

First Epistle of John III

Fred R. Coulter—June 11, 1994

Now let's continue on in the Epistle of 1-John. And I think there's a whole lot more to fellowshiping than just doing so on the Sabbath, as I pointed out last week, and we went through a little bit showing the real reason and purpose for the Sabbath and the way that God wants it defined. So let's understand that there's a little bit more about fellowship. It is far more than just coming to a place to meet. It is far more than just some of the things that we've understood on the Sabbath and the Holy Days. I want to cover just a couple of things concerning fellowshiping that we need to realize, that's very important for us, and this will actually help you to draw closer to God.

Now, before we cover certain things, which give us a greater understanding of fellowship, let's understand a couple of other things which are very important. In this series of 1-John we are going beyond any college class that any Church of God has given. So, you are, and I'm trying to make this at a level which will cover that, going to have a body of Scriptural teachings which is going to be more detailed—when we consider everything that we have done—than many of the Churches of God have ever done.

You go back and you consider all the series that we have done: the Gospel of John, the books of Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, James 1st Peter, 1st, 2nd, 3rd John, 2nd Peter and Jude. And when you consider all of those things that are really giving and hopefully arming all the brethren with the knowledge that they need; because the knowledge of God will

- strengthen you in faith
- strengthen you in understanding
- strengthen you in the days that we are living

—because we're going to literally see the foundations of everything crumble around us. And just as we are seeing the foundations of the Churches of God crumbling from within with false doctrine, people are now being told that the old former pagan teachings—which they came out of in their churches, when they left the churches of the world—are now really good and fine teachings and we ought to have had them all along.

So we need to stand for the Truth! Part of this is and part of the teachings, and what we want to do is, is put it in a way that we also understand that the teachings and the knowledge that we are presenting here is not just for information, it is for

your Christian daily living. And that's very, very important for us on a day-to-day basis to understand.

Now let's pick it up here, 1-John 1:3—John writes: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly **the** fellowship... [and it's a very interesting way that it is in there in the Greek and that I translated it: it is 'THE fellowship'—and there's a great significance to that.] ...—namely, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ.” Now, last week I went through and showed the importance of fellowshiping with God on the Sabbath; the importance that God even created the Sabbath and the Holy Days as special times of fellowship. But, is that the only thing there is to fellowship?

Well, let's learn a little bit more about it, and understand. Let's go to Romans 15:27. Fellowship also means *to partake*. Fellowship also means *to commune*. Not in the sense of a communion as even Worldwide Church of God is now calling the Passover—as unbelievable as that is. But it means *to be partaking of*. Romans 15:27: “Now, they took pleasure *in doing this*, and their debtors they are because if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things...” Let's understand something about fellowshiping and think of it in the way of God *sharing with us*. So they are made *partakers*_(KJV) or *to fellowship* with their *spiritual things*. Now, let's understand that we are also to be partakers of the Spirit of God.

Now let's look as some other aspects of fellowshiping. Let's go to 1-Corinthians 1:9: “God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now we are ‘partakers’ of God's Spirit; we are ‘partakers’ of God's Divine nature and that's how God fellowship with us on a daily basis. So what I want us to understand: that when John is writing about ‘our fellowship’ in 1-John 1:3, he is not just talking about coming to Sabbath services. He's talking about *partaking of the Spirit of God, partaking of the fellowship of Jesus Christ*.

Now let's come to Philippians the first chapter, showing that the fellowship is with the Gospel—that is *partaking of the Gospel*. We will see *partaking of the Spirit*, and also the *partaking of the suffering of Christ*—right here in the book of Philippians 1:5: “For your fellowship in the Gospel from *the* first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (vs 5-6). And this *partaking* and this *fellowshipping*, and this having *God's Spirit* is really the most important thing of the

fellowshipping. In other words:

1. *when you're studying* the Word of God, you're fellowshipping with God
2. *when you are praying*, you are fellowshipping with God
3. *when you come to Sabbath services*, you are fellowshipping with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

So it is a ***complete spiritual partaking***.

