

Keys to Answered Prayer XIII

Fred R. Coulter—March 17, 2007

It's kind of fitting as we're turning to Matthew, the sixth chapter, for number thirteen—since #13 is considered unlucky; #13 has bad things happen on it; the world is all concerned about Friday the 13th when it comes along—people get very superstitious. You even go into high buildings and they don't have a 13th floor. It goes from 12 to 14; that's how superstitious that people are.

So, we won't be superstitious here with this, because what we're going to do is find out how God rescues us from the evil one; and it says in the *King James* to 'deliver us.' So let's come to Matthew 6:13—we finished last time: 'lead us not into temptation.' And we'll pick up a little bit more on that as we begin. It says: '...but rescue us from the evil one....' Now God has to intervene to rescue us:

- He does it with His Spirit
- He does it with His Word
- He does it with His calling

Because the Scriptures we already know—you can put this down in your notes or in your margin: Rev. 12:9 says what? '*That old serpent, the dragon, Satan the devil, is deceiving the whole world.*' And he's got all the world's systems that he is using that men have devised to carry out his work.

Now we also need to understand, since we're right here, let's come to Matthew, the fourth chapter. Let's see who has the power. Now, you've heard the old story: *follow the money*—right? So we will do this. We will follow the money, because remember, the principle parts of the world are what? *Economics, religion and nations.* Those are the three principle parts and he deceives the whole world.

Now let's see how much of the world that he has. Matthew 4:8: "After that, the devil took Him... [So this is part of the temptation. We need to understand that in the world there are those who worship Satan the devil and know who he is. And these are not just low-level witches and voodoo practitioners or shamans out in the middle of some jungle or desert or high mountain in Tibet or something.] ...to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory... [And Luke 4 says: 'in a moment of time.'](now notice what He says): ...and said to Him, 'All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me'" (vs 8-9). Now, it also says in Luke 4: 'for it has been delivered to me.'

Now, it's been delivered to Satan the devil because men do not worship God. And there are various devices that he uses, as we will see. But the key that I want to cover here is this: Who controls all

the kingdoms of the world? *Satan the devil.* Let's ask another question: What nation in the world is God's Kingdom today? *There is none!* The only nations that have any form of Godliness are the nations of Israel—the end-time 10 tribes—and right now it is mostly centered in the United States of America. And you have a situation which is very, very interesting in that, which is this: ***God's Word always works!*** So when you have people who follow much of God's Word you find that they have honesty; you find that they have character; you find all of these good qualities, which when you look at how America was founded, that's how it started.

But the truth is, the Achilles heel in all of that early Christianity—if you want to put it that way of the United States and even Britain—was Sunday-worship. That was the Achilles heel. And so, rather than keep the Sabbath—now there was a time in England... Oliver Cromwell led a rebellion against the crown and took over most of England. At that time they were keeping Sabbath, Holy Days, and Christmas and Easter were outlawed. Now that's the closest in modern time that any nation has come to being a nation of God. That didn't last long. At the end he compromised and made a league with the king—I forget the king so don't hold me to the great details of history, here (someone said it was King Charles)—and he compromised with him, for the king, to declare that he was not an absolute monarch appointed by God. So that's where you have the constitutional monarchy in the United Kingdom.

So nowhere in the world is there a nation that is God's nation. There are people who are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that receive the blessings that was promised to Abraham because of Abraham's obedience—not because of the righteousness of the people. However, they did have God's law, and as much as anyone will keep the laws and commandments of God, God will bless them. Now, there's the blessing from Abraham that He must honor, regardless of the righteousness of the descendants. There is another blessing that comes—let's come to Jeremiah 23—and Satan also knows this, which becomes an important part for us to understand: some of the devices of Satan the devil.

Jeremiah 23:19—we'll break into the middle of a thought here: "Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the LORD shall not return, until He has executed, and till He has performed the thoughts of His heart: in the latter days you shall consider it perfectly" (vs 19-20). So, in other words,

God gives a promise and in the latter days we will understand what is happening in the way of religion. Because remember, Satan is there and he always wants to infiltrate and take down the people of God.

Now, did Satan grab hold of the priesthood of Israel? *Yes!* With the alliance of what? *The king.* Whenever you had a wicked king, you had Baal worship even right at the temple—right? You can read the history of it, we don't have to go through it in detail. So always remember—and we'll look at this a little later—Satan knows who he needs to get. That's why it says, 'Rescue us from the evil one.' And we also have the prayer of Jesus where He said, in John 14, 'deliver them from the evil one.' Not take them out of the world, but in the world, 'deliver them from the evil one.'

Now, v 21—let's see what God says concerning the false prophets: "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.... [Now, notice v 22—this really quite a key verse]: ...But if they [false prophets] had stood in My counsel, and had **caused My people to hear My words...**" So God honors His Word in every case where it is preached. So, if they preach obedience to the last six of the commandments, they will have all the blessings that go with that, plus the blessing that God promised to Abraham. If they don't have idols, they have the blessing that comes from not having idols.

