

Epistle of First Peter X

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We're into 1-Peter 3:8, so I'm going to read vs 8-12, and then we'll go back and study these and we're going to make some comparisons. First of all, I want you to notice the absence of something that's very, very important to be missing, and that is Peter laid no claim to being the head honcho, the pope or the leading apostle. If he would have, this would have been the perfect place to do so, in the book of 1-Peter.

1-Peter 3:8: "Now, *this is* the goal... [everything that he has said up to this point, going back to chapter one and verse one, all the way down through chapter three and verse seven.] ...all of you be of one mind, sympathizing, loving and brethren, compassionate *and* friendly, not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you should inherit a blessing" (vs 8-9). Of course, most people don't even understand what the blessing of eternal life is all about—and it's so fantastic and it's so great that it's incredible.

Verse 10: "For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days... [Everyone wants that—right?] ...let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it; because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication. But the face of the Lord is against those who are practicing evil" (vs 10-12).

Now, let's go back, and as we've done before, let's take and study this in depth; and let's see how much here is really the same preaching that Jesus did; that Paul did. We have four things in v 8:

I. **All of you be of one mind.**

- Does this mean we've become brainwashed? *No!*
- Does this mean we have all the same thoughts? *No!*

This means to be one-minded toward seeking Christ—that's what it means. One-minded to seeking Christ.

Philippians 2:5—we will see how this ties exactly right in with it; and this is what we're doing in these studies of the General Epistles, because generally most people look upon them as really not very substantive, because after all they're just real short ones, and after all they're put way back toward the end of the New Testament, so they can't be very important. But they are! Here's the kind of mind that we are to have.

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus... [This then is the mind of humility] ...Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; And being found in *the* manner of man..." (vs 5-8).

Showing that God came down and shared the whole human experience as a human being. Of course then, in *The Christian Passover* book I go into that in great depth and detail to show what kind flesh, what kind of human existence it was that Jesus took upon Himself. We won't get into that very deeply today, but this is the kind of mind that we are to have.

II. **"Sympathizing"**—that means have sympathy and understanding. Come back to Philippians 2:1, and tie that in and see how it is exactly the same thing. We have:

- *sympathizing*
- *loving the brethren*
- *compassionate*
- *friendly*

"Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind... [there it is] ...having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others" (vs 1-4). And that leads up to v 5: "Let this mind be in you..." So that's what it's talking about.

We have Satan's counterfeit: You all become robots over here and you all join this organization over here and you follow your leader right on to death. We've got another case, it looks like, supposedly, of Jim Jones down there in Waco, Texas. Boy, I tell you, there are a lot of things that raises huge question marks in my mind. Why did they bring out the troops against them? Why did they storm it? Why did they shoot? What was going on? In America you have the right to be an idiot. But what it's doing, it's setting people up to getting use to the Federal Government coming after fringe, so-called 'religious' groups—right? So, maybe some caused them to do what they're doing, but then, on the other hand, once people get used to this kind of thing, then it's so much easier to go after other people. That's what it's setting up.

I wondered, years ago, living in America, how could this happen? Living in this world, how could it happen? It talks about all the things that are going on, Matthew 24:4-9: “Then Jesus answered *and* said to them... [when they asked when was He returning] ...‘Be on guard, so that no one deceives you. For many shall come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ’...” (vs 4-5).

There are going to be all kinds of different people saying ‘Christ is Christ’; and this fellow down there, did he say he was Christ? He said he was Christ. We had someone else saying he was the son of God—Yahweh Ben Yahweh. We’ve had someone else say something else, so you’ve got all of these things.

“...and they shall deceive many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let *these things* disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these things* take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different places*” (vs 5-7). We had all of these this year—right? *Yes, indeed!* Last year and the year before and we’ll have them for the year to come—right? *Yes!*

Verse 8: “Now, all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake” (vs 8-9). How is it that they’re going to kill Christians? ***Now I know!*** It will be very easy when the time comes. You look back and you think what happened with some of these back in history, and all of the people who were killed for their religious beliefs.

Verse 10: “And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another...” Wow! It’s going to be a wild time to try and find your way around in this world. That’s just the way it is.

