

## How to Fellowship with God

Fred R. Coulter—July 14, 2001

Sometime back I was watching television advertising this church in Morgan Hill, and how good they are and the features that they have and the things that they do. Right at the end the pastor said, ‘Come on and attend and let the relationship begin.’ Of course, this was a Sunday-keeping church and I thought that’s interesting: *relationship!* Of course, that’s what God wants us to have, too. There’s a right relationship with God and there’s a wrong relationship with the world, which comes with Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots. And all those that drink of her cup and eat of her bread are committing fornication—they do have a relationship.

Now, we’ve also recently seen ‘true confessions’ on television. As a matter of fact, last night one of the women who was one of the consorts of Democratic Representative Condit, and she had a relationship with him. Of course, you can’t bring into an illegal relationship the requirements of a legal and proper relationship. It’ll never work! She believed the lies that she was told. She committed herself and she expected commitment back from him—but it wasn’t so! So we’re looking at a situation where that, in our relationship with God, God wants us to have fellowship with Him and wants us to have the right kind of fellowship. The fellowship that is like with that Sunday-keeping church that advertised, that the wrong kind of fellowship.

So let’s ask the question: How do we fellowship with God? And especially—as I have been mentioning—which I’ll mention quite often: We are living in a time when we have peace; we have prosperity; we have security; we have time; we have the facilities; we have the means to really learn and study the Word of God—don’t we?

Not only that, but we also have so many things which helps us to understand the Word of God that other people didn’t have hundreds of years ago. I don’t think that they had quite the understanding until we come to the time when William Tyndale and those who were translating the Bible into different languages for the people, and then later on when you get into where you had the *Cruden’s Concordance* and *Strong’s Concordance* and then the new knowledge that we have been able to understand with Greek and with Hebrew. So here, at the end-time, we have all the knowledge available for us. So the knowledge is good. But knowledge, unless it is used, is no good. And that’s what gets the Laodiceans into trouble.

I was thinking, I went to the store the other day, and I’m just at fault as anybody else. Delores was out shopping so I said I’m going to go and get me something to eat. So I went in the store and here they had all these rotisserie chickens all ready. I asked them, ‘How many do you do a day?’ She said, ‘About five cases of chickens every day.’ And that’s just in one little store. You can go in there. You don’t have to prepare a thing. You can buy everything, go home and have a dinner. I was thinking: Wow! What a deal this is! Hardly anybody has to do anything any longer to get their meals. You want bread today, you go buy whatever kind you want. There are thirty varieties right there on the shelf—pick and choose. You want a beef, you don’t have to kill a whole beef to get a piece of beef, you just go to the store and get the one you want. So, I got this chicken. It was all nice and hot and I bought some potato salad, too, because I wanted a little potato salad. Now, you stop and think how long that would have taken me, or someone else, to prepare that meal at home.

Now then, let’s not condemn those things. Let’s look at the good point of it. This give all of us, everyone of us, *time*:

- to pray
- to study
- to draw close God

—because we’re not all encumbered with that kind of work. We’re not out there having to work under the ‘Adamic curse.’

So let’s begin right here in 1-John, the first chapter, and let’s understand how important our relationship—or fellowship—with God the Father and Jesus Christ really is. And it’s with *both* of Them.

1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning... [talking about Christ] ...that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed... [we have intently scrutinized and gazed upon Him. That is the apostles. Their *eyes have seen* and then *looked upon*, that’s kind of a repeat, but it means *intently scrutinized*.] ...for ourselves and our own hands handled... [after the resurrection] ...concerning the Word of life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us...” (vs 1-3).

Now here is the truth right here in this one sentence. Most churches break down and become ‘country clubs’; and the reason that they do is because they reach the point—as I gave in the sermon on *The Five Stages of Apostasy*—of culture. When you reach the point when you are big enough and you’re established enough and you are comfortable enough you have *culture*. And so what happens when you have ‘culture’? *People join you because of the culture, rather than because of repentance.* There is a difference! They look and see: ‘Well that’s a nice culture. I agree with that. I think I will join you. Oh, baptism part of it? Well, that’s fine.’ So they’re baptized and remember what happens when the ministry reaches a *culture*, too, then they want to have numbers and they want to have increase; and they want to have their buildings; and they want to have all of those things. So, they slack down on really preaching repentance. When the Church reaches a ‘culture’ mode, they baptize people who want to join the ‘culture,’ but have not repented. I think this helps us understand why so many people in Worldwide gave up on Sabbath and Holy Days and just went slam/bam back into Christmas.

We see that “...for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ” (v 3). Any fellowship with brethren, or people in any church, if it doesn’t first begin with God the Father and Jesus Christ is going to degenerate into a social thing, because people are drawn by culture and people that they like; or because they have programs for the kids; or they have programs for the women; or they have a good basketball team or a good baseball team. There was one minister who said, ‘Ok, none of you can play basketball on Monday night with our team unless you attend Sabbath services. So they quit playing basketball and weren’t attending Sabbath services.