However, Israel has always had, instead of a direct relationship with God, most of the times they've had an oblique relationship with God. Now what do I mean by that? *They come to God, yet they want to keep their own ways.* Now remember when they wanted a kingship. What did God tell Samuel? *He said, 'Samuel, they haven't rejected you, they have rejected Me.'* Even with wanting a kingship, what did God say: 'All right, I'll give you a king but you know you're going to be in trouble.' I'm just summarizing it. Were they in trouble? *Yes!* Not one of the kings of the ten northern tribes was ever righteous. Not one! And He told them, 'I'll let you have a king and if he will help you keep My commandments, I will bless you, but know that you have taken one step away from Me.' But even in spite of that, for the sake of the fathers—that is Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (wherever you see the phrase *the fathers*)—God has bound himself for certain blessings to the descendants of Abraham. But He hasn't bound Himself to the rest of the world. So here, this is a two-edged sword.

"But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings" (v 22). So you have that in the mix to consider. But ultimately, with the

experience that we're seeing in England and in America...Now, with that said, let's understand that in the world there is good, there is evil, and Satan gets permission from God whenever something major comes down—like he did with Job. The world is controlled by Satan through various secret—unknown and known—organizations. Those who are known openly in the public have a public message that makes them look like an innocent fraternity—such as the Masons, such as the Knights of Columbus. There is also what is called a 'Committee of Three Hundred.' Now many people think that IF they can expose the conspiratorial things done by men in high places, that they can correct the problem. Now, you can't do it. Because there are so many of these organizations and so many of these people in so many high places, that it's an impossibility to do it. The only way—now let me present to you, as far as the world is concerned. And we need to understand this, and why we don't preach a lot on the conspiracy theories—howbeit they're all true and they're out there—you need to be careful and understand what's going on.

Here's what would have to happen: One man or group of men would have to have access to know where every one of these secret members in all of these societies—whether they're business societies, religious societies, whether they're governmental societies; because you have all three—you'd have to know where all the main leaders are, and you would have to have sufficient power to within one instant of time in the whole world, whether it's day or night, to have the forces come in and execute everyone of them at the same time. So there would be no successors to take over. You would also have to have the power to implement a new form of government. Now, what have I just described? *The return of Christ!* That's why all efforts to reform government in the world will only succeed to a degree of the willingness of the government officials to do what is right. But that's about it. You need to understand that. That's why it's important that we are "rescued" from Satan the devil.

Now, let's look at some other Scriptures here so we understand about how Satan works and how Satan operates. Let's come here to Acts 26, and let's see our calling. We are called to save the world, but **not now!** Because I've just described to you the problems and difficulties of what you would have to do and where you would have to start in order to save the world. Now this is the calling of Paul after he was knocked to the ground—he and his party.

Acts 26:15: "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting.... [Very interesting statement—isn't it? If anyone of the brethren are persecuted, who are

they persecuting? *Jesus! Why? Because with the Spirit of God, Jesus is dwelling in them. Correct? Yes!* (v 16): ...Now arise, and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you *as* a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you. I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you... [Now notice—spiritual operation which comes through conversion]: ...**To open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light**... [So it has to be a spiritual operation. You can put in your margin there several Scriptures: John 6:44-45; 14:6.] (Now notice, continuing v 18): ...and **from the authority of Satan to God**... [So let's understand something very important: there are two great authorities in the world: Satan and God! Now in between, there may be some groups of people who are leaning more toward God than they are leaning to Satan. But the ultimate authority is reduced to two: God and Satan.] ...so that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me” (vs 15-18).

So that was, what you might say: this is how God operates. He gives a mission statement, right? This is a mission statement. Now, how is it going to be performed? “Paul, you get up and go out and do it, and I’ll inspire you and back you up. And you preach and teach and I will be the Power behind you.” So we have to be delivered from Satan the devil.

All right let’s look at a couple of other things here of how Satan is also described by Paul. Now, these Scriptures you know, but let’s go ahead and just read them into the record—2-Corinthians, the fourth chapter. And one of the greatest ploys of Satan the devil—and the way that you can tell that these people are really under the power of Satan the devil is what? *They deny that Satan exists!* Totally deceived. And generally those who deny that Satan exists, a good number of them deny that God exists! And as I have said earlier, **no one is ever free from God, period!** God has control of everything:

- through Himself and through Satan the devil
- through Himself for eternal life and blessings
- through Satan the devil for the way of the world and sin

So regardless of what people may think or claim, **you’re never free from God.** Now, you may not like the preacher if you’re going to church. You may not like whatever it may be, but you’re never free from God. Now, here’s how Satan works. We’ve seen how God works in other sermons and so forth, let’s see how Satan works.

2-Corinthians 4:1: “Therefore, having this ministry... [which I just read to you about turning them from the power of darkness to light and from the authority of Satan unto God] ...according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced... [Now, this all part of conversion, because these are the ways of Satan the devil] ...personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain... [And that was before the institution of national banks.] ...not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully... [Now, what is he describing here? He is describing the tactics of Satan the devil. Because Satan loves to get people hooked on dishonest gain, doesn’t he. Look at the whole gambling industry in America now—addiction to gambling. Whatever it may be. There’s so much of it you can hardly name it.] ...dishonest gain... [in high interest rates] ...dishonest gain... [in cheating and lying. Those are some of the things that some of the devices of Satan the devil, which we’ll cover here in just a bit.] ...not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully” (vs 1-2).