It’s going to happen. That’s why we as Christians are not to be that way. That’s why if you hear someone say ‘Hey, brethren, we need to get guns and we need to protect ourselves and we need to be on guard against these people, and when they come shoot them.’ ***That’s the opposite of what Christ said. That’s the opposite of the teachings of the Bible.***

We are to be, as He says here in 1-Peter 3:8: “...be of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate *and* friendly, not rendering evil for evil... [that’s real hard to do!] ...or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you should inherit a blessing” (vs 8-9).

Let’s compare this with Romans 12, and then

we will compare this with Luke 6, where we find that Jesus was preaching the same thing. If you would like to do this for a Bible study, you take Rom. 12 and you kind of lay out all the verses and then go back into the book of Proverbs and you can probably get all the Proverbs there and add right to it, because that’s the foundations where a lot of this came from.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy *and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service...” Here’s what men tend to do, which is probably what happened in Waco, TX. When a person says to God, ‘All right, you have my whole life. I dedicate my life to You: baptized, received God’s Holy Spirit, so forth.’ Then a man steps in and puts himself between the individual and God, and leverages that dedication to himself. Then the man says ‘follow me’ under all costs. *No!* We’re to follow Christ under all costs.

“...which is your spiritual service. **Do not conform yourselves to this world...** [that’s the thing that is most difficult, because you’ve got to live in it] ...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God” (vs 1-2). That’s what it has to be. That’s exactly what it has to be. Can’t be anything other than that.

Verse 9: “*Let love be* without [dissimulation] hypocrisy...” Very clear: no cliques; no parties; none of that. It also means that sometimes you’re nice to a person to their face and then you turn around and behind their back you really get them. You have dissimulated. Doesn’t mean that you have a show of love but that you have love with dissimulation.

“...abhorring that which is evil *and* cleaving to that which is good.... [notice how this follows right along with 1-Peter 3—if you lay both chapters side-by-side.] ...*Be* kindly affectioned toward one another in brotherly love. *Let* each esteem the other more highly than himself” (vs 9-10). That’s what the whole situation with the people of God has to be. And the most difficult thing is when people are beat up and abused in the name of Christ. That is the most difficult thing.

Verse 11: “*Be* not slack in business. *Be* fervent in spirit. *Be* timely in serving. *Be* rejoicing in hope. *Be* patient in tribulation. *Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer” (vs 11-12). You can take each one of these and almost make a sermon for each one of these as we’re going along. But that’s not the purpose what we’re doing here today.

Verse 13: “Contribute to the needs of the saints, *and* strive to be hospitable. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse” (vs 13-14).

Isn't that what he just said back here in 1-Peter 3:9: 'not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead be blessing.'

Verse 15: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep; *be* of the same mind toward one another..." (vs 15-16). Identical Gospel, there's no difference between what Peter preached, what Paul preached and, and we'll see in just a minute, what Christ preached.

"...Do not set your mind on high ambitions; rather, be accommodating with those of low estate. Do not be wise in your own eyes.... [I've got that nice and underlined in red as a message to me.] ...Do not render to anyone evil for evil... [there it is, identical, almost word for word] ...*but* be prepared to do what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, as much as is your part, be at peace with all men.... [there are the instructions right there] ...Beloved, do not avenge yourselves; rather, leave *this* to *God's* wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense,' says *the* Lord" (vs 16-19). In other words, *get out of the way! Don't get in the middle of it.*

This whole thing down at Waco could have been avoided if they just would have said, 'Oh, I understand that you think that we're some sort of subversive group. Why don't you come on in and have dinner with us.' There are other things involved like a twelve-year-old wife and polygamy and things like that. You see how these things get setup? But you see the contrast in true Christianity here in Rom. 12, and then you go down and you start looking at the thing down there in Waco, TX, and you say, 'Hey, that can't be Christianity.' But yet, they call themselves Dravidians—don't they? And they keep the Sabbath—don't they? Wow! Everyone who keeps the Sabbath now is in the same category—right? That's the way the world looks at it.

"...for it is written, "'Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense," says *the* Lord.' Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in doing this you will be heaping coals of fire on his head.... [That is not literally 'coals of fire.' That is figuratively speaking. But what you're going to do is put it in such a situation that how can he continue to condemn you if you then are not retaliatory against him. Isn't that something!] (Here's the finality of it): ...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (vs 19-21).

