

First Epistle of John IV

Fred R. Coulter—June 25, 1994

We're still in 1-John, and let's cover a little bit more concerning that God is light. Let's go to 1-John 1:5 and let's just refresh our, our memory here: "And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is **not any darkness in Him at all.**" And as I mention it, it refers to the fact that God—everything about God—is contained in that statement:

- *God is Light*
- *God has glory*
- *God has light*, like the sun

—so therefore, men in their foolishness, worship the sun. And men, in their foolishness, draw analogies between God the Father and Christ in comparison to a flame. That is not what it means at all.

- Light also means *Truth*.
- Light also means *the way of God*.

So where it is talking about "God is light and in Him is not **any darkness at all,**" means that you cannot accuse God of sin, of things that are evil. And then that ties right in later (as we will see) *God is love*.

Now let's look at this. Let's go to Psalm 104:2—and let's show some more concerning *God is Light*. Now, if you want a full-fledged study in the Bible—which I will encourage you to do; and when we go through and study like this, I also do it from the point of view to help inspire you study your Bible more—go ahead and study about *Light and darkness* all the way through the Bible, and I think you will find that it's quite revealing. Psalm 104:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who covers *yourself with light* as *with a garment...*" (vs 1-2).

Now, it's talking about the *very existence* of God. His level of existence is living in eternity. His level of existence is that His whole spiritual body, and His whole spiritual being is like looking at the sun in full strength. Now, when Moses asked God, 'Show me Your glory and it will suffice me,' God answered and said—and this is the One Who became Jesus Christ: 'No man can see My face and live!' Why?

- The human being with the 'law of sin and death' in him cannot be in the pure presence of the glorified God and live!
- No sin can exist in His presence.
- No evil can exist in His presence.
- Flesh cannot exist at that level of existence.

So that's why God said, 'Now there's a crack in a rock here and I will pass by and I will show My glory but you cannot see My face and live—but you can see My back parts.' That was really, literally the backside of God that Moses saw. God is a person, God is a being, but His existence is likened unto *light* and He *clothes Himself with light*.

Now, let's go to Psalm 36:9—and you will see that all the way through, that what John is talking about *all the way* there is so much about light and darkness in the Bible; good and evil. Psalm 36:9: "For with You *is* the fountain of life: **in Your light shall we see light.**" Now the only way that God is going to give us understanding is through the *Light of His Holy Spirit* that He gives to us. And that's why that everything in Christ has been personified in Christ. 'I am **the Way, the Truth and the Life**. I am the **Light of the world.**' The only way that men can find the *truth* and the *light* of God is to have it brought down to their level—which is what God does.

Let's just turn back to Psalm 27:1: "The LORD *is* my **Light...**" So, when we're talking about that God *is Light*:

- We're talking about *His being*.
- We're talking about *His glory*.
- We're talking about *His way*.
- We're talking about *His laws*.
- We're talking about *His commandments and truth*.

Now let's go to John the eighth chapter, and we will see how Jesus Christ said, *clearly*, that *He was the Light of the world*. And when we understand the writings of John and the Epistles of John, we will see that John was really clearly showing that Christ is the *only way*—and yet, everyone is teaching salvation through some other way, through some other Christ, that you can receive the Holy Spirit without baptism. Well, the Bible doesn't teach that.

John 8:12: "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world... [Now the way that we can come into the *light of God* is through the Holy Spirit. And to *walk in the light*, which we will see is His Truth.] ...the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, **but shall have the Light of life.**" That's the whole key: ***We are to follow Christ!*** And we are going to see that when John is done with the section of light and darkness in the first chapter of 1-John, then he gets in: How then do you walk in that way? And the emphasis on commandment-keeping vs sin, and truth vs lying is so profound in 1-John that it really fits today. How can people in

today's world and today's climate in the Church of God find their way out of all the confusion that is going on. That's why 1-John was written. *Study and live by 1-John*—a very profound book!

Let's go to John 12:35: "Then Jesus said to them, "Yet a little while the Light is with you. Walk while you have the Light, so that *the* darkness will not overtake you. For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going." ***That's the whole exemplification of the Christian walk.*** Now, let's tie that back in with what we covered last week in John 3. Because the whole Christian life can be summarized in:

- Are you walking in the Light?
- Are you coming to the Light?
- Are you following the Light?

—which then is God—God's Word, God's Spirit.

John 3:19: "And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the Light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed.... [And that's the whole thing we are supposed to be doing in our lives, brethren. And we're going to see how John then ties this right in with: forgiveness of sin, repentance, walking in Truth and fellowship with God—they all come together.] ...But the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God.*" (vs 19-21).

