

# Assaults Against the Church I In the Last Days

Fred R. Coulter

I got to thinking that one of the things that we are able to do and some of the people we are reaching has to do with those who have been in the Church of God for a long, *long, long* time and many of them fall into the area of which you would call senior citizens. I remember one time, someone said, 'Fred, what are you going to do with a church full of senior citizens?' Meaning: *when they all pass on!* I said I don't know, because we're asking God to provide what He's going to provide and bring together who He wants to bring together.

So, I got to thinking about it just considering everyone that I know and their ages, and I thought if that's the part of the ministry that God wants me to have—which it is—then I should faithfully do that regardless of who, where, what or the age or whatever. But in particularly those who have been in the Church for many, many years, what a tragedy they've spent 20-30 years in the Church and finally their faith is assaulted and some of them may tend to give up or leave or go or whatever the situation may be.

If it's part of the thing God wants me to do to help them restore their faith, so that if and when the time comes that they go 'to sleep'—leave the rest of us awake and alive here on the planet to suffer through the things—well then, that's fine! Because after all, what is the whole goal of any ministry but to see people in the Kingdom of God; to see them be faithful to the end so they'll be in the resurrection. And there will be some people who won't be with us here next year. This more particularly was brought up with a letter that I got this last week. This lady wrote:

Recently I read your most excellent book *A Harmony of the Gospels*. I tried writing to the publisher to purchase a copy... [there's another York Publishing somewhere on the east coast] ...Let me tell you this: I was recently put out of the Worldwide Church of God... [and you're not going to believe this] ...for studying the Bible and trying to get those in the local congregation to check the Scriptures to see if it were so. There have been so many doctrinal changes within Worldwide it makes your head swim. They're even removing the hymnals and replacing them because they feel they are not doctrinal.

Everyone is wondering: What is the test? We know we're going to be tested—what is the test? The test is:

- Do you believe God?
- Do you believe His Word?
- Are you going to follow it?

It's happening to everyone, everywhere, in every Church of God all at the same time. So it's not just an isolated thing. People cannot take comfort within an organization. They can't take comfort outside an organization. ***Their only comfort is going to come from God, directly!***

They're verses right out of the Bible. Right after morning services, Sabbath, they're planning a senior citizen's dinner and boat outing on the Sabbath! My minister told me to sit back, relax like the Greyhound bus driver and he'd do the studying—danger!

I'm attending a church congregation with the Philadelphia Church of God. Were you ever a minister in WCG? I am, at this point, searching for one who follows the true faith. I am attending PCG to keep the Holy Days and weekly Sabbath until I'm able to check him out, Scripturally.

Well, when she does she'll find out there are some difficult problems with him, too.

At this point, I do not know what to do. I believe in God's commandments, Holy Days and the weekly Sabbath. I'm doing research on the Passover at this time. The Worldwide Church of God is giving strong indications that it's leaning to the 15<sup>th</sup> Nisan as do the Pharisees and Sadducees and scribes that Jesus our Lord warned us about.

They may even go one step further. I got a letter from England that asked me what I think is going on in Worldwide. I said I thought it's probably going to be soon like the Seventh Day Adventists. And every indication is that it's going to be.

I do believe Passover is the first day of Unleavened Bread.

She sent me all the material and the study that she did on it, and I thanked her for it. When I did the sermon on *The Unleavens* I didn't know that it was really going to be to a benefit immediately to go into in that detail. But, as it turns out, that's one thing that is plaguing a lot of people, so I told her that I would send her the book *The Christian Passover* and she can go through and check it herself.

Would like to know when you keep the Passover and Unleavened Bread and also how to count Pentecost. I like the way you originally wrote in the book *The Harmony of the Gospels* the Passover and Unleavened Bread totaling eight days. Do you still keep it this way?

Yes, we do!

We appreciate anything Biblically that you have to say in this light. I respect the research you and others did in the writing of the book *A Harmony of the Gospels*. If you do not agree with me then explain the above mentioned Scriptures. I prayed for God to provide me your address.

Does God answer prayer? *Yes, He does!*

Lo and behold, a stranger I wrote to, that just came out of Worldwide Church of God provided me with it.

So, that's how I got the letter.

I was so excited! I sat right down to send you this letter. I'm looking forward to your reply. I feel you're very close to God and to tell you the truth I need encouragement.

PS: I'd like you to see what we have found, the four of us, and will be glad to send it to you.

After I got that sent off she called and said she got it. And here's part of another letter she sent a week later:

I'm a mother and a grandmother and I'm 54 years old and have been attending, like I said, since 1973, was baptized in 1974. So many changes coming out of the offices of the WCG not Scriptural. They've got everyone afraid to ask questions. I know several studying but are afraid that if they leave they will lose their salvation. They're even doing away with the hymnals now. They say that they're not doctrine. I heard that they were tampering with the commandments. Must be true; they now plan socials on the Sabbath.