Satan *loves* to do that. Because if you have the Word of God—what is the Word of God? *The Word of God is Truth*—correct? And if you have the Word of God, which is Truth, you can stand up and say to people, ‘The Word of God is Truth. Now let me tell you about the trinity.’ or ‘Let me tell you that you no longer have to keep the laws of God and go to certain Scriptures.’ And I can tell you this: if you don’t have our series on Galatians and Romans and Hebrews, you need to get those, especially Galatians. And if you do not have *The Code of Jewish Law*, you do not have one single clue as to what Paul is writing about concerning works of law in Romans or in Galatians. And one of the favorite tricks of Satan the devil in deceitfully handling the Word of God is this: Paul writes that we have been ‘delivered from the curse of the law.’ Slight of hand. The law is a curse. Basic doctrine of Protestantism. *No*, the curse of the law is the penalty for breaking the law—you are saved from your sins.

Satan likes to save you *in* your sins, rather than *from* your sins. That’s very important. “...but by manifestation of the Truth...” (v 2). So you need to have the whole Truth—all of the Word of God. You need to understand how to study it. That’s why we have *The Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*. That’s why you need to understand Isa. 28: ‘line upon line, here a little there a little, precept upon precept’—put it together. That’s why you have to ‘prove all things, hold fast to that which is good.’ Now, if that sounds complicated, it’s complicated not because God made it that way, but because of the deviousness of Satan and his servants—and he does have servants. Just like God has true servants who serve Him and

preach the Word of God and serve the brethren, Satan has His servants who are true to him and his doctrines and appear very righteous, as we'll see here in just a minute.

And he says, "...we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God" (v 2). So what he's doing is saying, the only true motivation in this ministry of mercy that he has received is the Spirit of Truth, the Word of God—which is Truth—and from the heart in serving the brethren with a clean conscience—no hidden agenda, no politics. And that's why when you get into a hierarchical church, you set yourself up for a big fall. Always happens! Now, we've been discussing some traps that some of the current Churches of God are falling in, with mishandling and deceitfully using the Word of God and wrong structure. You see right here in what Paul is doing, he's not exalting himself above the brethren. And you read in Ephesians 3 that he considers himself 'less than the least of all the saints.' So I'll bring a sermon on what's happening in those down the road rather than try and tackle it here at this point.

Now, v 3: "But if our gospel is hidden... [Isn't it interesting how God has done it. Like I brought out in the book, *God's Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days*, he hides it in plain sight in the Bible. It's there all the time. And the only way to discover it is proper Bible study and being led by the Spirit of God to come to the Truth. Now, that's God's secret plan so that, while it's there in plain view, they don't understand it. Because you *must have God's Spirit*, you *must love and obey God*, and you *must keep His Sabbath and His Holy Days*—then God will grant understanding. Not all at once! Bit-by-bit, by-bit, by-bit, by-bit because we grow in grace and knowledge.] (Here's another way that it's hidden): ...it is hidden to those who are perishing..." (v 3).

Now hold your place here and come to 2-Thessalonians, the second chapter, because we will see something very interesting on how this Scripture ties in with it, with the devices of Satan the devil. This is the *beast power* coming at the end is going to say he's 'God.' He's going to come in power. Once you have people deceived to a certain degree, then what Satan's going to do is bring on all his power and it's going to look like the real thing.

2-Thessalonians 2:9 "Even the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness **in those who are perishing** because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved. And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the lie*" (vs 9-11). So think how the world is being setup now.

Come back here to 2-Corinthians, the fourth chapter—because if we're going to be rescued from Satan the devil, we have to:

1. Know who he is
2. Know how he operates
3. Understand where we get the power to resist and overcome
4. Which comes from God.

2-Corinthians 4:3: "But if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing... [Now notice what happened, v 4—here is how it takes place because either you are under the authority of God, through Jesus Christ; or you're under the authority of Satan and his demons, through the power of this world. And we know he's called the 'prince of the power of the air.' And we'll see the other things that he uses to entice people.] ...In whom the **god of this world**... [That's very interesting, because you look it up in the Greek and it is 'theos'—same word that is used for the true God. Now this indicates and tells us the reason that he used this word was to show us the power that Satan has, and how the only one who is going to bring us out from under that power from Satan the devil is Jesus Christ and God the Father. It's not going to be any other way. That's why Paul was sent. That's why we have his writings. That's why we have the Bible.] (Now notice what happens): ...In whom the **god of this world** has blinded the minds of those who do not believe..." (vs 3-4).

