

After Baptism What Do I Do? II

Fred R. Coulter—May 15, 2012

Let's review as we go along here. I'll refer to some Scriptures and others we'll turn to. First of all Jesus said, 'None can come to the Father except through Me.' He also said, 'None can come to Me unless the Father draw him' or her. And that 'we will all be taught of God.'

When does God's grace begin with the individual? *Before baptism when you start seeking God!* Here's a promise—Isa. 55—God always has set it up so He answers His promises. Here's what needs to be. Remember Jesus said, '**S**eek and you shall find; **k**nock and it shall be opened; **a**sk and you shall receive.' When God begins dealing with each one in calling toward baptism, He begins to respond to people who are *seeking, asking, and knocking.*

Give you an example. I got a letter from a woman the other day that says she was talking to a Baptist and he says, 'I don't trust any of these churches anymore. All they do is tell lies.' She said, 'I just want to believe the Bible.' I think it was a he talking to a she. She responded and said, 'I have a book, would you like it?' So, she gave him *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah* and said, 'This is going to be some real deep reading. But if you want the Truth, here you go.' He took it. She gave him a Church at Home card so he said he's going to watch Church at Home.

Here's a person who was seeking. Why did he talk to her? God works in all kinds of circumstances that we don't know. Generally, we start seeking God when there's trouble and difficulty in our lives and we want to know, 'Why am I here?' You look at what the atheists say, 'You came from slime.' Of course, everything came from nothing.

You're going to like the new booklet that we have. We have two new ones coming out. One is going to be, *God—No God*. It shows the brightness from the heavens. Then it shows the earth and then the clouds. It shows the model of how the evolutionists picture how man evolved. You have these 4 or 5, starting from a creature to a man, have that below. It tells a good story. The other one is, *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?* We have that one, too. We'll have them here in a few weeks.

But nevertheless, here is a promise. Remember, *God cannot lie!* But in your seeking God He tells you what you need to do. If you're willing to do this, He'll deal with you. Here is where grace starts. It's not through a minister; it's not through a church—it begins between you and God!

You stop and think when God began to call you. It was between you and God. If you've been involved in a lot of churches or checking out a lot of churches like most people today do—most people that ask for baptism now have been watching cbcg.org and ChurchatHome.org and they've received various literature.

Isaiah 55:6: "Seek the LORD while He may be found..." This is very interesting. God told Jeremiah that the people were so bad, 'Don't even pray for them, because I won't hear you.' In other words, there always comes a time when things are so bad that God will not hear you.

"...call upon Him while He is near.... [He is near; He's not far off.] (But here's the condition; there are always conditions to it): ...Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD... [you come to God] ...and He will have mercy upon him... [He will come to you] ...and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (vs 6-7). The first thing that needs to be is you get your brain and your thoughts squared around.

Verse 8: "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways," says the LORD. 'For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (vs 8-9). That's where to begin. God will answer.

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where then, *is* the house that you build for Me?.... [God doesn't want a great work from you. He's made the heavens and the earth. What are you going to do for God?] ...And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word'" (vs 1-2). That's who God is looking for, those who are seeking God and are repenting.

Let's see how God also does this things. God plans ahead. Let's see a very interesting statement in Acts 18. This is when the Apostle Paul came to the city of Corinth.

Paul had to be led of the Holy Spirit where he needed to go. There were no telephones; there were no faxes; there were no smartphones, no dumb phones. They had postal mail by donkey-back. So Paul had to walk. I imagine once in a while he rode a donkey. I don't think Paul had cholesterol problems either.

Acts 18:1: "Now, after these things, Paul departed from Athens *and* came to Corinth; And there he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with Priscilla his wife (because Claudius had ordered all the Jews out of Rome). *And* he came to their *house*. And because he was of the same trade, he dwelt with them and worked; for they were tent makers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath... [to the Jew first, that's where he went] ...and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks" (vs 1-4).

I always like to read these accounts about what happens in the synagogue, because he really causes problems.

Verse 5: "Now, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* the Christ. But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming, *Paul* shook his garments *and* said to them, 'Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles'" (vs 5-6). He split the synagogue right down the middle. If you've been in church wars today, then you have an idea.

Verse 7: "And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue.... [right next door] ...But Crispus the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house... [This is heap-big trouble for the synagogue.] ...and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized" (vs 7-8).

Notice what God said to Paul—most of us we'd want to get out of there—v 9: "And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, 'Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent, for I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city'" (vs 9-10).

Think on that statement. God was working with people before Paul ever got there, many people. What does that tell us about today? That's why we need to do the things that we need to do to prepare all the materials, to have the sermons, to have the CDs. I'll tell you what we do to get them out and what Jim and Betty do and what we do and so forth.