Now, let's compare—we've already done 1-Peter, Rom. 12—Luke, the sixth chapter; let's see how that fits right in. Luke 6 is a reduced, or a summary of Matt. 5, 6 & 7. But I want you to see how that, consistently, Christ, Peter, Paul, the whole New Testament constantly teaches the same thing. That's what's important here.

Luke 6:20: "And He lifted up His eyes upon His disciples *and* said, 'Blessed *are* you, the poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed *are* those who hunger now, for you shall be filled.... [that's hungering and thirsting for righteousness. And you shall be filled—filled with the Word of God.] ...Blessed *are* those who weep now, for you shall laugh" (vs 20-21).

Imagine what it's going to be like for all of those who really had to suffer and die for Christ; and their last thought was whatever, the last minute before they died, then BANG! here comes the resurrection. Now they have a new body; they have a glorified body; and they're in the full joy of the Lord. And don't you think that they're going to be, as it were here, laughing! Laughing with joy and happiness. That's not laughing back in sarcasm toward them.

Verse 22: "Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall cut you off, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as wicked, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy... [I still haven't come to that position, yet, brethren; have a long way to go before I get to that. But keep this in mind]: ...for behold, great *is* your reward in heaven... [and Christ is going to bring it with Him when He returns.] ...for their fathers did these same things to the prophets. But woe to you, the rich, for you are receiving your consolation! Woe to you who have been filled, for you shall hunger! Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep! Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you! For their fathers did these same things to the false prophets" (vs 22-26).

I can't help but think of the political scene that's going on. Everyone saying how great it is, and WOW! It's going to be bad!

Verse 27: "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, *and* do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who despitefully use you" (vs 27-28). Completely different attitude—right? *Yes, indeed!*

So, we can conclude from the Waco event here, that even though certain trappings of Christianity are hanging on this, they are not Christians because they are not doing this. ***They are not doing this!***

Verse 29: "If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other *cheek* also... [I've heard people say, 'and yeah, when they hit the other one you turn around and you punch them in the gut.' Doesn't say that! *Does not* say that!] ...and if anyone takes your cloak, do not forbid your coat also.... [that might save you from getting killed in today's world.] ...Give to everyone who asks you; and if anyone takes what *is* yours, do not ask *for* it

back” (vs 29-30). That is if you give to someone and they need it, you don’t come back and say, ‘Hey, well bring it back.’ Now, if it’s your lawnmower or something that you loan out, that’s a different story.

My wife was mad at me a couple of years ago because I loaned out our roto-tiller. And I didn’t know, but the guy brought it back with a blown head. Now what does the Bible say? He was supposed to be a Christian, a fellow brother, supposedly. What are you supposed to do in that case? *Fix it!* And if he can’t fix it, say ‘Hey, it blew, I’m sorry, I don’t have any money’ and then that way I could say, ‘Well, since you don’t have any money I’m sorry it blew, maybe it would have blown on me, so I’ll take care of it.’ At least I would have had the opportunity. That would have ‘saved my neck from the noose.’

Verse 31: “And exactly as you would have men do to you, you do the same to them also. But if you love *only* those who love you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good *only* to those who are doing good to you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive, what praise is it to you? For even sinners lend to sinners... [and charge high interest, too—exorbitant rates] ...that they may receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good...” (vs 31-35).

Here is the true nitty-gritty Christianity. Yes, doctrine is important, absolutely! Yes, commandment-keeping is important, absolutely! But here is the true attitude. Here’s the true conversion. Here are the true teachings—right here. Jesus taught it, Peter taught it, and Paul taught it; and we saw that James taught it. When we get to John we will see that John taught it. As a matter of fact, the whole New Testament teaches it.

“...and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be *the* children of the Highest; for He is good to the unthankful and *the* wicked” (v 35). Why? *Hoping that they would repent*, because as we have seen in the past, God is interested that they truly repent.

