

## Keys to Answered Prayer XV

Fred R. Coulter—April 28, 2007

Let's review just a little bit some of the keys to answered prayer:

### **1. Believe God:**

- believe what He says
- believe what is in His Word

Now, God does not have to talk to you directly, because what you have in the Old and New Testament combined are the very words of God. So in order to believe God, you have believe His Word.

### **2. Obey God:**

Because God is not a God of lawlessness. God is a law-giver. And if God, being the Lawgiver abolishes law, then He is capricious and He is lawless and He is a liar and cannot be God.

### **3. You have to love God:**

Love God with all your heart, mind and soul and being.

### **4. You have to trust God.**

#### **5 God will deliver you.**

So today we're going to cover: *trust God and deliverance* that God will give us. Now let's first of all understand how important that this is. Let's begin here—we're going to look in several Psalms today—and we're going to focus in on *trusting God*. Let's come to Psalm 40. Now what we have realize is this: *Regardless of the circumstances, always trust God*—even in the face of what looks like immanent death.

Now, I heard the story of a Seventh-Day Adventist who was drafted into the German army in WWII. And he trusted God to place him where he wouldn't have to be in combat—so they placed him in the transportation department, and mechanics. And he was allowed to have the Sabbath off because he did good work and trusted God all during the war. He was never wounded. He saw a lot happen, but he was never wounded. The end of the war he was in the eastern zone and God opened the way for him to come to the western zone before the Soviets really finally took over. And he gave that as his personal (how shall we say) testimony that in spite of the circumstances, regardless of how bad it may seem, you can always trust God.

Now Psalm 40 is a very good Psalm for that. Psalm 40:1: "I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry," So this has to do with prayer. You're not going to get your answers to prayer immediately just because you pray. Sometimes you have to continuously pray.

Now let me just mention here—some people have asked me: 'Well, what if I'm continuously praying for the same thing day-after-day? Is that 'vain repetition'? I said, 'No, it's not vain repetition as long as it is something that you are praying about and you need an answer to it—you keep at it.' Just like there in Luke 18: that the widow kept coming to the judge 'to avenge me.' Kept coming, kept coming, kept coming. So that is not vain repetition. That is needed repetition. "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and established my goings*" (v 2).

When I read that I think of Jeremiah. Now, the circumstances of his ministry and prophecy at times was almost unreal. And the king and the princes were so against him—when he would come and prophesy the Truth—that they connived to arrest him and they threw him into the muck of the sewer. So here you are God's prophet and God says: 'I'll be with you.' and here you are in 'skubalon' up to your chest. And the smell and the stench! Well, what did God do? *God sent a man* who was a Cushite. And he got some other men and they got some old rags and made a rope out of it and called Jeremiah, 'Jeremiah, are you still alive?' He said, *Yes*. 'Here, put this around you and we'll pull you out.' Can you imagine trying to pull a body out of that muck—sucking you in. And get up out of that and all the filth! If I was in circumstances like that I know I would have vomited all over the place; and think of all the bugs and all the creatures down there and the...the rats and things down there in the sewer. I think of Jeremiah and the circumstances he was in.

"And He has put a new song in my mouth... [Now, that reminds me of Paul when he and Silas were arrested for preaching the Gospel—what did they do? They sang hymns all night. And at midnight God sent an earthquake, destroyed the jail and the jailer was all upset and he came out and he said: 'You men of God, are you still alive?' They said, 'Yes.' 'I'll take you out, come on in, come and eat.' And he and his whole household repented.] ...*even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall **trust in the LORD**.... [So regardless of the circumstances, remember this] ...Blessed *is* that man that makes the LORD his trust, and respects not the proud... [who offers them a way out] ...nor such as turn aside to lies" [to avoid the problem.] (vs 3-4). So you can always avoid persecution for a time by denying Jesus. But that's not trusting in God. We'll look at what Peter did a little later.

Now, let's come over here to Psalm 44:6. This is why the Psalms are so good. Regardless of

the physical circumstances of what you have. And while we're going through this, we need to understand this—you've heard me say it in the past and I'll say it again in the future—***you have nothing you didn't receive—nothing!*** So don't get the big-head over anything. So regardless of what you have

Verse 6: “For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.... [Even in physical circumstances and spiritual circumstance—either way—the physical things are not going to save you. God has to give you a way out.] ...But You have saved us from our enemies, and have put them to shame that hated us. In God we boast all the day long, and praise Your name forever” (vs 6-8).

All right, Psalm 49:1—because this is a very good Psalm. And all of you Laodiceans out there in cassette-land, listen up! because this is especially for those who are Laodiceans. “Hear this, all you people; give ear, all *you* inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp. Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil... [Put in your margin there: Psa 91] ...*when* the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about? They that trust in their wealth... [Think of all who are wealthy] ...and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches... [Remember what happened to Hezekiah after God gave him 15 years to his life, and he lived? What happened? *The ambassadors from Babylon came over.* And what did he do? *He showed them all the wealth of the whole kingdom of Judah.* And God said, ‘Why did you do that?'] ...boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of *them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live forever, *and* not see corruption. For he sees *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.... [The latest most notorious one what who? *Anna Nicole Smith.* Right?] ...Their inward thought *is, that* their houses *shall continue* forever, *and* their dwelling places to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names” (vs 1-11). Great memorials to them!