Now think of this for a minute: How simple it is to come under the clutches of Satan the devil. Do not believe God! *Got ya!* That simple! So that's why it's in our daily prayer: 'Don't lead us into temptation,' especially those who come from Satan the devil and our own lusts—and 'rescue us from the evil one.' And today with all of the modern electronics that Satan is able to also use to magnify his power and control human minds. And I think about this—just this last week I traveled up to Seattle and Spokane. So I'm sitting on my seat on the plane and different ones are coming in and I see them walking up and down in the terminal as well, and they're hooked in, they're wired in to their iPod—and they're in their own separate world. And remember this: *what goes into your mind, controls your mind.*

This is why you have to have the Holy Spirit in you, have to have the laws of God written in your heart and your mind. So whatever occupies your mind controls you. So Satan has so many things he can do now; so many avenues. So you have that. That's in addition to television; in addition to radio and all the other things. But hey, there it is. And when you go to a movie, you don't go to a movie anymore to really see good acting. You go to be blasted with the sound through every cell of your

body. And today, as far as the gross, satanic music is concerned—rock music, rap music, gangster rap, all of that—it is so loud because people don't want to hear it, they want to *feel* it. And if you're so wrapped up in this kind of thing, you're automatically blinded and you think you're enlightened.

“...blinded the minds...” that's why I've given several sermons in the past, which I will again in the future, *Guard the Door of Your Mind*. That's very important in being delivered from Satan is *what do you think on*. Because we'll see one of the devices of Satan the devil is to come along and inspire you to want to do something that looks really good! A good cause! We'll see that a little later. Now, here's what happens: “...blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them” (v 4). So think about it.

Now here we have all of these means of preaching the Gospel, electronically, visually, printed word, and so forth. So what do you think Satan's mission and goal is in this? *Get in there and control it*.

- Who controls the music?
- Who controls the movies?
- Who controls the television?
- Who controls the government?
- Who controls the printed word?

Now, in America you still have some freedom to get some things printed, but think about it, our project that we are doing now, we could never get done in many of the countries of the world. So just think; ask yourself a question: how many devices are there in the world that Satan uses to close off the Truth? *Economics, religion, education, government*. Try getting knowledge of God in the school. What's in the school today? *All twisted satanic version of history, of origin of life*—and you can't even get Intelligent Design into the schools today. In a nation that was supposedly founded on Christian principles. And you say, 'How could that be?' *Because Satan has his agents working in all of these organizations*—that's why. And I think it's more apparent than ever before. The only solution to save the world is the return of Jesus Christ. And the only solution to get rid of all of these satanic things is nearly destroy everything in the world. And that's what's going to happen when Christ returns. So we need to understand that, too.

Now notice, v 5—very important thing. How do you tell who's a true preacher of God or not? *Listen to what he says*: “For we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake...” Very interesting. I remember when I was in a huge, large,

rich corporate Church of God. And I was observing all of these sycophant ministers in a hierarchical system—high up in the hierarchy and well paid. And I went to the great temple that they had built in Pasadena—which God took away from them now, as well as other things—and I sat there a listened to a sermon by a man who was bringing the main message of the day. And I noticed, as most of those who would get up there would have to extol the apostle of that church—and his name was called Herbert W. Armstrong. And so I sat there and listened to it and I put down five letters: JC—Jesus Christ; HWA—the man. And I kept tabs all through that hour and twenty-minute sermon, how many times did he mention Jesus Christ? toot, toot, toot—then every fifth one you do the little slash mark across it—how many times did he mention the name of the apostle? Now give a guess as to how this political sycophant did. How many times he mentioned the man? How many times he mentioned Christ? Seven times=Jesus Christ; 111 times=HWA. And then people say, 'I wonder what happened to that church?' Well, it's very obvious, and the man who did it? Guess what he now believes? *No law, Sunday, the whole thing!*

Deceived! You never ever preach yourself. Now that doesn't mean you don't mention yourself. But when that man stood in the pulpit and said, 'I am God's only apostle on earth'—what did he do? *He signed the death warrant for the whole organization*. And everyone who believed it and followed along with it—when things started going wrong then they all rallied around the man and ra, ra, ra for the man, rather than saying, 'Where is God? Where is Christ?' No, his name was mentioned in some sentences, two or three or four times, and it was all I could do is mark it down, and then other times he'd go on and then come up again two or three or four times. I almost fainted! So who were they preaching? Christ? or themselves? *Themselves and the organization*. Amazing! I mean it blew me away.

Now, v 6—and here's the whole thing concerning what preaching needs to be, be: “Because *it is* God Who commanded *the* light to shine out of darkness, Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ.” So that's quite a thing. Then notice everything that Paul went through here in chapter four and as we'll see in chapter eleven. But you see, I also want us to understand. Think of this: when it was boasted, we—now please understand this: *no corporate Church of God or no corporation in the world can be the only Church of God*. Can never be! When those boasts were made, 'the only apostle of God on earth today,' and the 'only true Church of God on earth today,' those were lies of Satan the devil because they were blinding their minds to Jesus Christ and God 'gave them over to their own devices.'

Now some people who are going to hear this are not going to like those words. And some people are going to get very upset at me. Well, I suggest you read your Bible and you look at past history. Did it come to nothing? *Yes!* Why then are there so many ministers who have come out of that system who want to resurrect exactly the same thing and put themselves in the same position that the ministers did then, and take to themselves authority which only belongs to Jesus Christ? *They haven't learned the lesson!* And they need to understand, Christ needs to be taught and glorified and all the ministers need to teach the brethren to have a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Now you know why I've emphasized it many, many times through the years.