What would you do then if someone broke in your house and killed one of your children? What should you do? *Well, you still have the courts that you have to go through in that particular situation. It would be very difficult.* However, I will have to say this: In my experience with Christians, I know no one who is a true Christian who has ever had anyone break in a house and kill their children. So that’s always a possibility, but God also protects us and God also has the angels about you and things like this. Could it happen? *Yes, it could happen!* Theoretically, many different things could happen.

And you never know until those things take place. If you get ripped off with a big sum of money, you’re going to be upset—really, *really, really* upset!—or if someone really does you in; or if you got a boss that’s terrible to work with. You still have to be a Christian. You still do the best you can. It may not necessarily be easy. But that’s what we’re to do.

God will take care of the one. And I can’t help but thinking of the Apostle Paul who helped kill Christians before he was converted. Now that’s a tough one to do. Would be most difficult, wouldn’t it, for you to sit at Paul’s feet if he killed one of your children. That would be most difficult. So within the scope of all of these things, yes, this is what we need to be doing. God eventually is going to take care of every one of these things.

To show you how men really get themselves in a pickle, just take on the thing concerning abortion. When men decided that a new, conceived human being is “unviable tissue mass” and is really not a person until it’s born and takes it’s first breath—now we’ve got this example in New York City. I don’t know how she never knew it. Is it possible for a woman to be eight months pregnant and not know it? Is it really? I can’t believe it, but she said she didn’t know it. I heard it three or four times. Wow! Wow!

I’ve heard of this one woman who was really gigantic and she thought she had a tumor and she went the hospital and gave birth to about a 12-lb. baby. She must have been really tremendous in size not to know that she was pregnant. Doesn’t the baby kick? Can’t you feel the baby kicking? I suppose it’s possible. I’ll have to say all right we’ll give the benefit of doubt; but she went to this doctor to get an abortion at eight months. So then, the doctor botched this thing up and cut off the child’s right arm. Subsequently, the baby was born and it’s alive and now it’s two years old and it’s working it’s way through the courts. And it’s probably going to end up at the Supreme Court.

You see how people get themselves in trouble when they try interfering with God? And try to play God? Now look, all of us, at one time, were an ‘unviable tissue mass.’ But we’re still human beings—right? Now they’re confronted with their own logic. Here’s a two-year-old girl alive, beautiful and fine and she’s missing her right arm. No one asked the question: Why did the mother go and try and have an abortion? If she would have had an abortion nothing would have been in the headlines; but now it’s sensational.

So, it’s going to make it’s way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court’s going to have to decide: When does life begin? I can tell you when life begins: *At the instant of conception.* It’s got to.

If it doesn't then when did you become alive? And most women by time they know they're pregnant, that little, tiny baby at six weeks is fully formed, but it's one inch long. That's it!

It's going to be interesting to follow this. But you have the whole thing here of going through all of these things, trying to compare this kind of thing with how we ought to act as Christians, and then you go out in the world and you're confronted with all of these contradictions, it's almost insane!

Now they have approved the experimentation on fetal tissue. You see the problems you get into? God never intended any of that! But how far has He let man go? Does the sun still rise on the evil and on the good? Does the rain still come on the just and on the unjust? *Yes!* God is going to work it all out in the long run through His plan as depicted in the Holy Days. God *is* God and He's got to know all these things that go on—right?

A lot of people say, 'Why doesn't God come down and do something and stop it?' He's determined in His mind He's not going to. Because it's not yet in His plan to come down and do that. And when He does, it's going to be absolutely fantastic! And when He does, He's going to come with those that are resurrected, because we, brethren, are living by what's here in the Bible now!

Verse 36: "Therefore, you also be compassionate, *even* as your Father is compassionate." I tell you what—this is so true—and I'll just have to tell you, my family (as you know) we're all kind of independent people, every one of us. I've had some pretty stout words back and forth with my own sons. I found this: the more I try and enforce something upon them, the more resistance that is there—right? *Yes!* I have found the Bible works when you try and be understanding and merciful. You know they're not going to be converted. How many of us as parents bring upon our children the standards of converted Christians. Doesn't work because they're not converted! So I have had to say okay Fred, now what are you going to do? Are you going to be loving and merciful? *or* Are you going to stand there and just shake your fist and say this is right and nothing else will work? *or* Are you going to demonstrate and prove it?