Now if you travel through West Virginia—since you had have Senator Harry Byrd as your senator back there—you have more Senator Byrd streets, avenues, boulevards, circles, hospitals, roads, buildings named after Senator Byrd. The reason is, he got the money from the government to do it.

“Nevertheless, man *being* in honor abides not: he is like the beasts *that* perish. This their way *is* their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah” (vs 12-13). God is the one Who will

redeem it. That's quite a Psalm. You can read the rest of it.

Now let's come back here to Psalm 118:5—all of these have to do with prayer, and the circumstances of prayer, and the reason to prayer—and these are *the keys to answered prayer*. And another thing that is important since we're talking about troubles and distress: don't wait until you're in troubles and distress before you pray. Just like America when 9/11 happened—‘Oh, God bless America’—well they hadn't given it a thought up to that time. Don't wait until disaster is upon you. Pray every day. That's why prayer every day is absolutely essential for your relationship with God. However, if you are in distress, ***pray!*** Don't wait till you can get some place to get on your knees—just pray right in your mind right at the time.

Now, Psalm 118:5: “I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, *and set me* in a large place. The LORD *is* on my side... [And the reason He's on our side is because we are on His side. It's just like Moses after he came down and the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf, which Aaron made. And Moses said, ‘Aaron, why did you do this?’ He said, ‘Well, I got the gold and threw it in the fire and out came this calf.’ And so Moses said, ‘All of those of you who are on the Lord's side, come over here.’ So all the Levites came over there, and the ones who were involved in it, the earth opened up and that took care of them. So ***in order for God to be on your side, you first have to be on God's side.***] ...The LORD *is* on my side; will not fear: what can man do unto me?... [If you're going to trust God, you don't have to have fear of any kind. That doesn't mean that you go out and wildly do things and don't have caution and do things in a proper way, at all.] ...The LORD takes my part with them that help me... [and you'll see that over and over again, that's true.] ...therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me” (vs 5-7). You don't have to go out and fight your battle. God is perfectly able to take care of it—always remember that. You have to do your part:

- by prayer
- by trusting
- by believing God
- obeying God
- loving God
- and trusting Him

Verse 8—a very key verse: “*It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. *It is* better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes [rulers].... [And especially the political climate that it is today.] ...All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.... [This is actually a prophecy of what Christ is going to do when He returns.] ...They compassed

me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them” (vs 8-11).

All right, let’s come to the book of Proverbs—we’ll come back and look at a couple of other Psalms here in just a minute. (For your information, Psalm 118:8 is the center verse in the Bible.) Now, let’s come to the book of Proverbs 11. Now the Proverbs is really a very good place for especially teenagers and young adults to program your mind with the things which will give you absolute right and wrong. Let’s just give you an example of it:

Proverbs 11:27 “He that diligently seeks good procures favor: but he that seeks mischief, it shall come unto him.... [Good lesson in life. If you want to ding around and fool around you’re going to get yourself in trouble. But if you diligently seek good, you’re going to procure the favor and you will get the things that you need.] ...He that trusts in his riches shall fall... [Absolute living truth. All of those who have been in the Worldwide Church of God should understand that. Because when the church came to the point of trusting in its riches and its property and its wealth and its influence, what happened? *They fell!* Not all at once. A fall doesn’t necessarily come all at once. It can come in stages.] ...but the righteous shall flourish as a branch” (vs 27-28).

Now let’s come to Proverbs 28. And also, by the way, studying the Proverbs is good for anyone who has had problems with the law; and has a problem of thinking of right and wrong; good and evil. Because too many people today are taught relativism; and too many people today are taught lawlessness—and they get in a habit pattern of thinking that they can do anything. Get in a habit pattern of thinking, ‘Well, if I do this then I’ll improve myself.’ That is really an illegal type of gain thing. And this is the kind of thinking that gets into those who get involved with drugs, who get involved with sex, who get involved with these things—well it doesn’t matter. Yes, it does! Because always remember this: ***No one is ever free from God anywhere at a any time.*** NEVER! Whether you’re converted or not converted. If God knows when a sparrow falls, God also is responsible for blessing the righteous, for cursing the wicked. Every act that you do is recorded in your mind. And God is a heart-knowing God.

So if you love God and keep His commandments and if you believe in and obey His voice, and if you trust Him, then He’s going to bless you. If you don’t, then you’re not going to be blessed. That’s why the Proverbs are so good—helps get your thinking straight. Key verse—absolute key verse:

Proverbs 28:25: “He that is of a proud heart stirs up strife: but he that puts his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.... [Now, that’s not why you gain weight. This means that you will be made prosperous in the Word of God.] ...He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walks wisely, he shall be delivered” (vs 25-26). Now, we’ll talk about being delivered a little bit later on.

Come back here to Proverbs 3—this is worth repeating—because it is really a keystone of behavior. Proverbs 3:5: “Trust in the LORD [whenever you’re in trouble.] ...Trust in the LORD [if you feel like it] ...Trust in the LORD [if you are comfortable] (NO! It says): “Trust in the LORD **with all your heart**... [Because then God will lead you. God will guide you.] ...and lean not unto your own understanding.... [That ties right in with that Proverb: ‘he who trusts in his own heart is a fool.’ So you can’t go by how you feel. You can’t let your emotions dictate to you what should be. You have to have the Truth of God, the Word of God and the Spirit of God to do that.] ...In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil” (vs 5-7).