So let's come back here to John 12:35 again. When the darkness descends upon you, you don't know where you are going. Have we seen that happen? Have we seen that happen to people who turn their backs on the Light instead of coming to the Light? *They turn their backs and they walk away from the Light and they walk further and further and further and further from the Light*—and pretty soon it's only a distant flicker in the background. And they are in darkness and the darkness has covered their eyes. And just like Jesus said, 'He doesn't know where he is going.' But, when you are walking in the light which is darkness, Satan's light—because Satan appears as an 'angel of light'—when you've turned your back on the ***true Light*** you think the 'dark light' now is the illumination and truth. ***But it's not!*** So that's why John has written this, so we can have these contrasts, and so we can understand the Truth from error, so we can understand righteousness from sin, so we can understand Light from darkness. So it is really a *very simple* book, but it's a *very profound* book. It is one which helps us. As one woman said, after she read some theological trash, 'I threw it out!' Because she could see the Truth and the Light from the error and the darkness.

So he says, John 12:36: "While you have the Light, believe in the Light [Christ], so that you may become *the* children of Light.'...." And that's what we want to be, brethren, the children of God, 'the children of light.' That's the whole thing that John is writing.

We will see how all of this then becomes personified in Christ, as we will see in Revelation, the first chapter—how Christ looks. Now, let's understand something: This also reveals that Christ is God, that God is a person, that God has shape and that God has form and that spirit has shape and spirit has form. Now He had to show it to him in vision because he couldn't see Him directly face-to-face. This is the One Who says, 'I am the Beginning and the Ending.'

Revelation 1:10: "...I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last... [He also says in v 8: '*...the Beginning and the Ending...*'] ...What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia.'.... [and he lists all the seven churches] ...And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands; and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man..." (Rev. 1:11, 8, 11-13).

That tells you what His form is. Always remember this, brethren, it is fundamental: ***The Bible teaches that we have been made in the image of God.*** 'Male and female made He them.' Image is a reflection of the reality. ***The reality is God!*** and we have been *made in His image*. That's why when Philip asked Jesus, 'show us the Father and it will be sufficient' (John 14:7-9). Jesus said, 'If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father.' In other words, to see Christ in the flesh would be to see what the Father looks like if He appeared in the flesh. Now I know that Scripture is going to be twisted so that people will say that, yes, it's just one God. But it doesn't mean that at all. It just answered a simple question with a direct, visible answer. Now here's what Christ looks like in His glorified form:

Verse 13: "...clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet... [We read the Psa. where He *covers Himself with light*, clothes Himself with light. There are things made of spirit, which are ***things***. And the thing made of spirit is for spirit beings to use. Physical things, such as a shirt or a dress or a coat or shoes would burn up in the presence of a spirit being. So you must have spirit things—spirit clothes, spirit sea of glass, spirit throne—made of spirit things. Those spirit things are not living beings. They are made of spirit ***for*** spiritual beings. So there is such a thing as a spirit garment.] ...and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His

head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire... [so bright, so powerful, so piercing] ... And His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword [the Word of God]..." (vs 13-16). Not that He had a tongue from which a sword went out of. But, why is the Word of God called 'a sharp two-edged sword'? Let's think about this for a minute.

What is the Word of God? **Truth!** That's right. So when anything is confronted with Truth, if there is error in it—guess what? *schwit!!!!* And that's what we need to be doing with the Word of God, brethren. And that's how the Word of God needs to be in our lives and needs to be preached. Let's just read into the record—let's go back to Hebrews the fourth chapter, and I'm sure you're all familiar with this. But we need to understand how **profound** the Word of God is, and why Jesus Christ came and was called 'the Word of God.'

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living... ['quick' (KJV). The Word of God is **living**; it's not dead. Means the same thing in the same place in whatever circumstances, down through history forever and ever. It is **living!** Why? *Because God spoke it!*] ...**and powerful...**" There is nothing more powerful than the Word of God. And I think, brethren, unless we're walking in the light of God's Word we're not going to grow in the power of God's Word; unless we're walking in the Truth. It's the same way in our lives. It's the same way in preaching. And some of the things we see now coming out in the name of some of these churches—**it's pabulum!** Moreover, it's *poisonous* pabulum. And worst than that, it is **dark** pabulum. Coming from the light that is darkness—not coming from the Light that is Truth. But here's what's going to happen to them, and this is what John is talking about in the Epistles of John—and that's why they are so **powerful!** Because it's bringing the pure Truth of God, the pure Light of God.