So you see, you have that kind of thing. People are there because of people; people are not there because of repentance to God the Father and Jesus Christ as our Savior. That’s why he says: “...for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ” (v 3). That’s where it needs to begin. Everything in our Christian life needs to be built on this foundation and stay on this foundation and let this grow and multiply in your life.

It’s very interesting, when the Church is scattered today you have three situations that exist:

1. Those who have the culture and want the culture go ahead and accept the false doctrine and go along with it, because they are there for people.

2. Then you have those who are still for God and they search around and they get a source where they can get spiritually fed—whether it be at a local church or whether be via cassettes or books or literature or whatever. Then they go to a Sabbath-keeping church where they can have their ‘fellowship with culture.’ They are still kind of divided.
3. Then you have—like we just recently came across—a woman who for four years sat home, kept the Sabbath and Holy Days alone; though she had a hostile and unconverted husband. Finally, she got a computer. So she said to herself, ‘I’m going to check out these Churches of God.’

She went through them and finally found our website and found out that no, we’re:

- not political
- we’re not organizational
- we don’t have a hierarchy
- we are not aiming for a cultural thing.

We’re trying to teach people to turn to God the Father and Jesus Christ. So she responded and we just sent her a beginner’s care package.

Being scattered, if you are alone and you turn to God, because there’s nothing left but you and God, and you really study the Bible and you really prove the Word of God, and you really listen to those things such as audio cassettes or videos or books that you can read, and so forth, which will help give you the understanding of the Truth of God. And we receive many, many letters all the time stating that that’s what’s happening in their lives. So when there is a scattering, there is that *good aspect* of it. So it is not wrong to be alone—between you and God. After all, salvation is an individual thing, and it is really between you and God alone. So if you’re counting on being in the midst of a group—like the Catholics say, ‘Outside the Catholic Church there’s no salvation.’ Well, we heard that in one Church of God, too. Not true!

If you do not have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, you do not have salvation. You cannot receive it by being in a group. You cannot receive it by being in a culture. You cannot receive it because someone else you know is righteous.

Salvation comes as a gift of God through His Holy Spirit that He gives to you upon repentance and baptism, and then you grow!

And this growth is called *conversion!* In it there are many things that we go through in our lives. And all the things that we've gone through are really something. And if everyone of us sat down and told the stories of what we have gone through to hold fast to the Truth, it would fill many volumes of books; considering all the brethren if they could do that.

So you have to get down to this: ***Our true fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ because we have the Spirit of God as a begettal!*** And we have Jesus Christ as our Savior. And, as I've pointed out, there are two aspects to the Spirit of God:

1. the begettal by the Father
2. the Spirit of Christ which is in you

It's the one and self-same Spirit, but there are two factors involved with it.

Let's go on because this whole first chapter becomes a very important key. Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full." You may have sorrow in the world; you may have tribulation in the world; you may have great trouble in the world—but you need to have joy in Christ and in God the Father. And that joy comes because you know God, you love God and you fellowship with Him.

"And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light..." (v 5). It's very interesting: *light* and *truth*. Jim gave me an article on Walter Disney, talking about all the deceptions, it says this: 'When there are lies you lose power.' I thought about that in relationship to God. Why is God all powerful? *Because He's all powerful!* Why will God never lose power? *Because He cannot lie!* That's why Satan fell and lost power, because he's 'a liar and the father of it.'

This helps us to understand, with our deceitful natures, why we need to always be conforming to the Truth. As we're going to see here, part of the problems that everyone of us have is that we can lie to ourselves, cheat ourselves, not tell the truth the way we ought to. And even Paul said to the Church in Colossi, he says 'lie not one to another.' So it's a thing that you grow into to come out of, but you can't really do it unless you understand the power of God and the Truth of God that He is Life and that He is Truth. Then you begin to understand and realize that His Word is Truth. Therefore, if you live by every Word of God, and you have the Spirit of Truth—which is in you—and you are walking in the light—guess what? *You are on a Godly path and that's part of how you have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.*

"...that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth" (vs 5-6). And that's profound because the Greek there is 'poieo' which means *practice* not the Truth. So it shows that it's something you have to *practice*. Not something you just do whenever you think of it—you *practice* the Truth! What is Truth?

- Your Word is Truth
- Your law is Truth
- Your commandments are Truth
- All Your statutes are true and righteous altogether

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, ***then we have fellowship with one another...***" So there it is: we have the fellowship you have with one another ***must first begin with God the Father and Jesus Christ,*** and you're walking in the light. That's how it has to be!

Notice, here's the first important thing that we always need, and that is the first thing of fellowship with God is: ***right standing through the forgiveness of sin,*** and that's living under the grace of God. This is continual forgiveness of sin because we have sinful natures. That's why every day the model prayer is: 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.' That's daily! And lots of times sin will not necessarily be just breaking a particular commandment. *Sin* can be the exaltation of self, which is not overtly breaking the law except when you begin exalting the self you begin to put yourself as an idol between you and God. *Sin* can be where it's not sin, it can be *neglect*—it hasn't gotten into *sin*, yet. That's why

- we need to go to God every day
- the fellowship needs to be every day
- the prayer needs to be every day
- the study needs to be every day

When we pray we talk to God. And God's Spirit is with us and He inspires us and gives us understanding. He helps us when we understand how great He is, to understand how *nothing* we are. When we understand that then we actually grow in fellowship with God.