Now, let’s understand something, brethren. Prayer from the heart—trusting, believing prayer from the heart—God will always answer, ***always!*** The answers don’t come all at once. The answers may be a little different than you have figured. And some of the answers some of the time, may be ‘no’ for your own good. Not every prayer to God is a ‘yes’—because God is not going to answer a prayer that you pray to fill your own lust. He may answer the prayer by giving you a trial, rather than give you what you want.

Now, let’s come here to Proverbs 15:8—this is why the Proverbs is so good, because it’s black and white, right and wrong, good and evil, righteousness and wickedness. Comment was made that God is the Supreme Parent—which is true. And just like parents don’t give everything to their children—for their own good—likewise God does not give everything to us and answer every prayer in the affirmative, for our own good. Because in the whole thing, what God is trying to develop is character—His character in you.

All right, Proverbs 15:8: “The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD... [That’s why—now think about it for just a minute—why do the Holy Days start with the Passover? *Because you cannot approach God without a sacrifice.* And the ***supreme sacrifice*** is Jesus Christ. That’s why. You can’t take it at a day you want to; in a manner that you want to, because then you’re not trusting God, you’re not believing God, you’re not obeying God, etc., etc. But that’s why. And you

can't have any greater sacrifice. That's why also every day in our prayers we ask God to forgive us our sins—and that requires a sacrifice.] (Notice the second half of this): **...but the prayer of the upright is His delight.**" Have you ever thought about that God delights in your prayers. God intervenes to help you.

Now you're upright because of Jesus Christ. Verse 9: "The way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD... [So you have two abominations, don't you?] **...but He loves him that follows after righteousness...** [Now follows the next verse, because sometimes God gives us correction. And remember what Jeremiah said: 'Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in him to direct his paths. Oh, correct me with judgment.' And of course, that means mercy as well.] *...Correction is grievous unto him that forsakes the way: and he that hates reproof shall die*" (vs 9-10). Very interesting— isn't it? All of those showing that you have to trust in God.

Now, let's come to Psalm 115:1: "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Your name give glory... [All the glory goes to God—everything that there is.] *...for Your mercy, and for Your Truth's sake....* [That's why, you see, if you try and gauge your righteousness and standing with God based upon your physical possessions, you're going to miss the whole point. And that's what the Laodiceans never understand. They say, 'Well, God blesses those who...whatever—tithes or whatever. All of that is true. But, don't turn around and look and say, 'I must be righteous because God gave this to me.' or 'I must be good because God gave this to me.' No! Because there is 'not one good, no not one.' But it's 'for His mercy and for His truth's sake.'] *...Wherefore should the heathen say, 'Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens: He has done whatsoever He has pleased'*" (vs 1-3).

And God is going to help you. God is going to intervene. Now, let's read some more, because this whole Psalm is on trusting God. Now, it's going to be versus trusting in idols. There are a lot of people who run into a Cathedral—it could be Catholic; it could be Buddhist; it could be Hindu, whatever; it could be Protestant.

Verse 4: "Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; **so is every one that trusts in them**"(vs 4-8).

Think about this when you see a cross or a crucifix hanging on a mirror in a car. They're

trusting in that idol. Think about this when they go before an idol and pray to the virgin Mary. She can't do anything. It's the work of a hand. You're worshipping something that some man made. 'Oh well, this represents...' God said, 'Don't even make it.' So it doesn't represent anything. That's a lie and a delusion.

Now, notice a comparison, v 9: "O Israel... [And since the Church is spiritual Israel, we could say: 'O Church of God.'] **...trust you in the LORD: He is their help and their shield.** O house of Aaron... [So we could say: 'O the ministers of the Church of God.'] *...trust in the LORD: He is their help and their shield. You that fear the LORD... [That's anyone. It starts out with Israel and then Aaron and now everyone.] ...trust in the LORD: He is their help and their shield. The LORD has been mindful of us: He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great. The LORD shall increase you more and more, you and your children*" (vs 9-14).

Now, let's understand this: We need to be blessed in the spiritual understanding of the Word of God, being led by the Holy Spirit of God. Some people might say, 'Well, I don't know how to pray.' Well, we'll get to that in just a minute. Let's finish off this Psalm because this is a great Psalm here.

Verse 15: "You *are* blessed of the LORD Who made heaven and earth.... [You can't get any greater blessings than that.] *...The heavens, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth has He given to the children of men....* [And always remember this]: **...The dead praise not the LORD**, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD" (vs 9-18).

Now, Psalm 116:1: "I love the LORD, because He has heard my voice... [He'll answer your prayers] *...and my supplications.* Because He has inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *Him* as long as I live.... [Now, there again, regardless of the circumstances] *...The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech You, deliver my soul. Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple: I was brought low, and He helped me*" (vs 1-6).