"...and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both **soul and spirit**.... [Now, that's why, brethren, (as we will see) when you sin you get a guilty conscience. It is God's Spirit **convicting** you of that sin. So that you may repent, because God wants us to repent. And that's the whole ongoing situation with Christians.] ...*and of both the joints and the marrow*... [Now, why does he use 'marrow'? *The marrow of the bones is the physical life where the blood is produced.* So, right down into the very essence of human existence] ...*and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart*" (v 12).

So, you see, it's not going to be like this thing in Los Angeles—can we get a jury to convict O.J.? **God knows!** It doesn't matter what the defense may or may not do. It doesn't matter what the prosecution may or may not do. Now you know, brethren, why there has to be a final judgment—and God is the One Who's going to judge the secrets of men. Because how many things have been done that human beings don't know? That have been held secret? That have been held back? That have been perpetrated on people? God is going to know, and the judgment is going to happen and everyone is going to come before the judgment seat of Christ. And **everyone** is going to give an account of himself. **Because God knows!** Now, it's no difficult task for God. There is the 'spirit of man,' which is recorded upon it everything we've ever said or done—period! That's why we need grace and forgiveness and mercy **constantly**.

Now verse 13: "And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight... [Why? *Because when you come to the light, the light exposes your living and your evil.* That's why those who are walking in darkness don't want to come to the light. But they're going to be forced to one of these days.] ...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account. Having therefore a great High Priest... [that's fantastic, brethren] ...*Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet *He was* without sin" (vs 13-15).

Now, I want you to understand: every time we come to *light and truth*, then there is sin and there is repentance and there is cleansing, as the way that John wrote. So it says here, v 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Now let's just finish off over here with, with Revelation 1:16: "...went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power." If you get where it's plenty hot enough, anything that truly has life in it cannot even exist in the power of the sun. But, that shows what Christ looks like. Now you know why a human being cannot live in the Divine presence of God. You can't even look at the sun for 15 minutes and not go blind if you truly stared directly into the sun. So that's the kind of light we are dealing with.

Now let's cover just a couple of other things before we go back to the Epistle of 1-John. Let's come and see that **the commandments and the laws**

bring us Light. Psalm 43:3—not only is the Lord Light, but everything that God does is in the Light. Everything that God produces light. The laws and commandments of God produce a way for us that is light. Psalm 43:3: “O send out Your Light and Your Truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Your Holy hill, and to Your tabernacles..... [Now, what is this telling us? *He’s walking in the Light.* Coming to His Holy hill, coming to His tabernacle.] ...Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise You, O God my God” (vs 43:3-4).

Psalm 97:11—so it shows the **way of** Truth, the **way of** Light — “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His Holiness” (vs 11-12).

Psalm 119—as we have covered many times, shows the profound, converted attitude toward everyone of God’s laws and statutes and judgments and commandments and precepts and way and word. That is a whole deep and profound study in itself. Psalm 119:105: “Your Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.... [v 130]: ...The entrance of Your words **gives light**; it gives understanding unto the simple.” So, when you combine all of these together, this shows what the true Christian life is, **walking in the light.**

Now, one more in Proverbs 6:23: “For the commandment *is* a lamp; **and the law is light.**...” So, no wonder when John is done with the light and dark section he talks about keeping the commandments of God. And then he makes no uncertain comparison. Let’s go back to 1-John again.

1-John 1:5: “ 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 in Him at all. If we are proclaiming that we have fellowship with Him, and we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth” (vs 5-6). Which shows then that the only way that you’re going to have fellowship with God is to be **walking in the Light.** Now another thing, ‘if you are walking in darkness and saying you are having fellowship with Him [Christ], we are lying to ourselves.’ This is the Greek verb which I told you about, which is the verb that expresses something in Greek which is not exactly expressed in English. It is something that you yourself are doing to yourself. If you tell a lie do you still know what the truth is? *Yes, because you know the truth and you know the lie!* And generally if you tell a lie, you are telling it to someone else. That’s bad enough. But what is so wrong about lying to yourself and you’re doing it to yourself is that, **the lie becomes truth in your mind.** So when you’re lying to yourself in that way **you can no longer distinguish truth from a lie.** And

that’s what’s so profound about it. And that’s what’s so profound on the political scene today. So many lies are being told that no one knows what a lie is! And definitions are being changed constantly so no one knows what the truth is. And that’s what happens when you are lying to yourself and you are doing it to yourself. Now notice v 7: “However, if we are walking in the Light, [how?] **as He is in the Light...**”

Now, let’s go to James, the first chapter. **As God is in the light!** Now that is an ultimate thing— isn’t it? Isn’t that the *ultimate* of how we need to be walking? *Yes, it is!* James, the first chapter—let’s see what it talks about: *God and the Father and fellowship,* and the whole thing is just absolutely profound.