This shows then how this comes right over into our fellowship and how it comes from Christ. Philippians 2:1: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any **fellowship of the Spirit**...” Now that’s how we fellowship with God—with His Holy Spirit—and God fellowships with us. By the very fact that we have God’s Spirit in us, ***God is fellowshipping with us***. Have you ever thought of it that way before? Now that really is meaningful to me on a daily level of Christian living. That means that if God is fellowshipping with me, because He’s given His Holy Spirit to me, and if God is fellowshipping with everyone whom He has called because He’s given His Spirit, therefore, brethren:

- see how important prayer is
- see how important study is
- see how important it is to give ourselves wholly over to the Word of God.

Now, what does this then result in, in our lives? This kind of fellowship of the Spirit of Christ in us?

Verse 2: “Fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory... [And boy, I tell you, that’s the hardest thing for the Churches of God to get out of the strife and vainglory. But if they can really learn to love God; and if we can, if we can understand the fellowship that Paul is talking about, that John is talking about, then this helps go a long way in getting rid of that.] ...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.... [Then what it does come to? What is the ***full fellowship*** with God the Father and Jesus Christ?] ...***Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus***” (vs 2-5).

- Now, you think of that. Are we to have the mind of Christ? *Yes, we are!*
- Is that not the whole purpose and goal of being a Christian? *Yes, it is!*

Now because of that, then there’s some very important things that we need to understand. Let’s go to Philippians 3—and I think that I understand this just a little bit more. And I think this helps us

understand why we go through so many difficulties and trials of our faith. Philippians 3:10: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the **fellowship of His sufferings...**”—plural, ‘sufferings’.

Now, when you think about all that Christ went through in living as a human being—all that He gave up, all that He suffered—and really, He lived—as far as a human being—a very contradictory life compared to the rest of human beings, because He was truly the only one who was in complete fellowship and harmony with God the Father. And that made the sufferings that He went through even more so. So when Paul wrote *the fellowship* or *the partaking* or *the sharing* of Christ’s sufferings—and then you look at what Paul went through and you think of the troubles you go through—not even to be compared. So this, our fellowship, is even more.

Now let’s come to Ephesians 3:9. If we expand this fellowshipping of God with His Spirit, with Christ, with the Father, we can put this under the ***true fellowship***. In other words, ***the very true purpose for our Christian lives is fellowshipping with God***. Now, if we keep that in mind, then that’s going to help us reach a greater understanding of the love of God; a greater understanding of fellowshipping with each other; a greater understanding of how we can live our lives in a way that’s pleasing to God.

Ephesians 3:8: “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ; and that I might enlighten all *as to what is the fellowship* of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ” (vs 8-9). Which means, brethren, God is taking you into His full confidence and let’s you partake of the secret plan of God that we are literally going to be the sons of God. That is something! I tell you, it is something!

Now, when we get into the conflict of the world. Let’s go to 2-Corinthians 6:14. We are told that we are not to be partakers, or that is ‘have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.’ 2-Corinthians 6:14, Paul writes—and here’s how I translated it: “...And what [participation] fellowship... [‘communion’ (KJV)—but it means *fellowship* or *participation*.] ...*does* [righteousness] Light *have* with [lawlessness] darkness?... [And yet, we read what the leaders are doing to the Church: the junking of the Church of God doctrine. What fellowship does it have? Or ***what fellowship does Light have with darkness?*** Now, we’re going to see how that ties in with the first chapter of 1-

John.] ...And what union [harmony] *does* Christ have with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer have with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?...” (vs 15-16).

Now it says in the *King James* ‘the temple’—but in the Greek it is ‘**a** temple.’ What are our bodies? *Temple of God, if so be that you have the Spirit of God.* Now, I’m going to expand on this in the Feast of Tabernacles, because our bodies, brethren, are a **temporary tabernacle** for the Spirit of God. And we can think on that and expand on it more.

“...For you are a temple of *the* living God... [and if we could say: ‘if you have the Spirit of God in you.’] ...exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ‘Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (vs 16-18).