My mother's 78 and still in WCG and sees things that upset her also. But I do not, at this time, want to take her to this PCG group she's attending. My son is seeking baptism at this point in time and they seem to be stalling him off. My son has become very dedicated to the purpose of studying God's Word and living according to them. He believes the Holy Days and the weekly Sabbath. I've been working with him and his wife and helping them to learn some of

the basics, which are no longer taught since 1987.

That's the one letter there. Then, as a result of the information that I sent to England, I got another letter from England:

Dear Mr. Coulter, I was given a video tape of your sermon *What is the Government of God?*—which I found very interesting. Could you please send me some more video/audio tapes and any booklets which I could study. I was a member of the Worldwide Church of God for almost 20 years...

I mean, we're dealing with people that have been in for a long, long time!

...and left a year ago because of doctrinal changes, which I could not accept. Could you please let me know what you think about the changes within the WCG and what you think about what the future holds for the organization?

This is the one that I said I think it will become like the SDAs. The SDAs are not listed as a cult by Protestants because they believe in the trinity. Remember, the WCG now says that the Holy Spirit is Divine, which is the first step to going to a trinity. And I hear that there are already plans in motion to bring in the trinity thing so they can be accepted by the world. That's the whole thing that's the excuse to bring in all these doctrines so that they can have the college accredited. Then he asks:

Is Worldwide losing members? What about the situation financially?

I told him, I don't know, I think they're losing more than they're gaining.

Perhaps you may wish to let me know something about yourself and your organization. I've been listening to some of the sermon tapes by GTA. Do you know anything about him and his organization?

I just told him what we've done in the past concerning that, how that since they believe in the 15<sup>th</sup> Passover that it raises question marks.

Here's another letter:

It was really good getting to know you by phone, I'm looking forward to meeting you in person. Thank you very much for all the tapes and literature, especially your wonderful book *A Harmony of the Gospels*. Although I've had time to read but a few pages, I can see that it will be very helpful in studying the life of Jesus Christ our Savior and is truly a labor of love. Much thanks, too, for your very wise

counseling concerning our apartments. It was a relief to know that I had not sinned against God, but if I would have consummated the deal regardless of the cost to me.

He asked me about what do you do when someone makes a tentative offer but there's no contract involved—am I bound to God? Well, no, not unless there's a contract involved because you really haven't consummated the deal—it's still negotiating. They'd like to join the Feast in Tulsa, but they're going to Panama City to be with their son and daughter.

Here's another letter:

It's a pleasure talking to you on the phone. I sent a new check for *The Christian Passover* and to help for the postage, and for *A Harmony of the Gospels*. Please disregard the previous check.

I've been interested in pursuing Biblical studies on a graduate level. However, working for a traditional 'Christian' TV station the pay is very limiting. Of course, theology is a major limiting factor also.

That poor man must be right in the middle of it there, to go through all of that.

Thank you for your offer to send the care package. As for the Passover, I have serious doubts about a Wednesday crucifixion...

When he gets the other things, that'll help him.

In studying the chronology I have found a lot of calendar research and found political, religious and financial objectives in an attempt to change the calendar.

That's about the world calendar he's referring to. He wanted any information I had on that. He was also in Worldwide for a while.

Here's a little note:

Thank you for very much for all the tapes. I use them to study and study the book of James. Now we are studying the Epistle of 1-Peter. Thanks again.

So, these are just a sample of some of the letters that we get. But also some of the other material that we get has to do with doing away with the Holy Days. And I think that with all of this that is going on, let's ask about *The Assault on the Church in the Last Days!* I see this thing happening time and time again.

- What are the biggest problems that come along, that you're challenged once you believe the Truth?

- What's the thing that comes along to challenge your faith?
- What are always the problem areas?
  - ✓ Sabbath
  - ✓ doctrine
  - ✓ Holy Days
  - ✓ Healing
  - ✓ clean and unclean meats
  - ✓ divorce and remarriage
  - ✓ salvation
  - ✓ Passover
- What is the central thing they assault? *The Passover!*
- Why?
- Why assault the Passover?
- *They assault the way the Bible says to take the Passover!*
- Why assault that?
- *The Passover is the foundation of the New Testament!*

Let's go to John 13—we covered part of this when we went through foot-washing, but let's just cover part of this. Anyway to cause confusion, to cause doubt, is Satan's tactic. We're not going to get bogged down in the details of that because that's all covered in the book *The Christian Passover*—and I cover it in great detail.

When Jesus came to wash Peter's feet, John 13:8: "Peter said to Him, 'You shall not wash my feet, not ever.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'"

Then He says, v 15: "For I have given you an example, *to show* that you also should... [you're obligated] ...do exactly as I have done to you." So, the first thing you do is assault the Passover by

- getting rid of foot-washing
- getting rid of the wine
- changing the bread
- changing the day
- having it too often.

There is not one doctrine—especially if you've read the introduction to *The Christian Passover*—in all the Bible that has as many questions or problems about it as does the Passover. The Jehovah Witnesses only have *their* 'apostles' wash each other's feet.

- Anyway to change it!
- Anyway to twist what Jesus has said!

