

First Epistle of John VII

Fred R. Coulter—October 6, 1994

We're going to continue in this and we're going to make progress in it. I do know that going through each verse, and going through in depth really has been a help and a benefit to the brethren.

Now, let's go back and let's review just a couple of things here. And I think the best way to review it is to go to John the twelfth chapter—because you cannot go through the Epistles of John without also connecting back to the Gospel of John. And so, the Gospel of John brings into focus some of the things in an overall summary that he brings out in detail in the Epistle of 1-John.

John 12:44: “Then Jesus called out and said, ‘The one who believes in Me... [that’s the whole point and focus of the Gospel of John, is **belief** and **believing** is the **action of faith**.] ...does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me.... [Now, when we come to the 1-John, what that is talking about then is the application of this in a very detailed way]: ...And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me” (vs 44-45). So it’s no mystery of what God looks like—not at all. Looks just the way that Christ looked like when He was in the flesh.

Verse 46: “I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me... [present tense, because that’s what it should be] ...may not remain in darkness.” Now, the word ‘abide’ we’re going to cover here quite a bit in 1-John 2. But the strongest meaning of ‘abide’ means *to live*. Can mean: *remain, to stay in, to live in*.

So if you’re believing in Him, you are not living in darkness, because Christ is the Light. He’s the ‘Light of the world.’ The Word of God symbolizes the light of God—it is ‘a lamp unto our feet.’ Christ is also called the *Word of God*. So we find the

- **Light of God**
- **the Word of God**
- **the love of God**

all fit in on how we are

- *to walk*
- how we are *to serve*
- how we are *to keep* in God’s way.

Verse 47: “But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world..... [What is going to judge them? *The Word of God, the message of Christ*. Their own actions compared to Christ.] ...The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him;

the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day.”

Now, think about this. Think about all the words that Jesus spoke. Now when we understand also—which we do—that Jesus Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament. Then when we understand that Jesus said, ‘The one who teaches even the least of these commandments shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven’—guess what’s going to judge them? *The whole Word of God!* And the words which Jesus spoke in the New Testament on top of it. So that’s pretty profound when we understand that.

“For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak.... [So, when we understand that, and understand how that Jesus did nothing of Himself—whatever He heard the Father tell Him to do, that’s what He did. Whatever He saw the Father do, that’s what He did. So it comes directly from God the Father.] ...And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me” (vs 49-50).

That adds to our review of 1-John, so let’s go back and let’s take just a couple of other things as we’re going along here, so that we understand what we’re doing. Let’s go to 1-John. We’re going to just review some, some basic things in outline form.

1. In the first chapter we are told that the most important thing we have is what? **Fellowshipping**—*fellowshipping with God* means that Christ and God the Father are in you. They’re tabernacling with you and God wants this fellowship.

Carl Franklin’s son summed up really well. He said, ‘God is not looking for someone to punish, God is looking for someone to love and have a relationship with.’ And that’s exactly the whole theme of the Epistles of John—all three of them. So that’s why he starts out with *fellowship*.

2. He says we’re to “**walk in the Light.**” And as we walk in the Light, what does this do?
3. We are to **confess our sins** and He will cleanse us from every sin.
4. We are to have **obedience**.

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if we are keeping His commandments**... [and the Greek there is the present tense, ongoing—‘**if we are keeping.**’] ...Anyone who says, ‘I know Him,’ and is not keeping His commandments is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4). And that also has got to mean the Sabbath commandment.

And it was most interesting. I think it was most revealing and most interesting at the Feast of Tabernacles when we had a discussion on where do the Protestants and Catholics stand? Then it soon all centered around the Sabbath commandment—and the Sabbath commandment becomes most important. Then the next one is the commandment, ‘you shall not make any graven image’ or idolatry of any kind. So therefore, if we are breaking the Sabbath and say we know Christ, *we don’t know Him*. We may know something *about* Him. But we don’t *know* Him.

Now, what does it mean ‘to know’? *To know* in the sense of an intimate relationship, and very much akin to marriage, and very much akin to the marriage act of sex—and I say, *marriage* act, because there are acts of sex in which no one knows each other. You only temporarily share a physical contact. But, ‘to know’ means *to intimately know in a most profound and personal way*. And if you do, then you will be keeping His commandments. If not, it says: v 4: “Any one who says ‘I know Him’ and is not keeping His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” So that becomes a very important thing. *We are to be obedient and keep the commandments of God*.

5. **we come all the way**—and of course that’s likened to walking in darkness *vs* walking in Light, and loving God and loving the brethren *vs* hating the brethren and living in hate and all that.

Verse 12: “I am writing to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*...” (vs 12-13).

Now, let’s put this all together in John. How then do you overcome the ‘wicked one’ in a very profound way? *Well, we have found, that the more you strive to love God, the more that you’re able to see what you need to overcome*. Let’s look at a couple of things here that are important, because some people have turned to the section and have said because you have ‘overcome the wicked one’ means that, once you have the blood of Christ applied to you, you have completely overcome and there’s no more overcoming to do—you just kind of sit back and you relax on that statement.