I tell you what, it saved me a lot of grief! What happens when you're fighting with your husband or your wife or your children? I'll tell you what happens, your mind is in turmoil all the time. I'll guarantee it. But when you pray for them, and you try to be loving, and when you try to help and really apply yourself to it, then what happens? Can they respond to that? *Yes!*

What if they're just totally cantankerous and don't respond? Well, they found even the people—

these kids on the streets and homeless and everything—what is that they really want? You set aside all their faults and mistakes and everything, what is that they really want? *Want to be accepted and want to be loved!* Isn't that correct? *Yes!*

If God hasn't called people then you accept them and you love them whether they're called or not called, *because that's what we are to do!* Otherwise we've done no different, no different, than a gang of crooks who love each other. A comment was made: It gives them the right to be their own person so they can grow in character. Yes, God has given the freedom of choice to every human being—isn't that correct? *Yes, He has!* And there is no law against stupidity.

We all do stupid things. Aren't you glad you're not alone? Another thing that is true: You can't think for another person. It's impossible! God has given every person life, choice, made us in His image, and unfortunately, we're all sinners. Every one of us! So God has got to call us out of that. And when it comes time for the resurrection I do want to have a talk with Adam and Eve and say, 'Why did you do it?' That I do! But God is greater than Adam and Eve, and God is going to straighten it all out in His time.

We can be thankful that we understand the plan of God to know that those poor, pitiful people, wherever they are in the world, suffering in whatever conditions that they are—whether it's Bosnia, Russia, Africa, India, South America, whatever. And I can't help but thinking every time I see one of these specials on the Mayan Empire—and I've mentioned this before—where it shows row after row after row of skeletons, skulls, stacked one on top of the other. And you think: each one of those were alive one time. And here's this skull, there's another one, and they've dug up thousands of them offered to the gods.

Well, if God is not greater than all the sins of mankind down through history, then God is not God. God is greater and He's going to undo all those things—in His time and in His plan. That's why it's very important that we understand what God is teaching us here.

Let's go back to 1-Peter 3:9, and let's understand a little bit more here. After then we have learned how then not to "...render back evil for evil, or abuse for abuse; but instead *be* blessing..."—even as Jesus did. As I mentioned several times in this series, Jesus said—when they were right in the middle of killing Him—'Father, forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.' Now, you and I, we would say, 'You just wait till I'm resurrected and I'm going to get you.' As human beings that would be our thought, but He didn't.

How can we have the kind of mind and attitude so that we are not following our natural instinct of human nature by rendering back evil for evil or abuse for abuse? Remember that the next time you're on the freeway and stuck! I'll tell you it works, though. Today I was coming up and I was driving along and here was a guy—I was watching and he was moving over on me, and so I just moved over into the next lane and he never saw me—and he looked over at me like...and I just waved to him. Most other people you get something much more different than a wave!

Here is how to keep your mind on the right thing: "...knowing that you were called to this, **that you should inherit a blessing**" (v 9). All right, let's talk a little bit about the reward and the inheritance that God is going to give. There are two things that you're going to inherit:

1. Personal
2. Possessional—what you will possess

Let's look at these now. Here's what you're going to receive *personally*. Let's go to 1-Corinthians 15 first and then we'll go to Philippians 3. And, brethren, there is no way for us to totally comprehend this blessing, except to say spiritually and intellectually we can understand it.

I had an interesting conversation. I went down to pay my insurance the other day and here was this new secretary in there, and when there's a new secretary I always like to tease them a little bit and I said, 'I was sent in here to get my winning lotto ticket of a million dollars, do you have it?' She said, 'No. If I did I'd have to share it with my husband.' I said, 'Well, that's fine.' And she really had a hassled day. Here you walk in and you see someone with this hassled look about 3:30 in the afternoon, and they're just waiting for five to come so they can...And if you're in front of a government building at five, you better get out of the way, because you're going to get trampled on, because the herd is coming out the door.

