

Godless Christianity

Fred R. Coulter—September 3, 2011

One of the bases that they have for Christianity without God we find in *Christianity Without God* by Lloyd Geering)

It is too little acknowledged that the authoritative and powerful ecclesiastical structure which dominated Europe for a thousand years owed more to the Roman Empire than it did to Jesus. That church developed to fill the power vacuum left by the fall of Rome. Jesus certainly did not found it.

That's a true statement. With every deception or with every lie, you have truth to pave the way for your reason to change things.

In Christianity without God there is still a place for rituals and festivals. We will celebrate everything we have come to value in human existence.

Have you heard of Christian values? Then I'm going to follow this up with another sermon or maybe two, about a Protestant backlash against it, which sounds really good, but that's another pitfall leading to the world religion.

We celebrate everything we have come to value in human existence, such as the importance of healthy human relationships, the rich inheritance of human culture. In Christianity without God there is no place for the traditional figure of Christ as the Divine Savior.

You would think every Protestant church would be in an uproar against this. *No!* You're going to find out they're following right along with this.

Yet, there's certainly a place for Jesus as the Teacher, the Man of wisdom, the one Who realized the path to freedom.

Key word: *freedom*. Must have freedom. And we're also going to see as we go through several of these things that the way the deception is accomplished is by *incrementalism*, by *redefining* words. Take one three-letter word. You think of one three-letter word that has been so infamously redefined that you hardly dare speak against it: *gay!* Used to mean you were happy. And homosexuals are anything but happy.

Of relevance to us is not the Jesus who was elevated into a mythical heaven, but Jesus, the fully human person who shared the tension, enigmas, and uncertainties that we experience.

No, He did not! He knew Who He was. He knew what His mission was. He knew God the Father. He had no uncertainties about Him at all.

It is the Jesus who told stories, which shocked people out of their traditional ways of thinking and behaving who can free us from the mindset...

We still look to Jesus to free us!

...from the mindset in which we have become imprisoned.

If you're a Christian, you're imprisoned.

The Jesus most relevant to us is He who provided no ready-made answers, but by His tantalizing stories prompted people to work out their own appropriate answers to the problems of life. That is why the parables of the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son will be remembered long after the historical confessions and creeds have been given.

Christianity can exist without God. Indeed, Christianity without God has actually been in our midst for quite some time. It has been coming quietly unheralded and unnoticed. It is rather like the way Jesus spoke of the arrival of the Kingdom of God.

That's what they're going to try and say their establishing. 'Don't look here, don't look there, don't look anyplace. It's right here.'

It was Christianity without God that made possible the series of emancipations mentioned above. They may even be regarded as manifestations of the coming of the very kingdom itself of which Jesus spoke.

That's why I've done the series, how's Jesus returning? Everyone's going to know and it's going to be extended over a long period of time.

Just as the early church saw evidence of the coming of the kingdom in such events as the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, so we say that though there is a long way to go, we can rejoice to see some positive changes taking place.

And here's what he lists:

There is increasing personal freedom to think and to speak....

we'll see some of the personal opinions

...Slaves are being freed, patriarchy is crumbling...

they're trying to establish a matriarchy

...homosexuals are free to come out,
weapons of mass destruction are being
widely condemned...

greatly sought after by the Islamic terrorists

...racists attitudes are being overcome...

Oh, yes, like the flash mobbing in various cities.
Like teaching black children how to use machetes to
kill whites. Yes, it is.

Equality of sexes is being achieved. The
disadvantaged are no longer being ignored.
Human worth and values are being
increasingly honored.

Really? *Nonsense!* How did all of this get started?
*One of the leading ones in doing this was the Jesus
Seminar.* Remember some of the sermons I gave
years ago on the Jesus Seminar? Headed up by
Robert W. Funk; that probably could be pronounced
'flunk.'