Let’s go to Revelation 12, let’s see where they get this concept misapplied. This has to overcome Satan, and I tell you what: Satan is out there really working hard right now—really working hard everywhere!

Revelation 12:9: “...who is deceiving the whole world... [v 10]: And I heard a great voice in heaven say, ‘Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb... [This shows a final completed state; not your current state.] ...But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the Word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death’” (vs 9-11). This shows a *completed* state of overcoming. However, Rev. 2 & 3 gives us a different picture. It’s just like salvation. What are three steps of salvation?

- have been saved
- are being saved
- shall be saved

So, it’s just like with overcoming the devil:

- *we have overcome him*
- *we are overcoming him*
- *we shall continue to overcome him*.

We find this right in Rev. 2 & 3—I’ll just cover one or two verses here. But I want you to understand that it is a process that we are doing.

Revelation 2:7: “The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes...” Now, what did we learn with the ‘eth’ (*KJV*)? *It means overcoming*—which shows a process, ongoing, *completed*. Because Christ has called us. *Being completed* because we’re overcoming; to be *finally completed*:

- When?
- What is the last enemy to be overcome? *Death!*
- When is death overcome?
- *At the resurrection*.
- Is that not the final overcoming of Satan the devil?
- *Yes!*

So, it has to be all put together, and I’m sure that when we come to the Feast of Unleavened Bread we will get into it even more in detail about overcoming.

6. We are then to **reject worldliness**.

Let’s go back to 1-John, the second chapter, again. *We are to reject worldliness*.

As we study through here, I want us to understand something very important: that what John has written is so concentrated in meaning. Yet, it is simple that you can read right through and understand as you read through it. But it is so concentrated in meaning that we have to go back and look at it and study it several times to get all the meaning.

Let's pick it up here in 1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious arrogance of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God **abides** forever" (vs 15-17).

Now, let's look at this for just a little bit. The love of the world comes from where? *It comes from Satan in the world.* Didn't he just say that we've overcome the 'wicked one'? The love the world comes from the world and the 'wicked one' or Satan and your human nature—yes! It wants to go that way, yes, absolutely! And, of course, we are to overcome human nature.

So the love of the world comes from the world, v 17: "...and the world and its lust is [what?] **passing away...**" *It is temporary!* And, if you don't think it's temporary, all of you 49er football fans can realize how temporary all these big strong guys are because they're falling down with injuries right and left. So it's the same way with everything in the world. Everything in the world is eventually going to pass away—and that's why we find one of the theme's of the Feast of Tabernacles was: 'Behold, I make everything new.'

Now, let's notice on the other side. The love the Father comes from the Father. And, the one who is doing the will of God will live forever. So there is something to *doing the will of God.* And that's the whole important thing in our lives, brethren: ***the will of God!***

Let's go back to the book of Matthew, chapter six. One reason why prayers are not answered in the way that a person thinks they ought to be answered is because they are not asking the will of God to be done. Now that may sound a little strange. Too many people go to God and say: 'God, approve *my will.*' But that's not how Jesus taught us to pray. So, when we come back to some of the most simple, some of the most basic things that we should know and learn and live by.

Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name.... [First thing we need to understand and realize is: God is Holy, God is true,

God is righteous, God is just.] ...**Your kingdom come...** [Not that we may be extended in life in this world. Why? *Because this world is passing away.*] ...**Your will be done on earth...**" (vs 9-10). And that's what we need to ask. 'God, Your will be done.' And, I think if we do that more and more, then we're going to see our prayers answered in a way that it ought to be. And, when we understand that ***all*** of the circumstances in which we find ourselves in, will work together for good, because we love God and we do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And so, if we're going to be doing the will of God—now, what is the will of God? That's another whole study, which I'm not going to get diverted into at this particular point. Let me ask you to maybe do that as a study on your own.

What is the will of God? Well, the major will of God is expressed in the four basic principles that God operates by:

1. God is love
2. You should love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul and being.
3. You should love your neighbor as yourself.
4. You should love the brethren as Christ has loved us.

Everything else comes out from that. Maybe it is God's will that, for a time, you suffer. Let's go to 1-Peter, the fifth chapter. Maybe for a while that is God's will. And maybe that's why there are so many difficulties going on in the church today. God wants to know what is in our hearts.

Now here's what we're to do when those circumstances come about. Here is how we are to do it: 1-Peter 5: 6: "Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you" (vs 6-7). And that means that you're submitting everything to the will of God. Not only everything we do, but what does it say of every one of our thoughts.

2-Corinthians 10:5: "Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ." Now, is that not the will of God? *Yes, it is.* So, if we are doing that, regardless of the circumstances, we're going to live forever—that's what Christ promised.

1-Peter 5:8—so here again, here's this battle. The same thing we find in the Epistle of 1-John—Light and darkness, good and evil, obedience and sin, love and hate. "Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same

afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world. Now may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while..." (vs 8-10).