So the first step is: "...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all [every] sin..." (v 7). There is not a single sin that God will not forgive except the unpardonable sin. If you feel bad and guilty about something, that is a forgivable sin, because ***an unforgivable sin*** is one where:

- you have no *regret*
- you have no *feeling*
- you have no *remorse*

- you have no *shame*
- you have *nothing*
- you have **hardened your heart**

But, you see:

- if every day you're *being cleansed*
- if every day you're *going to the throne of grace*
- if every day you have this *fellowship*

—then what happens? *God is imputing to you the righteousness of Christ!* And with the righteousness of Christ imputed to you, then you are walking truly in the light. And this encourages you more to develop that relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. So rather than saying, ‘I know I need to pray today. I’ve got too many things to do.’ So you go about your way. And maybe this gets to be a habit. So you’re not fellowshipping with God every day.

Then what happens? *Then trouble comes*, because sure enough it’s going to come! Then you go to God and say, ‘Oh, God, help me!’ Now, God in His mercy is probably going to help you, but what if He took the same attitude and said, ‘No, I don’t have time for you today.’

Or like Elijah said to Baal—the prophets of Baal when they were screaming and cutting and yelling and jumping around—‘Hey! A little louder, guys. Maybe he’s asleep! Jump up and down and scream and cut yourself more. Maybe he’s on a trip!’

God does not take that attitude. That’s why it’s so important. And just consider, since we have the time, we have the peace, those things I mentioned in the beginning, how incumbent it is upon us to really develop this relationship with God. And what it really is, it’s Christ and God the Father developing the relationship with you as well as you with Them—it works both ways.

‘Cleanses us from all sin’: We have right standing with God the Father and Jesus Christ through the sacrifice of Christ, and He is our High Priest to purge all sins from us!

Let’s go to Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and powerful... [so you’ve got this incentive over here, too] ...and sharper than any two-edged sword... [so it’s going to cut to the quick—isn’t it? And sometimes there are things in the Word of God which are hard to take because you’re doing what it says and you really haven’t repented of doing what it says, so therefore it’s hard to take. But, if you take it and let it have its work—because along with repentance also comes correction; there will be correction so that we can go in the right way.] ...piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, and of both the joints and the marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts

and intents of the heart.” You have two things that do this:

1. The Word of God—which is written
2. Christ Who is the Word of God—Who reveals this to you.

—so it works both ways. And why does He do it? *So you can repent and change and be in that relationship with Him.*

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account. Having therefore a great High Priest... [Now then, since we are in these predicaments, Christ is there as our High Priest,

- to give forgiveness
- to give cleansing
- to give help
- to give strength
- to give His Spirit

...Who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of our faith.... [Not give up on it, but hold fast to it.] ...For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses...” (vs 13-15).

So, what happens when you have a ‘big blooper’ day? Some ‘bloopers’ are little. Some ‘bloopers’ are big! You go to God and you just tell Him, ‘God, You know, and forgive me and help me to go on. Lift me up that I can overcome.’ Maybe you won’t overcome all at once, but through time and prayer and fellowship, you will begin overcoming and changing. God is not going to come down and just naturally just change everything instantly so you’re perfect. Perfection doesn’t come until when? *The resurrection!* But we can be perfected in certain things (as we are going to see). And those certain things then come because we go to Christ; because He knows and understands

“...but one Who was tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet He was without sin. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 15-16). So, that’s how we come to God.

Now let’s come back here to 1-John 1:7: “...cleanses us from all sin.... [Notice how he’s showing the contrast here]: ...If we say that we do not have sin... [that means we don’t have a sinful nature] ...we are deceiving ourselves... [because our deceitful nature is deceiving ourselves] ...and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins... [To Whom do we confess them? To Christ! Not to any priest!] ...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness.... [This is why it is that we confess to Christ, not to a man. Can a man be faithful and just to forgive you for your sins? *Only if you've sinned against him.* A priest cannot do that. A minister cannot do that. No one can do that. It's between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ; and They are there ready, willing, able and capable.] ...If we say that we have not sinned... [in our actions] ...we make Him a liar... because the Bible says 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.'] ...and His Word is not in us" (vs 7-10).

God is not going to be a liar. So if we make Him a liar by our attitudes—guess what? *We're in deep trouble, because God cannot lie.*

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [What happens every time you repent and confess your sins? *You determine not to do it again. You determine to improve*—don't you? You determine to overcome. So that's why he writes this: So that when you repent and you're in right standing with God, and you're receiving the correction of God, then you're not going to be out there sinning.] ...And yet, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ *the Righteous*—" Because He's our High Priest. What is the job of the high priest? *To advocate! To propitiate!* Advocate means to *be on behalf of*. To propitiate (as we'll see) means *to forgive*. And that's the job of Christ; that's why He's High Priest.