2-Corinthians 7:1: “Now the, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, **perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.**”

And that’s what the true fellowship of God really is: ***Christ living in you, God the Father in you by the Spirit of God***—and that fellowship then is a daily thing. Now, when that is done on a daily basis by all of those who have the Spirit of God, how much more and how much greater then is it when we come together to fellowship together and do so on the Sabbath—and let God’s Spirit be here to teach us; let God’s Spirit be here to guide us—and ***let this be a day that pleases God.*** Well, I think that the overall result of that is really quite tremendous.

Just one other verse I want to cover here in *being partakers*. Let’s go to 2-Peter 1:1—here we find that Peter really gives us in an encapsulated summary, some very, very inspiring things. “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power... [through God’s Spirit] ... has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become **partakers**... [fellowshippers, sharers, receivers] ...of the Divine nature...” (vs 1-4). Now that is through God’s Holy Spirit. That’s something! And *partaker* comes from the same word as *fellowshipping*, to be *participating in*; to be

receiving of. And so, that is on an ongoing daily basis. Absolutely on an ongoing daily basis!

Let’s come back to 1-John, the first chapter, 1 and let’s get into some things that are very important. Let’s go ahead and, and we’ll read from verse four down through the end of the chapter, and this gives us the foundation of the very basics of Christian living. And the very things that we need to cling to in understanding the Truth of God in very difficult times. And also, I just want to mention here, that 1st, 2nd, 3rd John are ***really high-level New Testament teachings based upon the basics of Christ.*** And that there is not one direct quotation from the Old Testament. ***Isn’t that something?*** Not one direct quotation from the Old Testament! Now for some people that will get them all upset, but let them be upset nevertheless.

1-John 1:4: “These things we are also writing to you, so that your [our] joy may be completely full... [he’s including himself and everyone with that.] ...And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, **but we are walking in the darkness**, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth... [And that’s literally what it means, ***practicing.***] ...However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, own Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us” (vs 4-10). So that’s quite an important and profound section.

Now let’s come and look at this thing concerning *Light* and concerning ***darkness***. Now, Ed made quite a few, I think, profound statements concerning the Light and concerning darkness. So, I would like to just mention some of those as we start going more deeply into this particular section and see how it ties in with our lives.

Concerning the Light: No one is running to the Light, they are running away from it. Why? ***Because:***

- *the* Light is ***painful***
- *the* Light is ***exposing***
- *the* Light is ***purging***

For example: people like to have a candlelight dinner, so to speak. Because the light is soft, it’s not exposing, it is not threatening. But the Light that comes from God is so brilliant; and Light in this

particular case, when we're talking about God, represents everything of God:

- His *Truth*
- His *glory*
- His *level of existence*

—and the fact that His Word is *Light and it is Truth*. And therefore, Light is purging. We'll see how this ties in with *Truth and with Light*.

Let's see some important things concerning darkness in relationship to Light. Let's go to the Gospel of John, and let's understand that there are some things in the Bible which are very important concerning Light and darkness. What is one of the first things that we learn in the very first verses? As we're recalling, in the Gospel of John the first chapter refers back to the Creation.

- What is the first thing that we learn concerning God and the Creation in Genesis the first chapter?
- *"In the beginning was God."*
- What covered the face of the earth?
- *Darkness!*
- Who brought Light?
- *God did—"Let there be light and there was light."*

The whole lesson of the Bible is contained in the very first part of the book of Genesis. **Only God can bring Light. Only God can bring truth.**

Here in the Gospel of John 1:4: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness... [And that's what men don't like! I mean, look at some of the congressmen. Look at the President. If you shine **'the pure Light of Truth'** into their lives, nothing would be left. Now there's also something that's important that this tells us]: ...but the **darkness does not comprehend it**" (vs 4-5). Now, it also means that the darkness does not **overcome** the Light.

So there's one thing that's very important concerning the Light of God's Spirit in us, which is that Satan the devil can never overcome it, brethren. We have to voluntarily give it up. So what is Satan's job? What is his tactic? *To get us to voluntarily give it up!* And that's why John was writing in the way that he wrote of Light and darkness, of truth and error, of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, keeping the commandments of God, the difference between God—who cannot lie—and the liars who come in and tell half-truths to try to bring the deception.