So that sometimes is God's will. Was it God's will that Christ suffer? *Yes, it was!* What does suffering do? I've learned this: *The most important thing that suffering does is you realize the value of God's love.* I think that brings home the lesson more than anything else. But notice what he's going to do. After you have suffered for a while, "...Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and settle you*" (v 10). I think over the period of years that we've gone through, have we not all experienced that? *Yes, we have!* Does that mean that we no longer have any trials? Satan would love you to believe that! *If you have trials, you're a great sinner and God hates you. If you have no trials, everything is wonderful and God loves you.*

Now you think on that for a while, because that's exactly what Satan would love you to believe. And will he give you a smooth way? *Sure he will.* What does it say of the way of the world: "broad is the way" and easy is the way and "wide is the gate that leads to destruction." So, it has to be according to the will of God.

We will continue back in 1-John 2—and we will read all the way down through v 29 and then come back and study the verses so we can learn what we need to out of it, because there's a tremendous amount for us here.

1-John 2:18: "Little children, it is *the* last time; and exactly as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now **many** antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time.... [This is not only a statement of fact for then, this is a prophecy for today and a statement of fact today. That's why these epistles are so important.] ...They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed to *show* that *they* all were not of us. But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and you have knowledge of [everything] all things *pertaining to salvation* [not everything in the world]" (vs 18-20). Now again, I want to draw your attention to how many times he says, 'I write' or 'I wrote.' All the way through here, he says it so many times.

Verse 21: "I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because you are knowing it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth.... [So, therefore, the Word of God being Truth, Christ being 'the way, the Truth and the life' etc., etc., there's not a single lie coming

from there.] ...Who is the lying one if it is not the one who is denying that Jesus is the Christ? He is the one who is the antichrist—the one who is denying the Father and the Son. Everyone who is denying the Son... [now, we'll come back and analyze and study each one of these verses] ...does not have the Father either" (vs 21-23). Now in the *King James* there's an added you will see in your *King James* translation that he used denying the Father is also denying the Son. That was not in the original.

Verse 24: "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning be dwelling in you... [remaining, dwelling—I used the more permanent one: dwelling. Because, if it isn't living in you and abiding in you, it's more than just "remain."] ...if what you have heard from *the beginning* is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us: life, even eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.... [And that's what it means: **leading you astray**. Do we see that happening today? *Yes.*] ... But you yourselves have dwelling in you the anointing that you received from Him; and you do not have need for anyone to indoctrinate you...." (vs 24-27). Now, I realize that my translation here is a little interpretive. But when you put it all together *indoctrinating* or *teaching* you what? *False doctrines*.

"But for the same anointing is teaching you in all things {in the Word of God}, and is true, and is not a lie; and *by doing* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him. And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that when He is revealed we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who is practicing righteousness has been begotten by Him" (vs 27-29).

Now let's go back and look at these verses, and we're going to study them in just a little bit different sequence. First of all, you can put down here: Signs of the End—Last Hour—End Times—Last Time can all be equally translated the same.

Signs of the End: 1-John 2:18, 19, 22, 23 and 26—so if you kind of want to circle those numbers and tie them all together with a line, you'll see why.

Verse 18: "Little children, it is *the* last time..." Now for them, it was the last time. Why? As we look at that, it is for them, in that time, down through history and for us at the end time. Now, why was it the last time for them? *Yes, because they were living then*, but much more importantly, in relation to what? *Yes, with John coming to the end of his life, it was ending the original apostolic age.* Correct?

Yes! John was the last living apostle. Now, what happened when he died? *The Church just literally blew apart.* And we'll see why. Do we see the same thing happening today? *Yes!*

So, as we're going through this, I want us to keep in mind those three things:

1. The last time for them

—and I might mention, go back and review the, the study that I did on the *Two Generations*. When it says 'that generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled'—for that generation it happened in type. *That's one generation.*

2. The second generation is us at the end

—where the fullness of this is going to be completed. Not just restricted to the little area around the Holy Land, but the whole world. "...and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming..." (v 18).

Now, let's understand something. What was the first thing that Jesus said, when the disciples wanted to know when He was coming, when the end of the world would be? Now, that's why I put in the letter, that God would give us the right understanding of world events—religious and political. Because, too many times we have been told, 'watch those things' but what should we really be watching? *The antichrist within! The false teachings within!* That's the major thing to be watching for, and isn't that the major thing that is happening today? *Yes!* Now notice, he said: "...even now **many** antichrists have risen up..." Is that not happening today? *Yes!* So that's why the Epistle of 1-John is so important, because we are repeating, at the end time, the same things that he was going through. The same thing that the first century church was witnessing, just before the Apostle John died. So, it's no wonder that all of these events have been taking place within the Church. Why? *We'll see in just a little bit.*

"They went out from among us, but they were not of us..." (v 19). How many times have you heard that not everyone who is attending church is converted? *Yes!* Well then, it's no surprise the things that happened as they did. Now, there is a time when those who believe in heresy *leave*—which is what happened here at this particular point. *There comes another time when those who believe heresy have so much power that those who want to hold to the Truth must leave.* So, you've got two operations. Let's see that.