Verse 2: "And He is *the propitiation* for our sins... [lest we get to thinking He is for our sins only]: ...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*" Now, you cannot understand that statement there unless you understand the Holy Days and the Last Great Day. You look out in the world today and surely the world is not having its sins forgiven, and surely the world is not with God. Notwithstanding all the ecumenism of all the religions of the world coming together.

Then it talks about 'we know Him if we keep His commandments. Let's just go through this, because this is important in our fellowshipping with God. Not only do you talk with God, through prayer; not only do you have God talk to you, through His Word and His Spirit to lead you; but also, you have to *walk with God!* And to *walk with God* means to *walk in the way of His commandments.*

Verse 3: "And by this standard we know that we know Him..."—which then is a positive; absolute knowledge. There is no doubt! You say if you know something, you *know it*. But to say that *you know that you know it...* There is a conviction where there is no 'wiggle room.' We need to go

back to the covenant of baptism. Baptism is a death covenant. You have pledged your death at baptism. So even though God is merciful and righteous and kind and forgiving; even though He gives us lots of room to repent and grow and overcome and change, when we come to the point that we know that we know Him, our relationship with God then becomes so strong that *we know that we know!*—meaning there's *no doubt!* ***There's no doubt whatsoever!*** There is not one reservation in your mind! This is why it's got to be with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Why? *Because if you give this kind of love and obedience to a man, then you're putting the man in place of God!* This kind of love and obedience and knowledge and understanding only goes to God—to no man.

"...by this *standard* we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments...." And not only that, you will be anxious in wanting to keep His commandments. 'His commandments are not burdensome. Herein is the love of God that we keep His commandments, and they're not burdensome' (1-John 5). Yes, you're going to have difficulty in this world. Yes, it may be difficult to keep the Sabbath in some cases. But it's still not a burden, because you're not loaded down with the sins of the world.

So we have a Guide so that we know that we understand, so we can't be deceived. Verse 4. "The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him." That is a *profound* statement. That's how you divide all those who say that they belong to Christ. If they don't keep His commandments it doesn't matter how nice they are; how smart they are; how loving that they may appear to be; how charismatic that they may present themselves—they're liars!—like all religious leaders: the Jews, the pope, the Muslim muftis—that's what they call them. Yeah, and ministers of all the churches—yes! Oh yes, even the Churches of God that have gone off—absolutely true!

And the way that you understand how they come at you, is this: There is a difference between saying that the *King James* is not right here and the Greek really means this. What you will find is this: It will bring you the Truth when you understand the Greek, and it will strengthen your faith and belief in commandment-keeping. Whereas, if someone comes and says, 'Well, Jesus didn't mean this when He said that.' Now what is he doing? *He's calling Christ a liar! and the Truth is not in him!*

Verse 5: "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected...." That means *it is being perfected*. All of this implies that there is time, there is growth, there is the whole working of this fellowship that is

described in the 1-John 1. Being perfected! And that's why when it comes someone who has been perfected in the faith, who has been faithful for years and years and decades and decades, that God says that the death of the saint is 'precious in the eyes of God.' So that's why we have a lot of people who have been in the Church a long time, and a lot of them—if we go down much more in time—they're going to be facing 'death's door.' Well, don't worry, there is a time to die. And as long as you're being perfected you can look forward to that, because the next moment of your consciousness will be that you'll be resurrected and be a spirit son or daughter of God. That's why we don't need to be in fear of death! Christ has overcome death. But, we are to be perfected, and that's what the fellowship is to do: ***to perfect us in the love of God!***

"...By this means we know that we are in Him.... [If you are in Him and you have the fellowship that God wants you to have with Him, then you are becoming one with God the Father and Jesus Christ.] ...Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is **obligating** himself also to walk even as He Himself walked" (vs 5-6). These are some very profound simple Scriptures—aren't they? And even Sunday-keepers can read these and go right over them and miss them!

How did Christ walk?

- He never sinned—meaning He never broke any of the commandments of God.
- He always loved God—didn't He?
- always trusted in Him
- always did the will of God—no doubt—correct?
- How should we be then?
- *To walk as He walked!*
- Did Jesus always keep the Sabbath?
- *Yes, it was His custom!*
- Did Jesus keep the Holy Days?
- *Yes, He did!*

As a matter of fact, 'He is our Passover.' So that's how we need to walk.

Now let's see what kind of repentance that needs to come, since this is all to put us in right standing and fellowship with God. Let's come to Joel, the second chapter, and let's see what we need to do—the *kind* of repentance that we need.

I tell you one thing, when you are living in an age like we are living today and everything is so smooth and nice—which it is—and since sometimes it's hard to see the deceitfulness of human nature, sometimes it's really hard to repent; especially if you don't think you haven't done wrong when you've really done wrong! You're only deceiving yourself. This ties in also with loving God.