James 1:17: “Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights... [Who has so much light that]: ...with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning.” Now, that’s a profound light—isn’t it? That’s what it means to be ‘walking in the light **as He is in the light.**’ So then, translated to us, that means:

- How constant should be **our walk?**
- How constant should be **our belief?**
- How constant should be **our conviction?**

Verse 18—which gets into the fellowship: “According to His own will, He begat us by *the* Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings.” The **creation** of His family.

Let’s go to Revelation, the 21st chapter—ultimately that fellowship and that light is going to be profoundly expressed. Now let’s understand something here: today we are to be ‘the light of the world’ because we have the Spirit of God. We are walking in God’s way. We are fellowshiping with God—correct? And we are fellowshiping with God because He is Light; because we’re walking in Light, and He’s given us His Spirit. We’re still talking about the Light of God, but in relationship to our walking with Him. The theme *all the way through* the book of Revelation is *the Beginning and the Ending.* And I’m going to bring some sermons referring to each Holy Day. That with each Holy Day is *a beginning and an ending.* And with everything that God does with us, there’s a *beginning and an ending.*

The beginning is that God calls us. Leads us to repentance. We’re baptized. We receive the Holy Spirit of God. And with the Holy Spirit of God, Christ is in us—*the hope of glory.* We are fellowshiping with God, and Jesus Christ the Son, because of the Holy Spirit in us. We are walking in the laws of God. We are walking in the

commandments of God, **which are Light and Truth**. God is *Light and Truth*. Now we are to be walking in it as He is walking in it; and what is the **ultimate** end of that Light? *When we are with God the Father!* When we are not only are part of the Light, but we are **the Light**, because we have glorification.

Now let's come here to Revelation 21:22: "And I saw no temple in it; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city has no need of the sun, or of the moon, that they should shine in it; because **the glory of God enlightens it, and the Light of it is the Lamb**" (vs 22-23). So the **ultimate of walking in the Light is to be living as spirit beings in New Jerusalem forever!** And that ending, brethren, then is a *new beginning*. What are we going to do for all eternity?

- Now that we are equipped
- Now that we will be in the Kingdom of God
- Now that we will have radiant glory
- Now that we can walk in the Light of the Lamb directly, because we will see Him.

If you think that God's plan now is fantastic. Do you want something to inspire you and to think on? We can't answer it because we won't know until then, which is: What is God's plan for all eternity? *It's got to involve the Universe. It's got to involve us.* Isn't that something? So it's worth it to walk in the Light. So if we're going to walk in the light, as He is in the Light — now let's see what this will do for us.

Notice what this does, 1-John 1:7: "However, if we are walking in the Light, as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [and truly our fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son—as we saw there in verse three] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ His own Son **cleanses us from every sin.**" *Every sin*—not just some part of the time—**but every sin**. *Cleansing us*—now that is in present tense. You see once you get into this relationship with God, then

- there is repentance
- there is forgiveness of sin
- there is wiping the slate clean constantly

What is Christ doing to the Church?

Let's go to Ephesians, the fifth chapter. Whenever, brethren, we are brought into this relationship with God, there is a *constant cleansing*; ongoing cleansing. And that's all a part of the grace of God. Here is what Christ is doing to the Church. Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it [making Holy], having cleansed it... ['katharizo'—*cleansing*] ...with the washing of water by the Word..." (vs 25-26).

That's why it's so very important for us to know and understand. Christ in us is the Word of God—correct? The Holy Spirit in us leads us in the Word of God—correct? **It is cleansing us from every sin**. How does it cleanse us from every sin? Well, the world lies in wickedness and they don't know what sin is. The world does not go through what we go through.

(go to the next track)

Now, I'm going to talk about sin in relationship to us first. That's why the first message we hear is *repent!* and be baptized for the remission of sins—**forgiveness and remission of sins**—and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now let's understand something. I need to interject in here—and this is very important—*repentance* is not just *turning from*. That's part of it. **Repentance is a deep and a profound conviction of sin!** And your turning from sin is a metamorphous, which is called **conversion**. You are to be changed **from the inside out**—not the *outside* in. And was that not the sin of the Pharisees? 'Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are like whited sepulchers. You're white indeed, and beautiful on the outside, **within** you're full of dead men's bones.' Christ said, 'Full well you make the platter clean, **but you don't clean that which is within.**' And so the Holy Spirit is that which **convicts us, to be clean within!** removing every blot, every blemish, every sin, because we're 'walking in the Light as He is in the Light.' And what does that do to converted Christians?