Now let's come to John 3, and this ties exactly in with it; and this is what Ed was bringing out in, in such a clear, clear way when he said: 'No one runs to the Truth.' Remember what happened when God came down on Mt. Sinai, to bring the Ten

Commandments? The Light and the power—the people couldn't stand it! They ran *away*—not *to*! And isn't it true in our own lives when you're caught in a mistake and doing something wrong, you don't want to hear it? *Yes!* I don't! you don't!

John 3:18, because this contains a whole section here. This is very important in our Christian living on a day-to-day basis. "The one who believes in Him is not [condemned] judged..." Please, brethren, ***grasp and understand that!*** If you believe in Jesus Christ and have the Spirit of God in you, ***God does not condemn you.*** When you sin, *which you do*, we confess our sins (as we will see) and He ***cleanses*** us from those. That's what's so important and that's part of our fellowshiping with God; our fellowshiping with Christ. And if we can grasp that, and we can understand that, and realize the tremendous calling that God has given us, it is so powerful and uplifting! It is absolutely so great! And when you, you combine that with the love of God—and this is what you are seeking, striving for, fellowshiping for, partaking of every day—then, I tell you what, it helps overcome human nature, so that you don't *desire* to sin. ***That's the whole point of Christian growth and overcoming.***

"...the one who does not believe has **already** been [condemned] judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God... [They make their own condemnation. No one has to stand up and point a finger.] ...And this is the judgment [condemnation]: that the Light has come into the world... [that is Christ—He was the Light] ...but **men loved darkness...**" (vs 18-19). And that is true in the simplest form: that most crime and evil takes place at night or at dark. And you look at the places of entertainment that men love, and they are dark—and many of the bars and many of the dance halls have psychedelic lights. These lights are moving. And do you know what that does to the human mind? *It hypnotizes you and takes away your character of choice so you will do things which are not right.*

Now I saw part of a very interesting special—I forget exactly when it was, maybe it was last evening before Sabbath. You've heard of 'whirling derby'—haven't you? Where a person gets out and dances around and around and around and around and around. And I never knew where that came from. But it showed this whole Muslim group where they were all going around spinning around in circles. Now there was this was this bigger circle and they were all going around individually, spinning around in a circle. They had their arms out like this and they just would hold their head back—and the whole purpose of that spinning was to get their minds off of everything in the world and to think of nothing, and so that they could be possessed—that's really what it was.

Now, they would not like someone coming in to say that is evil and that is wrong and that is not of God! They love darkness, their deeds are evil. “For everyone... [now let me read this in the *King James*] ...that does... [and that means *practices or lives by*] ...evil **hates the Light ...**” [Can’t stand the Light, doesn’t want the Light, doesn’t want the Truth—and when it gets so bad, so, so bad in practicing evil, people come to the point that they cannot tell the truth, even when the truth is more plausible. Have you ever met someone like that? I think it’s absolutely amazing! There is no one in prison who is there because a crime was committed by that person—whoever you talk to. Nearly everyone is framed. Nearly everyone is there because of an unjust reason. They hate the truth. Very rare is the hardened criminal who will admit ‘I’m a hardened criminal and I deserve death’—because truly then Light has come into his life. They hate it.] “... neither comes to the Light, lest his deeds should be [exposed] reprov’d” (v 20).

And I’m telling you, brethren, the way they’re exchanging Light for darkness and Truth for error and the doctrines of God for the doctrines of men and demons, they’re truly **walking away from the Light**. They’re not coming to it, and they’re not coming back to it ‘lest their deeds be exposed.’ And there’s something also very interesting about the light. And I know Ed has done a lot of thinking on this because he’s given some very important analogies for us, and here’s another one: When you first start leaving the light, by turning your back on it, to walk in a different direction. Instead of coming to the light, you’re walking away from the light. Now if you have been coming to the Light —Christ, God

- letting your life be purified
- growing in grace and knowledge and understanding
- fellowshiping with God’s Spirit in you and Christ in you

—and then you turn and start going the other way—what is a phenomena that is true? **Around you it still appears that you are in the Light**. And you walk away from it step-by-step-by-step, so when you do, right at first and for quite a while you think you’re still in the Light —but *you’re walking away* from it.