Here's what he says. Here's the whole credo.
One of the things that they did, and I've told you
how that they judged, they went through Matthew,
Mark, Luke, and John and then they decided to have
these scholars there. None of them were really
converted. They're just historians and scholars. Of,
course they were selected so that they would be
there to help promote what they were doing.

In going through the New Testament, the
actual sayings of Jesus would be read. They voted
by marbles. Sounds like a bunch of little kids out in
the parking lot. They voted by marbles. Red—that's
what Jesus said. 'We know it.' Pink—that may be a
kind of close. You have gray—well, there may be a
little bit in there. There were 4 colors. Then you
have black. *No*, Jesus didn't say that.

And in the final analysis, the whole Gospel
of John was declared black. And what they did, they
said, 'Well, now we have the fifth gospel over here.'
And that fifth gospel is the gospel of Thomas, which
was a Gnostic gospel. How many of you have seen
the History Channel where Mary Magdalene was the
one that Jesus loved? Maybe they were secretly
married. Maybe they had a child. What was that
movie that was based upon that? *DaVinci Code!*

They said, 'Well, we need this,' and then out
came out all the Gnostic gospels that you never
heard of—the apocryphal of Peter, the gospel of
Mary Magdalene, and all of this. They were buried
in the Egyptian desert. The reason they were buried
there is because they were rejected. Guess who knew
where they were? *Satan!* He wants all of this
resurrected, so now it comes out and it's
undermining the New Testament. Whereas the New
Testament says that the whole Bible is God-

breathed—'all Scripture is God-breathed,' meaning
each and every word. If you don't approach the
Bible from that point of view and understand it from
that point of view and put it together from that point
of view, then you'll never understand it.

Robert W. Funk, who had a visceral hatred
of Jesus Christ, being a Jew, he says here. These are
part of the twenty-one theses for the coming radical
reformation. And I'm going to read to you what is
happening in this radical reformation in particularly
in Holland and also in other countries.

*The Coming Radical Reformation, Twenty-one
Theses* by Robert W. Funk (westarinstitute.org)

1. The God of the metaphysical age is
dead. There is not a personal God out
there external to human beings and the
material world.

Really? What do all atheists begin with? *Space and
a big bang*—right? And they never tell you how that
evolved. They steal from God. You know it's like
this joke with the atheist. God leaned over and said,
'Uh huh, get your own dirt.'

We must reckon with a deep crisis in god
talk and replace it with talk about whether
the universe has meaning and whether
human life has purpose.

The Bible explains it. But they won't obey. There's
a key to the Bible that people do not really grasp.
You must obey what you read! The Bible is not so
complicated that it's difficult to understand the basic
things. Try the Ten Commandments. Does that
sound a little difficult? *That's easy!* You begin there
and then you build from that point.

2. The doctrine of special creation of the
species died with the advent of
Darwinism... [now it's being totally
discredited] ...and the new
understanding of the age of the earth and
magnitude of the physical universe.
Special creation goes together with the
notion that the earth and human beings
are at the center of the galaxy (the
galaxy is anthropocentric). The demise
of a geocentric universe took the
doctrine of special creation with it.
3. The deliteralization of the story of
Adam and Eve in Genesis brought an
end to the dogma of original sin...

Just because men reject it and don't believe it
doesn't change it. How do they explain how human
beings are so inherently evil, even the ones who
appear to be the most righteous? *They cannot
explain human sin!* And theologians, on the other
hand, who want to please people say, 'We're all
good.'

...brought an end to the dogma of original sin as something inherited from the first human being.

What does Romans 5:12 tell us? *It is inherited; our nature is inherited!* You don't believe it, just watch a little baby! Watch it from the time it's born as it's growing up. What do they have to be taught right away? *What's right and what's wrong!* What do they want to do? *What's wrong*—correct? And they don't want to do what's right, unless it's an advantage for them. But what happens to most teenagers and everything when they first start getting out on their own? First thing they do is dump all the 'dos and don'ts' that mom and dad ever taught them. They get out there and run just wild to do what they want to do. Then BANG! later on their judgment day comes.