Romans 7:7—and this is the battle that true, deep and profoundly converted Christians go through. "What then shall we say? *Is the law sin?*.... [Now, most people think the law is sin, so when too many people are breaking the law, what do they do? *They get rid of the law*, so there is no more sin, because the carnal mind is that way. The carnal mind is not interested in getting rid of sin. The carnal mind is not convicted of sin like we are, because they don't have the Holy Spirit.] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, 'You shall not covet.'... [But even at that, you still don't understand the truth of covetousness. Just because the law defines it.] ...But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind of* lust because apart from law, sin was dead.... [Why? *Because where no law is there's no sin.*] ...For I was once alive without law.... [but he was a Pharisee. Now let's understand what we're really talking about here.] ...but after the commandment came... [Which means: *when the true understanding of the commandment came*—and also the true understanding of the commandment.

Remember how Paul was called? *He was, on his jackass going to Damascus to arrest those*—and all of a sudden what happened to him? *A blinding what? Light!* And what happened to his vision? *He went blind!* So we can also have an illusion to the commandment here of Paul to preach—not directly, but secondarily.] ...sin revived, and I died” (vs 7-9). No, Paul didn’t die, *but by baptism*. How *profound* is repentance? *So profound that you die!* How do you die? *You die the death of baptism. You are joined together in His death.* (Rom. 6).

He said, “And the commandment, which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me.... [Because now *he could not escape the consciousness of sin when he sinned.*] ...Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore, the law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good” (vs 10-12).

Now then, here’s a dilemma that’s hard for the carnal mind to even grasp. And this is why, brethren, the Church has to go beyond commandment-keeping in the letter of the law, *to commandment-keeping in spirit of the law*, to doing the things which are pleasing to God. And when you do that then the conviction of sin is going to be there and you’re going to wonder: Oh, God, when can I ever overcome sin? And that is a profound experience that only Christians go through—*because of God’s Spirit in them to convict them of the sin*. To do what? *To lead you to repentance*. And what are you going to find? *You’re going to find that you’re doing just exactly like the model prayer says: ‘Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses [daily].’ Yes!*

So this is some pretty profound stuff we’re going through here, brethren. So he brings up the question—v 13: “Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful.... [And that’s what happens with the Spirit of God.] ...For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold as a slave under sin.... [The only way you get out from under that is through Christ.] ...Because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is* what I do.... [So here is this battle going on within—this inner battle.] ...But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me” (vs 13-17).

You come to the realization and the true

conviction of mind that in your mind and your nature is a sinful nature and it is always there to cause you to sin—and *that is a conviction, which only a converted mind understands*. A carnal mind does not understand that. A carnal mind does not even know what sin is. A carnal mind does not have conviction of sin. All we have to do is witness some of these heinous crimes that come along. If a jury can be convinced that the perpetrator is the victim, instead of the one who has been killed, they’re off, and they have no consciousness of it.

Now let’s continue on: “...sin *that is* dwelling within me; because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good....” (17-18) That’s always a good one to read when we start getting all *high and mighty* and we start thinking we’re the *greatest* gift to God—no good thing! And the only way, brethren, that you see: In the world if a carnal-minded person were told ‘there is no good thing in you,’ they would have what psychologists would say, ‘low self-esteem.’ What that does, that pokes a hole in the pride—doesn’t it? Just like taking a balloon and sticking a pin in it—BAM! You have nothing left. Only a converted mind can handle that and still have the hope and the faith and the esteem which comes from Christ. There’s no good thing in it. Now you know why Christ said, when the young man came and said: ‘Good Master’—[Christ] said, ‘There’s none good but God, don’t call Me good.’ Because He was carrying human nature.

“...there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good... [the desire to do good] ... For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me. Consequently, I find this law *in my members*... [which is then

- by *conviction* of God’s Spirit
- by *conviction* of conversion
- by the *Light* of God’s Word
- the *Light* of God’s Truth
- the *Light* of God’s Spirit

...that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me” (vs 18-21). This is why we need to be *cleansed*. This is why we have the promise that the blood of Jesus Christ *is cleansing us* from *every sin! Every sin!* EVERY SIN! And when we really grasp that, the way that God wants it, that is so uplifting and that is so profound and that is so releasing, as it were; because then you know that you’re in God’s hands.