The Church, when it began, was under many, *many*, *many* assaults. Let's remember what Solomon said in the book of Ecclesiastes: 'That which has been is that which shall be.' So, we're being recycled through the same things again. Just

like this lady who said, ‘I prayed for your address, and a complete stranger whom I never knew wrote to me (she came in contact subsequent to that prayer) and gave me your address.’ A good example of trusting God and having prayer and faith. People look at their own physical circumstances and think: ‘God, You’re responsible!’ *No!* Maybe He is; maybe He isn’t. But can God answer your prayer concerning anything? *Yes, He can!*

What did James say? ‘*Cast your cares upon the Lord for He cares for you.*’ So, He’ll take care of whatever your needs may be. If you pray that God will help you and provide for you. He doesn’t say that He’s going to send you a winning lotto ticket. He doesn’t say He’s going to make you a millionaire. He doesn’t say any of those things, but He promises to take care of you.

Concerning doctrine, because ‘that which has been is that which shall be.’ This is exactly what we’re going through today! I think it is more epitomized by the way that the political candidates are saying one thing so they can hide and deceive their true intentions about something else. And it’s the same way in religion. There are a lot of people coming along in the guise of ‘new understanding’ and ‘new truth’ and ‘new doctrine’ and all this sort of thing; and all it is just recycling all the old things again.

Revelation 2:2: “I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test [try] those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles...” (vs 2-3). How do you try/test someone?

- You prove them!
- You prove their doctrine!
- You prove their teaching whether it is so or not!

Where did these false apostles come from? “...proclaim *themselves* to be apostles but are not, and **did find them liars**” (v 2). What happens when you’re assaulted with lies so long? *You begin to cave in to them!* That’s what happened with the Ephesian Church.

Verse 3: “And *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name’s sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love” (vs 3-4). Being assaulted by these things for so long, they left their first love!

Verse 5: “Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.” So, the Ephesian era went through some things.

Let’s go back to the book of Acts for just a minute. We’ll do a little survey as we also look at some specific verses as we go along. You know that the Holy Days are under attack so we’ll eventually end up there, but here we have a situation: Some people have said that ‘the only reason that the apostles were there on Pentecost was because they just happened to be there.’

- What were the commands of Jesus? ‘*Go to Jerusalem and wait until you’re imbued with power from on high!*’
- What is one of the biggest errors that people make in trying to understand the Scriptures? *They believe the Jewish lie, which is ‘Judaism is the religion of Moses.’*
  - ✓ Never was!
  - ✓ Never has been!
  - ✓ Never is going to be!

I talked to one person who said, ‘Well, I’m trying to search for the Truth.’ They went to a synagogue and she said, ‘Those people are totally out of it.’

In Acts they were there keeping the day of Pentecost. We know the New Testament teaches the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, and it’s got to include Pentecost. If they’re doing those, they’re doing the others. They received the Holy Spirit on the same day that the Ten Commandments were given, we know that. Not only did they have to fight the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees and many of the people, now they had another problem.

Acts 8 tells us where one of the three enemies came from; where these problems come from:

- some from *within*
- some from *without*
- some from *pagans*
- some from *Jews*

Years ago we didn’t think we’d ever have any problems with the doctrines of the Jews—did we? Now we’re going through a lot of it—aren’t we? *Especially with the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover!* Here in the book of Acts we have the origin of the pagan problem within the Church. It has to do with Simon Magus.

Acts 8:9: “But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery...” Sorcery is coming back; under the guise of *New Age* religion! And ‘new agers’ want to get into every religion and ‘new age’ it. You’ve heard of the saying ‘nuke it’; now it’s ‘new age it.’ That’s what they want to do!

There is a 'reformed' Jewish movement that now is making statues of the 'mother god.' Have Jews worshipped the 'mother god' in the past? *Yes, indeed!* Jer. 8, 'making cakes unto the queen of heaven.' So, as I said: *that which has been will be!* There's nothing new under the sun. Just reflecting on this, I remember some 25 years ago when I was doing a series of sermons out of the *Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop. He said that his understanding of prophecy in the future (remember this was written before the turn of the century—1900) the *image of the beast* was going to be 'Mary-worship'—which then is old Isis-worship; Ishtar-worship; mother earth-worship. What are the 'new agers' trying to do? *New Ageize everything!* The Catholic Church is set up for that.

The Jews have made an appointment to try and have diplomatic relations with the Vatican again. So there's nothing new under the sun. What were the problems with the Jews back before the time of Christ? *They made an alliance with the Romans!* Who were the ones who made the alliance with the Romans? *It was the Pharisees!* The Pharisees came back and nearly did in the Sadducees. Then a little while later the Sadducees came back and, as revenge and got almost all the Pharisees again. Then they remade the alliance again with Rome. So, they're going through the same thing again.

"...practicing sorcery in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria..." (v 9). That is *hypnotize* them as it were, and there's such a thing as 'mass hypnotism' and it's working, brethren!