Joel 2:12: "Therefore also now, says the LORD, 'Turn you even to Me with all your heart... [that's what God wants. If there's any one thing you can say about a relationship that you need with God—fellowship with God—it is wholeheartedness! That's why Jesus said 'let the little children come to Me.' There's no guile. They're wholehearted.] ...and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments... [It's not a physical thing that God wants you to do. It's a spiritual thing that God wants you to do.] ...and turn unto the LORD your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents Him of the evil'" (vs 12-13).

Now, sometimes when you're going through some of the correction that you're going through, sometimes it seems a little evil, and sometimes you do have to go through terrible things—but God will see you through it! He'll see you through it all.

Then it says, v 14: "Who knows if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him..." [Who knows what the outcome will be? If you always put God first and you're wholehearted, and you have that fellowship with Him, who knows what will happen.

Let's come back here to Psalm 32; notice what takes place. Here's the blessing we just read of in Joel 2. Psalm 32:1: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.... [covered by the blood of Christ] ...Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputes not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (vs 1-2). When you repent of your sins, they're removed as 'far as the east is from the west' and Christ is always ready to forgive. And there is a blessing that comes with that.

Verse 5: "I acknowledged my sin unto You, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD'; and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah." ***And God will!*** That's why you have to really believe in God and know God and understand God and have the fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, then you will know that your sins are forgiven—just like he said here.

It's human nature to be comparative—isn't it? So we'll do a little comparing here. Have any of you sinned as David did or Manasseh did or any of the others who have sinned and repented in the Scriptures? Maybe not in the overt action that people can look and see, but surely in the mind—yes? ***That's where God wants the change.*** Not only repent of the action, but have the mind change. That's why we need to go to God and have Him forgive us.

Verse 6: "For this... [in this way] ...shall

everyone that is Godly pray unto You in a time when You may be found... [it says in another place: ‘call upon Him while He may be found.’ Like we started out, if you don’t have time for Him and you wait and wait and wait, maybe there’s going to come a time when He doesn’t have time for you and you can’t find Him; and He’s going to let you go through some very sore and difficult trials before He answers. So don’t wait until it’s too late.] ...surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble...” (vs 6-7). Yes, He will—spare us from a lot of it; deliver us from all of it.

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“You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble You shall compass me about with songs of deliverance.... [Now, when you really escape something that is bad you feel like singing—don’t you?] ...Selah.... [that means *think and meditate on this*] ...‘I will **instruct you and teach you** in the way which you shall go: I will guide you with mine eye’” (vs 7-8). This is God saying He will instruct us. Isn’t that something! That’s because you have the fellowship. If we are led by the Spirit—right? If we are instructed out of the Word of God and by the Spirit of God. That’s why we’ve said many, many times over: We have to know the Scriptures so we *think* with the Scriptures. And when you do, that’s Christ instructing you—I will guide you with My eye.’

Verse 9: “Be you not as the horse, or as the mule, *which* have no understanding... [You know the old saying where the guy who got the 2x4 and went out and clobbered the mule, and that was just to get his attention? God says don’t be like that.] ...whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto you.” In other words, they’ve got to be controlled. So here’s the key: ***Let God lead you and who controls you? God does!*** Also, God says that He ‘tries the reins and the hearts’—meaning that that’s how He does it with us. Not as animals, but with His Spirit to lead us and help us and teach us.

Verse 10: “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked... [It may not come all at once. That’s what gets a little frustrating, when you see the wicked prosper—but it will happen. I can cite many examples. God always takes care of the wicked.] (Notice the contrast now): ...but he that trusts in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, you righteous: and shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart” (vs 10-11). So that shows the kind of fellowshipping that we need to have with God. So we let the blessedness of the forgiveness of our sins take over.

Now, let’s come here to Isaiah 66. This is also a profound part of our fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Now all men like to do some big accomplishment in life—don’t they? *Yes!* What’s the greatest thing you could do for God? *Well, Solomon had that; he built a temple for God.* That’s the greatest thing he could do in life, and probably because he got so secure in it, led to his own demise, because he didn’t continue with the relationship that he had with God when God appeared to him in vision and in dreams—talked to him. And when he was humble in his own eyes, he said, ‘Oh, Lord.’ God came and asked, ‘What do you want? Anything you want.’ Solomon said, ‘Oh, Lord, that I may have wisdom to judge Your people.’ And He said, ‘Because you were tender in heart and you asked for wisdom, I’m going to give you wealth and every other thing.’ If he would have stayed with his first statement there, and remembered that in building the temple for God it was a blessing to do so; but a curse if you use it in any other way.

Isaiah 66:1: “Thus says the LORD, ‘The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that you build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?.... [In other words, what can man do for God that is so great that God has to be moved to do something? What moves God more than anything else?] ...For all those things has Mine hand made, and all those things have been,’ says the LORD, ‘but to this man will I look... [this is what moves God. You’ve heard the saying today: this really motivates me, or this turns me on, or this really gives me desire. This is what gives God desire.]; ...**even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit**... [not haughty; that’s what it means] ...**and trembles at My Word**” (vs 1-2). That’s all part of the relationship that we have with God. And we can have a ‘contrite spirit’ when we understand the greatness of God, we understand the greatness of what Christ has done.