Let's just finish this verse and then we will go on. "...but they were not of us, because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed to show that *they* all were not of us" (v 19). So God has

to expose this. Today we don't have to ask the question: Where have all the apostles gone? Today we have to ask the question: Where have all the evangelists gone? You stop and think of all the great names of the great evangelists we knew years and years ago—where are they? With the exception of two or three, they are **all** gone! Were they of us? or not of us? I would have to say, **they were not of us.**

Let's go to 3-John—and we will see what happens when they finally get the upper hand. And this has happened, too—hasn't it? 3-John 9: "I wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes, the one who loves to be chief among them, does not accept us.... [Finally took over by political power] ...Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account for the actions that he is practicing with evil words, bringing unjustified charges against us, and he is not satisfied with these things, *for* he himself neither receives the brethren, *nor does he permit* those who wish to receive the brethren, *but* he forbids them and **casts them out of the Church**" (1-John 9-10). And we've seen that happen—haven't we? And it's happening today. If you want to follow Christ within the Church of God, you're being cast out.

Now, let's go to Isaiah 66, and let's see how this was even prophesied. And **almost every one** of the churches that have been raised up recently, if you listen to their sermons to begin with, they always go here to Isa. 66:5. We did! Because all of this is a purifying process for the Church. Isaiah 66:5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you that tremble at His Word; Your brethren... [Now, did the Apostle Paul write about false brethren? *Yes!* Gal. 2: he said that false brethren came in to 'spy on our liberty.'] ...Your brethren that hated You... [have you experience hate in the Church of God from brethren that should love you? *Yes!* This is all a part of the end-time, antichrist attitude of movement from within.] ...that cast you out for My name's sake... [yes, they even do it in the name of Christ, don't they?] ...said, 'Let the LORD be glorified.'... [that is, 'on our actions of casting you out'—just like Diotrephes. He cast them out of the Church and said, 'It's the will of God. The Lord be glorified.' But, God is going to turn the tables] ...but he shall appear to your joy, and **they shall be ashamed.**"

Now what is one of the first signs of the antichrist movement *within* the Church? We can put it: *the sign of the tare*—t-a-r-e! The 'sign of the tare' and their teachings. And John labels what those teachings are, and it comes from *within*. Matthew 13:24: "And He put another parable before them, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field... [And isn't that true? We all try and do the best. We all try and sow what is good. But what happens? *Difficulties arise.*] ...But while men were sleeping,

his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.... [Now, notice how difficult this is.] ... Now when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared” (vs 24-26).

It looks just like the real thing! But it doesn't bring forth fruit. Now, what kind of fruit are we to bring forth? Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (vs 22-23).

They're not bringing forth the fruits of the love of God, or the faith of God, or the Truth of God. But they are in there and they look good and they sound good. They take energy. They take money. They take people, don't they? *Yes!* In amongst. Matthew 13:27: “And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?’ And he said to them, ‘A man *who is* an enemy has done this.’ Then the servants said to him, ‘Do you want us to go out and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, “Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary.”’” (vs 27-30).

Now I've said this several times: Most of the brethren that we know have either been affiliated or associated with the Worldwide Church of God and Herbert Armstrong and many of the ministers still rely on his teachings. So, I want to give you just a little scenario that I've said, off the record, but this time I'm going to put it on the record so we can understand about the tares.

(go to the next track)

Let's go back to the book of Job. So, I'm going to say that the best way we can account for the difficulties that have been happening in the Churches of God—let's go back to a scene very similar to like the book of Job 1:6: “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence come you? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.... [Just like we read in 1-Peter, he's going around seeking whom he may devour. Or, he's going around planting the tares wherever he may.] ...And the LORD said unto Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God, and shuns evil?’ Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nought? Have not You made a

hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse You to Your face.’ And the LORD said unto Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only upon himself put not forth your hand.’ So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD” (vs 6-12).

Now, let me combine these two into what I think may be something that happened in heaven right about the time Herbert Armstrong was repenting of all the major things he did which were not right. And I say this because I know for a fact that he told Joseph Tkach, ‘Don't go around the world anymore because when we went around the world God didn't open a lot of those doors. We had so much money we kicked them down.’ Which shows he was repenting of those things. So, I think one day, when Herbert Armstrong was repenting, Herbert Armstrong was drawing close to God—and I think, just before he died—remember all the things he wrote: the 18 things in the *Worldwide News* and getting the Church back on track. He never got the Church back on track, he got himself back on track. And I think one day, God said to Satan, as Satan came around, ‘Look at My servant, Herbert, how he's repenting of all those things that you enticed him to do.’ And Satan said, ‘Yea, when he dies, I bet in 10-15 years I can turn the Worldwide Church of God into a New Age church.’ And God said, ‘Ok, it's in your hands.’ And Satan said, ‘Fine, I already have my tares planted within.’