Mass hypnotism is working today; all you have to do is just have an election. Weren't they 'mass hypnotized' with Ross Perot, running out to follow a man because he said certain key words, and he never stated what he was going to do, how he was going to do it, when he was going to do it and so forth. This world is getting setup for a deception again!

"...proclaiming himself to be some great one" (v 9). What is it that people are looking for? This whole world is on the *welfare mentality*; which is '*he made me do it.*' You're not responsible for yourself and what you need is a strong leader to take the responsibility.

A lot of people are angry at Bush (#1) because they say he caused all the problems. He caused some of them. And you look at Congress and all Congress did is cater to the whims of the people. And all the people did was say, 'you take care of me.' And all the people said, 'Well, you've got to do this for me'; 'you've got to do that for me'; and 'if you want my vote you'd better do it.' So, they did it.

This morning I went in to get a cup of coffee

on my way up here and as I was coming out there was a young girl with a friend of hers and two young men, and she said, 'Oh, I want to get pregnant; I want to have a baby.' I came so close to turning around and saying, 'Are you married? Are you going to be married?' And once she has the baby, what does she do? She's runs to the government and says, 'Oh, take care of me. They can solve the problem very quickly by saying, 'Who told you to have a baby?'

That sounds like the answer of Gen. 3. We're all mesmerized! We're looking for a great leader again. What is the thing that's going to bring the 'great leader' on the scene that people will follow? What do you think it's going to be? *Jesus said, 'An evil and adulteress generation seeks after a sign—a miracle.'* That's what people are wanting. That's exactly what Simon Magus was doing.

Verse 10: "To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God.'.... [He was doing miracles] ...Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip, who was preaching the Gospel—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ—they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself also believed; and after being baptized, he steadfastly continued with Philip; and as he beheld *the* signs and great works of power *that were* being done, he was amazed" (vs 10-13).

"Now, when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them; who, after coming down *to Samaria*, prayed for them, that they might receive *the* Holy Spirit; for as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the* Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money, saying, 'Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.' But Peter said to him, 'May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money'" (vs 14-20).

I'm sure that Simon Magus went out and he started all of his own religion saying, 'I was baptized.' Has that happened before? *Yes!* Have we seen that happen today? *Yes!* Happening again!

In Acts 13 we find another thrust of the problem. So, we have the pagan problem over here. The pagan branch of the Church started with Simon Magus and ended up with the Catholic Church. Here's another part that joined it. Most of these

Jews—who were the problems within the New Testament Church—were in Asia Minor; were the Jews who were from Alexandria. Then you also had the problems of the Jews from Jerusalem. You had both. Here’s an external Jewish problem:

Acts 13:4: “So then, after being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed away to Cyprus. And when they came to Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they also had John *as* an assistant. And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-jesus [the son of Jesus]” (vs 4-6).

Do we still have the same thing today? The *holy book, holy blood, holy grail* is based upon the lie that Jesus had relations with Mary Magdalene and she had a baby. And he is the one of the royal line coming down to the one who’s going to be the world-ruling leader. So, here’s one, the ‘son of Jesus.’

Verse 7: “He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who called Barnabas and Saul to *him*, desiring to hear the Word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so was his name interpreted) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith.... [we have exactly the same problem today] ...But Saul, who *was* also *called* Paul, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him, *and* said, ‘O full of all guile and all craftiness, *you* son of the devil *and* enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of *the* Lord?’” (vs 7-10).

That’s exactly what is happening today. People are twisting and turning and perverting and changing and creating doctrines that don’t come out of the Bible.

People have asked me: What do you think of the *New King James*? What do you think of the *New International Version*? What do you think of this Bible and that Bible and so forth? I still have my *King James*. I’ve got a pamphlet showing that there are at least—just in the New Testament alone—600 places that have been ‘x’-ed out or removed or taken away out of the *New International Version* and *Revised Standard* and so forth. I’ve always used this *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry, because he used what is called *The Received Text*—which is the proper Greek.

Here they are perverting the right ways of the Lord. How do they pervert it? How are the right ways of the Lord perverted? *Disbelief!* Let’s look at some Scriptures that show how they do it. A false ‘Christian’ religion will use, as the basis or claim as a the basis, for their faith the Word of God, the

Bible! What happens? How can you, out of the same Bible, get 200 denominations of the Church of God and 400 denominations of the Protestants? That’s really the question! It’s confronting a lot of people with problems and difficulties today.

This was going on in the days of Paul. What did Paul say in 2-Thess. 2, which was the second epistle that he wrote? He said, ‘The mystery of iniquity does already work; it was already working with Simon Magus and Elymas the false prophet.

2-Corinthians 2:17: “For we are not like the many, **who for their own profit are corrupting the Word of God...**” That’s why there are so many different denominations of Protestants, and so many denominations of the Church of God.

- Does God allow people to do that? *Well, obviously, He does because He hasn’t stopped them!*
- Why does God allow that?

I mean, when we’re victimized by it, we don’t like it.

- Why did God allow that? *Because we all have to choose!*
- What is one of the first warnings that Jesus gave? *Beware of false prophets (Matt. 7).*

“...but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ” (v 17).