This is what it’s talking about here: “For everyone who is practicing evil hates the Light, neither is coming to the Light lest his deeds be reprov’d. But **he that does Truth comes to the Light**, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (20-21, *KJV*). Now, not only is this true in the sense of us as individuals, but this is also true specifically concerning Christ.

- Was Christ the Light? *Yes*

- Was He always coming to the Father, Who’s called “the Father of Light”? *Yes*
- Was He always practicing the Truth? *Yes*

So this fellowshiping and living in the Light and walking in the Truth is so very, very important and profound for us to know and for us to understand.

Let’s come to John 8:12: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world...’” Why?

- because He was the Son of God
- He was bringing the Truth of God
- He was bringing the salvation of God
- He was bringing the righteousness of God
- He was the expressed image of the Father
- He was the Light of the world

“...the one who **follows** Me... [Now the most important thing in our Christian life is to follow Christ. And the most important thing that we can do as teachers and ministers is to help everyone of the brethren follow Christ.] ...the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.” Who is the ‘prince of darkness’? *We know that’s Satan the devil*.

Let’s come to John 12. The reason I’m going through the book of John first is to show that John was really conveying many important messages to us, many important writings to us through the Light of God and the darkness of this world. John 12:35—and here I think, brethren, is a very profound verse for the Church today. We know that the day of reckoning is coming all the way around. But you see, the day of reckoning always seems a long way away. Why? *Because events kind of come up on us a bit at a time, a bit at a time, a bit at a time*. And when that happens, we don’t realize the full magnitude of what is happening **until** we finally get there. If I could use an analogy here, let’s use one: Remember the potato chip—remember those good, thin, crispy potato chips that you can’t eat just one! But you eat one and another, and another, and another, and another and lo and behold the bag is empty! I’ve done that. So it’s the same way in the Church today. We are getting closer and closer and closer to the end and every event that transpires is like the eating of that one next potato chip. And when the bag is empty, the end has arrived. So, it’s the same way with *walking in the Light*.

John 12:35: “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Yet a little while the Light is with you...’” Now, let’s apply that to the Church. Let’s apply that to the church. Remember Matt. 25 and the parable of the ten virgins: they took their lamps, five were wise, five were foolish and their lamps were going out. Why? *Because they didn’t have the fellowship of*

God with His Spirit. They didn't have the oil which is the Spirit of God.

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They did not have the commandments of God, which they were to keep, and that's why in the book of 1-John—when you study ahead for our series we are doing—in John the second chapter it talks about **commandment-keeping!** Know for sure that if you are keeping the commandments of God, *you are walking in the Light of the laws and commandments of God.* If you are keeping the commandments of God with the Spirit of God in you, then you have the Light of Life within you—Christ with you—and you are keeping the commandments of God in Light. So, when Christ said, 'Yet a little while the Light is with you.' The prophecy **will be fulfilled**, brethren, when there's going to be a famine of the hearing of the Word. Some people wonder if that is not even now. The time **will come** when the end will be upon us. And unless we have Christ in us, we're going to be in difficulty.

John 12:35 "Walk while you have the Light... [In other words, just like in John 3:19, 'the one who is coming to the Light'] ...so that *the* darkness will not overtake you." And when darkness comes upon you then you're going to be hearing the most profound, ridiculous statements! That's how you know that they're walking back into darkness. Now, it appears that there's still light there, because they haven't left the light entirely and the light shining on their back as they look ahead, they can still see—but not as clearly.

Now, it's just like when, when you say, park your car at night and you need to see where you're going, so you turn on the headlights and then you have to stop and get out of the car and go forward and examine something that you see that is in the way. Now, the further you go away from the lights of the car, the dimmer that those lights are. And it's the same way with *the Light of God's Spirit, the Light of God's Truth*: the further you get away from it, the longer you stay away from it, the more that you are bringing darkness into your way of living, or bringing in the doctrines of this world, the darker it becomes!

