they say, "Oh, I'm sorry." You say, "Okay you're forgiven." But they're not sorry to the point to change their behavior. Or they're not sorry to the point to stop what they are doing. But nevertheless, before God you've forgiven them. Comment from audience: 'They're sorry they got caught.' We'll talk about repentance when we get to that section of it. This is very important concerning what we're covering here.

Now, let's come to John 14:14: "If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.... [Now as we covered, it has to be according to God's will.] ...If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.... [And that is a literal translation from the Greek.] ...And I will ask the Father... [so He intervenes for us] ...and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age" (vs 14-16). So commandment-keeping is all important there.

Let's come over here to John 16. Now, if you believe God will you obey God? If you believe God will you keep His commandments? *Yes, because you know that they came from God*. So you can reverse that around the other way. *If you don't keep the commandments of God, you don't believe Him*. You may profess with the mouth, but your heart betrays you. And God looks upon the heart.

John 16:26—here's why we pray in Jesus' name. We'll come back to this again, but we just want to put this in here. "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... [Now this is why prayers are answered. Remember where we started out, **you have to love God**.] ...because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father" (vs 26-28). So we pray directly to the Father—we'll expand on that a little bit later.

Believing takes action. Let's come to Matthew 21—*believing takes action*. What if you need a job. You get on your knees and you say, 'Oh God, give me a job.' Immediately get off of your knees, flop on the couch and hit the remote and turn on the television! And then the next day you pray for a job, you get up off your knees and flop down on the couch and turn on the remote and you sit there, 'Well God, why didn't You give me a job, I've been waitin' by the phone all this time.' You know, God expects you to get out and pound the pavement, knock on the doors, go here, present your résumés, keep at it and *let God bless you and open the way to answer the prayer*.

Now here, Matthew 21:28: "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first one and said, 'Son, go work in my vineyard today.' And he answered *and* said, 'I will not'; but afterwards he repented *and* went. Then he came to the second *son and* said the same thing. And he answered *and* said, 'Sir, I will *go*'; but he did not go.... [So he asked a question]: ...Which of the two did the will of the father?'.... [Remember, we're to do the will of God—right?] ...They said to Him, 'The first *one*.' Jesus said to them, 'I tell you truly, the tax collectors and *the* harlots are going into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in *the* way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and *the* harlots believed him. Yet you, after seeing *this*, did not afterwards repent and believe him'" (vs 28-32). So what we're dealing with here: God gives you an opportunity to change. If you find there's something a little too hard or too difficult for you, God gives you the opportunity to repent. So in this you see two things: You must *believe God*, you must *believe His Word*, and *you must work*. As we saw last time, '*faith without works is dead*.'

Now let's come to Psalm 119:65—let's see that *believing* is a process. Now here's another key that's all important you need to realize. Do you want to grow in grace and knowledge? *Yes!* All right, then you have to constantly believe God. Let's see the operation of it here in Psalm 119:65: "You have dealt well with Your servant, O LORD, according unto Your Word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed Your commandments" (vs 65-66).

Now this is very important—believing the commandments of God and obeying the commandments of God are not an end. They are a beginning and a process and the end thereof is *Godly character*. That's why—remember the young man when he came to Jesus and said, 'Master, what should do that I may inherit eternal life?' And He says, 'Keep the commandments.' He [the young man] said, 'Oh, I've done these from my youth.'

Commandment-keeping is a beginning and process, not an end—because God then teaches us.

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Now let's continue on in Psalm 119, because we will learn some lessons here, because one of the things that's important to understand is this: *God has called you to build character* and understand this: *it is not possible to build the true character of God unless you have trials*. Now trials then give you an opportunity:

- to use and express the love of God
- the faith of God
- the belief in God
- look to the hope of God
- to look to Him for salvation
- to look to Him for deliverance
- to look to Him to reconcile the problem within your life

And we're all going to come to a point—probably many, many, many times, that there is a problem that is so huge that it is so big, that the only thing that you can say is, 'God I cannot handle it, please intervene and solve it.' Now whatever little part you can do, you can do. But let's see the process here:

Verse 66: "Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed Your commandments.... [and as I mentioned, that is the start: keeping them, obeying them, under all circumstances—the character of God. Because that's what Jesus did—didn't He? *Yes!*] ...Before I was afflicted I went astray..." (vs 66-67). That's why you have trials. *Trials are adjustments necessary to keep you on course*. Now if you continue going astray then you are going off course. And know that the trial you're going through now, you're going to face a future trial which may be of a greater magnitude.