Let’s come here to Micah, the sixth chapter. This ties right in with ‘what mighty work can I do for You, God?’ You look back and I can hear so many statements ringing in my mind—the greatest, the biggest, the most and all this sort of thing—and it’s all come to nothing—right? *Right!* God will take us up on it:

Micah 6:1: “Hear you now what the LORD says. Arise, contend you before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear you, O mountains, the LORD’S controversy, and you strong foundations of the earth: for the LORD has a controversy with His people, and He will plead with Israel.... [Put in there Rev. 3:14-21 for the Laodiceans. He has a controversy with them—

doesn't He? Yes, *He spews them out of His mouth—doesn't He? Yes!*] ... 'O My people, what have I done unto you?.... [all He wanted to do was good. He have them a good land flowing with milk and honey.] ...and wherein have I wearied You? Testify against Me'" (vs 1-3). What did God do to you? *Nothing but good and mercy and kindness.*

"For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of servants; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that you may know the righteousness of the LORD.'.... [In other words, God held back all the devices that they wanted to do against them.] ...Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?.... [What is it going to take? *A great thing!* Huh? *No!*] ...Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (vs 4-7).

And men have done all these things—haven't they? I mean, last year was a jubilee year for the Catholic Church—right? And if you went on a pilgrimage to the Vatican and you walked through 'jubilee door' you got indulgences for the future. You can go do any sin, but you have to come and leave a big offering before you walk through that door. Can you imagine?

Verse 8: "He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" That's the key to the relationship with you and God the Father and Jesus Christ—to walk humbly!

Now, let's come to 1-Peter, the fifth chapter, and let's see something else that comes along with that kind of humility. 1-Peter 5:5: "In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.... [That's why it's so important we never get exalted.] ...Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time... [and when does the exaltation take place? *At the resurrection!*—that's correct!] ...casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you" (vs 5-7).

- God loves you.
- God cares for you.
- Christ died for you.
- Shed His blood for you.

- Took His stripes upon Him—Who was beaten and lacerated for you—individually/personally.

"Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the devil* is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour.... [And he devours them—some people willingly; they just walk right into his mouth. Kind of like walking into the mouth of the huge dragon and say, 'Hello, I'm here.'] ...Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are in the world*. Now may the God of all grace... [If you've been going through trials, difficulties and problems, remember this verse. You go to God and ask for His grace.] ...Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself **perfect you, establish, strengthen, and settle you**" (vs 8-10).

In other words, whatever you're going through, because you have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, He is going to give you understanding. And when you have understanding that *strengthens* you, and that *establishes* you, and that *settles* you. That means you're no more bouncing around like James said, 'as a wave of an ocean going to and fro and the wind driving it wherever it is.' You are *established* and *strengthened* and *settled*.

Next thing we need to do. First one is to have your sins forgiven and be in right standing with God. The next one is **to be in agreement with God**—you agree with God! I even heard that Michael Savage got out the book of Exodus and was going through some of the lesser laws of God, after the Ten Commandments, showing—over the radio—how these were good things to have in this society. Well, that's true! They are good things to have in this society. And he was in agreement with God with that. We need to be in agreement with God, but *you cannot be in agreement with God and in agreement with this world*. That is the key. So, I was rather shocked to hear him say that. But, it's one thing to read those things and say those are good. It's another thing to believe it and act upon it and accept it for your way of living.

2-Corinthians 6:14—this is a key principle in everything. Not only in marriage but also in business, and also in things in the world—especially in things concerning God. **'Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers'**.... [That has to do in fellowship with God. How do you get yoked with unbelievers? *By going to Sunday-keepers and find out how they worship.* They don't believe in the Sabbath. They don't believe in the Holy Days. They don't believe in keeping the commandments. So they are what? *Unbelievers!* Though they profess Christ.

Though they use the Bible. Though they read it. That's really a fantastic mystery of God—isn't it?—that they can do that and not really understand. Isn't that something?] ...For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common? And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? And what [concord] union *does* Christ *have* with Belial?" (vs 14-15).

Now, that's interesting, 'concord' (KJV)—isn't it? Concord is *agreement*. What happens when the Vatican wants something from a country? They set up a concordant agreement. They had one with Hitler. They had one with Mussolini. They had one with Franko—concordant.

"And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever?.... [In the world you may have to deal with them. In the world you may have to 'rub shoulders' with them. But not in fellowship with God. This is talking about *in fellowship with God*.] (Attention all Catholics, v 16): ...And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For **you are a temple of the living God**... [Here's where the true fellowship really matures itself in a spiritual way.] ...exactly as God said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people'" (vs 15-16).

Now, that's profound—isn't it? This is why we only have the beginning portion of the Spirit of God. That is by grace only because God the Father and Jesus Christ are not the ministers of sin. Think on this: When you sin and you have the Spirit of God in you, God knows about it. And if you continue in it, you are making Him fellowship with sin, because He's dwelling in us and walking with us 'and I will be their God and they shall be My people.'