2-Corinthians 4:1: “Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully... [How can you handle the Word of God ‘deceitfully’? *By making it say things that it doesn’t say!*] ...but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God” (vs 1-2).

Here’s how all of these false doctrines come about, 2-Peter 3:14: “For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things... [all the things concerning the Kingdom of God] ...be diligent, so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.” Notice what comes right after that. We have to be diligent for it because we’re gong to be assaulted on every side.

Verse 15: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the **ignorant...**” (vs 15-16). A lot of false doctrines come from people who think they know and don’t! They’re unlearned!

“...and **unstable...**” (v 16). Just go from every wind of doctrine that comes along and trying something new. Notice how they do the other Scriptures to their own destruction:

“...are twisting *and distorting* as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (v 16). That’s exactly what has happened concerning the Holy Days, concerning all these things.

Let’s come down and look at a couple of things that Jesus said concerning the Scriptures. What did Jesus say concerning the Scriptures? What is a very basic Scripture that Jesus said?

(go to the next track)

Matthew 5:17: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.” Let me give you a good example: You have a bottle that is half full, if you’re going to fill it full, what do you do? You take a baseball bat and destroy it! Is that not right? *NO!* You put more water into it to fill it full. The word ‘fulfill’ does not mean *to abolish!* It means to fulfill.

Verse 18: “For truly I say to you...[which means *amen*—he’s speaking on Himself] ...until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law **until everything has been fulfilled.**” That tells us what Jesus thought.

Not only is this a declaration, but this is also a prophecy. Not only is this showing what the current problem was then but a prophecy for our time:

2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come... [read your newspaper] ...for men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (vs 1-4). That’s what we have today. I don’t have to expound or expand that; just read your newspaper.

Verse 5: “Having an outward appearance of Godliness... [oh yes, everybody’s got their religion; we have so many around now it’s incredible] ...but denying the power of *true* Godliness. But *as for you*, turn away from *all* these. For from *men such as* these come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed *gullible* women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust. *They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* Truth” (vs 5-7). That’s what happens. They never

know.

- Has sex education solved the problems of sex?
- *No! It’s made it worse!*
- Has the study of the Bible made them believe more of the Bible?
- *No! It’s made them believe less of the Bible because they don’t study in faith and they don’t believe it.*
- Has understanding more about the human body led to longer life?
- *No!*
- Has understanding more about the things in the universe given us an understanding more about the universe than we understood before?
- *No!*

Verse 8: “Now, just as Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, in the same manner also these are *brazenly standing against the Truth...*” Resist the Word of God! They *resist the Truth*, which is the Word of God

“...*they are* men of depraved minds, reprobate in respect to the faith. But they will proceed no further, because their folly will become clearly evident to everyone, just as theirs also was. But you have closely followed my doctrine, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions *and* sufferings—such as happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, *and* in Lystra. *You know* what sort of persecutions I endured; and the Lord delivered me out of them all” (vs 8-11).

We’re that way in the world now. God has got to deliver us out of all of these problems and difficulties—doctrinal and otherwise.

Verse 12: “And indeed, everyone who desires to live Godly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted. But wicked men and imposters **shall become worse and worse...** [they just twist, turn and connive] ...deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*” (vs 12-13).

What is our solution? Verse 14: “But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings...” (vs 14-15)—which is the only place that tells us about the Holy Days.

When we come to the New Testament, they were being kept as a matter of course, and not everything that we are to do has to be absolutely repeated in the New Testament to make it something that we should do. Jesus Christ and salvation is based on the Holy Scriptures through Christ; not that Christ came and did away with the commandments

and the laws.

“...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 15-17).

2-Timothy 4:1: “I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season...” (vs 1-2). When are the Holy Days to be kept? *In season!*

“...convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of teachers...*” (vs 2-3)—because they have ‘itching ears’ wanting something new.

“...having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths” (vs 3-4). That is exactly what is happening. So, it’s after *their own* lusts. What are these lusts? *These are the natural feelings that people have!* We can put it this way: a need, a desire that seems natural.

Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh...” (vs 1-3)—the desires of the flesh: *give me some of that old fashioned unclean food.*

“...doing the things willed by the flesh...” (v 3). You know it’s really much more fun going to the beach on the Sabbath because everyone is there.

“...and by the mind...” (v 3). The mind will lust after new doctrine. The mind, being carnal, will twist and turn the doctrine.

“...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest *of the world*” (v 3). Let’s see exactly how these things come about. Laodiceanism is allowing the world into your life so much that the world interferes with God. We have to live in the world, but we’re not to be *of* the world.

1-John 2:15: “Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of 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” (vs 15-16). What are they saying? *We’re doing the will of God!* But they aren’t!