Death is not punishment for sin, but is entirely natural.

Well then, explain how it's entirely natural.

And sin is not transmitted from generation to generation by means of male sperm, as suggested by Augustine.

You know why he had to say it only came from the male sperm? *Because* (they say) *Mary was immaculately conceived and she didn't have human nature!*

4. The notion that God interferes with the order of nature from time to time in order to aid or punish is no longer credible.

Ask all the people that suffered the 300 sum plus tornados this year, and the floods, and the hurricanes and the droughts and the fires and the earthquakes. Even in Japan the governor of Tokyo said that 'this was the hand of heaven.' Of course, he had to apologize the next day, but the people voted him back in again, so I guess the people agreed with him more than all of his colleagues.

Miracles are conceivable only as the inexplicable; otherwise they contradict the regularity of the order of the physical universe.

5. Prayer is meaningless when understood as requests addressed to an external God for favor or forgiveness and meaningless if God does not interfere with the laws of nature.

Well, He works with the laws of nature, too. He made them!

Prayer as praise is a remnant of the age of kingship in the ancient Near East and is beneath the dignity of deity.

How does he know, if he doesn't believe in Him?

Prayer should be understood principally as meditation—as listening rather than talking—and as attention to the needs of neighbor.

Isn't that lovely!

6. We should give Jesus a demotion.

And that's what they're doing.

It is no longer credible to think of Jesus as divine. Jesus' divinity goes together with the old theistic way of thinking about God.

One more. Of course, the virgin birth is an insult to intelligence. Should be abandoned—#8 in the list

The virgin birth of Jesus is an insult to modern intelligence and should be abandoned. In addition, it is a pernicious doctrine that denigrates women.

How so?

7. The plot early Christians invented for a divine redeemer figure is as archaic as the mythology in which it is framed. A Jesus who drops down out of heaven, performs some magical act that frees human beings from the power of sin, rises from the dead, and returns to heaven is simply no longer credible.

Unfortunately, Robert W. Funk is dead and he won't be able to personally witness the return of Christ. But there is a resurrection coming in which he will be resurrected and I wonder if Jesus is going to say, 'Robert W. Funk, will you please come forward.'

The notion that he will return at the end of time and sit in cosmic judgment is equally incredible. We must find a new plot for a more credible Jesus.

Another Jesus; another gospel. How is that playing out today?

Most people who go to church on Sunday, they probably all believe that the pastor who is preaching to them believes everything he's saying and must believe in God and must accept Jesus, otherwise he wouldn't be a pastor. But are there some people in the pulpit with other motives with other beliefs?

I read a report some time ago by a man who had been 27 years in the Southern Baptist hierarchy, one of the main centers of their ecclesiastical studies and church headquarters functions, and so forth. His last name was Godsey, a take-off of 'God say,' or 'God said.' He did not believe in Jesus. He did not believe in the virgin birth. He rejected all the

doctrines of the Baptists and he let all of these things filter out through what he was teaching, dribble by dribble, or incrementalism. Finally after twenty-seven years, there was no longer any closet for him to stand in, so there he stood with the naked truth of his heresies. There are others just like that. So here is what is called a ‘new Christianity’—pastors who don’t believe in God. Then why do you pick up the Bible? Why do you continue to be a pastor?

This comes from a BBC report, *A Laboratory for Christianity’s Destruction* by R. Albert Mohler Jr (christianpost.com):

Some church leaders in the Netherlands want to transform their small nation into a laboratory for rethinking Christianity, experimenting with radical new ways of understanding the faith.

Sound a little bit like Robert W. Funk? Radical reformation? *Yes, indeed!*

Religious Affairs Correspondent Robert Pigott tells of Rev. Klaas Hendrikse, a minister of the PKN, the mainstream Protestant denomination in the Netherlands. Pastor Hendrikse doesn’t believe in life after death, nor even in God as a supernatural being. He told the BBC that he has “no talent” for believing historic and orthodox doctrines. “God is not a being at all,” he says, “but just an experience.”