"...I have many people in this city.'.... [Isn't that something?] ...And he remained *there for* a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them" (vs 10-11). It got so bad that it got into a political mess. I won't go into that.

Let's see another place where he did this in Acts 13. We covered this before, but we'll just review it again. He went into the synagogue. They said, 'Oh, you're a Pharisee. Stand up and speak.' So he stood up to speak. Then he told them about Jesus

Christ, how you can be justified from sins that you can't be justified with by the Law of Moses.

Now think on this: We have something very similar with the Churches of God and Protestantism. They say you can be justified and not keep the Law. There comes a point that you have to preach the Gospel like Tyndale said. He said, 'When you preach the Gospel you start with Moses and hell and damnation for sin.' This is what Paul did here.

Acts 13:39: "And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." Remember there are two versions of the Law of Moses:

1. the Bible
2. the Pharisees' traditional version, all their traditions

Notice what he said. He wouldn't say, 'I perceive that you love God. I perceive that you are wonderful people. I perceive that you really would welcome Him with open arms, so why don't you come forward and give your heart to the Lord.'

No! Here's what he said. He said, v 40: "'Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you: "Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe, even if one declares it to you.'" And when the Jews had gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles entreated *him* that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath" (vs 40-42). I want you to understand what he's going to do here. He did not say, 'Oh, that's good. I've come to change the Sabbath to Sunday. We'll see you tomorrow. You don't have to wait a week.' NO!

Verse 44: "And on the coming Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of God.... [The word sure got around that week—didn't it?] ...But when they saw the multitude, the Jews were filled with envy and they spoke against the things proclaimed by Paul, *and* were contradicting and blaspheming" (vs 44-45). You could have the same thing today if you went into a Sunday-keeping church and you were sitting there and the pastor said, 'I perceive that you're a teacher. Would you come and speak us some words?' Be happy to.

You get up there and say, 'I know that all of you think you're justified here on Sunday, but you can't find one word about it in the Bible. Christ is calling you to repentance today, because your 'churchianity' is not from God.' What would happen, they'd get mad. They'd probably come up and take you out. 'Deacons, come and get this guy out of the pulpit!'

Verse 46 “But Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, saying, ‘It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first... [Jews first] ...but since you reject it and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles; ‘For so the Lord has enjoined upon us: “I have set You for a light [Christ] of the Gentiles that You should be for salvation unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”’ And when the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced... [Why? Because the Jews held all the Gentiles as second, third, and fourth-class citizens.] ...and they glorified the Word of the Lord, and believed, as many as were appointed to eternal life” (vs 46-48).

Here God was already working with the people before they arrived. How many people is God working with today that we don’t even know a single thing about? *We don’t know, but we better be ready!*

Verse 49: “And the Word of the Lord was carried throughout the entire country.” What happened? *Got all stirred up, sent him out of there;* they came to Iconium and Lystra, performed great healings and the pagan priests came down.

Here’s what the multitude said when the man stood up and leaped and was yelling, Acts 14:10, Paul: “Said with a loud voice, ‘Stand upright on your feet.’ And he leaped up and walked. And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices in Lyconian, saying, ‘The gods have become like men and have come down to us’” (vs 10-11). This is what the Greek religions were—right? *Yes! ‘Oh, the gods are here.’*

Verse 12: “And Barnabas they called Zeus... [‘Oh, look, Zeus is here!’] ...and Paul, Hermes, because he was the principal speaker. Then the priest of Zeus, who officiated before their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, desiring to sacrifice with the multitudes. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard this, they ripped their own garments in disbelief, and rushed into the multitude, shouting out. And saying, ‘Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, with the same nature as you, and we have been preaching the Gospel to you, so that you will turn from these vanities to the living God, Who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all the things in them; Who in the past generations allowed all people to go in their own ways; Though, indeed, He did not leave Himself without witness, in doing good to us from heaven by giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with good and gladness’” (vs 12-17).

Then they were able to calm them down. When the Jews from Antioch heard about this they sent ones down to stir up the Gentiles. So they did and what happened after they were preaching it?

Verse 19: “Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and after persuading the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, supposing that he was dead.... [You know there are going to be some tough times preaching.] ...But while the disciples were standing around him, he arose; and he went into the city with them. And the next day, he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And after preaching the gospel to that city...” (vs 20-21). Then he made the circuit and came back to the place that stoned him.

Let’s see what it is that God is doing. *Grace starts in your life when God begins to respond to you because you want to know about God!* So,

- the calling: that’s the grace of God—you have to answer.
- the drawing of the Father: that’s the grace of God.
 - now we have the Bible
 - now we have the Word of God
 - now we can tell people to go to the Word of God

That’s all part of the *grace of God*.

Let’s come to Ephesians 2—we’ve covered part of this in what we did in the first one of this series—to show what God is doing and the great grace that He is giving us. The first part of chapter two tells us that we were all under the influence of Satan the devil and his world, but God called us out of it, raised us up together.

Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace you have been saved...”

v 9: “Not of works...”

v 10: he begins to reveal what God is doing after you are baptized. This is the grace of God.

Of all the Protestantism and because of the way that too many churches are run, church becomes the central focus rather than God the Father and Jesus Christ. Grace comes to the Church after you teach the brethren and those that God is calling what God wants to do. He doesn’t want people to come into a military compound where they have to be ruled over by the ministers. {see book: *Is the Ministry the Government of God?*}. No, it’s not the government of God. They are to be helpers. They are to be teachers. Here’s what God is doing:

Verse 10: “For we are His workmanship...” *God is doing a work in you!* That’s the greatest work in the world, because God is preparing you now that you have been baptized, received the Holy Spirit. God is working with you, developing you through prayer, through study.

“...created in Christ Jesus unto the good works... [Those good works are the commandments and laws of God and the works of faith, service, and

love.] ...ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10).

Let's see what Paul says to the Gentiles. Remember how the Jews treated the Gentiles and remember how the Gentiles were so happy when Paul came and said, 'It's to Jews and Gentiles equally.' That was a revelation. This is why the Jews were so mad. To this day they say, 'We are the chosen people.' One Jew said, 'If we're the chosen people, why are we picked on so much?'

Those that God chooses are the *chosen people*. Those who have the Spirit of God are the *chosen people*, because 'many are called, few are chosen.' You're chosen to become the workmanship of God the Father, because He is creating in you all the things necessary for eternal life. He tells the Gentiles:

Verse 11: "Therefore, remember that you were once Gentiles in *the flesh*, who are called uncircumcision by those who are called circumcision in *the flesh* made by hands; *And* that you were without Christ at that time... [v 13]: But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition." (vs 11-14).

That middle wall could be an actual wall at the temple, which it was, or an understood wall, or a make shift wall where they put the Gentiles in this back part of the synagogue and all of the Jews were in the front part. The most wealthy ones who had the most money could buy the seats on the front row. All of that is gone!

Verse 15 is a key and this is the correct translation. It's also a problem for the Protestants, but nevertheless we have it correct it here. "Having annulled in His flesh the enmity... [there was the hatred between the Jews and the Greeks] ...the law of commandments contained in *the decrees of men...*" The traditions of men that said that a Jew cannot go into the house of a Gentile. That's not from the Law of Moses. {see book, *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or a Religion of Men?*, that's eye opening.}

"...so that in Himself... [God the Father and Christ] ...He might create... [we're His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus] ...both into one new man, **making peace**; and *that* He might reconcile both to God... [Christ] ...in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. Now, when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. **For through Him we both have direct access by one Spirit to the Father**" (vs 15-18). That's why I ended the first sermon by showing you where do

your prayers go when you pray? Rev. 4 and 5, *they go right to God the Father.*

Have direct access by one Spirit through the virgin Mary, through all the saints, and through the pope... ***NO! For through Him we both have direct access by one Spirit to the Father.***" (v 18). How are we to start out our prayers? *Our Father Who is in heaven!* I want you to think about how blasphemous is it to say of the pope, 'Father, the Holiness...'? ***No! You have direct access to God the Father!*** That's something!

What does Satan want to try and do? *Intervene in the system to cut you off as much as he can from God the Father* through whatever means he can do it. Is this not the grace of God that you have access to God the Father? That you can pray directly to the Father? Jesus said, 'Don't pray through Me.' He says, 'You pray to the Father, for the Father Himself loves you.' Think about that!

After you're baptized things will go pretty smooth for a while and pretty soon you're going to have a trial, because everybody has a trial; sometimes many trials. If you've read anything of William Tyndale, he said, 'When God bids you go someplace by boat, He's going to send a tempest while you're on the sea to know whether you trust Him and believe Him or not.' If everything were smooth after we were baptized and there was no trial, there was no test, we would have all people be the most arrogant and haughty that you would ever care to know. Isn't that true? We'd look down and say, 'I know why you're having trouble. You ought to look to me, how good I am.' ***No!*** Paul was stoned, left for death. God raised him up and he went right back into the city. 'Hello, folks, I'm here.'

Verse 19: "So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God." After baptism this is where you are, right here. This tells us what we are to do next, because baptism is a start. Now you need to prepare for eternal life.

- You have a lot of learning to do.
- You have a lot of repenting to do.
- You have a lot of things that you need to change in here (in mind and heart), with God's Spirit.

A lot of people can put on a facade outside, but that's not inside. God doesn't care about the outside. James 2 he told the Jews, he said, 'If a rich man comes into your synagogue wearing gold ornaments and fine clothing and a man having terrible clothing comes in and you say to the one who has the good clothing, go sit in the chief seat, my friend. You have the gold and the silver, we like that because you can give to the synagogue. Hey, fellow, (the

other guy who's poor) you go sit back here in the corner.'