Now, some people may think that's a little radical explanation. But I think there is no other explanation that you can explain what is going on in the Worldwide Church of God and why the whole church is being scattered—I mean *the brethren*. And so, I really think that he repented of all the things that he did—and I'm happy that he did, and I'm glad that he did. And I'm sure that God forgave him without a doubt. I'm sure that He did.

So, here are all the tares. Now God is going to let it be. Let's go back to Matthew 13 again. Did God let all the tares of the Catholic Church continue, from the time of the death of the Apostle John? *Yes, He did!* Is God going to let all the tares continue, as well as the good seed, to the end? *Yes, He is!*

Matthew 13:36: “And after dismissing the multitude, Jesus went into the house. Then His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’ And He answered *and* said to them, ‘The one Who sows the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*.... [the

antichrist, of which there are now *many*] ...Now the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is *the* end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vs 36-42).

And so, we see the process beginning back here in the Epistle of 1-John where it's really reaching a very intense level. And we've seen it happen within the Churches of God today—a very intense level. God is going to let in continue to the end. Many people say, 'Well, we're going to wait on God to do something.' *No!* Jesus said, 'let them be unto to the end.' Which means, each one of us must do something. Every minister must do something. Everyone of the brethren must do something—*many antichrists!*

Now, let's go on. That way we know that it is the last time. 1-John 2:19: “They went out from among us, but were not of us... [Now, how can they go out from you, but still remain within? *It's possible. And we will see it is by denying Christ.* When enough of the tares are together in one spot they start getting rid of the wheat. And God takes them and transplants them over here where they can grow in good soil. Wherever *here* may be for the individuals involved.] ...because if they were of us they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show that they* all were not of us.”

- Now, how are we going to know that they're exposing themselves?
- How do we know today that they are being exposed?
- What is it that exposes them?
- How do we know?

Let's come all the way down here to v 22. Remember I said, vs 18 & 19 connect with 22, 23 & 26. Here's how they are exposed. Not only by their actions of leaving, but when they get the power to stay within, here's how they are exposed: “Who is the lying one if it is not the one who is denying that Jesus is the Christ? He is the one who is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son. Anyone who is denying the Son does not have the Father either” (vs 22-23). How do you deny?

Now, let's look and see how they deny God—while they profess that they are not. Let's go to 2-Peter 2:1, the way they deny God is to ***change the nature of God.*** That's how you deny God, and bring in the tares—from within—now, some may have left, some may have stayed. Peter brings out

very clearly here—2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you... [and that's what he's talking about in 1-John 2] ...who will stealthily ...[privately bring in, just like the tares planted among the wheat—you can't tell them [apart] at first, but sooner or later they do not produce the fruits.] ...introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”

How do you change the nature of God? *You teach what the Bible doesn't teach.* And that's what has happened with the doctrine of the trinity. They ***deny the revelation that God the Father is a person. That Jesus Christ is the exact image of the Father.***

Now, let's continue and see how this then manifests itself. Let's go to 1-John 4:1. Now, this shows the responsibility we are to do. But it also shows the whole process that is happening. It also shows the source of these things that are happening. 1-John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but is testing the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.... [What motivates false prophets? *False spirits!* That's why they have *charisma*. That's why they have *magnetism*. That's why they *sound spiritual*. It is a fake, false spirit. Now what are we to be doing?] ...By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God” (vs 1-2).

Now, what does that mean?

- *The first hint of a wrong spirit is that Jesus Christ was not as we are.*
- *Jesus Christ did not have same flesh as we have.*
- *Jesus Christ had no possibility ever of sinning.*

Remember that? *Yes!* That's how it starts. That's why I have in the 'Care Package' *Could Christ have Sinned?* Why come and be tempted if there's no way to sin? So then they also deny something else concerning human nature. That human nature does not have the inherent 'law of sin and death' within it; that we are basically good people. Now, remember the statement that was made: ***Once you change the nature of God, you change all other doctrines.*** And we've seen that happen, haven't we? *Yes!*

Verse 3: “And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world.” *Change the nature of God.* Now what happens when you change the nature of God by saying that God is a trinity, or that God is only One with three manifestations or modes of being

revealed? What happens? What is the next action that you can begin to see?

Let's go to 2-Timothy 3:5. This happens just as sure as the setting of the sun happens every day. Have we not seen this happen? Not only in the churches in the world, but also within the Churches of God. "Having an outward appearance of Godliness, but denying the power of *true* Godliness ..." They deny the power of God—don't they? How do they do that? *Well, first of all, it starts out that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ had nothing to do with your physical healing.* Is that not denying the power of it? *Yes, it is!* Then it starts out, well then, you don't use the Spirit of God in your life the way you were told in the past, and on-and-on. Then what does that lead to then? **What does that lead to?** Let's go to Titus, the first chapter, just the next page over there. Then it begins to reflect in their works.