Verse 3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone **is keeping His Word...**” (vs 3-5). You want to argue about commandments? *Let’s argue about words!* What is that going to get you? *It’s going to get you right down to your attitude!*

This ties right in with the prophecy in Malachi 4:1: “‘For behold, the day is coming, burning like a consuming oven; and all the proud, and every doer of wickedness, shall be stubble. And the day that comes shall burn them up,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and will leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be in His wings. And you shall go out and grow up like calves of the stall.... [*well taken care of*] ...And you shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I *am* preparing,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Remember the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments. Behold, I *will* send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD’” (vs 1-5).

Is God going to hold us to the Law of Moses? *Yes, He is!* There’s a place in the New Testament where the Law of Moses then refers specifically to the sacrifices and not all the first five books. There’s a warning!

Col. 2—first of all, let’s understand this: The Colossians were not Jews. The Colossians were Gentiles. Everything he is referring to here is not referring to Jewish vs Christian, but it is referring to pagan vs Christian. It is referring to manmade religion vs the Christianity of Christ. Have the pagans taken the Christianity of Christ and philosophized it away to where then you don’t have to do the things of God? In philosophizing it away, what do they say? *The commandments and the Holy Days are not important!* They say *there is more to religion than Christ!* This becomes very, very important for us to understand:

Colossians 2:1: “Now I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and *for* those in Laodicea...” Isn’t it interesting: What did Paul say concerning this letter to the Colossians?

- *if you believe* in the history of the Church, which I do
- *if you believe* in the seven eras in the



historical projection in Rev. 2 & 3 of the seven churches, which I do

- *if you believe* in the last era or the last historical projection of the Church is Laodicea, which I do

I believe that; with that in mind:

Colossians 4:16: “After you have read the epistle, **see that it also is read in the Church of the Laodiceans...**”—which then is a prophecy for us; a prophecy for the Laodicean time.

- What is the problem that the Laodiceans had? *They didn’t need Christ!*
- What is another problem that they had? *They were wise, they were rich!*
- What was the doctrinal assault that came against them? *Philosophy!*

“...and that you also read the one from Laodicea.” We don’t have that epistle.

Colossians 2:1 is a key thing that proves that we ought to keep the Holy Days of God: “...for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh; that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God... [the whole plan of God] ...and of *the* Father, and of Christ; in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (vs 1-3). Because *new agers* are coming along and saying:

- we have new wisdom
- we have new knowledge
- we have new understanding
- we don’t need Christ
- you are Christ
- you’re part of the creation of God
- you are God
- you are Christ
- you don’t have repent
- just think good thoughts

That’s the same philosophy that we’re fighting today.

Verse 4: “Now this I say so that no one may **deceive you by persuasive speech.**” They sound good! When Bill Clinton was giving his ‘new covenant’ speech, everyone was out there in tears. When ministers come along and give good sounding speeches and sermons and end up saying, ‘Brethren, God knows this is a burden upon you; you don’t need to keep the Holy Days anymore,’ isn’t that the same reason they use with the Sabbath? ‘Oh well, everybody goes to church on Sunday.’ How do they deceive? *Using the Scriptures to twist and turn, and wrest and create new doctrine!*

Verse 5: “For though I am indeed absent in

the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him” (vs 5-6). Whatever they taught them to do, they were to walk in it.

Verse 7: “Being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving” (vs 4-7) This is all a positive statement stating what you have in Christ.

Did the apostles keep the Holy Days? *Yes!* Did they keep the Sabbath? *Yes!* There was no question about any of those things. The questions concerned *circumcision* and *animal sacrifices* from the Jewish side. The questions concerning *philosophy, pagan religions, worship of angels* came from the pagan side. This is what we’re dealing with here. So, if they were taught to keep the Holy Days—which they were—then the assault that is coming against them was to take them away from that; to take them away from following the laws of clean and unclean food; to take them away from the Holy Days.

Verse 8: “Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Verse 18—this continues the thought: “Do not allow anyone to defraud... [beguile or trick] ...you of the prize *by* doing *his* will in self-abasement... [fasting, will-worshipping, beat the flesh into submission] ...and *the* worship of angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind.”

Brethren, that is the *New Age* religion today. They have ‘spirit channelers’; they teach children in the ‘state schools’ today to get in touch with those ‘spirit guides.’ All this *New Age* ‘religion’ is getting right into that. *The same thing!* So, it’s profound that this book of Colossians was for the Laodiceans! What do we have? *The same problems today in the Laodicean time of the Church—right?*

Verse 19: “And not holding fast to the Head... [that’s what happens, they’re not looking to Christ] ...from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God. Therefore, if you have **died together with Christ...**” (vs 19-20).

What does “...died together *with* Christ...” mean? *Baptism, raised out the watery grave!*

- *you’re dead to the world*
- *you’re dead to yourself*
- *you’re dead to Satan*

- *you're dead to the world*

That's **IF** you are dead with Christ.

"...from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves to *the decrees of men* as if you were living in *the world*?" (v 20). These are not the ordinances of God. These are the ordinances of the world.

Verse 21: "*They say, 'You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!'*" What is one of the things that *New Age* 'religion' is bringing into vogue again today? *Vegetarianism!*

1-Timothy 4:1: "Now, the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith..."—which they are doing;

- they are leaving the faith
- they are giving up the faith
- they are giving up Christ
- they are giving up God
- they are giving up all the commandment and everything

Why?