What did James say? He said you have sinned because you are a respecter of persons. Have you ever been in a church where there's respecter of persons? Think on that! The household of God. We all have different problems we need to overcome. We all have different talents that God can use. Any talent we have God has given. Isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 20: "You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles... [through the teachings] ...and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together is increasing into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are being built together **for a habitation of God in the Spirit**" (vs 20-22).

What does that mean? 'Habitation of God.' Let's take and examine the next step of grace. You repent, you're baptized, you receive the Holy Spirit.

- What happens with that?
- What takes place with that?
- *You are begotten again in the spirit of your mind!*
- What happens with that?

We're going to see two things here:

1. How was it that God was dealing with you before you were baptized?
2. How was it that you began to see things differently than you did before you started seeking God?

He answers it right here, key thing to learn. John 14:15: "If you love Me..." That's the first thing we need to do. Love God the Father and Jesus Christ. How are we to do that?

- This is something we *grow in*
- This is something we *learn*
- This is something we *gain by faith*
- This is something that we *look to* for God
- This is an operation of the Spirit of God, to love God the Father

Now notice: *with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul, all our being*, which then is a full time complete devotion to whom? *God the Father and Jesus Christ!* Not to men nor a church. A church is merely the assembly of those who have the Spirit of God. Because by one Spirit (1-Cor. 12) we are all baptized into one body. That body is the body of Christ.

All the work, all the developing, the prayer, the study, the understanding of God's way comes from daily prayer, daily study, daily living. When you come to Sabbath services and we're assembled together, now we're a church. And because we all

put our part of working with God the Father on a daily individual basis and God the Father and Christ working with us on an individual basis, when we come to Sabbath services ***God's Spirit is here to lead us, to guide us and to teach us.*** It says, 'we shall be taught by God' (John 6:55). How are we taught by God?

1. Word of God
2. The Spirit of God

How does the Spirit of God act in our lives?

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.... [Jesus explained to His disciples there who were to become the apostles]: ...And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age" (vs 15-16).

This means throughout the age from the time of Christ to His return. So this not only applies to the disciples right there, but this is a prophecy and teaching for all the rest of us who are called by God to be part of His spiritual creation.

Verse 17: "*Even the Spirit of the Truth...*" This becomes very important because the Spirit of the Truth—

- God is true
- God cannot lie
- Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life
- The Word of God is true
- The commandments are true
- Everything about God is true

That's one of the motivating factors for doing this translation of the Bible, was nothing more than what is the real Truth? Personally as a minister, after learning the Greek, I got tired of standing in the pulpit and say, 'The King James says this, but the Greek means this. The King James says this, but the Greek means this.' Someone asked, 'Why don't we have a Bible that says what it means?' That's not why I did it starting with the New Testament, but I did study translations so we could study the Bible and know what it really says.

This means the Spirit of the Truth, that we can't take the ways of the world and the ways of the churches of the world and use those means in the Church of God, which is to be the pillar and ground of Truth! That's why it's so shocking when you hear lies from the pulpit of a Church of God, which is supposed to preach Truth. That's going contrary to the Spirit of God.

Verse 17: "*Even the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive...* [No it can't because it hasn't repented. You don't receive the Spirit of God until you repent.] ...because it perceives it not... [doesn't know anything about it] ...nor knows it.. [has absolutely no experience with

the Spirit of God] ...but you know it because **it dwells with you...**"

I want you to look at those two words—*with you*. The Spirit of God was leading you and was dwelling with you as long as you were seeking God and seeking the Truth and would lead you closer and closer to understanding the Word of God. And would lead you to repentance if you yield to God and believe God. *The graciousness of God leads you to repentance!* So, everything we're talking about here is the grace of God working in your life, because you have direct connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Before baptism the Spirit of God is *with you*. Almost every one of us can look back and *we know* the incident that God used to begin to reveal Himself to us. I can! I can look back and I know where, I know when, I know what was said, I know how I responded and how I cried out to God and how God answered it. You can tell the same story in your own life.

"...because it dwells with you, and **shall be within you**" (v 17). When you're baptized, receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit it is *within you*. A great and fantastic grace—is that not true? It's not the operation of the Church that did it. The Church was really kind of on the sideline and the one who baptized you and laid hands on you was only an instrument of God that He says that He uses and that's how you receive the Holy Spirit of God. "...shall be within you."

What does that do? Let's take the Spirit of God *within us* and let's look at it here some more, v 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, '**IF**... [there's that big 'little' word again] ...anyone loves Me... [God's love is always constant] ...he will keep My word... [the whole message of Christ] ...and My Father will love him... [Notice, He says it's going to be *within you*. Here's how it's done.] ...and **We will come to him and make Our abode with him.**'" There you go.