Titus 1:15: "To the pure, all things *are* pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing *is* pure; rather, both their minds and consciences are defiled.... [Have you heard a minister speak with that kind of speaking? To try and explain the nature of God? Which is inexplicable, because it's not true? *Yes!*] ...They personally profess... [just like we found there in 2-Tim. 3:5.] ...to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work" (vs 15-16). So, once you change the nature of God, everything else then changes right down the line. Now what else does this lead to? When you come to a certain point then it really becomes difficult.

Let's go back to 2-Timothy 2:12: "If we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; **if we deny Him, He will also deny us.**" Now, let's tie this together with several other Scriptures.

Let's go to Jude 4. Its amazing. I mean, here it is, all of it right in God's Word. He will deny us. Why? *Because we deny Him.* This ties right in with 2 Peter 2:1—Jude 4: "For certain men have stealthily crept in... [just like the tares—right? *We didn't know they were there. We didn't know what was happening.*] ...those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." So then they began teaching things. Changing the grace of God into something that was never, never meant to be. Now, let's carry this one step further.

Let's go to Matthew 10. Now, it's one thing, brethren, to sin and confess sin; it's another thing to sin and take a while to repent, as did David with the situation with Bathsheba. It's one thing to

temporarily deny Christ, as Peter did. Remember, Peter said, 'Hey, I'll never deny You.' And Jesus said, 'Look, before the cock crows twice, you're going to deny me three times.' Not only that, it says the last time he even swore—but he went out and repented. So, it shows all the way along the line there are places of repentance and recoverability, which God has given. We can get the comparison, as we have here, same thing all the way along in 1-John 2.

Matthew 10:32: "Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven" (vs 32-33). Now, brethren, let's pray for our brethren and also those ministers involved, that they don't come to the point that Christ starts denying them before God. What is the ultimate result of that? Now, we started out as you recall concerning the will of God. That he who does the will of God abides forever.

Let's go back to Matthew 7, and let's see a Scripture we've gone over countless, many, many times. But here it is, very clear, right before our eyes. Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven.... [Practicing, doing, following, keeping, obeying, living by—meaning *constantly on an ongoing basis.* What are we doing? *The WILL!* Not just *a* law, not just *a* commandment, not just *a* thought, not just *a* precept, but the WILL of God.] ... Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you....'" (v 21-23).

1-John 2:4: "He that says, 'I know Him and keeps not His commandments' is *nearly correct—NO! 'A LIAR!'* And the Truth [God's Word] is not in him." So you see how all of this builds. And what John is telling us here is how the apostasy builds within the Church. And you put it all together and John, the Epistle of John, the second chapter, comes out to be very powerful.

Matthew 7:23: "And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'" Now, what is the Greek word there? The Greek word is 'a'—which is *a*, which means against 'nomia'—which is *law*. Or maybe if you have a *New King James Version* it would even translate it: 'you who practice lawlessness.' They are practicing lawlessness. In other words, they are against God's law. How can you be against God's law? Not only by breaking it, it is more than transgression. It doesn't say, 'You who are

transgressing the law.’ It says: ‘You who are *against* law.’ What do you do? *You say the laws and commandments of God don’t apply.* Well, this doesn’t apply and that doesn’t apply, and this doesn’t apply.

- Well, what is the will of God?
- *The will of God is here in the Scriptures, right?*
- Is this not the will of God?
- Is this not the mind of God?
- *Yes, it is!*

Let’s go back to 1-John 3:4, and here I translated it the way that it should be. In the *King James* it says—let’s read it in the *King James* first. 1-John 3:4—which is one of the very first things that struck you. Remember when you first began to understand about the will of God, the Word of God, what sin was and God began to call you and open your mind. 1-John 3:4 (*KJV*): “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Now, it’s much more broad than that. Let’s read it in the, in the *Faithful Version*: “Everyone who practices sin is also **practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness** [against law].”

Outside of the problems with designating the Holy Spirit as a person, the *New King James* has many of the things there translated in a more precise manner. So it’s not just breaking *a* law, it’s not just transgressing, it is *practicing lawlessness*—which means *you’re against the law of God*, which starts with what? *Well, it doesn’t matter which day you worship on.* You know, the Jehovah Witnesses say, ‘Well, every day is the Sabbath.’ Well, if every day is the Sabbath, then there’s no such thing as *the* Sabbath. Different ones say, ‘Well, I agree, one in seven. So therefore come to church on Sunday.’ So that becomes very profound.

Let’s see also how this develops even more in denying God. Let’s go back to 2-Peter 2, and let’s see the end result with what happens with all of this. That’s why Jesus said, ‘Let the tares remain until the end. Because the fruit of their works will be evident.’