So that's why he says this.] "...Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Your word.... [That's how to keep from going astray. You quit going astray by repenting and going back and keeping God's Word.] ...You *are* good, and do good; teach me Your statutes.... [That's why we go through these things.] ...The proud have forged a lie against me: *but* I will keep Your precepts with *my* whole heart. Their heart is as fat as grease; *but* I delight in Your law. *It is* good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Your statutes...." (vs 67-71).

Now think of this. Can we say this with all of our trials. Now it's difficult when you're going through them, I know that. Especially if they're protracted trials, which some of them are. When you get through to the other side and you have been faithful and you have believed God, and you have kept His Word, and kept His commandments, is it

not good that you went through that to build the character of God? And think of it this way—a little later on we'll cover this—but is not God going to add jewels to your crown (Mal. 3) that He's going to make, that He's going to give you? Because of your doing like it says here? So therefore, in the final analysis, at the resurrection, it is good that you have been afflicted, that you might 'learn Your statutes.'

"The law of Your mouth *is* better unto me than thousands of gold and silver" (v 72). Which ought to tell us what? *You don't need to pray for money.* You need to pray that God will provide for us. And when He provides for us then we manage it in the way that is according to the character of God—and He will bless us.

Now for example: What if you're addicted to gambling and you lose your job. And you say, 'God, give me a job.' And God doesn't give you a job. It's not the losing the job that's the problem, it's the gambling that you're addicted to that you need to repent of and stop before God will give you a job; otherwise you will continue in your addiction—is that not correct? And you can add to that alcohol, drugs, whatever it may be. And if you get into a trial because of your addiction, the reason you get into a trial is so that you can quit your addiction. Now you can stop your addiction, that can happen.

Let's come over here to Psalm 27:11—since we're in the book of Psalms. "Teach me Your way, O LORD..." The way God teaches you His way is how? *Through study, through obedience, through prayer, through trials/circumstances, daily living.* And when you do that and you understand the magnitude and the importance of the Sabbath, then the Sabbath is going to mean that much more for you. And when you come before God on the Sabbath, He's going to teach you even more. And as you come out of these trials, you're going to have experiences where you'll be going along and all of a sudden "ding"—the light of understanding of the trial will strike you. And that's when you will say, 'Thank you, Lord.' Now think on that!

Now notice: "Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. *I had fainted...* [that is, given up/lost hope] ...unless I had **believed** to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.... [That's talking about the resurrection in the final analysis— isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*] ...Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD" (vs 11-14). Now Jesus said the same thing in John 16. He said 'In the world you'll have tribulation, but be of good courage, I've overcome the world.' It's almost the same thing.

And I can say this: Going through and working things up on the Old Testament project, there is so much in the Old Testament that comes right into the New Testament that they are as inseparable as the two sides of your heart. You need both sides; you need both Testaments—Old *and* New Testaments.

Now let's continue on. Let's see some examples of unbelief. Now, let's come back here to Numbers 20—and it can happen to anyone, even Moses. You think of this. People look at that and say, 'Well, maybe God was unfair.' But think about what the authority that God gave Moses. The Word of God! Whatever Moses said took place—right? *Yes!* All the plagues, all the signs, all the wonders, the death of the firstborn. God said, 'I'm going to do it.' Moses told Pharaoh, 'It's going to happen.' And did it happen? *Yes!* And one of the meanings of the Passover is: *God has judged all the gods of Egypt, meaning all the gods of the world.* And what is a favorite thing that people like to do today? You watch the History channel, you watch the National Geographic channel, you watch news specials and documentaries, what are they fascinated with? *The religion of Egypt and the pyramids, and where the kings were buried and what they believed.* And what are they doing? *That's the living seeking to the dead to try an understand the purpose of life.* That goes against what God said. God said there in Isa. 8, 'To the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, there is no light in them.' And when they say 'the living should seek unto the dead'—that's what they're doing. All the gods of this world have been destroyed, judged. That's why every religion of this world is going to fail.