We'll see what we are to do with this. We are to see how we are to handle this. Now notice the opposite, v 24, because this is an absolute dividing line. There's no halfway house here. Absolute dividing line: "The one who does not love Me... [How do you express your love to God? *This is the love of God that we keep His commandments.*'] Jesus said, 'If you love Me, keep My commandments,' right?] ...does not keep My words..." That's every single word that Jesus spoke. You would be surprised the number of people that say, 'I like this, but I don't like that.'

As a matter of fact, there was a judge just this past week who made a ruling in a school and suggested this, because they had the Constitution of

the United States, the Bill of Rights, and other documents for the nation and they had the Ten Commandments listed there. Someone sued and said, 'I'm offended with the Ten Commandments.' Took it to court and you know what the judge said? He said, 'We ought to reduce the Ten Commandments to six, get rid of the first four.'

Verse 24: "The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me" (v 24). Everything He taught is what the Father told Him to speak.

What you're reading here in the New Testament, in the Gospels, and in the epistles, you are reading the inspired Word of God *as if it is from God to you*. That's why when you read it there is something that happens that does not happen with any other book. There is a spiritual meaning to it and you have spiritual understanding when you read it.

Come to John 6:63—this is a very important and powerful thing to know: "It is the Spirit that gives life... [eternal life] ...the flesh profits nothing... [You're not going to succeed in doing things for God the way that men do it. It profits nothing.] ...**The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.**"

That's why there's nothing like reading and studying the Bible with a humble attitude and yielding to God and believing it, because *they are spirit and they are life*. These things will become more evident to you as you progress in studying and growing and overcoming.

(go to the next track)

Let's see how Paul wrote back to the Church of Corinth and was admonishing them as to what to do. There were a lot of people there and the Church at Corinth ended up being one of the most problematic churches the Apostle Paul had. If you want to read a book of quite a bit of correction, read 1st & 2nd-Corinthians. You will see that contained in these two books are all the problems that you find prophesied of, of the seven churches in the book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3.

Jesus said He would build His church. When you are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God, you are baptized into the Body of Christ and you are a member of the Church of God, not the corporate structure. *No corporate structure is the Church of God!* The corporate structure is merely to do business in the world, that's it! The corporate structure has no spiritual application to the brethren. The elders do and the ministers do. The Church we're talking about here is the church that Christ said that He would build and 'the gates of the grave would never overtake it.'

Here in Corinth where there were a lot of people, Paul writes to them. Now that you're baptized you are what is called a 'babe in Christ.' That doesn't mean you're born again, because born again does not happen until the resurrection. But in understanding you are a novice. That's another way of putting it. You have to learn. Paul puts into perspective those new people and the ministry and how they work together and what each individual is to do.

1-Corinthians 3:1: "And I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to **those who are spiritual...**" Those understand the Word of God, who have lived the way of God for years and years. They are the ones who spiritually discern. They are the ones who have used the Spirit of Truth, etc.

"...but as to those who are carnal—*even* as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink... [That's what it's called back there in 1-Pet. 2, the spiritual meat whereby you can grow. From now on its growing, overcoming, changing for all the rest of your life.] ...and not meat..." (vs 1-2). The new book—*Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*—contains a lot of meat. The book *Lord, What Should I Do?* is milk. You see the difference?

Those who are on milk are to gradually grow and grow so that they can understand more and more. That's why Sabbath services. That's why assembling together. That's why we have Church at Home, because there are a lot of people who can't attend church.

Verse 2: "I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able to receive spiritual meat; and neither are you able now, for you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions are among you, are you not carnal? And are you not walking according to human ways?" (vs 2-3). They weren't changing the way they needed to change. They were not being led of the Spirit as God intended.

Verse 4: "When someone says, 'I am of Paul,' and another one says, 'I am of Apollos,' are you not carnal?" He puts the ministry then into its proper perspective in relationship to brethren. We're all brethren together. That's why Paul when he writes and he talks about things, he says *we*. Just like the Apostle John when he wrote the First Epistle of John—*we*, including himself.

Verse 5: "Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos? *They are* but ministers through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each one. I planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.... [God is in charge; Christ is the Head of the Church.] ...Therefore, neither is he who plants anything" (vs 5-7).

He did not put himself above the brethren, but to serve, help, encourage, and yes, to correct. We are to stand for the Truth. The elders are to be guardians of the Truth, guardians of doctrine, guardians because we're stewards of God's property because all the brethren belong to God. That's why it's called the Church of God.

"...nor he who waters; for *it is* God Who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (vs 7-8). That's talking two ways:

1. to the ministers who teach
2. to the brethren who are taught

We all have our own labor.

Verse 9: "For we are God's fellow workers; *and* you are God's husbandry, *even* God's building. As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me. I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon it" (vs 9-10).