2-Peter 2:17—speaking of these false prophets: “These *false prophets* are fountains without water... [they don’t have any spirituality to them] ...clouds driven by a storm... [that means *blown with every wind of doctrine*—right? Every change, every new thing.] ...for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever... [and it should read ‘the veil of darkness’ or ‘the covering of darkness’—and are we not talking about light and darkness, Truth and error, love and hate in 1-John? *Yes, we are!*] ...For they speak bombastic words of vanity... [which is new doctrine] ...enticing others

through *the* lusts of *the* flesh by granting indulgences to sin, *and ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception. While promising them freedom... [Isn’t that amazing? *Promised them liberty.* And you think of the politicians. I mean you can apply this politically, religiously, Church of God—all three are true.] ...they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage. For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through *the* knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ... [Now, you go back and couple that in what I did at the Feast concerning *What is the Chance for Salvation? What is the Unpardonable Sin?* and so forth. This means **unpardonable sin.**] ...they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the Holy commandment *that* was delivered to them.... [So it shows they had it.] ...But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: *The dog has returned to eat his own vomit; and the sow that was washed has returned to her wallowing place in the filthy mire*” (vs 17-22). That’s the end result of *denying*.

Now, the question is this: Does this happen to good people in the Church? Now, that depends on what you mean *good*. At the end-time is God letting Satan go around really stirring things up, similar to what at the end of the Millennium would be? *In a way it’s similar, but in a way it’s different.* But, the similarity is: What about people who have known the Truth and so forth, and have obeyed and now, when this happens, what is going to happen to them? *Well, I think God lays out the choices for them and gives them various stages where they can repent.* And it comes down to a choice every step of the way. God surely does not delight in the death of the wicked. God does not want those that He’s called to really truly do this. But then, how many people are brought in which are not truly converted. And I think—so the question becomes: How do we get all of these tares within, who are not converted? Let’s approach it from that point of view, because those who truly have the Spirit of God, God is not going to lose any of them. He will bring them to repentance unless they totally reject Him—which is possible in some few cases. But, when you have a situation then where you start doing the work of God to call people, like say, to open the church doors and say to the world ‘come in, we love you; come in and see how good God is’—without repentance. Then you have a lot of tares come in. Then you have a whole new set of circumstances.

(comment from audience): It’s possible to be *called but not chosen* and even some to be

baptized but not receive the Holy Spirit. Yes, we have an example of that with Simon Magus—don't we? *Yes, he was baptized.* I imagine Philip rued that day all his life. And I imagine there were people who came up to him and said, 'Are you the one who baptized Simon Magus?' And I bet he hung his head and said, 'Yeah, yeah that was a bad mistake.' Now, for a while they were so protective of people coming in that it was like trying to get an inner, inner spy circle. I don't think it needs to be that way. I think it needs to be 'let your fruits show' and really show what the calling of God really is. Now, for example: if you open the door to the world, you say, 'Why is the world in the condition that it is in?' *Because of sin and God commands us to repent.* Then you're doing your job. That's what needs to be. But, if you open the door to the world and say come on in say how good we are and by the way, you're good people and God is calling all good people, all bets are off; it's going to turn into a church of the world so quickly you will never believe what's going to happen. Because if you do that, then people are going to come in wanting to bring their religion. 'Oh well, we'll change from Sunday worship to Saturday worship.' But are you converted? Do you have the Spirit of God? So, that's how all these things develop where you have so many, many, many antichrists.

Now, let's come back here to 1-John 2:26: "These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray." So now, we've come back full circle of the whole operation of apostasy within the Church, haven't we? We have to test, we have to know, we have to understand.

Now, let's go back and study those verses, which then are the opposite of this. Remember, we had verses 18, 19, 22, 23 & 26—all those verses have to do with denying Christ, the antichrist, the wrong teachings. Now, let's pick up verses 20, 21, 24, 25 & on to the end. 1-John 2:20: "But you have the anointing from the Holy One..."

I'm going to bring a sermon: *What Do You Mean, Anointing of God?* Anointing means: it comes from the Greek, 'chrisma' which is a *gift*. Which is what? *The Holy Spirit*. Which begins when? *Repent and be baptized everyone of you for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift* ['chrisma'] *of the Holy Spirit*. That is an anointing from God. What is this to do in times of crisis? "...and you have knowledge of all things *pertaining to salvation*" (v 20). That's what it's talking about. He's talking to long-time members, from which out of their midst was coming the antichrist. Out of their midst were coming liars and false doctrines, but ***you have an anointing from God.***

Verse 21: "I did not write to you because you do not know the Truth, but because ***you have***

known it..." Have we known the Truth of God? *Yes!* And you can go through with a whole study on *what is Truth? How do you live by Truth?* so forth. Jesus said, 'Your Word is Truth.' We've already covered that so we won't dwell on it too much, except to say that the whole thing with 1-John is:

- Truth and error
- Light and darkness
- righteousness and sin
- love and hate
- Christ and the devil
- true preachers, false prophets

—all the way through.

"...but because you have known it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the Truth" (v 21). Now, that is profound! That's why we are to understand that we're not saved by anything other than the ***Truth*** of God. We're not saved by fables—which it's now being taught: 'Well, many of these things are allegories and myths to portray a truth.' Now, how can you have a myth—which is a lie—portray the Truth. *Never happen!* Not a single lie coming from the Truth.