Now, Numbers 20:7: "And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, 'Take the rod, and gather you the assembly together, you, and Aaron your brother, and speak you unto the rock before their eyes... [Now, I don't know what the size of the rock was, but out there in Sinai you could probably find a huge, great rock out there. He said, '**speak** to it.'] ...and it shall give forth its water, and you shall bring forth to them water out of the rock... [Now, what do we have here. Who was the Rock? *Christ.* What is the Holy Spirit? *Out of your belly shall come rivers of living water.* So here is a symbology for them that out of the Rock, Who is Christ, would come forth the Holy Spirit, which is the water.] ... so you shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.' And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, 'Hear now, you rebels... [Moses was under a lot of stress. So don't tell me you have a lot of stress. Try the desert. Try the heat. Try a million, 600-thousand carnal people

complaining against you at every turn. Rebelling against you. Men tried to take over the priesthood. Men trying to take over the office of Moses.] ...must we fetch you water out of this rock?.... [So he got mad!] ...And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice... [Now God said, 'speak' to it.] ...and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*" (vs 7-11).

Now, every minister and every teacher and every elder pay attention, because God holds us responsible. We are to do and preach the Word of God as He says, not as we like. And we are to do it exactly as God says. Notice, because they didn't believe: Verse 12: "And the LORD spoke unto Moses and Aaron, 'Because **you believed Me not**, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel...'"

Let's understand something else here, too— all teachers, elders, ministers, pastors, evangelists, whatever mucky-muck you may think you are. You must teach the Word of God and you represent God. And if you're preaching and if you're behavior is sinful and reprehensible to God, think of what God is going to do to you. And realize this: He is going to set a trial upon you that you're not even going to expect that is going to come. And if you perchance give yourself over to Satan, he is going to try and smooth the way for you, to lead you in further deception. So you see the results of this obedience here.

"...to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel... [That's the only purpose why we are here. The only purpose there are teachers. The only purpose there are elders is to sanctify God in the congregation, so that the people will have faith, so that the people will have hope. Not to benefit us. Not to give us power. Not to give us prestige or anything like that.] ...therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.' This *is* the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and He was sanctified in them" (vs 12-13).

Now let's look at another one. Let's come here to Luke, the first chapter. Quite an example— this is really an example—because what we're dealing with, we're dealing with a priest named Zacharias, who became the father of John the Baptist. And he was old and his wife was old and God was going to perform a miracle by finally answering her prayer. And what was the prayer of Zacharias and Elizabeth? '*Oh God, give us a child.*' He was in there offering incense and Gabriel...now if you read through Daniel and especially here in Luke, it's evident that the angel Gabriel is the one in charge of carrying out the circumstances and events

on the earth to fulfill the promise of coming Messiah in the flesh who was one of Elohim.

Luke 1:12—He sent Gabriel to give them a message: "And when he saw *the angel*... [And of course he was right there with the incense.] ...Zacharias was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, 'Fear not, Zacharias, because your supplication has been heard... [We'll talk about *supplications* later, because that's a special kind of intense, beseeching prayer.] ...and your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son to you, and you shall call his name John. And he shall be a joy and exultations to you; and many shall rejoice at his birth, for he shall be great before the Lord. And he shall not drink wine and strong drink in any form, but he shall be filled with *the* Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him... [Now isn't that interesting: '...to the Lord their God.' And he [John the Baptist] shall go **before Him**.... [Who was Jesus? *The Lord God*. How plain could that be? Right? *Yes!*] ...in *the* spirit and power of Elijah, to turn *the* hearts of the fathers to *the* children, and *the* disobedient to *the* wisdom of *the* righteous, to make ready a people prepared for *the* Lord.' Then Zacharias said to the angel, 'By what *means* shall I know this?.... [Innocent question.] ...For I am an old man, and my wife *is* advanced in years.' And the angel answered *and* said to him, 'I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God... [Now think about this in relationship to prayer, because your prayers go up to the presence of God, don't they? Think about this in relationship to believing God, obeying God and so forth.] ...and I was sent to speak to you, and to announce this good news to you.... [Now v 20 is the key:] ...But behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day in which these things shall take place, **because you did not believe my words**, which shall be fulfilled in their time'" (vs 12-20). So there are penalties that come for non-belief.