Verse 17: "'Therefore... [because of this fact] ...come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says the Lord... [because you can't have fellowship with the world and you can't have fellowship with sinners and still have fellowship with God.] ...'and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty" (vs 17-18). Now, that's the closest relationship that you can possibly have—right? Yes, indeed!

Now, let's come to 1-John [transcriber's correction], as far as coming out of the world it tells us what to do. And I'll tell you what, with the Spirit of God in you, the more that you see the world, the more that you see things of the world—look at the television, if you can't look at that and NOT love the world, then there's something wrong with you, because it's so filled with sex; it's so filled with violence; and

it's so filled with exalting women over men—they always cut the men down. You watch every ad where a woman is involved, she is always the one who rules.

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world..." Only God is capable of loving the world because He has the solution for it in the long run with His plan and His Holy Days. Yes, we're to love our enemies, that is true. But that doesn't mean that we live with them. That doesn't mean we associate with them.

"Do not love the world... [and that means the way things are in the world] ...nor the things *that are* in the world.... [I think God is going to let man have so many things, we're going to be 'gadgetized' nearly to death, that as a whole world we're going to say, 'what else do we need'—Laodicean age; 'rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing.' And if you don't have God, if you've got the whole world, you truly have nothing. Can they save you? No!] ...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him... [and therefore, you can't have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ] ...because everything that *is* in the world—**the lust of the flesh**... [from whence comes all these things that we have been seeing and hearing] ...and **the lust of the eyes**..." (vs 15-16).

That's how they get people all into buying things. And there's something that happens. I had this at one time, I don't have it any longer, but I see it in a lot of people, which is: You see something physical and it's so good and you want it and you desire it and you just burn for it, and you just got to have it. Or, a neighbor gets something and you got to 'one ups' the *Jones'* have it and now the *Smith's* got to be better—and all of that. That's the way it goes. Someone buys a new car and pretty soon everybody on the block has a new car. Someone paints their house, pretty soon everyone's house is being painted. *Keeping up with the Jones'*!—all the things. That's all based on lust! Some of it's based on the lust of smell. It has a reverse effect on me. You go into a department store and what do they have right up front for all the women shoppers? *Perfume and jewelry counters*. 'Oh, come and look at this. Free sample!' Oh Boy! And what is that for? *So you smell nice and beautiful*. You look in the mirror. All these magazines at the checkout stands, that's all for the lust of the eyes and lust of the flesh and 99% of them are for women! I have yet to see a good magazine there: *How to be a Masculine, Loving Man*. I don't think that that magazine would sell at all. But how to be licentious, half-naked woman, it sells like hotcakes. I do love women, I don't hate them, but we are living in that age—so forgive me!

"...and the **pretentious pride of physical life**—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away..." (v 16-17). Because it's all going to pass away!

You try this sometime if you don't believe this is true: You go and visit a town or a city that you haven't been to in 20 years and see if you can find anything you recognize. That happened to me when I went to Boise a couple of years ago. We lived there and we really loved Boise—nice little town. We lived out in Meridian, about 12 miles away and there was a lot of farm land and dairies right there, and now it is solid city. Downtown Boise there are great, big high-rise buildings. And as I was being driven around Boise, I couldn't recognize a thing, and I knew it like the back of my hand when we lived there. And Meridian, wonderful little town that we lived in, our first house that we rented was a beautiful, nice little cozy two bedroom/one bath house, and it was white with yellow trim and had a little drive-in port there, and it was just really a marvelous house. I think we got that for \$125/month, something like that? About 700-800 sq. feet.

Now also consider the past civilizations. Babylon passed away and was destroyed—wasn't it. Let's go back further than that: the world before the Flood. It was destroyed in the Flood. Babylon was destroyed. Egypt, Greece, Rome—it all passes away.

That's why we should not lust after any of those things or love the world. But notice the last part of v 17: "...but the one who does the will of God abides forever." They will remain, the rest will not. So that's something! We're not to be loving this world.

Now, let's come back here with the agreement that we need to make with God. Let's come back Amos 3:3—here's a key. And all of those out there in 'ecumenical land,' pay attention: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" And if you agree to disagree you are not agreed—you have no agreement. It's a false agreement, and sooner or later—because you cannot serve two masters—one or the other will rule. That's why the ecumenical movement is to the lowest common denominator. If God is going to 'walk with you'—which we saw—you have to be agreed with God—correct? How much?

Let's go to Psalm 119—How much do you have to be in agreement with God? God doesn't want you to be like the Jesuits. The Jesuits have to take an oath that they will have no will, no thought, no personal expression. They will be and act like a cadaver—in other words, whatever they are told to do they will do. God doesn't want you to give up your

will. He wants you, by fellowship with Him, so that **your will becomes like His will by doing His will.**

That's why every day we pray, 'Your will be done on earth' and that means in our lives not just on earth in general. It's going to be done on earth in general—no question about that. But in our lives 'as it is in heaven.' How much do we have to agree with God.