(go to the next track)

Now we've been discussing some of the economic things, which is for another topic, another sermon, but you see, you have parallels between money and religion. And as religion is deceitful, so are the economics. And as religion will fall so will the economics. There is always a judgment day for deceitfulness—and it will come. So let's go on with what we have here, and let's come to 2-Corinthians 11—this becomes very important when we understand it, because we're going to look, first of all, to be rescued from Satan. We'll talk about the world here a little later. First of all, we have to let God lead us in the way that it needs to be within His Church, because God does have His true Church which are scattered true, faithful brethren wherever they are in the world. They may be in many different organizations and some of them may not be in what we could consider any organization at all. Because understand this: ***organization is only good for the collective preaching of the Gospel beyond the ability of individuals.*** And in that then, it has to be handled in such a way, which we try and do, so that we use the maximum amount of money that God sends in to serve the brethren and preach the Truth.

So know this, all those who get carried away with great buildings and great projects and great things like this, it's going to fail because now is not the day of those things. And [we] need to learn the lesson: God took away the colleges and the property, all of those things, because why? ***They weren't preaching the Gospel the way it should be, and they became idols.*** And in doing that then, they had the influence of Satan the devil. Now, I'm not saying that they were possessed—please do not misunderstand me—but what I'm saying is: ***Satan likes to be there to disturb and to cause problems for the people of God and the Churches of God.*** So therefore, that's why it's there in a daily prayer: *rescue us from Satan the devil.* And your personal responsibility is your relationship with God the

Father and Jesus Christ and letting the Truth of the Word of God be the predominating thing that guides and directs everything that you do. Not the things in the world. Not the lusts in the world. We'll talk about that a little later. But what I want to focus on right now, is how Satan loves to get into the Churches of God to destroy them and pull them down. And we're going to see here now, with false doctrine, false teaching, false assumptions, while everything is looking really, really good to the carnal mind.

Now let's pick it up here in 2-Corinthians 11:1, because Paul always had to be rescued from the power of Satan—didn't he? *Yes.* Come over here to 2-Corinthians 12:7, first. Let's read what he said here: "But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations... [Now the truth is, we're not to be exalted about anything. Why? Because of this—remember, never forget: ***you have nothing you didn't receive.*** Your physical life, everything that keeps you going—***everything comes from God!*** Your spiritual life, God's Spirit, all comes from God. Why should ministers and people try an exalt themselves above other people. What on earth is that going to accomplish but vanity, selfishness and destruction?"] (So he said) ... *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me... [that means just that: to ***buffet*** him, to make him draw close to God. So when it says, 'rescue us from the evil one' on a daily basis, Paul understood that.] ...so that I might not be exalted. I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me; But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (vs 7-9).

Now, as I read the next part of this, I want you to think about the opulence of the great apostle of the Worldwide Church of God. "For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong" (v 10). So God looks at those who are weak physically. And let's just understand this: Those who are old and weak and coming toward the end of their lives, and are faithful and die in the faith, how does God look upon them? ***With far greater blessing and grace and understanding knowing that they're going to be in the resurrection,*** than for some exalted, high, mucky-muck minister to be some great thing that God never intended the ministers or elders to be. It's just that simple.

Now, let's come back to 2-Corinthians 11:1: "I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me. For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God because I

have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ” (vs 1-2). Now that is spiritually speaking. We could get into other things with that, but suffice to say, if you get taken down by Satan over and over again, though God forgives you, though you will be in the Kingdom of God, you no longer fit the spiritual classification of being a spiritual virgin—just like in the physical sense. Once a man or woman are no longer a virgin or chaste, they’re no longer a virgin or chaste. That doesn’t mean their life has come to an end, it’s just a fact. So what he’s saying here is this: ‘Why not be faithful to God instead of being taken down by all of these devices and things, which sound so alluring, etc.

Now, v 3: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness... [And one of the things that Satan always tempts with—and we’ll talk about this a little later—is *he holds out to you the prospect of a benefit* that you can get by circumventing God’s laws. That goes all the way back to Adam and Eve. What did he say? ‘Oh, in dieing you shall not surely die. Go ahead and eat of it. You can become like gods, now. You get a benefit! I am going to bring you a benefit.’] ...so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ. For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus...” (vs 3-4).

Now, are there other Jesuses preached in the Churches of God? *Yes!* Has it happened? *Yes!* Think about it. Was another Jesus preached when this apostle went to the so-called leaders of the nations and said he’s bringing the Gospel of the give and get? Was another Jesus preached when he said, ‘I come in the name of the god of the Egyptians, in the name of the god of the Jordanians, in the name of the god of the Jews, and the name of the god of the Ethiopians, in the name of the god of Malaysia or Hong Kong or wherever it may be? Is that not another Jesus? But didn’t it sound good? *Yes!* What do we have today in Protestantism? *All you have to do is believe.* You don’t even have to be baptized. So, if you believe and you don’t repent, and if you’re not baptized, you have a false conversion. You may have a great emotional feeling; you may be resolved to change your life; but that doesn’t mean you’re converted.