Let me suggest reading Rev. 2 and 3, the messages (the letters). These are direct letters from Christ to the seven churches. All of these enumerate the basic overall problems and challenges and difficulties that the Churches of God will face down through history. Take heed how you build on it.

- Are you zealous?
 - Are you hungry?
 - Are you growing?
 - Are you overcoming?
- or*
- Are you complacent?
 - Are you lazy?
 - Are you trying to mix doctrines from strange religions?

All of those are addressed in Rev. 2 and 3.

Verse 11: "For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble" (vs 11-12). There are two kinds of fruits you develop:

1. Those that are precious—gold being the highest quality; silver being next; precious stones are the next.

Are not all these things are what God is going to build New Jerusalem out of? *Yes, indeed!* These are depicting *character*. Character then is listed by the fruits of the Spirit.

2. If you're not building the way that you should—and you're using wood, hay or stubble—all of those can be burned up.

The precious metals—gold, silver and stones—they become greater when they go through fire. I don't know how many have watched it on the History Channel, the Alaskan gold miners. When they get the gold and it's amazing how they get it, but they get it and they stack it up in a jar. Then they take it over to a smelter. He puts it in one of these special stone containers that can withstand heat.

He fires it up to 2,000 degrees. He puts in some things which will remove all of the impurities. When it's all melted and everything is all mixed up, he takes it, sets it off and he pours it out into a little thing to form an ingot. The impurities rise to the top and they are scraped away. ***That's a very good example of what God wants to do with us.*** If we're

- zealous
- praying
- studying
- growing
- overcoming

then the dross will rise to the top and God will take it away; same way with silver. Silver refined seven times. That's likened to the Word of God.

When we were in Idaho, we used to go out to this farmer's ranch and back of his ranch he had hundreds of acres. We went up there to go geode hunting, the stones that are blown out of volcanoes. While geodes are in the air, they form little balls or eggs. You look at them and you think: 'What an ugly stone that is.' He's taking us up there and he says, 'Come here, I want to show you something.' He had this little hammer, took it out of his belt, held this stone in his hand and he went, CRACK! Opened it up and here are beautiful crystals inside.

That's a perfect example of what God wants. The outside may be perishing, but the inside is growing beautiful crystals: gold, silver, precious stones. This is what He's likening it to. Everything that has to do with our relationship with God has to do with our minds and with our hearts; has to do with our attitudes, has to do with our study, prayer, our relationship with each other, our relationship with husband and wife and children, our relationships even with the world.

Here's a promise, v 13: "The work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of trial will declare it... [you will be tested] ...because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall prove what kind of work each ones is"—gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble.

Out here going on the way to Hollister and all of you coming in to services from up north you come up Hwy. 25. There was this rancher who had alfalfa fields and he cut it and then baled it. He stacked his big stack right close to the highway. So some smart-aleck kids come along and they get a

Molotov cocktail going 25-30 miles an hour, throw it over there, step on the gas out of there. I remember seeing them stacked up there and I thought that's not a good place to put your hay. A couple of weeks later I drove by and here's this big pile of ashes, totally burned up. You know where he puts it now? Far away from the highway at the other end of his field.

Verse 14: "If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet as through fire" (vs 14-15). If they repent then they will be saved even if what they have done is all burned up.

Now notice v 16 because this begins to tie in where we left off in John 14. He says: "Don't you understand that you are God's temple... [Think of that! Remember where we started? Isa. 66, 'Where is the temple you're going to build for Me?'] ...and that the Spirit of God is dwelling **in you?** All of this is *grace*. Everything we are talking about is *grace*. So when it says, 'By grace you are saved,' that is absolutely and totally true because it's the relationship between you and God the Father.

Verse 17: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks himself to be wise in this world..." (vs 17-18). It really doesn't matter how wise you are.

Remember what Paul did when he went to Mars Hill, talking to the philosophers, the Epicureans and the Stoics. He said, 'I walked into this city and I saw that you are very reverent to deities. I walked past this memorial which said to the Unknown God.' They were so smart, they say, 'Maybe we forgot one of them, so we're going to put a memorial to the Unknown God.' He says, 'Him I declare to you. He's the One Who made heaven and earth and all things.'

Verse 18: "...If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world, let him become a fool... [What is a fool in the eyes of the elite? *Anyone who believes in God!*] ...so that he may be wise in God's sight." In the final analysis, what's going to happen? You better get on God's side. God isn't going to come on your side. You have to get to God's side.

Verse 19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God for it is written, 'He entraps the wise in their own craftiness.'" It's explained another way: Give a person enough rope and he will hang himself. The traps that they lay are going to come back on them.

Verse 20: "And again, 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are in vain.' Therefore, do not let anyone boast in men; for all things are yours, Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours; And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (vs 20-23).