“For I delight in the law of God according to

the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind... [which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ—you see—which is in you. It's warring against us, which is the law of sin.] ...and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. **O what a wretched man I am!** (vs 23-24). Now I tell you what, brethren, without the Spirit of God you cannot contain the wretchedness of human nature and understand it to the point that you love God and know there's no good thing in you and realize that only through Christ can this be cleansed. So, now maybe this will help you even understand more about overcoming and human nature and the Spirit of God and the light that is to be in us.

"O what a wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death? I thank God for His salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.... [That's how the deliverance is going to come. So as we're walking in the Light as **He is in the Light**—the blood of Jesus Christ is cleansing us, **continuously, from every sin.**] ...Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with my mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, I serve the law of sin" (vs 24-25).

Now let's go three more verses on into Romans eight. Because this will help us to understand when we come to the kind of commandment-keeping that John is talking about. Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..." God gave you the 'law of sin and death' within your members. If you're walking the way that this describes here: *walking after Christ*. If you're walking in the Light, then the Spirit of God is cleansing you from every sin. Therefore, if it's cleansing you from every sin, there is no condemnation. Because you're walking in Christ, because you're walking in the Light 'as He is in the light.'

"...who are not walking according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death.... [Not made you free to remove it, but has justified you to make you right before God.] ...For what was impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (vs 1-4).

John teaches the same thing, simply between Light and darkness, good and evil, Truth vs lie. Now let's go back to the Epistle of 1-John 1:7: "However, if we are walking in the Light, **as He is in the Light**,

then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, **cleanses us from every sin.**" We could go through and study about the blood of Jesus Christ with another whole sermon. So I'll let you study that on your own.

Now, v 8: "If we say that we do not have sin... [which—let's read this whole statement and understand it then] ...If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us." What is one of the doctrines that is taught of being *born again* now in the flesh. Get your *King James* and go to 1-John 3, and we will see that this is an erroneous translation because it **conflicts directly** with 1 John, the first chapter.

1-John 3:9, *KJV*: "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he **cannot** sin, because he is born of God." Now **that is an erroneous translation**. People today claim that being born of God now, or *born again* now—which is the traditional acceptance of many Churches of God as well as the Protestants—they say you **cannot** sin. But that contradicts directly what we're going to read here in the first chapter of 1-John. The truth is, when we get to it, **you have been begotten** and you cannot **practice** sin. It doesn't say *you can never sin!* Otherwise that would conflict with 1-John 1:8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us."

Now, let's go to 1-John 3:9 and let's see the correct translation of it while we are here—and we will go back and get into it more in detail when we come to the third chapter. But since I brought it up, let's just put it into the record here. Let's come to verse seven, 1-John 3:7: "Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who is practicing righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who is practicing sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. **Everyone who has been begotten by God is not practicing sin** because His seed of *begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God" (vs. 7-9).

- Practice means *to live in*.
- Practice means *to walk in darkness*.
- **We are to be walking what?**
- *In the light, as He is in the light*.

Now, let's come back to the 1-John 1:8 and notice what we are to do: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us.... [Which is also like saying Christ is not in us—right? Because Jesus said, 'I am **the Way, the Truth and the Life.**'] ...If we are confessing our own sins... [which fits right into the model prayer—

‘forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who transgress against us.’] ...He is **faithful** and **righteous, that He may forgive us our sins**, and that He may purify us from all unrighteousness.... [*That’s tremendous!* That is a promise, brethren. God will forgive everyone of your sins.] ...If we say that we have not sinned, **we are making Him a liar**... [Are we going to make God a liar? *No!*] ...and His Word is not in us” (vs 8-10).

Now, 1-John 2:1. Once we understand what Paul really wrote, notice how the same spirit is inspiring the same message in slightly different words. And John is *so profound*, but *direct* and *simple*. “My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin**. And *yet*, if anyone does sin we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous. And He is *the* propitiation* for our sins... [*Propitiation’ means *continual mercy seat, continual forgiveness, continual atonement—on an ongoing basis*, which ties right in with the fact that He is ***cleansing us from every sin!*** We have an Advocate with the Father.

- Christ is *advocating* for us
- Christ is the *sacrifice* for us
- He is the *propitiation* for our sins

...and not only for our sins, but also **for the sins of the whole world**” (vs 1-2).