Now let's come to Romans, the eighth chapter. Let's see a great principle for us today. But not only can we pray, but we also have a great deal of help with our prayers. Let's pick it up in Romans 8:22: "For we know that all the creation is groaning together and traveling together until now. And not

only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies.... [Showing the inner turmoil and strife that we go through—and we do.] ...For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees?... [That's self-evident] ...But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience. Now in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses... [We all have our weaknesses—every single one of us.] ...conjointly helping our weaknesses because we do not fully understand what we should pray for, according as it is necessary... [How do you have a perfectly righteous prayer, which is coming from us who are carnal, yet, we have the Spirit of God? This is why we can't save ourselves. We can only be saved by something greater than us. We can only have been created by something greater than us. So we have the Spirit to help us.] ...but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed *by us*" (vs 22-26).

Now this is not talking in tongues as the Pentecostals believe. This is merely saying that the Spirit of God is communicating to God our thoughts and filtering out all of the other things that interfere in our prayer—and is making known to God in the language that he receives what we're actually saying and the desire of our heart. Now this is very interesting, too, when praying—because if you're praying in faith and belief and trust; and your prayer is sincere and honest and forthright, then God's Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth is going to convey that to God. But if we're praying with pretense, if we're praying for show, God's Spirit is also going to reveal that, too—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* So God is there to help us. The Spirit of Truth is there to help us.

"And the One Who searches the hearts... [because that's what God does with His Spirit—He searches the heart] ...comprehends what the strivings of the Spirit *are* because it makes intercession for the saints **according to the will of God**.... [So that's something—isn't it? God intervening in that way and the Spirit intervening in that way.] ...according to *the will of God*... [that's how our prayers are answered.] ...And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His purpose*" (vs 27-28). So that works right with that.

Now let's come to Psalm 112. So don't feel as though that you can't pray. Don't feel as though that it's too hard for you to do. Don't feel as though because you've had prayers in the past, which have not worked out the way that they should, or prayers that you have felt that God didn't answer. Let me tell

you this: Trusting in the Lord, believing in God is so important, because you can be absolutely guaranteed this: If you pray—and then you get up off your knees and say, 'I wonder if God heard me?' You just canceled the whole prayer. Now, if you doubt whether God hears you, do like David did. How did he start out some of his prayers and Psalms? He said, 'Oh God, hear me!' And another one: 'Lord help my unbelief. I believe, but help my unbelief.' So that's all a part of confessing our sins and drawing close to God.

Now, Psalm 112:1: "Praise you the LORD. Blessed *is* the man *that* fears the LORD..." And go up here to the last verse in Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *His commandments*: His praise endures forever."

Psalm 112:1: "...Blessed *is* the man *that* fears the LORD, *that delights greatly in His commandments*.... [Not griping, not complaining, not thinking about, 'Well, if I didn't keep the Sabbath I could be doing thus and such and so and so.' Well, sure you could. But how is God going to deal with you because you think that way. We're to call the Sabbath 'a delight.' God is giving us His blessing and His Spirit on the Sabbath day. He's not depriving us of anything! That's why when the Sabbath comes, BAM! You make the Sabbath the best day of the week. And you keep the Sabbath—not just to keep it, but to *fulfill* the Sabbath. How do you do that?

- *with prayer*
- *with study*
- *with looking at the Sabbath as the greatest day of the week*
- *a day for relationship with God*
- *a day for fellowship with brethren if you can do that*

"...His seed shall be mighty upon earth... [and, of course, yes we will after the resurrection—won't we? *Yes!*] ...the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house..." (vs 2-3)—true wealth, true riches. Remember what Jesus said, 'If you're faithful in a little, you'll be faithful in much.' If you haven't been faithful in a little, Who's going to trust you with the true riches? So this is talking here about the true riches. Not the riches and wealth that we have in the deceived world today—where there is no money. All you have are digital accounts where you have funds. And that's it!

"...and his righteousness endures forever. Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness: *He is* gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man shows favor, and lends; he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved forever: the righteous shall be in

everlasting remembrance.... [that is of God] ...He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, **trusting in the LORD**. His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.... [and of course, you could also transfer that to Christ, of which it said of the Father, that Christ is going to succeed until He puts all the enemies under His feet and then deliver the Kingdom up to God the Father.] ...His heart *is* established, he shall not be afraid, until he see *his desire* upon his enemies” (vs 1-8)

(go to the next track)

We’ve covered part of this during the Days of Unleavened Bread, which is deliverance or being rescued—rescued from Satan and deliverance by God. He’s the only one Who can rescue us. That’s why in Matt. 6 it says: ‘deliver us from evil’ but it really should be translated: ‘rescue us from the evil one.’ Because Satan is the there to really try and tempt. And when these things come along, we need to look to God to rescue us from it—and to help us with it. Help us to overcome.

- We know that Satan is deceiving the whole world.
- We know that he has many people working for him today.
- We know that his ministers appear as angels of light—and he himself does, too.

We already covered that God doesn’t tempt with evil. We’ve already shown that Satan tempts with evil, with power, and he tempts with those things which look good—to give a benefit. And that’s how Satan started out with Eve. I’ll give you a benefit if you do it my way. And so, it appeals as a benefit. It looks like it is good, but what is it appealing to?

Let’s come to 1-John, the second chapter, and let’s see why we need to be delivered from our own sins, be delivered from Satan, but also in order to be delivered from Satan, we need to know what his tactics are—and we need to know that we can overcome.