How then do we begin yielding to God and develop the relationship with God so that God can begin creating in us the workmanship He wants in us so we can develop the *fruits of the Spirit*?

We have quite a few things that we do to help everyone. When someone requests to be on our mailing list, we send also that request to Jim and Betty. Jim has two regular letters and he informs them that we have six Study Packs. These are important because when you're newly baptized you need to begin to learn the doctrines and Truth. So, we have these six Study Packs which will take you from the beginning, being baptized:

- What is the Bible?
- How do you study the Bible?
- How do you pray?
- What is grace?
- What is love?
- What is Truth?

We send those out. For example, he sends out Study Pack #1 and a letter with a return envelope with their name and address, and it says, 'I'm almost finished with Study Pack #1, would you send me Study Pack #2.'

In it we have books, booklets and we have all those things available—one through six. For a more detailed study in the Bible we've got all the beliefs and doctrines of the New Testament Church. You can study through that. We have that in one of the Study Packs, all the sermons associated with that.

As you go through some of the commentaries and appendices, it's going to tell you:

- How did we get the Bible?
- Where is God?
- Who is God?
- How does He inspire things?

The appendices we talk about all the necessary things: Who was Jesus? We have in there *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* by Cardinal Gibbons. You read that. That is really something! When a Catholic cardinal tells the Protestants that they are on a death/suicide mission if they say they believe the Scriptures and 'Solo Scriptura,' and they keep Sunday, which is a Catholic day, they are hypocrites and destined to death. That's by a Catholic! And he says, 'Why don't you, since Sunday is a Catholic

institution, come back home to Rome? Quit being a hypocrite.'

- Appendix P: *What Does it Mean to Be Born Again?*
- Appendix Q: *What Does it Mean to Be Born of God?*
- Appendix R: *What is Meant by 'the Works of the Law'?*

Then if you want to start getting into some detailed studies when you're ready for it, we have

- Appendix Z: *Understanding Paul's Difficult Scriptures Concerning the Law and the Commandments of God.*

There are some that are very difficult to understand, especially in the *King James Version*.

Jim gave me a list of all the things that we have. We have sermon series that we send out:

- Hebrews Series
- Revelation Series
- Epistle of Romans Series
- Beliefs of the New Testament Church
- God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping
- God's Grace
- Baptism
- Keys to Answered Prayer

Want to know how to pray? We have 21 sermons and studies on *Keys to Answered Prayer*. You have all the information to study, all the information to know how to pray.

- The Love of God
- The Faith of God
- The Christian Covenant of Water Baptism
- Washing of the Water by the Word

Here is what we have in Study Pack #1:

- Lord, What Should I Do?
- Fourteen Rules of Bible Study
- How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?
- Is God a Trinity?
- Mystery of the Trinity
- When Was Jesus Born?
- Study Pack #1 CD
- Design of the Bible

Study Pack #2:

- Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days Which?

Most of them have already received that so they don't necessarily get it again. Every book we send out we put in there an advertisement for another book and a coupon with a little box, 'Do you want to be added to our list?' Then you are added to the list and then we send it to Jim and Betty and he's got all of these series, all of these Study Packs, other spiral-bound books, which contain sermon transcripts. This is a great way to study and learn, because you're learning by three ways all at once:

1. you hear it
2. you see it
3. you read it

The transcripts along with the CD sermons become very important tools. Here's what we have in Study Pack #2:

- The Day Jesus the Christ Died
- Transcriptions of Beliefs and Doctrine (with set of 3 CDs)
- Beliefs of the New Testament Church
- Christmas—the Greatest Story Never Told
- What is Meant by Works of Law

See how we progress. All of these are designed to help you progress. There has never been a real program like this in any Church of God and we have it.

Study Pack #3:

- God's Plan for Mankind, Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days (with 3 CDs)
- A Sabbath/Sunday Challenge (Rome's Challenge)
- Which Day is the True Christian Sabbath, the True Lord's Day?

God's Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days is a thick book with 36 sermons.

- ✓ What is God's Plan?
- ✓ What is God doing?

That's what people want to know. 'Why am I here?' All of it is right there.

- The Holy Sabbath Series
- Refuting Sunday-Keeping
- To Eat Out or Not on the Sabbath

Study Pack #4:

- A Harmony of the Gospels

All of these we send at no cost. God says, 'Freely give,' and when you freely receive you reciprocate and you freely give so that others can freely receive. That's God's way of doing things. That's why tithes and offerings.

- By Grace You Have Been Saved, Now What?
- Grace of God in the Bible
- Is the Ministry God's Government
- You are Complete in Christ
- Ninety Facts About God
- Church Government (which then is two sheets/three pages)
- A Created Relationship
- Follow Man #1-2
- Forgiveness
- Grace #1-6
- Is God a Family?
- Spiritual Shopping
- What is the Government God #1-2

Now you're graduating to more deep studies and receive the complete book on the Passover.