Now, let's come down to v 24—here is what we need to do: "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the beginning...*" What from the beginning?

- The Truth of God
- the commandments of God
- the Light of God
- the love of God.

All of that! That's what he's saying here. ***Let it be dwelling in you!*** Now, at this point he really focuses in on 'dwelling.' Now the *King James* has 'remain' or 'abiding.' But, as I mentioned earlier, I've chosen the stronger terminology: 'dwelling,' because it would have to be living in you: *dwelling*. "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the beginning* be dwelling in you; if what you have heard from *the beginning* is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father.... [So, I call your attention again, to the sermon that I did during the Feast of Tabernacles about Christ and God the Father tabernacling or dwelling in us. There it is right there.] ...And this is the promise that He has promised us: life, even eternal life" (vs 24-25).

Now, let's come to v 27: "But you yourselves have dwelling in you the ***anointing...*** [that is, *the gift of God*—which opens your mind, brings you understanding of the Truth, gives you understanding of His Word] ...that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you [with false doctrines]..." Now, I know that I will be accused: that is an interpretation; but I took it from the things that were brought here. Now it says in the *King James*: v 27: "But the

anointing which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you...”

- What were they teaching? *False doctrine*
- What were they following? *Darkness*
- How ere they walking? *In sin*

So, that’s why I said here, ‘be indoctrinating’—because *teaching* comes from the Greek ‘didasko’—which means *to teach* or the noun of it is, ‘didaskalias’—which is *doctrine*. So, *indoctrinating you with false doctrines*. “...for the same anointing instructs you in all *spiritual* things...” Now, it says here in the *King James*: “...but as the same anointing teaches you of all things... [And I inserted here ‘of the true Gospel.’ Why? *Because we’re talking about Truth and error—correct? The Gospel vs the false gospel.*] ...and is true, and is not a lie; and *by doing* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him” (v 27).

So, in other words, there comes a time when long-term Christians, having the Holy Spirit of God, knowing the Truth of God, understanding the Word of God, they do not need any false teachers coming along to indoctrinate them in ‘new’ doctrines which *deny the Father*, which *deny the Son*, which *deny the Truth*. And you have to sit there and take it because they’re in authority. When people, who are in authority, start teaching lies in place of Truth, they have lost any right to teach the Word of God. And when you, with the Spirit of God, can detect that—is what John is saying here—you don’t need them to come and teach you.

Now, let’s finish off here, vs 28 & 29 and we’ll be done with chapter two. “And now, little children, **dwel in Him...** [that’s what it has to be—*live in Christ*] ...so that when He is revealed... [the return of Christ] ...we may have boldness [rather than shame] and not be put to shame before Him at His coming” (v 28). And I tell you, remember what He said: ‘Bring Me here My enemies before Me and slay them.’ That is ‘shame’ and ‘egnomai.’

Verse 29: “If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who is practicing righteousness **has been begotten by Him.**” And that is the correct translation, by the way—“practicing righteousness.” What is righteousness? *All Your commandments are righteousness. Your Truth is righteousness. Your Word is righteousness.* You’re practicing it. So, as we have learned through the years, the Word of God is like a sphere. And it all fits together and you can approach it from many, many, many different ways and it still all agrees with itself.

There are probably some other things we could add to the second chapter, but I want you to understand that going into the third chapter, because

the third chapter then becomes very profound in the things that it teaches us.

- 1st, 3rd-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) John 12:44-50
- 2) 1-John 2:3-4, 12-13
- 3) Revelation 12:9-11
- 4) Revelation 2:7
- 5) 1-John 2:15-17
- 6) Matthew 6:9-10
- 7) 1-Peter 5:6-7
- 8) 2-Corinthians 10:5
- 9) 1-Peter 5:8-10
- 10) 1-John 2:18-29
- 11) 3-John 9-10
- 12) Isaiah 66:5
- 13) Matthew 13:24-26
- 14) Galatians 5:22
- 15) Matthew 13:27-30
- 16) Job 1:6-12
- 17) Matthew 13:36-42
- 18) 1-John 2:19, 22-23
- 19) 2-Peter 2:1
- 20) 1-John 4:1-3
- 21) 2-Timothy 3:5
- 22) Titus 1:15-16
- 23) 2-Timothy 2:12
- 24) Jude 4
- 25) Matthew 10:32-33
- 26) Matthew 7:21-23
- 27) 1-John 2:4
- 28) Matthew 7:23
- 29) 1-John 3:4
- 30) 2-Peter 2:17-22
- 31) 1-John 2:26-29; 20-21, 24-25, 27-29

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2, 3
- Galatians 2
- 1-Peter

Also referenced: Sermons:

- *Two Generations*
- *Could Christ Have Sinned?*
- *What is the Chance for Salvation*
- *What Do You Mean ‘Anointing of God’?*

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