Now notice what Jesus said: "...so that *the* darkness will not overtake you. For the one who walks in darkness **does not know where he is going**.... [Now, that tells us an awful lot. That tells us also that's why doctrines become confused because they don't know where they're going. They are leaving the Light. They are viewing things with the darkness. The light of darkness instead of the Light of Truth—if I could put it that way.] ...While you have the Light, believe in the Light, **so that you may become *the* children of Light**" (vs 35-36).

And that's what we're to be, brethren. That's the whole basic theme of the Epistle of 1-John, the children of Light, who are the children of God vs the children of darkness, who are the children of the devil.

Now, let's see something that is very profound concerning the darkness and how it affects us. Let's go to Luke 22 and we will see who's the *prince* of darkness, who is the *author* of darkness.

- And how does he appear?
- How does Satan appear?
- *As an angel of light.*
- Is there such a thing as black light?
- ***Yes, there is!***

Luke 22:51: "But Jesus answered *and* said, 'That is enough!' Then He touched his ear *and* healed him." That's after Peter cut off his ear. I'm sure he was not aiming for the ear. I'm sure Peter was going for the neck. And he turned his head and sliced his ear, and Jesus said, 'Ok, that's enough,' and healed his ear. I've often wondered, I've often wondered: I wonder what that soldier thought. You would remember it—wouldn't you? If someone came after you with a sword, full force and you ducked and turned your head and your ear was cut off. Big glob of blood all over and this evil man you're arresting said, 'That's enough!' and reached up and touched you and healed your ear. I mean many of us can remember when we just take a hammer and smash our thumb real good—right? This would be a profound event. Just a little aside as we're going.

"And Jesus said to those who had come out against Him, *the* chief priests and captains of the temple and elders, 'Have you come out, as against a thief, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not stretch out *your* hands against Me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness'" (vs 52-53). ***Yep! power of darkness.***

Let's go to Isaiah 60, because it shows how the whole world is. Now, if you have the *Messiah*—there is a song sung by the baritone which is really a tremendous song. Now, I actually heard it sung by a soprano once and it didn't have the same force. Whenever you convey something that is evil and dark—in a musical sense—you don't use the high notes. Notice on every ad, everything that you watch in drama or a movie or something, when there's something that is nice and sweet and emotional they play soft, high notes—don't they? *Yes.* And when you find yourself watching a movie or a television program where they are doing this and you're getting emotionally involved and tears about ready to come, to come streaming down your face, just go turn off the sound and then watch it. You won't be

ready to cry. I did that one time. I was sitting there watching this movie and it was very emotional, and I notice that they were playing this music. And I was sitting there and I was ready to cry, I was! I was getting all choked up and everything like this and I said what are you doing, Fred? So, I tried that, I went and turned off the sound—I wasn't ready to cry. Now, when they portray something that is evil, something that is horrible, they use dark, deep, bass tones—don't they? And in the *Messiah*, the bass sings: "For behold darkness has covered the earth." And he gets down there in the bass and gross darkness, and you just really get this feeling of darkness. Well, that's what the world is in!

Isaiah 60:1: "Arise, shine; for your Light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you.... [That's a prophecy of Christ] ...Light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you, for, behold, the **darkness** shall cover the earth, and **gross darkness the people...** [so if you're going back into the world, that's what you're going back into—**gross darkness**] ...but the LORD shall arise upon you, and his glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (vs 1-3). There's the prophecy of the coming of Christ and the whole application of the Church.