1-John 2:12 “I am writing to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*.... [We can’t be rescued from Satan and overcome the wicked one **unless we look to God to rescue us and deliver us.**] ...I am writing to you, little children, because you have known the Father. I wrote to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning. I wrote to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*.... [He says

that twice. Now here’s how you have your part in overcoming the wicked one.] ...**Do not love the world**... [the society around, because as we covered during Unleavened Bread what? *We have to be rescued from sin and self and Satan and society.*] Do not love the world, **nor the things that are in the world**.... [Never let your life be all wrapped up in things, gadgets, acquiring this and that and the other thing.] ...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him because everything that *is* in the world...” (vs 12-16). Now that’s quite a statement, isn’t it? EVERYTHING! So what I want you to do is I want you to take this verse 16 and when you’re watching television just see exactly that’s how Satan deals.

“...everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh... [And isn’t that what we have when we see all these commercials, pleasing the flesh] ...and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world” (v 16). So this is how Satan approached Eve, didn’t he? Came to her and said, ‘Oh, you’re going to have a benefit. You can become gods. Now if you eat this, in dying you shall not surely die. Even though you may die, you’re really not going to die. God didn’t tell you the truth. You can get a benefit now. Now look how pleasant this tree is. Look how good the fruit looks, and it’s something that you desire to make you wise’; and then the ‘pretentious pride of physical life.’ We see that in all the sports—don’t we? Everything! Satan will come along and say, ‘I’ll help you.’ **Of course he will!** He’ll even do you good so that he can deceive you later. He doesn’t come in with pure evil right at once—just like with Adam and Eve. ‘This is good for you. Oh, I know what God said, but just think how good this will be for you.’ It’s not from the Father but is from the world. “And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever” (v 17).

Let’s look at some other temptations that come along with this—temptations to do good, because there are a lot of do-gooders out in the world. Let’s come here to Matthew 16. Satan loves a good cause. Now all I have to do is draw your attention to the fantastic lies of the *Inconvenient Truth about Global Warming*. And I will simply answer the question this way: I think that we should send Al Gore to Mars and let him see if he can stop the global-warming on Mars because Mars is warming up in the same number of degrees that the earth is. Because global warming is not from the pollution of men or CO<sub>2</sub>—carbon dioxide feeds the plants and they absorb it and return back oxygen.

Rather, the things for global-warming is coming because of things from the sun, from the solar system and even some things from far outer

space—so it is from God, and man isn't going to be able to stop it. But a lot of the heating is coming because of more intense sunspot activity. It's not because you're driving your car. But Al Gore has now got his own mini-college where he brings volunteers to 'train them'—and to go out and evangelize other people. Schools have it so that parents must come and watch these things at school with their kids. Kids even have nightmares because they think the world is going to flood over and they're going to die. Global-warming also has to do with the internal heat of the core of the earth and the way that it's reacting—and that reacts magnetically from the magnetic storms from the sun. So you've got it from outer space and you have it from within. But everybody now that goes to this global-warming college, they are sent out as evangelists. They love a good cause. They don't care if it's a lie. They don't want to prove what is true.

Satan works at: *get a good cause*. Now, Matthew 16—this is right after Peter answered the question that when Jesus said, 'Who am I?' and he said, 'You're the Christ.' And Jesus said to Peter, 'Flesh and blood hasn't revealed this to you, but My Father has revealed it to you.' Which shows that even people who are able to understand some of the Truth can be subject to deception by Satan. Now then, after that:

Matthew 16:21: "From that time Jesus began to explain to His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and to be raised the third day.... [Now, notice Peter's reaction—a good cause!] ...But after taking *Him* aside... [That is Peter took Jesus aside.] ...Peter personally began to rebuke Him, saying, '*God will be favorable to you, Lord. In no way shall this happen to You*'" (vs 21-22). And the implication is because 'I, Peter, am here to rescue you.' And remember who was the one who had the sword that was aiming for the servant of the high priest's head and missed and got his ear? *It was Peter!* Can you imagine the ego that Peter would have had if he could have prevented the things that Jesus went through. 'Lord, I rescued You.'

Now notice Jesus' answer—and the reason that this is important is because Satan was trying to put an idea of good, which would lead to evil, in Peter's mind. And after all, really, the whole purpose of Jesus' coming, goes clear back to Gen. 3:15—doesn't it? And the whole Old Testament is announcing about the coming of the Messiah—isn't it? *Yes!*

"Then He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan!... [So remember this: **Not all good thoughts come from God.** Realize that. Have you ever been well intentioned? And then you do something and it doesn't turn out right, because the

good intention is not what is right and is only a good intention based upon a faulty premise.] ...You are an offense to Me, because your thoughts are not *in accord* with the things of God, but the things of men" (v 23).

That's why John wrote: "**Do not love the world.**" You can see how these things then interfere with your prayer life. Now, one of the biggest Churches of God got such in a habit of lying and fooling the brethren and they became more and more sinful and everybody thought everything was right and God was getting ready to take it down and when it went down they said, 'Why did that happen? It was so good.' *No!* You didn't see the evil and the corruption that went on. It was terrible.