Psalm 119:123: "Mine eyes fail for Your salvation... [because he's so anxious for it] ...and for the Word of thy righteousness.... [so that he can know it and study it and live by it] ...Deal with Your servant according unto Your mercy, and teach me Your statutes" (vs 133-124). That's exactly what's going to happen when you're fellowshipping with God and led by the Holy Spirit. God will teach you. You'll be going along and all of a sudden it's going to be just like a light switch is turned on in your brain. Something will come and you will understand, and you never thought of it before; or it's something that you've known, but you never looked at it that way before. It will be WAM! Why did that happen? *Because God's Spirit led you and taught you.* Remember what we've read there in John 6:45: 'we'll all be taught of God.' How are you taught of God? *By His Spirit and His Word.*

"...teach me Your statutes. I am Your servant; give me understanding... [that's what happens when you have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ—you have understanding.] ...that I may know Your testimonies" (vs 124-125)—that is *understand* them.

Let's come to Job 42:1—this happened with Job. Job thought he knew everything. Job had the 'light turned on'—didn't he? "Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 'I know that You can do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from You.... [Job didn't sin in the letter, but he sinned in his mind.] ...Who is He that hides counsel without knowledge?.... [Job was a fool because he thought he could hide his secret thoughts from God! *No!*] ...therefore, have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.... ['I'm stupid; I'm ignorant.'] ...Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak: I will demand of You, and declare You unto me. **I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye sees You**" (vs 1-5).

In other words, this is an experience of coming to true understanding. Not just seeing God in the whirlwind as it were, but coming to a true understanding. Notice what this leads to: Verse 6: "'Wherefore I abhor myself... [What was he doing? *He was exalting himself above God!* Is that not sin? Yes, that's *idolatry!*] ...and repent in dust and

ashes.” So then, the rest of the story is that Job final agreed with God—didn’t he? *Yes, he did!*

Psalm 119:125: “I am Your servant; give me understanding... [that’s what Job got—wasn’t it? *Yes!*] ...that I may know Your testimonies. It is time for You, LORD, to work: for they have made void Your law.... [Boy! Isn’t that true today? Now it’s time for God to work, to do whatever He’s going to do.] ...Therefore, I love Your commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.... [You’ve got to love God, love His commandments. (Now, here’s how you agree with God): ...**Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way**” (vs 125-128).

That’s quite a thing! That’s how much you have to agree with God. It isn’t like Jimmy Carter said, when he had to split off from the Baptist Church, that ‘the Baptist Conference is gone beyond my Christian belief.’ Well, Jimmy, it doesn’t matter what you believe. If you don’t agree with God it’s nothing! It doesn’t matter what you call it. It doesn’t matter what you think of it. It is nothing! And unless everyone comes to the point of agreeing with God, they’re going to be where? *Lake of Fire and ashes—correct? Yes!*

Verse 129: “Your testimonies are wonderful... [look at the attitude here] ...therefore, does my soul keep them. The entrance of Your words gives light... [Are we to *walk in the light?*? *Yes!* And when you let the Word of God in your mind, it gives light! You’ll be ‘walking in the light.’] ...it gives understanding unto the simple” (vs 129-130). And we’re all simple—aren’t we? I mean, let’s understand it: *yes, we are!* I don’t care if you have the highest IQ on earth, you’re still a simpleton because unless you know God and love God, and God is known of you, then you’re simple. What happened there, it says in the Rom. 1, ‘proclaiming themselves to be wise, they became fools.’ If you’re a fool you’re a simpleton—right? And those who rejected God ‘proclaim themselves wise’—are what? *They are the wise of the world!* It doesn’t matter what your IQ is, but ‘He gives understanding to the simple.’

“I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for Your commandments.... [Was he zealous? *Yes!* Was he seeking God? *Yes!*] ...Look You upon me, and be merciful unto me... [there’s the fellowship right there, and forgiveness] ...as You [always] used to do unto those that love Your name” (vs 131-132). This means as you always do—it could mean; not as you used to do, being passed, not doing it now. This means as you always do or are accustomed to doing.

“Order my steps in Your Word... [walking

in every way of God] ...and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.... [that ties right in there with Rom. 6:16, that ‘sin shall not have dominion over you—shall not reign over you! It doesn’t mean you won’t have sin. You’ll have your sins forgiven, but it means *don’t let it rule you.*] ...Deliver me from the oppression of man... [Oh yes, let that be!] ...so will I keep Your precepts. Make Your face to shine upon Your servant; and teach me Your statutes. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law” (vs 133-136). And when you keep that kind of relationship with God, it will—you will look out at this world *and weep!*

Those are the first things we need to have fellowship with God.

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) 1 John 1:1-7
- 2) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 3) 1 John 1:7-10
- 4) 1 John 2:1-6
- 5) Joel 2:12-14
- 6) Psalm 32:1=2, 5-11
- 7) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 8) Micah 6:1-8
- 9) 1 Peter 5:5-10
- 10) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 11) 1 John 2:15-17
- 12) Amos 3:3
- 13) Psalm 119: 123-125
- 14) Job 42:1-6
- 15) Psalm 119:125-130

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 John 5
- Revelation 3:14-21
- John 6:45
- Romans 1: 6:16

Also referenced: Sermon: *Five Stages of Apostasy*

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