So what is the sum of all this, brethren? Let’s just start right here: ***The sins of the whole world***. The sacrifice of Christ has not yet been applied to the sins of the whole world, because God has not called them. That’s why the Holy Days tell us the key as to when this will be applied. But for us, it is telling us that we have an ongoing relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Our sins *are being* cleansed—***every sin!*** We do have a conviction of sin in us, because of the Holy Spirit of God to lead us to repentance. And I know this: When I have sinned, and I’ve thought, well, you know, I’ll wait until I’m in a better attitude before I go repent.

- Have you ever done that?
- Do you ever get in a better attitude so you can go repent more righteously?
- Huh?
- How can you repent more righteously when you’re a sinner? *They’re contradictory terms.*

If you’re fighting a battle with sin, let’s understand what’s happening. It’s all a part of the grace of God. Did you know that? It’s part of the grace of God that ***is leading you*** to repentance. That’s how God is cleansing us from ***every sin!*** And that is so great! Brethren, God has done this so that to inspire us, to love Him even more, to grow in grace and knowledge—and while you are doing that and being cleansed from every sin, you will find that you are

sinning less, but you understand the ***profound*** depths of sin at the same time, while you’re being cleansed. Well, that’s part of the graciousness of God.

Let’s pick it up here in Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the **riches of His [goodness] kindness**... [Now, isn’t that rich? Isn’t that profound? Isn’t that good? What is His ‘goodness’ (KJV)? It means ***graciousness***. Do you despise the goodness of His graciousness?] ...and forbearance... [because He doesn’t strike you dead on the spot] ...and longsuffering; not knowing that the graciousness of God **leads you to repentance?**” That’s what God is doing. That is all a part of the ‘conviction of sin.’ That’s all a part of ***being cleansed*** of every sin. And John writes this in the beginning so we can know and understand and have confidence, brethren, that in Christ and Christ alone can this be done.

Let’s go to Ephesians, the first chapter, to show you the riches of the graciousness or grace of God. And that’s got to be an awful lot of love on God’s part—don’t you think? *That God the Father would put His Spirit in you, and with the inner workings of Christ in you, lead you to repentance, convict you of sin, cleanse you of every sin.* That way then, you can have confidence in keeping the commandments of God. That way then, you can have ***true*** esteem—not self-esteem—***Godly esteem*** because of the greatness of God.

Now here in Ephesians 1:3—and I know I go here a lot, brethren—but, I tell you one thing, we really need to understand the profound depths of God’s love for us, that He would do this! Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with **every spiritual blessing**... [Isn’t that a spiritual blessing what we’ve just covered today?] ...**all spiritual blessings**. in the heavenly *things* with Christ... [and that is a heavenly things that God is doing with us. Cleansing us from every sin. Washing of the water by the Word.] ...According as He has personally chosen us for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love... [that’s why we’re being cleansed from every sin: that we can be Holy, that He can sanctify us. That’s why we are called ***Holy brethren***.] ...be Holy and blameless before Him in love... [And that is to inspire more love in us, brethren. To uplift us. To give us that great and that profound love and desire to be the Son of God.] ...Having predestinated us for **sonship** to Himself through Jesus Christ... [to God the Father Himself!] ...according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace... [the graciousness of God leads you to repentance.] ...wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in

the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (vs 3-7).

- That’s what it means to be *cleansed* from every sin.
- That’s what means to have Jesus Christ at the right hand of God as a Helper, as an Advocate.
- That’s what means to walk in the light as He is in the light.
- That’s to inspire us so that when we come to the next section here in first John, that we will know *we are to keep the commandments of God*.

Now, let’s come to 1-John, the second chapter, and let’s go on. Now after going through and showing that we are to every sin cleansed. That we’re to be walking in the Light. That we’re to be keeping *the commandments of God*. And what always is one of the first things that happens when a Church of God begins to deteriorate, they leave off keeping the commandments—don’t they? And which ones do they leave off keeping? *The ones which they consider the least*.

Now it’s currently taught that in some Churches of God that commandment-keeping is a *tradition* of the Church. Can you believe that? ***No! Commandment-keeping is a command of God!*** It’s not a ‘tradition’ of the Church. But, what does this pave the way for? What does this ‘tinkle’ of the Truth and the watering down of the Truth pave the way for? If commandment-keeping is *our tradition*, then *your traditions* are what God led you to do—such as: Sunday-keeping, Christmas and Easter.