“...whom we did not preach... [Meaning, what did Paul write? What did the apostles write? What did God give in the Old Testament, etc.?] ...or you receive a different spirit... [Because Satan is able to have spiritual power, which comes from him and his demons—correct? As counterfeits for Christ. And if someone has a spiritual experience they’re what? *Totally convinced that it’s right!* Like one man has set himself up; he said he had a vision from God that he has been appointed to be the apostle’s

successor to HWA and that all churches and all ministers need to come to him and submit to him—and even made the statement that he would be over the two witnesses, because an apostle is greater than prophets as listed in Eph. 4. People fall for it hook, line and sinker. Look, it’s a trap to test whether you believe Christ or not, that’s what it is.

Comment was made (from audience): All of these things people don’t see as defining another Christ. All you have to do is just pick up the *Journal*, and you can see some true messages there, but you can see all the subtle, satanic messages that are there—some of them not so subtle. For example: Jesus was not God before He became human. And how many people fall for these things hook, line and sinker? Listen, if you fall for those things, you’ve never been grounded in Christ. Now, you may be converted, but you may not be grounded in Christ the way you ought to.

Comment was made (from audience): When it was proclaimed that ‘I come to you in the name of the God of this country or that country’ or so forth, what is in the minds of the one hearing it? Some people may think since God is God of all people, therefore it’s okay to say that. And since Jesus said, ‘It’s more blessed to give than to receive,’ it’s okay to have the Gospel of give and get. No, the true Gospel is *repent and be baptized*. And only one baptism that I know of ever occurred, which was with the personal assistant to that apostle. So the thing is, that’s another Jesus, that’s another gospel. Subtle! You need to understand that. Now, I challenge everyone out there in ‘audio land’: when you look at the *Journal* compare it with the Bible. You will find it one of the big things that people want to do. And there’s even a book of it: *Raising the Ruins*. Why would you want to raise the ruins when Christ wants you to become a new creation. Humm? See? Those churches and those men and those brethren are going to be punished again! Because they didn’t get the message that these things were not of God but a perversion of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, and never came from God in the first place. Had it come from God it would not have been destroyed.

Comment was made (from audience): Today everything is an opinion. And we’ll get to that when we see how Satan can tempt us personally and individually. But what we need to see is, and understand, why are we where we are today? And what happened to where we come here, to come to this point? We need to understand what happened. So, I’m mentioning this so we get a clear view, because there are too many trying to resurrect the same old ‘ruins.’ And there are too many brethren out there also that like to have ministers to rule over them so they can blame them when something goes wrong. And isn’t that the same excuse that the

children of Israel gave when they heard the Ten Commandments. “God, we’re going to die if we listen to You. You tell Moses, let Moses tell us.” And then what happened when things went wrong. ‘Moses, you did this. Moses, you did that.’

Now notice, v 4: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept... [And let me tell you something here, very loud and clear: *Today, because of having all the Bible—the knowledge of the Word of God we have today, that God has provided, and the Spirit of God that we have today—there is no excuse for having a different Gospel or one that is perverted—* to whatever degree, by whatever means. Now notice] ...which you did not accept, **you put up with it as something good**.... [Like one man said, ‘Well, I know this minister believes that Jesus was only created in the womb and that’s when He first came into existence; and He wasn’t God before. But this minister is sincere and he does good to help other people.’ Well, of course! So he concluded: ‘Therefore, I work with him.’ Well, no! Paul said if they don’t adhere to the sound words of Jesus Christ, and preach another doctrine, *‘withdraw yourself!’* That’s basically why we are here where we are today.

Now notice what happens when that occurs. You accept another Jesus, you have a different spirit, you have a different gospel and you put up with it as something good—what are you dealing with? *Opinions!* I think this, I think that, I think the other thing. And what did he start out 1-Corinthians with? *They’re following this man, that man. Some follow Apollo, some follow Peter, some follow Paul, some follow Christ, some follow some other men.* Is Christ divided? That’s the result of it. Now, let’s see what happens. They begin comparing—don’t they? Comparing these other false ministers coming in—now we’ll talk about them here a little later—comparing them with Paul, and Paul with them. Amazing! So Paul has to answer it. That’s why he says: “I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me” (v 1).

“But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles.... [That’s what it means in the Greek—that’s the best why I could translate it, because it is the ‘super, hot-shot’ apostles.] ...For although *I may be* unpolished in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge; for in all things I have demonstrated this to you. Now did I commit sin by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you freely?” (vs 5-7). Now he did this to combat those false apostles who were what? *Taking tithes and offerings.* And what happens to all these highly

exalted, so-called apostles who set themselves up and create big churches and buildings and things? What happens? *I already said it, they ask for more money, more money, more money, more money, don’t* they? So Paul said, ‘All right, I’m going to give to you free.’