So anyway, I knew that would get her attention. And she said, 'Boy, time just seems to be going faster than ever before.' I said, 'Well, it's really true. When you stop and think of it, when you're a year old from one year to two years, that's 50% of your whole life—one year is 50% of your life. And when you're three, that one year is one-third of your life. When you are 70—from 70-71—that's one-seventieth of your life; and so time really goes faster—right? *Yes!*

I remember when I was in third grade I thought I'd never get out. And one reason was that I was so sick so much that I had to take it twice. I thought I would never ever get out of the third grade. But I did. That's why when we're kids, all the

distances seem longer and further, and all the time is longer than it really is. And when we get older—and I tell you what, this week went by...and it was gone! It was just flat gone! I got up and I was reading the paper and I felt like Tuesday and it was Thursday, and I said to my wife, 'Is today Wednesday or Tuesday?' She said, 'No, it's Thursday.'

Then I also said to the secretary, I said, 'Now, try this on for size: God has given every one of us a little bit of eternity.' And she said, 'What do you mean?' And I said, 'You can't think of the time when you didn't exist; and you can't think of a time when you won't exist. Even though you know somewhere along the line you may expire.' And isn't that true? *That is sure true!*

We are going to inherit a blessing. Here's a tremendous promise. You are walking about with the assurance of that promise, 1-Corinthians 15:49: "And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust... [Do we have a physical body? *Yes!*] ...we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*... [to be as Christ is] ...Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God..." (vs 49-50). We have an inheritance. It's going to be the Kingdom of God; will be *possessional*. And the *possessional* and the *personal* both come at the same time.

"...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (vs 50-52). That's the blessing we are seeking for, brethren.

We're going to see that that is going to be a body of glory; and it's going to really be something!

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You think about this for a minute. It's going to happen, v 52: "In an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." We'll see what that change will be. And we will see how it's going to be. It's not going to be flitting off to heaven, as many people think. It is going to be a dynamic and fantastic spirit life that God is going to give us.

Verse 53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (vs 53-54). And I personally think that God is going to undo every evil that men have perpetrated to destroy human life. And there's one thing that Satan has perpetrated, and that is the thing concerning

abortion. And I think God is going to undo all of that, too.

Let's look at the personal blessing that we are going to inherit, Philippians 3:20: "But for us, the [conduct or politics] commonwealth of God exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ; Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself" (vs 20-21). That's going to be something! There isn't going to be any more argument about the flesh. The flesh is important as long as we're human beings. But it doesn't count for spirituality. Let's see what that's going to be like.

Let's go to 1-John, the third chapter. This is the *personal blessing* that we're going to inherit. And as we mentioned previously, about at that point where He says that you're going to laugh, you talk about *joy* at that time! That you're going to have a level of existence that you won't have to worry about the aches and pains of getting old. You won't have to worry about getting gray. You won't have to worry about any of these sort of things, because you're going to live forever! Now your mind can somewhat comprehend that because of the way that God made it. But here is something that we need to understand of this *personal inheritance*.

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us..." That means it doesn't understand us. In other words, the world can really not understand what makes you tick the way that you tick, if you have the Spirit of God—that's what that means.

"...because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (vs 1-2). How does Christ look? The Catholics say you have the 'beatific vision'—you go to heaven and you kind of look on the face of God forever. What does the face of God look like? 'Well, it's kind of like the glowing of the sun and all this sort of thing. But you can't really see God, because God is God.' *NO!* That isn't what it means or says. We're going to see Him *as He is!*

Revelation, the first chapter; here's a picture of the glorified Christ. What is our assurance that this is going to happen? Assurance that it's going to happen is that if you have the Spirit of God and you have a physical body—which you do—'as we've born the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly.'

Revelation 1:13: "And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire... [That's a mighty existence—isn't it? That is something!] ...and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace... [not going to have these old knobby athlete's feet anymore. You're going to have feet that have glory!] ...and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power" (vs 13-16).

That's something! That's the *personal* inheritance that God is going to give us. Hebrews, the second chapter. The *possessional* one is that we are going to inherit, as the children of Abraham, the world! You think on that for a minute. We'll plug in a couple of other Scriptures with it here.

Hebrews 2:1—it talks about the salvation, it talks about the inheriting the blessing, and so forth: "For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time **we should slip away**. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, how shall we escape, *if we* have neglected **so great a salvation...**" (vs 1-3)—this is something, brethren, that 'the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, nor has it come into the mind of man what God has prepared for those that love Him.' It's a great salvation!