Now let's go to Matthew 4:14, and see where Matthew pointed out that this was fulfilled by Christ. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying, 'The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, *by the way of the sea*, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people who were sitting in darkness have seen a great Light; and to those who were sitting in *the realm and shadow of death*, Light has sprung up [to them]" (vs 14-16). Now, it's talking about Christ, the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Now let's come to Matthew, the sixth chapter, and let's see something that's very important concerning light and darkness and concerning the power of darkness. Matthew 6:22: "The light of the body is the eye..." Now, what does it say about the eyes of Christ in His glorified form? *His countenance is as the sun in full strength, and His eyes as a flame of fire.* "The light of the body is the eye..." There are so many things you can tell about the eyes. All moms and dads know they can tell when their kids are lying—just look at them in the eyes.

If you want to see something very interesting, when you go down to the post office next time, you walk up to the, to the 'wanted by the FBI' section, and you take a look at the eyes of those who are the criminals, who have committed heinous crimes. Very important! You watch the eyes of some of these politicians. They get on, you watch some of

the Sunday newscasts, and you watch them. And the one that just blows my mind is Bob Dole. He gets on there and his eyes look like they're a merry-go-round. They're just going back and forth, back and forth, around and around. He can never look you straight in the eye. You can never feel that you've really have made contact with a person that you can know assuredly that that contact is right and true.

Now notice what He says: "...Therefore, if your eye be sound, your whole body shall be *full of light*.... [And that is single-purposed, single towards God, then it'll be full of light.] ...But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be *full of darkness*. Therefore, if the light that *is* in you be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!" (vs 22-23). So there is such a thing as 'enlightened darkness'—**dark light**. Who is the 'prince of the power of the air'? *Satan is!* He is the one who brings the darkness. He says, 'How great is that darkness.'

Let's go to Colossians, first chapter. Christ is come to bring us out of that darkness. Christ is come to bring us in the Light and in the Truth and in the power and glory of God through His Holy Spirit. There is **the power of darkness which grips this world**, and that is of Satan the devil. Speaking of Christ: Colossians 1:13 "Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love." And of course that darkness is **of the world**.

Now let's go to Acts 26 for just a minute, showing the whole mission of the Apostle Paul. Now what he said that his preaching the Gospel was to do. Acts 26:17: "'I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles... [that is sparing Paul from the people and the Gentiles] ... to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, that *they* may turn from darkness to Light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God... [and when that happens] ...so that they may receive remission of sins... [Now, when we go back and read 1-John 1 and those verses we just read, what are we talking about? *From darkness to Light; forgiveness of sin; confession of sin.* See how it follows right exactly along with what we have here.] ...and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me'" (vs 17-18). And that inheritance is eternal life. Eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God. So that's why the book of 1-John is so absolutely important.

Let's go to Ephesians 6—where it talks about these powers and it talks about the darkness. And boy, I tell you, there's never been a time when we have seen this happen as it is happening right today. Ephesians 6:10^[transcriber's correction]: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the Lord*... [and that's the whole thing John is trying to tell us in 1-John—

we're going to see how absolutely perfectly all the writings of the Gospel fit together.] ...Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the Lord*, and in the **might of His strength**."

Brethren, let's all do that and ***be strong in the Lord and the power of His might***. There are a lot of brethren that need to be turned back to God. There are a lot of brethren that need to be healed. And I think that if we're going to be 'walking in the Light' that God is going to be with us and there will be those things. There will be the healings. There will be the interventions. I saw a special on this Peter Pop-off. Have you ever heard of Peter Pop-off? Well, Peter Pop-off was an evangelist, and when he preached he 'popped off.' He had healing campaigns. They finally caught him because he 'popped offed' once too much. But his wife, Mrs. Pop-off would be back of the stage and she would have these little introductory cards that everyone filled out with the name and the address and their telephone number—and if they came because they needed to be healed, what illness they had. And she was back there 'popping off' to Pop-off and telling him the names over a wireless radio that he had in his ear. And he would be out there and he would 'pop-off' the name of the individual; and "pop-off" their sickness; walk up there, lay hands on them, pop them off and knock them on the floor. It was amazing!

So there was this one mailman, and he says, 'I'm going to catch me a pop-off.' So he and his friends got these radio detecting things and picked up the conversation from Mrs. Pop-off who is popping-off to Mr. Pop-off and they caught him popping-off. And what they would do—he even shaved his head and put on different disguises—he would go into where he was meeting, he would fill out a card with a different name, a different address, and he would fake all of this. And sure enough, he got called three different times. And people look at that and think that that is what religion is all about. And then you get these exposés to show that Pop-off was a pop-off and in his popping-off it was a fake-off. Not the truth.