So John makes this profound statement here—1-John 2:3 [transcriber’s correction]: “And **by this standard** we know that we know Him: **if we are keeping His commandments.**” That is clear, that is *profound*, that is *sharp* and that is *powerful*. Now there are two ways of knowing Him:

- 1) You may have seen Him and have known Him when you were growing up in Judea and maybe have been one of those what *knew* Him because you were living then
- 2) Can refer to the apostles. That if there are those who are saying they’re apostles and are not, and are saying you don’t have to keep the commandments of God. The TRUE apostles *knew* Him.
- 3) We know Him because He has called us and we have the Spirit of God. And We *know* Christ from the point of view as revealed in the Divine Word of God.

So “by this standard” *we are knowing*—constant, ongoing knowledge—that we have known Him if we are keeping His commandments. *Constant*, present tense: *keeping always*. Again the contrast. Notice the whole books of 1st, 2nd, & 3rd John are sharp contrasts between Light and darkness, Truth and error, love and hate, commandment-keeping *vs* sin. Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and is not keeping His commandments... [is a nice, wonderful fella. Is a brother in Christ. Is just misguided. NO! No psychological statements of acceptance here] ...**is a liar**, and **the truth is not in him**. On the other hand, *if* anyone keeps His Word, truly in this one the love of God **has been perfected**. By this *means* we know that we are in Him” (vs 4-5).

Now, that’s how important Sabbath-keeping is. Is that not *profoundly* important. Yes, indeed! It is. John is making it clear because we’re going to see in the latter part of chapter two there were those antichrists coming in and teaching them wrong and false doctrines. They were bringing in the darkness of Satan and saying this is light. They were bringing in the transgression of the law and commandments of God and saying that is Truth—and they were saying, ‘We know Jesus. We know God. We have a greater revelation.’ And John is saying, ‘No they don’t.’ If you’re not keeping the commandments of God, if you’re not walking in that way, you don’t know God. And boy, it needs to be said that way.

Notice, v 6: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him... [you’re saying you’re living in Christ; if you’re saying that Christ is in you, here is your obligation:] ... is obligating himself **also to walk even as He Himself walked.**” Now there is the whole definition of true and profound Christian living, right there.

- Did Jesus ever sin? *No*
- Did Jesus ever break a commandment of God? *No*
- Did Jesus ever eat any unclean food? *No*
- Did He ever eat anything with blood in it? *No*
- Did He ever break the Sabbath Day? *No*
- Did He ever break a Holy Day? *No*
- *He never sinned. That’s our example. That’s how we are to walk.*

Now, let’s go to 1-Peter, the second chapter. So you see, it is true we do need to understand the technical things, but God puts it on a simple level. For example, let’s just use the example of clean and unclean meats. We could do scientific studies into those things and understand that they are not fit for human consumption. We could get very detailed and very involved in it. All that knowledge descends from a very simple thing: “These are the beasts of

the earth which you shall eat: everything that parts the hoof and chews the cud.” That is the simple introduction to everything that is clean. Now is it good to have a complex and technical understanding of some of these other things? *Yes!*

Just like it’s good for us to have a detailed and complex understanding of God’s Word when we’re able to do so. But John is saying, ‘I’m putting it in simple terms for you: *keep the commandments of God, walk in the Light, walk in the Truth.*’ Then he says, ‘Now, you’re obligating yourself to walk even as he walked’—in the more profound way. ***So we need both.***

Let’s come here to verse; let’s come here to 1-Peter 2:20: “For what commendation *is there* if, disobeying and being beaten, you endure it? But if *while* doing good you endure suffering, this *is* acceptable with God; for to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps.” (vs 20-21).

- 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 1:5
- 2) Psalm 104:1-2
- 3) Psalm 36:9
- 4) Psalm 27:1
- 5) John 8:12
- 6) John 12:35
- 7) John 3:19-21
- 8) John 12:36
- 9) Revelation 1:10-11, 8, 11-16
- 10) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 11) Revelation 1:16
- 12) Psalm 43:3-4
- 13) Psalm 97:11-12
- 14) Psalm 119:105, 130
- 15) Proverbs 6:23
- 16) 1-John 1:5-7
- 17) James 1:17-18
- 18) Revelation 21:22-23
- 19) 1-John 1:7
- 20) Ephesians 5:25-26
- 21) Romans 7:7-25
- 22) Romans 8:1-4
- 23) 1-John 1:7-8
- 24) 1-John 3:9
- 25) 1 John 1:8
- 26) 1-John 3:7-9
- 27) 1-John 1:8-10
- 28) 1-John 2:1-2
- 29) Romans 2:4
- 30) Ephesians 1:3-7

- 31) 1-John 2:3-6
- 32) 1 Peter 2:20-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 14:7-9
- Romans 6

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