"...which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will? For *it is* not to *the* angels *that* He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking" (vs 3-5). ***We're going to inherit that!***

Let's go to Revelation 20—here is the possession that we are going have, plus position. So if you want to put it this way:

- it's personal
- it's possessional
- it's positional

All three! Defines it right here—Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection..."

- Who only is Holy? *God!*
 - Is God also blessed? *Yes!*
 - Are we to inherit a blessing? *Yes!*
- ✓ Personal

- ✓ Possessional
- ✓ Positional

So we'll make it three.

Verse 6: "Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power.... [You're going to live forever.] (here's the position): ...But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years"—and bring peace to the whole world. That is a short summary of the whole plan of God.

Let's look at the other side of it, because there's still the other side of it—Hebrews 12. And here's the example of someone who gave away his inheritance, which is brought out as just a means for us to understand that what God has called us to is great and so fantastic, brethren.

Hebrews 12:14: "Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking diligently, lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and through this many be defiled; lest *there* be any fornicator or godless person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright; because you also know that afterwards, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; *and* he found no room for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears" (vs 14-17). That's for those of us who are called in this age, that we know that once God has called us then it is for eternal life.

Let's go back to 1-Peter, the third chapter, and we'll finish off with one other section here, concerning the eyes of the Lord. 1-Peter 3:10: "For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days... [and that's all of us projecting forward to the Kingdom of God in reality.] ...let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let Him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it; because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplication..." (vs 10-12). Very important!

Now, we know the Scriptures that say that God even knows when a sparrow falls. God keeps very good track of His creation. He knows all the hair on our head. How does God know all of this? Let's go Psalm 33—here's the Psalm that this was taken from. Go ahead and read the whole Psalm there. And you know, the scientists are getting closer to this every day.

Psalm 33:6: "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made... [that's the big bang!] ...and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses. Let all

the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the people. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, and the people He has chosen for His own inheritance" (vs 6-12). So, you see how this ties right in with what we just covered.

Verse 13: "The LORD looks down from heaven; He beholds all the sons of men. From His dwelling place He looks intently upon all the inhabitants of the earth. Together He fashions their hearts alike; He considers all their works. The king is not saved by a great army; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall it deliver any by its great strength. Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear Him, upon those who hope in His loving kindness, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine." (vs 13-19).

So, when we get back to answering the question *what if?*—there's the answer right there. We don't know. We can ask *what if?* But we can't project into all circumstances. Only God can take care of those things. God will take care of those things. And we can all relate to one another what God has done to prevent different things from happening to us; or blessing us and watching over us.

Let's go to Revelation, the fifth chapter, and let's see that God has His spirit powers moving on the earth at all times. God knows. And I think that if we really knew how close God's throne was to this earth, we would be surprised. But we can't see it. And everyone is wondering: I wonder what's out there? Well, one of these days when Christ starts coming back to the earth, and they're going to *see!* But right now, here we go:

Revelation 5:6: "Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth." What do they do? *We'll see!*

God does a lot of things not involved in just those who are seeking Him. God also helps those who, for even in a minute, pray and say, 'Oh, God, help me!' Now how many remember the hijacking of the TWA plane over there in Beirut, Lebanon? That was what three years ago; four years ago. What happened? The pilot, he had a Bible. He was reading and studying the Bible, and praying like crazy. What happened? Everyone on that plane was praying, 'Oh, God, spare us, deliver us.' Did God hear their

prayers? *Yes, they were spared; they were delivered.* Here's how God does it.

2-Chronicles 16:9 “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth... [They're not like eyeballs as we would be as human beings, and they're sort of out here bumping along on the earth—it doesn't mean that. God is able to see. We can liken it to (as we know today) remote TV cameras. God knows, only He does it a lot better than remote TV cameras.] ...to show Himself strong in the behalf of those whose heart *is* perfect toward Him....”—seeking Him.

Now, I remember when I was first being called, I knew absolutely nothing about nothing. And the only thing I understood about grace was that my aunt's name was Grace, and she was a Sunday school teacher. Whenever she would come and visit us she would bring her little felt board class, and I couldn't stand it. So, my feeling toward 'religion' was, always in my mind, my Aunt Grace. And every time I saw her coming, I would always run out in the yard and play and try and get away.