Now, let's look at another good intention by Peter. Let's come to Luke 22—let's see another reaction of Peter, especially after Jesus told him what was happening. And this took place no less than at Jesus' last Passover. Remember, at the last Passover they were arguing *who was going to be the greatest*. Let's pick it up here in v 21 and follow it through—just to show that the carnal mind sometimes never gets it, even with the evidence right smack in front of you:

Luke 22:21: "Behold, even *now* the hand of him who is betraying Me *is* with Me at the table; And the Son of man indeed goes, according as it has been appointed, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!' Then they began to question this among themselves, which of them it might be who was about to do this. And there was also an argument among them, *even this*: which of them should be considered *the greatest*" (vs 21-24). Now, what does this do? It tells you they understood a lot about what they were going to do as kings ruling with Jesus, right? They wanted to know: who's going to be the greatest?

Verse 25: "And He said to them, 'The kings of the nations lord over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors.... [And that was long before the Democrat Party, trust me!] ...But *it shall* not be this way *among* you; rather, let the one who is greatest among you be as the younger, and the one who is leading as the one who is serving. For who is greater, the one who is sitting *at the table*, or the one who is serving? *Is* not the one who sits *at the table*? **But I am among you as one who is serving.** Now you are the ones who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint to you, as My Father has appointed to Me, a kingdom; So that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel'.... [Now, this still didn't satisfy.] (v 31): ...Then the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon [who is Peter], listen *well*.... [Today we would say, 'Listen up!'] ...Satan

has demanded to have you, to sift *you* as wheat.... [Now just think: if Satan was able to really get the Apostle Peter—he couldn't get him, so he got Simon Magus instead, right? *Yes!*] (now notice): ...But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren” (vs 25-32). And **he didn't get the point!** Because of his impetuosity and his self-willedness.

Verse 33: “And he said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death’.... [‘Lord, I'll fight for You!’ And how many people want to go out and do a good work for God? *No, let God do the work in you and let Him provide the work He wants you to do.* Not going out and establishing your own work. And so, all ministers better listen up! Do not set yourself up as the great, almighty mucky-muck. Remember what happened to the man who proclaimed himself as God's only apostle on the earth, and learn a lesson.] (Yes, Peter said): ...‘Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.’ But He said, ‘I tell you, Peter, *the cock shall in no wise crow today before you have denied knowing Me three times*’” (vs 33-34). Did that happen? *Yes, it did!* That's why you have the opposite (we'll cover that a little bit later in John 21).

All right now, Satan tempts with **comparing**. Who are you to compare yourself to? *Jesus Christ, that's Who*—because it's very deceitful. Let's come here to Mark, the fourth chapter, and let's see that in the parable of the sower. Because this is how some people really get themselves in trouble: they compare themselves with other people. We'll see what Paul has to say about that in just a minute. But here in Mark 4—well Satan wanted Peter, apparently because Peter had the proclivity to be impetuous and to act without thinking; to fall for a good cause, rather than something which is true. Comment was made: That's pretty strong to say that Satan demanded. The question is: Did Satan know what he was going to do? *Well, I think that he probably did.* Did he not have his Peter's in the past? *Yes, Balaam, who was at Pethor—which is a another name for Peter.* And what are the priests of Satan's religion called? *Fathers or Potters or Peters.* So yes, he knew.

Here is the interpretation of the *parable of the sower*—and let's see why we have the prayer to ‘rescue us from the evil one.’ And we need that every day because **the biggest thing that can happen to people in the Church is to be tempted by what seems good!** Because “there is a way that seems right to a man but the ends thereof are the ways of death.”

Mark 4:14: “The sower sows the Word. Now the ones by the way, where the Word was sown, these are the ones who hear, but Satan comes

at once and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts” (vs 14-15). And that's what Satan wants to do with people in the Church. Get them diverted just a little bit, bring a little more diversion, change the course a little bit and begin to take it out of your heart. That's why we have to be rescued from him. That's why we went through the whole thing:

- you need to believe God
- obey God
- you need to love God
- trust in Him
- and then we look to Him for deliverance

Now v 16: “...And the ones which were in like manner sown upon the rocky places, these are *the ones* who when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with joy; but *because* they have no root in themselves, they do not endure... [And you hear people say, ‘Well, I wonder where all the people who were in the Church are? *There's your answer: they didn't endure!* So you have to endure to the end.] ...when tribulation or persecution arises... [or you can say: splits or divisions within the Church. Are those not persecutions and tribulations? *Yes.* What are you going to choose? Are you going to choose God and the Truth? Are you going to go in a way that seems right to you? And maybe that way that seems right is Satan holding out what? *A good cause for you to latch onto.*] ...arises because of the Word, they are quickly offended. And those which were sown among the thorns, these are the ones who hear the Word, But the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things *that come into their lives* choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful” (vs 16-19).

Now, you can probably look back, if you've been in the Church a long time, you can probably look back and see many people fit into these various categories. Isn't that true? *Yes! Absolutely!* So the Word of God is true—and every one of them. Now, the point is this: Every one of these examples that we have used, Satan is there: it's looks good to do this; they go a different way that looks good to them; then you throw in Satan's twisting and turning of doctrine and then you have it. So if they have the cares of this life, comparing themselves, the deceitfulness of riches—well, I have all of this—and the lust of other things come into their lives, **choke the Word and it becomes unfruitful.** So you might say they are “choke Christians.” And they always say that, too, in sports. When someone fails to do what they ought to do, they ‘choke under pressure.’