"...and shall follow **deceiving** spirits and doctrines of demons.... [that is what this whole *New Age* thing is about] ...Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*; forbidding to marry; and *commanding* to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, even by those who know the Truth" (vs 1-3). *Vegetarianism! Meditating! Yoga!*

All of this is the philosophy of men—Eastern Oriental 'religion.' **Those are the rudiments of the world!** There's even a group now that says that if you think the right thoughts you won't die! I tell you what, everyone on their death-bed is wishing and praying they won't die—right? I'm going to shock you. Guess how many followers they have worldwide? *30,000!* Think of it! Will people follow these 'doctrines of demons'? All you have to do, folks, is have the right thought and you can live forever. What did Jesus say? *'Take no thought for your life, for you can't make one hair white or black; you can't add one cubit to your stature by taking thought thereof.'* Incredible!

Colossians 2:21—these are the rudiments of the world: "*They say, 'You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!'*" The use of all such things leads to corruption, according to the commandments and doctrines of men" (vs 21-22)—which come from *philosophy*:

Verse 8: "Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ."

Verse 23: "Which indeed have an outward appearance of wisdom..."—will-worship: the power of the mind, that's what it is; think yourself to eternal life!

I mean, come on! *Never happen!* You get stuck in some of these things, you wish you could think your way out of it, but sometimes you can't—let alone make yourself live forever. All of my good thinking, all of my desiring not to put on weight didn't stop it—did it? *No!* For those of you have the opposite problem—you're thin and you wish you could gain weight—all of your thinking won't put it on. I have the kind of flesh, I have to beat it, I have to pound it, I have to exercise it, I have to grunt, I have to groan, I have to sweat and strain and slave and I lose a little. So, that's the way it is!

All of it's going to perish in the using! Those of you who think that fat people are that way because they indulge; some people are that way because of heredity! Don't be too quick to condemn if you are thin, and don't be too quick to be envious if you are fat. Just do the best you can. If you have to pound it and beat it to keep it down to a reasonable roar then do that. If you don't have to, then don't do that. But don't have the will-worship like this. That's what it's talking about.

"...in voluntary worship of *angels*, and self-abasement, and unsparing treatment of *the* body... [Oh yes, he's humble; look what he's done!] ...not in any respect to the satisfying of *the needs* of the flesh" (v 23)—not in any way will it do away with the lust of the flesh.

We are not dealing with Jewish laws. We are dealing with pagan traditions, pagan philosophies. Were there Jews who were pagans? *Yes, plenty of them!* What I want us to do in this is have the proper spiritual and mental background and underpinning or undergirding of the Scriptures to understand what I'm going to bring next time about the Holy Days.

Verse 8: "Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ." That is exactly what is happening to the Churches of God today. These philosophies of religion and doctrine are coming in.

Verse 9: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him... [You don't need Buddha, Hindu, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim or New Age] ...Who is the Head of all principality and power" (vs 9-10). Jesus is above all of these demons and spirits and things that are leading people astray.

Verse 11: "In Whom you have also been

circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands... [these people weren't circumcised in the flesh; they were not Jews, but Gentiles] ...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"—which then is receiving the Holy Spirit to then take away the veil that's on your mind; take away the hardness that is on your mind.

Verse 12: "Having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh..." (vs 12-13). There you go, right there.

They were not circumcised in the flesh; can't be any plainer. These were not Jews who were being told you no longer have to keep the Holy Days, which is the contention of most philosophical religious people when they come and read Col. 2. They say, 'He's saying don't keep the Jewish days.' Nothing to do with it. He's actually saying, 'Keep the days of God.'

"...He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us..." (vs 13-14). That is: *touch not, taste not, handle not* the commandments of men and they're pagan religion, "...which was contrary to us..."

"...and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (v 14). Why? *Because all of those things represented sin!* Never were the Ten Commandments nailed to the cross. Never were the Holy Days nailed to the cross.

Verse 15: "After stripping the principalities and the powers, He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it." That is in His life, His death, His crucifixion and resurrection. Why should people go after all this *New Age* stuff, brethren? You think about it! When there's Christ, when there's God the Father, why should they go back to all these weak, rudiments of the world? *It's amazing!*

Here comes the great controversy; here is the key Scripture, v 16: "Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you..." Let's tie all these together:

- v 4—let no man deceive you with enticing words
- v 8—let no man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceits
- v 18—let no man beguile you
- v 16—let no man judge you
  - ✓ How? *By their standards!*
  - ✓ What were their standards? *Pagan religion!*

If these Colossians were keeping Christmas, Easter and New Years they would not be judged. But if they gave those things up, they would immediately be judged—isn't that correct? When you kept Christmas, if you did, did any of the Christmas-keepers criticize you for keeping Christmas? *No!*

It's just like when I determined in my mind that I was going to keep the Sabbath, I would work sometimes 16 hours a day—one restaurant in the morning, one in the afternoon or the midnight shift seven days a week. So, I came to my boss and I said I have to have off from Friday night to Saturday night. I can't work at that time. He looked at me and said, 'Why, Fred?' I said, 'Because of my religion.' He looked at me just dumfounded and said, 'When did you get religious?' I said, 'If you can't do it, tell me. I'm going to be fair and give you two weeks to work it out.'