Well, when I was first being called, I remember I was out walking one night—over in San Mateo, going to college at that time—and I looked up and I saw the stars up there and the only thing I could remember was that “God, You made those and You said, ‘Ask and you'll receive; seek and you'll find’” and I said, ‘Here I'm asking and I'm seeking’”—now how's that! That's the only thing I knew how to do. Obviously, I had no experience in religion at all whatsoever; and yet, God heard that prayer and answered that prayer—right? *Yes, He did!*

Nevertheless, that's the way it is with God. And there are many people who pray that God answers their prayers and does not necessarily call them. But He answers their prayers because in faith they asked Him. And God is no respecter of persons. But when God calls someone to repentance so that they receive the Holy Spirit, then it's another whole powerful thing, like this letter we had from that man in Denmark. He said, ‘I'm burning to know what you believe.’ So we sent him a hot package off to help him out there.

1-Kings 15—here it says about David. This is when the division of the kingdom of Israel took place and that's not the point I want to get to. But here's what God told Rehoboam concerning his tribe here and why he did what he did. 1-Kings 15:5: “Because **David did that *what was right in the eyes of the LORD***... [God knows!] ...and did not turn aside from all that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.” God knows! God won't forget! God has called us to inherit blessings. His ears are open to

our supplication and His eyes are upon us all the time.

Let's look here at John 14—and we'll go ahead and we'll pretty well end it here today. Let me just have you take down these different Scriptures for under the prayers that David gave. Many of the prayers start out: ‘Hear me, O Lord... Hear my supplications.’ {here are Psalms you can put down in your notes: Psalm 143:1; 55:1; 40:1-4; 64:1}

John 14:13: “And whatever you shall ask in My name...” It has to be legal; it has to be lawful; it has to be right. You're not going to pray, ‘O God, help me to hold up this bank.’ If that prayer's answered, it's not the real God. It's not going to be: ‘O God, help me to seduce this woman’—who's not your lawful wife. God is not going to answer that prayer. This ‘whatsoever’ has to mean those things that are right and good.

“...this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*” (vs 13-14). It may not be answered instantly. The answer may be a little different than you expect, but ***God will do it!***

John 16:23: “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, **He** will give you.” God the Father—the greatest Being in the universe. And that always dumbfounds me! And we pray, all of us pray, but just think of it: That you can get on your knees and pray to God and say, ‘Our Father in heaven...’ and you are in contact with the Ruler of the universe!

I suppose in modern language you could say, ‘Out of sight!’ That is true! That is amazing! And you could ask ‘whatsoever’ and He will give it to you.

Verse 24: “Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.... [v 26]: In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (vs 24, 26-27).

There, brethren, is the ‘simplicity in Christ’! Yes, it is true, some doctrines and prophecies do get a little complex; and some of these things get a little entangled. But there is the ‘simplicity in Christ’ right there!

So, when you pray—whatever your trouble is, whatever your difficulty is, whatever your problem is, whatever your joy is—you go to God and you pray directly to Him. Because, as Peter said, ***‘We have been called to inherit a blessing.’***

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

- ✓ Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Peter 3:8-12
- 2) Philippians 2:5-8, 1-4
- 3) Matthew 24:4-10
- 4) 1 Peter 3:8-9
- 5) Romans 12:1-2, 9-21
- 6) Luke 6:20-36
- 7) 1 Peter 3:9
- 8) 1 Corinthians 15:49-54
- 9) Philippians 3:20-21
- 10) 1 John 3:1-2
- 11) Revelation 1:13-16
- 12) Hebrews 2:1-5
- 13) Revelation 20:6
- 14) Hebrews 12:14-17
- 15) 1 Peter 3:10-12
- 16) Psalm 33:6-19
- 17) Revelation 5:6
- 18) 2 Chronicles 16:9
- 19) 1 Kings 15:5
- 20) John 14:13-14
- 21) John 16:23-24, 26-27

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 5, 6 & 7
- Psalm 143:1; 55:1; 40:1-4; 64:1

Also referenced: Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

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