Now let's understand something: When you put the focus on the ‘cares of this life’ and the ‘deceitfulness of riches’ and the lust of other things that come into their lives, what are you doing? What is your standard? *Your standard is comparing yourself with others.* You do not want to become the



poor, humble person that is of God. Now I remember a man who the first time he went to church he thought he was really something. And he came into church and what did he see in church? He saw farmers, ordinary people, poor people. And he thought to himself: How can this be the Church of God? Later he realized that's whom God calls.

Now, let's come to 2-Corinthians 10 and let's see the warning here: ***Never compare yourselves with others—never, never do that!*** We'll read down through because it's very instructive to read what Paul wrote because there's a lot in here. 2-Corinthians 10:3: "For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war... [That is our spiritual warfare is not] according to *the* flesh.... [Because it is ***spiritual!*** That's why you can never accomplish spiritual things by physical means. It must be with God's Spirit.] ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds" (vs 3-4). And the greatest stronghold to overcome is your own selfish, lustful, carnal mind. And the only way you can do that is by using God's Spirit to change and overcome.

Verse 5. "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ... [And that's a daily effort. That's something you do all the time.] ...And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.... [Now then, he shows the purpose of that.] ...Are you looking at things according to their appearance?...." (vs 5-7). You can't do that. You have to look at everything in a total package. And James brings this out. The first thing he said: 'What if a man comes in your congregation who is dressed very poorly. And you say to him, 'Friend, go sit over here in the corner.' And then another man comes in who's decked out with gold and silver and fine apparel, and you say, 'Friend, come right up front.' James says, are you not partial and are you not judging the heart?' Looking at things according to their appearance.

"...If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ's, let him reconsider this concerning himself... [that maybe he's not!] ...for exactly as he *is* Christ's, so also *are* we Christ's. For even if I should boast somewhat more concerning our edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be put to shame In order that I may not seem as though I am frightening you by means of epistles. 'For on the one hand,' they say, '*his* epistles *are* weighty and strong; but on the other hand, *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech *is* contemptible'" (vs 7-10). In other words, how can someone like this

write epistles like this! And we see him, what makes us want to follow him? And then he writes these epistles to correct us. Who does he think he is?

Verse 11: "Let such a one think about this: that exactly as we are in word by epistles when we are absent, so *we will be* in action when we are present. But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves... [and that also means to others] ...**have no understanding**" (vs 11-12). And that's exactly what Satan wants to get people to do. Then he can begin taking away from you.

All right, the next thing that Satan wants to get you to do is to join the world—have a good cause. And Satan will come along with a good cause. Let's take care of these people over here. Let's have this do-gooder activity. Now, let's come to James, the fourth chapter, very instructive. Now, I'm going to read about the Church of God. It's written to the Jews, but I'm going to read about the Church of God, because this is what is happening in the Church of God today. And this is also another reason why prayers are not answered, because you're acting like the world, you're talking like the world, you're thinking like the world. In other words, ***you're carnal!*** And remember, you can never accomplish spiritual things with physical means.

Now, James 4:1: "*What is* the cause of quarrels and fightings among you?... [Think about this.] ...*Is it* not mainly from your own lusts... [lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, the pride of life.] ...*that are* warring within your members?" That's a source of everything. And who is there to stir it up? *Satan the devil*. Let's have a good quarrel. Now, some of the news that they have today, they have debates. And they never let anyone really speak what they need to speak. They just fight back and forth. And no one is going to convince anybody because it's all after their own lusts and their own positions and they think they are right. The thing that Satan loves to do is get you on a cause that you think is right and you're totally wrong. And when you get to the point that it makes no difference whether you're right or wrong, but the cause and the thoughts of the cause become important—then you're in trouble.

Verse 2: "You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous... [Now, we're not out actually killing people, but you can destroy them by what is called *stabbing them in the back*. And how does that work? *By gossip; by talk; by double-crossing.*] ...and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask.... [So they're not praying.] ...*Then* you ask, and you do not receive, because you ask with evil motives,

that you may consume *it* on your own lusts.... [Now, James is pretty strong here, isn't he? So don't be asking for things to consume on your lusts. Don't look at others and see what they have and say, 'Oh God, give it to me, too. After all I believe in communism. Let's have equal shares.'] (Notice what James says): ...*You* adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity *with* God?... [So Satan wants to get you to join the world.] ...Therefore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (vs 2-4). And of course, God is going to let you do it if you desire; because there are the choices before us.

Now let me give you a good example, a modern-day example. I mentioned in one of my sermons that Dr. Land—I think it is Richard Land—and Rick Warren of the Saddleback Church in Southern California, have joined the Council on Foreign Relations. And here is a perfect description of how it seems right in joining the world because you have a good cause. Now, Jesus said we are living *in* the world, but we're not to be *of* the world. And I said in the sermon that they joined the Council on Foreign Relations so they can more moderate the evangelicals and fundamentalist to blend in with a more moderate world religion. So, this member in the Church sent him an e-mail and here's the answer he got back. This is Dr. Land's statement:

Council on Foreign Relations—the CFR—is a non-partisan think tank that seeks to better understand the world and the foreign policy choices facing the United States and other governments.

The way you understand it is go to the Word of God—know what is right and wrong, good and evil.

In 2006 the membership extended an invitation to me to join the Council because of their desire to broaden the Council's scope by having more evangelicals involved in it's deliberation. Another example of this emphasis is that recently Michael Gerson, an evangelical who is a former chief speechwriter for President Bush, joined the CFR as a senior fellow in their Washington, D.C. office. Having accepted this unique opportunity...