This is why we send out what we have to everyone, no cost—everyone that’s on our mailing list. There’s some people that have nothing to do with us and they just want it, they can buy it online at Amazon.com. That’s fine, we have that out there so the Church is not in the business of selling. This is why I preach once a year on tithes and offerings. And every Holy Day mention it because we are to take up an offering. I do not ask people for money because of what Paul has here. Don’t need to ask them for money. Let God inspire them to love God and obey God and everything else in their life, including how to tithe and offer will fall in line sooner or later. And if not, then by sermons to beat and extract money from people what good is that money going to do anyway? You may be able to do something with it in the immediate time when you get it, but what is the end? *The end is merchandising.* And the end is looking to the physical thing rather than *building up the brethren spiritually.*

So this is why he did this—v 8: “I robbed other churches... [Now the reason I’m going through this is so that you can have a good comparison to understand how you can escape the wiles of the devil, and how you need to be delivered from the devil and his cunning craftiness. And look, understand this: If it can happen in one of the churches of Paul—and even later Paul said, ‘All those in Asia have abandoned me’—we need to understand that unless we have the constant relationship with God, and are being delivered from the evil one daily, we’re going to find ourselves in trouble. And God doesn’t want us in trouble. I mean we have enough overcoming human nature, don’t we? And overcoming the world, that we don’t have to fight and overcome a church, which in degree has been infiltrated by the teachings and doctrines of Satan, which appear blessedly to be true. Need to understand that.

Now, v 8: “I robbed other churches, receiving wages *from them* for ministering to you.” So Paul did not take tithes that went to the local church and they gave him a wage—that’s the way it should be. And not great, highly exalted wages either. In that great, exalted church that I was talking about, every evangelist had a six-figure salary which varied from \$100,000 to \$250,000. You calculate how much went to salaries, how much went to buildings, how much went to maintenance, and then how much really went to feeding the flock and you

will see why God destroyed it. And if you don't understand that *I can't help you!*

Verse 9: "And when I was present with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone (for the brethren who came from Macedonia fully supplied my needs)... [Now Paul did this because he wanted to show the Truth of God compared to all of these false ministers which were there.] ...for I kept myself, and will *continue* to keep myself, from being burdensome to you in anything.... [Because he wanted them to be converted first.] ...*As the Truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Why? Because I don't love you? God knows I do. But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off any occasion from those who are desiring an occasion; so that in the things they boast of, they also may be found even as we are*" (vs 9-12). Very important! So he did it for a specific purpose. So here, right in this Church of God, all of this satanic activity was going on. Why? *Because the brethren weren't adhering to the sound words of Jesus Christ and they weren't praying to be delivered from the evil one, daily.* And it happened to them!

Now let's continue on Satan's activities within churches—Churches of God and within any other church that professes the name of Jesus. Now what I want you to do, if you have a religious channel, watch some of the different ministers and speakers and listen to the message. See where it's headed compared to what's in the Bible. That's why God has given us His Word—which is Truth—so we can compare it with the Bible and we have to know how to do so and not just take the word of any man. Very important to understand. Because eventually—especially with the hierarchical churches—men take over. And then men cut them off from God. And men, who start out as perhaps dedicated preachers, end up becoming servants of Satan.

Now let's come to Acts, the twentieth chapter, and let's see where Paul even prophesied of that. And let's see what he explains here. Now, in understanding about Acts 20, we need to realize that this was probably about 58-59 A.D. when Paul was on his way back to Jerusalem. And he knew that all the elders in Ephesus he would never see again. So this becomes a significant farewell address to them. So I think it's important that we understand it in the light of contemporary history of which we have gone through. And which many churches, even Protestant churches in the world, have gone through.

Now, let's pick it up here in Acts 20:17: "Now from Miletus, he [that is Paul] sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.... [Now it doesn't tell us how many elders were there. But there indicates that there quite a number.] ...And when they had come to him, he said to them..." (vs

17-18). We need to grasp the significance of what Paul was saying here, because later, in 2-Tim. 1, he says 'all those in Asia have left me.' Now, that's quite a significant statement. This tells us two things:

1. True spiritual knowledge does not stay in the mind if you don't exercise it. Like with the Spirit of God—if you don't use the Spirit of God, if you don't study the Word of God.
2. And so Paul is preparing them for what he knew would happen.

And as we go through this, those who have had experiences like that within the Churches of God, I want you to relate those experiences to what is being said here, simply because this is a prophecy that should have alerted us that this would happen.

"And when they had come to him, he said to them, 'You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, and all the time I was with you, I served the Lord with all humility and with many tears and temptations... [Nowhere did he exalt himself over the brethren. Nowhere did he say that he was the *one* to rule in their lives.] ...which came upon me through the plots of the Jews...'" (vs 18-19).

And that's very significant because Paul, before God called him and converted him, what was he? *He was probably the #2 leading man in Judaism, at the time (Gal. 1).* And he was out there arresting and causing to be killed true Christians. So when he was converted, the Jews were after him all the time. And it's kind of like a Rabbi said in recent years: 'Jesus I can understand. But Paul I can never forgive.' Why? *Because Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees.* So if you have the *Code of Jewish Law*, know that that's exactly what he was doing. So, he had to avoid being killed and I'm sure that he was happy that they didn't have helicopters at that time. Because you know that they would have flown around with their machinegun helicopters waiting for Paul.