Now let me say a word of this: For all of you who have been upset and discouraged because of men and preachers whom you believe have deceived you—and if they have, you have allowed them to—who have brought in false doctrines and taught them to you—which you have allowed them to do. And you wonder what's wrong with your spiritual life. What's wrong with your spiritual life is that you didn't believe the Word of God, you didn't believe the Bible, but you believed a man who brought you falsehoods! So maybe your spiritual life is kind of Zachariasized (if I could put it that way). It is deaf and it is dumb. Now when you repent and return to God, He will give you life. He will restore you. But you have to take the action to do it. Because remember where we started. It is mandatory

for the one who comes to God to believe that He exists. And to exist means *believe everything that He is, everything that He has said*, in spite of 10-thousand people on your right hand and 30-thousand people on your left hand saying something else!

Now let's talk about the promises of God. Let's understand this: First of all, we need to realize God cannot lie. **God cannot lie!** Come to Titus, the first chapter—very important for us to realize here. If what you have requested of God in your prayers has not been fulfilled, perhaps you need to consider His answer may be 'no.' Do you expect God to just be a 'yes' machine for every request that you have? *Of course not.* Many times the answer is 'no.' And always remember this: Whenever your prayers involve someone else, remember you cannot live their lives for them. They have to make their own choices. So you ask God to deal with them in His way, regardless of the circumstances. Now this is very evident in the letters that I get from the prisoners whom we send the New Testament to. And after you see some of the specials on the way that they're treated and their just stuck in a cell and have nothing, and they won't give them anything, and they have no money. But I think it's interesting: those prisoners, who have not committed heinous crimes, begin to find Christ in prison. Very interesting because they begin to recognize something's wrong. The first thing they need to do is understand, God doesn't lie!

And that they are there, unless they are an innocent victim, which I just read in the paper this morning that one man who was convicted and put in jail and has been there since 1979—so you think of this if you have a trial—for killing someone, was finally exonerated because of DNA testing. And how did that happen? They inadvertently arrested the man who did the original crime in 1979 and every person who they take in they do a DNA test. And he himself was kind of an older man, but he was rearrested and put in prison and in a wheelchair and was several hours from being released when the word came down this is the one who did the crime. And the man who's been in there all this time is innocent and he is released. And all the state would do is say, 'We're sorry.' So you think about that. Think about what you go through. So if you happen to be in prison or convicted of something, you start straightening out your mind by getting rid of self-deception, by putting in the Truth of God into your mind. There's no other way you can do it.

Now here, Titus 1:1: "Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the Truth that is according to Godliness; in the hope of eternal life, which God **Who cannot lie** promised before the

ages of time" (vs 1-2) So God cannot lie. All His promises are true!

Let come here to 2-Corinthians 1:20, let's see that—very important. All His promises are true! Now they may not be given all at once. Could you take every blessing of God, all the goodness of God poured out upon you all at once? *No!* God will give you a measure, but all of His promises are true.

2-Corinthians 1:20: "For whatever promises of God *there are*, in Him *is* the yes, and in Him the Amen, with glory to God by us. But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, *is* God. Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (vs 20-22). Which Eph. 1 says is a promise of God. So if you have the Spirit of God, you have: The fulfillment of the greatest promise that God can give you in this life: **His Holy Spirit**. Everything else is secondary to that. So if we understand this, when we come before God to pray. And we understand that all of His promises are true; and we can claim them.

Now let's come back here to Hebrews, the sixth chapter and we'll see this: how it affected Abraham. Hebrews 6:10—so we can understand because all of us have our ups and down. All of us have our good and bad moments, and even we have some ugly moments. But as long as they are sins—not a 'sin unto death'—they're forgivable. So go repent. And if someone sins against you that is not a 'sin unto death' pray for them, that God will forgive them, lead them to repentance and so forth. Now if it's something you need to go discuss with them, then you do it in accordance with Matt. 18 and work the things out.

Hebrews 6:10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work... [God knows what you're doing.] ...and the labor of love *by* which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*. But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence... [Showing that we have to keep on, keep at it. As long as there's life, there's hope. And as long as we're doing what God wants us, be diligent!] ...unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end. So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises. For God, after promising Abraham... [and He did—didn't He? *Yes!*] ...**swore by Himself**, since He could swear by none greater..." (vs 10-13).

Now let's understand this: Swearing is done by men in hopes that everyone will take the truth and give bonified testimony—correct? *Yes!* God being true, God never lying, God does not need to swear. But if He swears by Himself, He's swearing by His very existence, that what He said He will fulfill.

Now let's also understand something else. What God promised Abraham, *we are the results and recipients of that*—are we not? So it's still ongoing—isn't it? *Yes!* And we're a part of that, aren't we? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "...saying, 'Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.' Now after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for God to lie...*" (vs 14-18).