Remember, they want to set up the one-world government. They want to set up the final 'beast.' That's their goal! Unique opportunity! See, Satan comes along and gives you a unique opportunity.

My participation in the work of the CFR is entirely in line with the Biblical mandate for believers to salt and light in society. Now we are.

Does Satan quote Scripture and make it sound good? *Yes!* But Jesus said we're not to become part of the world. Jesus says, 'My Kingdom is not of this world.'

The Council offers other opportunities for me to be a positive influence. [Is he going to call them to repentance?] And bring my Scripturally derived values [but are they, in truth?] beliefs and convictions to this diverse arena. It is my view that as God gives the occasion, we must be faithful to honor Him by carrying His Truths and wisdom into the marketplace of ideas and thought. As the Apostle Paul was given the opportunity to speak to the cultural elite of his day on Mars Hill, my individual membership in the CFR allows a Biblical world-view to be delivered without compromise in this venue.

Oh really? Let's see what Paul said, let's come to Acts 17—now here's a perfect example of quoting Scripture without quoting Scripture. You name it, but you don't quote it. Question is: Why did they invite him? Do they want him to come because he represents all the Baptists? And if he can get the Baptists to begin thinking like they want them to think—and you do it a step at a time. You compromise one step at a time. How are we going to solve this problem? *You can't solve it God's way because the Kingdom of God is not here.*

Acts 17:22: "Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars' hill *and* said, 'Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities; for *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, "To an unknown God." So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance... [Now, I can't picture Dr. Land calling all these elite 'ignorant' like Paul did here.] ...*is* the one *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands... [not of this world] ...Nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things. And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord... [Now, I don't picture Dr. Land saying this]: ...if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us, For in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, 'For we are His offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is* made of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised* by *the*

imagination of man...” (vs 22-29).

Now, do you think that on the Council on Foreign Relations that he’s going to say, ‘You know, I suggest that you tell all the Buddhists to destroy all their idols; and you tell all the Catholics—and my advice to the Pope is this: Stop praying to Mary and pray to the real God.’ REPENT! Now—v 30: “...For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent... [If he did that at his first meeting, he would no longer be invited. He would be very unceremoniously *uninvited* to ever come again.] ...Because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead” (vs 30-31).

Now that’s the message that Paul preached on Mars Hill—which is quite different from what Dr. Land has given. So why don’t you just follow and see what Dr. Land is going to be preaching and how he’s going to be working everything in to the ***one world order—which is the coming Babylon the Great, which is going to take over the whole world.***

Comment was made that this is the wedge into all the Baptists now, for one of the last bastions of Protestantism that have some semblance of Truth. And we said years ago, God is going to do something with the Baptists and confront them with the choices; because as it says in the Old Testament: what is coming upon the world is coming upon ALL nations. ***Everyone is going to have to choose!*** And so, Satan is there trying to make inroads wherever he can. And unfortunately, we can say of not joining the CFR, but remember when Worldwide Church of God said for the members: ‘Well, you can join the local Rotary and you can join the local Lions and you can join these clubs.’ What are they? *They are lower level operatives of the same system.* You join the world!

What is said back here in Revelation 18—and we’ll finish here. This whole Babylonian system is developing—it’s going to encompass the whole world. Now let’s see God’s advise about joining the world. We are not to join the world.

- we don’t hate them
- but we don’t think like them
- we don’t act like them
- we don’t join them

And even in their causes—which appear good—are those really causes of God, or diversions by Satan which look good, to have do-gooders busy doing things to keep them involved in something that is going to lead to what Satan is building.

Revelation 18:1: “And after these things I saw an angel descending from heaven, having great

authority; and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird; because all nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication...’ (vs 1-3).

That’s Babylon the Great. And we are seeing now the governments turning to religion to solve the problems of the fighting and warring among religions by getting them to cooperate. And the thing that is spurring this along in a very fast pace is radical Islam, killing and slaughtering and bombing. And the governments can’t stop it. They have to go to the religionists to get them to try and change it. It’s all part of it.

“...and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury.’ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, My people...[We are to come out of this world. We are not to join the world.] ...so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues, For her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities” (vs 3-5).

So if you join these things, you’re joining the world and Satan has got you exactly where he wants you. And unless you repent, you’re going to go right along with the system. Those are all the things that Satan does to try and divert us.

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

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- 1) Psalm 40:1-4
- 2) Psalm 44:6-8
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- 4) Psalm 118:5-11
- 5) Proverbs 11:27-28
- 6) Proverbs 28:25-26
- 7) Proverbs 3:5-7
- 8) Proverbs 15:8-10
- 9) Psalm 115:1-18
- 10) Psalm 116:1-6
- 11) Romans 8:22-28
- 12) Psalm 112:1
- 13) Psalm 111:10
- 14) Psalm 112:1-8
- 15) 1 John 2:12-17
- 16) Matthew 16:21-23
- 17) Luke 22:21-34
- 18) Mark 4:14-19
- 19) 2 Corinthians 10:3-12
- 20) James 4:1-4

- 21) Acts 17:22-31
- 22) Revelation 18:1-5

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- Luke 18
- Psalm 91
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