And so, when I read something like this, brethren, where it says: 'Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.' I just pray, brethren, that God will give us the capacity to do the things in healing and in serving—that the people can truly be healed, because there are a lot of people who are sick. There are a lot of people who have broken hearts. There are a lot of people who are dispirited. And they need help and they need healing. But it can only come if we're strong in the Lord.

Now, in our individual lives, it says: 'Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to

stand against the wiles of the devil.... [Who is the 'prince of the power of the air,' who is the 'power of darkness.'] ...Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*...." (vs 11-12). And that's why it's a shame, brethren, it's a shame that he Church of God that we know, that we were originally called into is walking step-by-step right back into the world and *bringing in the dark light of the darkness of this world*. Because it's not only the darkness of this world, but 'against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.'

So then, "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand" (v 13). That's what the whole book of 1-John is about, to be able to ***stand!***

- ***stand*** in the Light
- ***walk*** in the Light
- ***live*** in the Light
- ***be in*** the Light
- ***be cleansed*** of God

—and all of these things are so very, very important for us.

Now, let's go back to 1-Peter 2:9. Let's really get a glimpse of our calling as Peter let us know, as we know and understand, as God has given it to us. Now, I want you to really think on this, brethren. Now, if you get discouraged, you get down, you feel God has gone way off some place, He really hasn't—remember this: 1-Peter 2:9: "But you *are* a chosen stock...

- God Himself has *called* you.
- God Himself has *given* you of His Spirit.
- God Himself has *given* you of His Light.

...a royal priesthood... [and that's what we're going to be. We're going to be kings and priests with Christ] ...a Holy nation, a people for a possession of God, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous Light; who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God... [that's what we are, the people of God] ...who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy. Beloved, I exhort *you*, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your way of life honest among the Gentiles so that although they speak against you as evil doers, through having witnessed *your* good works, they may glorify God in *the day of visitation*" (vs 9-12).

Now, let's go back to the 1-John 1:5: "And this the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is Light, and there is

no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not **practicing the Truth**.... [Now let's look at this aspect of 'the Light.'] ...However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another..." (vs 5-7)—and also that's fellowship with Christ and God the Father.

Let's come to the book of Ephesians and let's see how all of this flows along in our Christian living—in the Light *that we are to be walking in and practicing the Truth*. Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them. For you were once darkness; but now *you are* Light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of Light, (because the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and Truth).... [Now notice, what the Spirit of God has to do with, the fruit of it:] ...Proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*" (vs 1-11).

So then again we have the contrast of Light and of darkness and showing how we need to walk in the Light of God.

- 1-John Scriptures from *The Seven General Epistles* translation by Fred R. Coulter—except where noted
- All other N.T. Scriptures from: *The New Testament in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter—except where noted
 - Old Testament Scriptures from the *King James Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-John 1:3
- 2) Romans 15:27
- 3) 1-Corinthians 1:9
- 4) Philippians 1:5- 6
- 5) Philippians 2:1-5
- 6) Philippians 3:10
- 7) Ephesians 3:8-9
- 8) 2-Corinthians 6:14-18
- 9) 2-Corinthians 7:1
- 10) 2-Peter 1:1-4
- 11) 1-John 1:4-10
- 12) John 1:4-5
- 13) John 3:18-21

- 14) John 8:12
- 15) John 12: 35-36
- 16) Luke 22:51-53
- 17) Isaiah 60:1-3
- 18) Matthew 4:14-16
- 19) Matthew 6:22-23
- 20) Colossians 1:13
- 21) Acts 26:17-18
- 22) Ephesians 6:10-13
- 23) 1-Peter 2:9-12
- 24) 1-John 1:5-7
- 25) Ephesians 5:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 1
- Matthew 25

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- Romans
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- James
- 1-2 Peter & Jude

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