Study Pack #5:

- The Christian Passover
- Christ's Last Passover
- Leavened or Unleavened
- Defining the Oneness of God
- Passover Ceremony
- Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch and Psalms
- This is Spiritual Warfare
- 5 CDs included

Then there are other things that we send out with it:

- Fourteenth/Fifteenth Passover vs the Covenant with God
- Could Christ Have Sinned
- Faith and Law
- Faith with Salvation
- God's Love Never Fails
- Justification by Faith #1-4
- Lord or Sermon
- Mystery of Godliness
- So You Have Suffered #1-2
- Table of the Lord vs Table of Demons
- Passover of the Rejected
- To Return to God
- True Fellowship
- The Way of God or Mans

See how all of these things are laid out. Everyone wants to know, 'What do Jim and Betty do?' **They work hard** in producing these Study Packs and the CDs and making the spiral books. Jim says he can't handle much more anymore unless we get some more help. When we get the other meeting room up, we're going to take the meeting room here and we're going to turn it into a spiral-book production center.

The reason we have it is because for study—and all of these things are for study—with the spiral bound you can open it up and it lays flat. You don't want to be studying and you go to write something down and your book closes. With the transcripts you can mark them and everything.

With all of this what we have found, when people ask for baptism *they know why* they need to be baptized and *they know about* baptism and they are prepared. Because they have answered the call of God, we serve them with all of these things to help them to grow.

Christ said, 'Feed the flock,' three times to Peter. Did He mean feed the flock? *Yes!* How do we do it? We have all the tools today. We can do more to feed the flock and help everyone grow in grace and knowledge and come to the knowledge of Christ to:

- grow in character
- grow in understanding
- grow in being able to resist the world
- grow in understanding the Bible

Study Pack #6:

- Count to Pentecost with chart
- Invisible Idol #1-2

That was something. Too many churches get into idolizing the man. **You worship God!** Those who are elders and ministers serve from the sidelines. It's like a coach. A coach is the most important person in the team. How is he most important? Does he exalt himself? *No, he gets the team involved in functioning and playing correctly.*

- Judge Righteous Judgment
- Mother of Harlots
- Included are 6 CDs for the Study Pack
- True Meaning of Acts 2:1
- Understanding God's Command for the Wave Sheaf
- Key of David #1-2
- The Tabernacle of David

Let's look at some other things that we need to do. I want you to come to the back of the Bible here. I want to show you how we designed the Bible. The Bible is put together in the proper order of the original inspired manuscripts the way that they were originally put together by Ezra for the Old Testament and by the Apostle John for the New Testament.

We have put together things for studying in the Bible. The first appendices that we have in the Bible Appendix A on page 1246 is the *Fourteen Rules of Bible Study*—spiritual keys to understanding the Word of God. *First thing!*

Now that you have this Bible, what do you do with it? You read the commentaries, the appendices, you study what's in the Bible. It tells you how God put together the Bible and how you are to study. Then it works its way through. We have the next appendix—*The Structure of the Book of Psalms*, because Psalms are important for prayer.

Then Appendix C, *The Book of Proverbs: Its Structure, Design and Teaching*, because Proverbs are important in understanding human relationships.

Then we get into very important things, Appendix D, *The New Testament Was Originally Written in Greek*. A lot of people don't understand that, why in Greek. The basic answer is it was the common language at the time and God could not trust it to the Jews in Hebrew because they rejected Christ. The New Testament doctrines are so precise, so God chose the Koine Greek that is a precise language.

One of the professors at Cal-State University told Willie Miller that when he was looking at the Bible, he says, 'I can tell that the New Testament was translated by a Greek scholar by looking at the English because I can see the Greek through it, but

also by the sentence structure of how it was translated.' So I just pass that on for information, what it's worth. Koine Greek was the common language of the whole business world. Even the Septuagint, that's Greek.

There are quite a few other things that we can add to it, so we'll have one more in this series.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 55:6-9
- 2) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 3) Acts 18:1-11
- 4) Acts 13:39-42, 44-49
- 5) Acts 14:10-17, 19-21
- 6) Ephesians 2:8-22
- 7) John 14:15-17, 23-24
- 8) John 6:63
- 9) 1-Corinthians 3:1-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 4; 5
- James 2
- 1-Corinthians 12
- John 6:55
- Revelation 2, 3
- 1-Peter 2

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Is the Ministry the Government of God?*
- *Judaism: A Revelation of Moses or Religion of Men?* by Philip Neal
- *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

Booklets: (coming soon)

- *God-No God*
- *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?*

References:

- Commentaries and Appendices contained in *The Holy Bible in its Original Order*
- Sermon Series
- Study Pack 1-6 information

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