Let's understand something: Never, *never* listen to anyone who says God has abolished His law. You know instantly he's a liar, he's a false prophet and he's misrepresenting God. Anything in the New Testament that has been changed from the physical ritual to a spiritual aspect has been superseded by a greater requirement. Just one example: Circumcision of the flesh has now been superseded by circumcision of the mind and heart, *which is a greater requirement*. Because a person can be circumcised in the flesh, *but not in his mind and in his heart!* So the requirement of circumcision does not do away with all law in the Old Testament, rather it amplifies it and makes it spiritual in the New Testament and of greater import and accountability. Because the important thing is this: When you understand that God cannot and will not lie, then you can come to God in complete confidence and hope and understanding and you can claim the promises. And you can say, 'God, my faith is weak, help me strengthen my faith. Help me in my unbelief.'

Now notice, it says: "...*it was impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope that has been set before us; Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the sanctuary within the veil...* [Holy of Holies in heaven above] ...where Jesus has entered for us *as* a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec" (vs 18-20). So God cannot lie. That's a tremendous thing for us to understand.

Now, what is the greatest promise that God has given? *Eternal life*. And what is the verse that all of the Protestants claim, but do not act upon? John 3:16—right? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him... [and that means everything about Him] ...may not perish, but may have everlasting life." Oh they claim it, but they turn right around,

BANG! and say, 'Oh, you don't have to keep the law.' And as minister Tardo, who wrote the book against the Sabbath said, 'All 613 commandments of the Old Testament have no forensic value for Christians today.' A total preacher of lawlessness. He doesn't believe God! Now, God has given those things to us.

Let's look at a couple of examples here. Let's come back to the book of Psalms, please. Notice: promise/blessing, promise/belief—and action; lack of action/curses—all right here in Psalm 1:1: "Blessed *is* the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly... [You don't accept the ungodly statements that they pronounce. You don't believe them.] ...nor stands in the way of sinners... [that means *stands in their way of life*] ...nor sits in the seat of the scornful." Who are the scornful? 'Oh well, God didn't mean this. Oh well, it wasn't written then. Oh well, the apostles didn't write anything. Oh, God needs me.' This great Pope, who is next to God, to tell the world what to do. Well, I'm very glad the Imams proved him not infallible. Proved that he was fallible.

Now notice, here is how you do it: "But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in His law does he meditate day and night" (v 2) Now tie that in with Heb. 10:16, 'for he shall write and inscribe upon their hearts and minds His laws.' That's how you do it. Your minds were made to be programmed with the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, that gives you the Truth, that gives you the character so you can develop the character of God and you can overcome an evil deceitful human nature by replacing it with Truth—step-by-step-by-step, thought-by-thought-by-thought, action-by-action-by-action.

Now notice: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season... [there is a time for everything] ...his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper" (v 3). Now you may prosper with little or you may prosper with much. But the most prosperity that you want and need is the spiritual prosperity of the character that comes from God. Is that not correct? *Yes!* Which is what? What did David say that all of the commandments of God were greater than all silver, right? *Yes, indeed!*

"The ungodly *are* not so; but *are* like the chaff which the wind drives away.... [You can see that in all these public opinion polls. What do you think? Vacillates from one to the other—right?] ...Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous... [because He gave it to them; He has His Spirit in them.] ...but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (vs 4-6).

Now, we're out of time here, so what we'll do, we will continue next time.

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) Hebrews 11:6
- 2) John 11:25-27
- 3) John 12:44-46, 48-50
- 4) John 20:24-27
- 5) Mark 11:20-26
- 6) John 14:14-16
- 7) John 16:26-28
- 8) Matthew 21:28-32
- 9) Psalm 119:65-72
- 10) Psalm 27:11-14
- 11) Numbers 20:7-13
- 12) Luke 1:12-20
- 13) Titus 1:1-2
- 14) 2 Corinthians 1:20-22
- 15) Hebrews 6:10-20
- 16) John 3:16
- 17) Psalm 1:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 21 & 22
- Exodus 3
- Galatians 5:22
- Malachi 3
- Isaiah 8
- Ephesians 1
- Matthew 18
- Hebrews 10:16

Also referenced:

- Sermon: *Why God Hates Religion*
- Book: *Sunday Facts and Sabbath* by Dr. Russell Tardo

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