I wasn't judged for keeping the Sabbath until I kept it. You ask time off to go to the Feast of Tabernacles and you say *I need this time off*. 'Where are you going?' *It's a religious convention*—you don't want to lay it on them all at once because they won't understand it. *It's an 8-day convention*. 'What Church do you go to?' You're being judged all the time by these things. "...do not allow anyone to judge you..." Then you finally blurt it out and say *the Bible says we ought to keep the Feast of Tabernacles*. 'The what?'

Now, if you went up and said, 'Look, I'd like the day off before Christmas and the day after Christmas.' *That's fine, have wonderful time*. You're not judged; likewise, with these pagans here. They quit Christmas, they quit Easter, they quit all of this stuff just like we did. What were they doing? *Keeping the Sabbath, Holy Days, changing their eating habits and so forth*. That's why they were being judged.

Verse 16: "Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a festival, or new moon, or *the Sabbaths*."

- Why? Is it their right to judge you?
- Who is our Judge? *Christ!*
- *No, it's not their right to judge you!*

Verse 17: "Which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but the body of Christ." And that seems like kind of an obtuse statement, but the body is of Christ. If you have a *King James Version* you will see that the word 'is' has been printed in italics and is inserted to clarify it, but it doesn't—it confuses it. So, the whole thing should read:

Verse 16: "Do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a festival,

or new moon, or *the* Sabbaths, which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but **the body of Christ**" (vs 16-17).

How could they judge them concerning a Holy Day if they weren't keeping them? How could they—as former pagans, Gentiles, having nothing to do with the Jews—be judged for keeping the Holy Days if the Jews would look and say that in order to follow the Scriptures you have to keep the Holy Days? It wasn't Jews judging Gentiles. It was Gentiles judging *converted* Gentiles while they were keeping these things. Same exact thing we have today. 'Why don't you keep Christmas?'

Let me give you the paraphrase that I did on this:

Consequently [therefore: because of all that I have said coming up to this point], in the light of this, do not let anyone judge you...

What does 'judging' mean? *To call into account; to assume sensorial power over you; to criticize you—all of those things. Have we had those against us? Yes, we have!*

...in what you eat or what you drink or in regard to or on account of a Holy Day or a new moon, or the Sabbaths... [that's plural is the weekly, ongoing Sabbaths] ...which things are a foreshadowing...

It's interesting, because that is a present tense participle in the Greek. These things are a 'foreshadowing'—which then can be an advanced sign.

...of the things which are coming...

- What things are coming?
- What do the Holy Days picture for us?
- *The events according to the plan of God!*
- What do these Holy Days bring us?

*A foretaste of the coming events in God's plan!*

- Don't they encourage us, inspire us and uplift us?

*Yes, indeed!*

- Aren't those the very powerful vehicles—the Holy Days and the Sabbath—**which keep us out of the world**, though we live in the world, so that we are not OF the world?

*with*

- ✓ their philosophy
- ✓ their religion
- ✓ their way of doing things

"...but, the body of Christ" (v 17). There are several things that could mean:

- Don't let anyone judge but the body of Christ—the Church.

- Through Christ that the meaning of all of these things are understood.

*or*

The meaning and reality of observing these things is found in the body of Christ.

In other words, in the Church and the observing of these things in the Church, you're going to find the meaning and reality of *the proper eating, drinking, keeping of the Holy Day or new moon or the Sabbath*. Now, if we were close enough together, I would like to have what the Bible shows as a social once a month on the new moon. That would be fine. It's not a Holy Day. It is not a religious gathering. If we could, and there were enough of us to get together, that would be fine. They were doing it then.

The key important thing here is the Sabbath and the Holy Days. Those things we can come together with because those are Holy convocations. Whereas, the new moon is not a Holy convocation.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 13:8, 15
- 2) Revelation 2:2-5
- 3) Acts 8:9-20
- 4) Acts 13:4-10
- 5) 2 Corinthians 2:17
- 6) 2 Corinthians 4:1-2
- 7) 2 Peter 3:14-16
- 8) Matthew 5:17-18
- 9) 2 Timothy 3:1-17
- 10) 2 Timothy 4:1-4
- 11) Ephesians 2:2-3
- 12) 1 John 2:15-16. 3-5
- 13) Malachi 4:1-5
- 14) Colossians 2:1
- 15) Colossians 4:16
- 16) Colossians 2:1-8, 18-21
- 17) 1 Timothy 4:1-3
- 18) Colossians 2:21-22, 8, 23, 8-17

Scriptures referenced:

- Jeremiah 8
- Genesis 3
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- Matthew 7

Also referenced:

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
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- *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*  
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