Now, v 20: "And how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, but preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house... [meaning, *in their homes.* And that's why the thrust of things with 'church at home' is just going back to the beginning. Isn't that the name of the movie, *Back to the Beginning?*] ...Earnestly testifying, both to the Jews and the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.... [So preaching the whole Gospel] ...And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, and am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there; Except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me. But I myself do not take any of these things into

account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the gospel of the grace of God” (vs 20-24).

And this is how we need to gauge all of our lives. Because really when we get down to it, that is a key of faith and understanding. Not to be at the disposal of some minister to have you do something—like these suicide bombers and radical Islam today. They’re even now enlisting women. Women who have had troubles with their husbands and divorced and now they’re set to be killed or raped—and if they are raped, anyone in the family can kill them because they have been defiled. So, now they have a program on: any woman who is disgraced and facing the death penalty at the hand of the sharia law and men, she can volunteer to become a suicide bomber—and now she will have blessings in paradise. So you see, this is not what it’s talking about. Because when we are Christ’s we wholly belong to Him, but we do so in an intelligent and converted and faithful and dedicated way.

Now v 25: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom of God, will see my face no more; Wherefore I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all, For I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God.... [Now notice v 28 because this is a key prophecy and he knows that this is going to happen because of what we’re going to read here in a little bit in 2-Cor. 11.] ...Take heed therefore to yourselves...” (vs 25-28). Now you see, all ministers, teachers and elders need to take heed to themselves. And don’t get carried away in great grandiose things. And just like Paul wrote: ‘You that teach the law, don’t you teach yourself?’

And really—just a little side-bar here, if we can use a little legalese, just little side-bar. God wants everyone to be controlled, *to control themselves by God’s Spirit and His Word, and you are self-governing under God*. That’s how God wants it. Not from ministers to police people’s lives, tell them what to do—go here, go there, go the other—because we’re all to grow up in Christ. The way we grow up in Christ is let Christ rule in our hearts, let the Holy Spirit lead us and don’t get carried away in anything. Now he’s telling this to the ministers. Very important to understand.

“Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers... [So it’s not something you get by vote. It’s not something you get by reward. It is the Holy Spirit does it.] ...to feed the Church of God... [That’s the important thing. Feed them what? *Feed them the Word of God!* That’s why in Psa. 34 it says, ‘Oh taste and see that the Lord is good.’ And

so that we can all grow in grace and knowledge and love and all of this that we understand. That’s what God wants.] (notice): ...which He purchased with His own blood” (v 28). So *when you start messing with the Church of God, you’re messing with Christ*.

Now I want you to think about all your past history in the Church of God, or all your past history in a Protestant Church, or your past history in the Catholic Church—and I don’t know if there are any Muslims out there, but if there are, you have GIANT hurdles to overcome, to come to understand the way of God. But it can be done.] ...which He purchased with His own blood.”—which we know with the Passover coming up is the New Covenant, therefore we need always to serve the people of God the way God wants them served; to teach them the Word of God; to show them the way to have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock... [That happened then and we see it happening today again.] ...and from among your own selves... [Now here were elders who were dedicated to God, but something happened because Satan came along and tempted them, and they yielded to the temptation. Now we’ll talk about that a little later as we go on.] ...from among your own selves... [those right there speaking. He was looking them right in the eyes.] ...men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves” (vs 29-30). Now that is *seeking power*, and seeking wealth. And all you have to do is just extrapolate that out and look what happened with the rise of the Roman Catholic Church—which today is the world’s largest landowner in the world. Hey they got quite a thing going. Everybody works for nothing and it all goes into the church coffers. That’s not God’s way!

Verse 31: “Watch, therefore... [He’s telling them: Watch your lives. Watch what is being said. Watch what is being taught.] ...remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears. And now I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothing. Rather, you yourselves know that these hands did minister to my needs and to those who were with me. *In* all things, I have showed you that you are obligated to so labor to support those who are weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus Himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ And after saying these things, he knelt with them all *and* prayed. Then there was much weeping by everyone; and they embraced Paul *and* fervently kissed him, Being distressed most of

all by his saying that they would not see his face any more. Then they accompanied him to the ship” (vs 31-38).

So let’s look and see how this was unfolding in the Church of Corinth. We’ll pick this up in the next one.

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) Matthew 6:13
- 2) Matthew 4:8-9
- 3) Jeremiah 23:9-22
- 4) Acts 26:15-18
- 5) 2 Corinthians 4:1-3
- 6) 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11
- 7) 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
- 8) 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
- 9) 2 Corinthians 11:1-12
- 10) Acts 20:18-38

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12:9
- Luke 4
- John 6:44-45
- John 14:6
- Isaiah 28
- Ephesians 4
- 2 Timothy 1
- Galatians 1
- Psalm 34

Also referenced:

Sermon series: *Galatians*
Romans
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- *God’s Plan Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Solomon Ganzfried & Hyman E. Goldin
- *Fourteen Rules for Bible Study*

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