You see what Catholicism has done? Catholics—listen up—are not, and never have been Christian. The whole Catholic system is utterly satanic and occult from the pope clear down to the parish priest. That’s why in one diocese they found 250 pedophilia priests. They are in the bonds of iniquity. If you are a Catholic, if I were you, I would suggest to you, you better get a good Bible and you better run to God as fast as you can and get away from that absolute trap that you are in. Don’t do like these people, eliminate God all together. That’s exactly what Satan wants to do. He sets up a system so that later on he can attack it and get rid of what people think is God so he can stand alone.

Furthermore, as Pigott reports, “Mr. Hendrikse describes the Bible’s account of Jesus’ life as a mythological story about a man who may never have existed, even if it is a valuable source of wisdom about how to lead a good life.”

So, he’s an unbeliever. But in the largest church in Holland he is considered a minister in good standing.

As a matter of fact he’s not even unusual. As study undertaken by the Free University of Amsterdam determined that one out every

six Protestant ministers is either agnostic or atheist.

In fact, he published a book in recent years entitled, *Believing in a Non-Existent God*. Conservative church leaders demanded a heresy trial for the pastor, but the denomination decided that Hendrikse’s views are too commonly held... [by much of the clergy and the laity] ...to be considered out of bounds.

The BBC report also introduces Rev. Kirsten Slettenaar, another minister of the church, who openly rejects the divinity of Christ. She refers to “Son of God” as a mere title. “I don’t think he was a god or a half god,” she says. “I think he was a man, but he was a special man because he was very good in living from out of love, from out of the Spirit of God he found within himself.”

Well now, how can you find the Spirit of God within you? Just like something else I read. This is rampant—that as soon as a new human life is conceived, there’s another new god. No! There’s another human being who has the potential to enter the Family of God, but it is not another new god.

The Dutch ministers featured in this report dismiss the doctrines of Biblical Christianity...

That’s why the name of this church is Christian Biblical Church of God.

...as “outside of people” and “rigid things you can’t touch any more.” Like the liberal theologians of the last two centuries, they insist that the “real meaning” of Christianity can survive, even if its central truth claims are denied.

What did Jesus say? ‘I am *the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*’ What are we told to live by? *The Truth!*

One layperson cited in the report celebrated the liberation of Christianity from truth claims, allowing her to recreate the faith “to my own way of thinking, my own way of doing.”

Let’s go to the book of Proverbs. Let’s look at a few Proverbs here, because this tells us some very interesting things. Men don’t believe in God, women don’t believe in God, and they try and get rid of God; God is not going to conveniently go away. But what’s going to happen is, in *their own wisdom* they are going to find themselves to be fools.

Proverbs 21:2: “Every way of a man... [that includes a woman because word *man* is the last three letters of the word ‘woman’] ...*is* right in his own eyes, but the LORD ponders the hearts.”

Verse 4: “A high look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked *are* sin.” And that’s what we have just read.

Proverbs 16:2 says nearly the same thing: “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits.” What kind of faith is this woman going to develop? What’s it going to lead to? Can she give herself life? *No!*

Proverbs 14:12: “There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death.” And what happened to Israel when everyone did what was right in his or her own eyes? *The whole society went headlong into paganism!* Christianity in the Netherlands is a *something-ism*. In other words, whatever you think the something is, and that’s your god, that’s what it is.

The majority of Dutch citizens, he explains, desire some form of spirituality, but not the God of the Bible.

Gotcha! That’s exactly where Satan wants you. And guess who’s going to fill the vacuum? *Satan the devil!*

“There must be something between heaven and earth, but to call it ‘God’ and even ‘a personal God’, for the majority of Dutch is a bridge too far.”

Professor Stoffels... [Sound like the man who is on Fox: ‘Stossel Report.’ He’s got a lot of wild ideas, some are pretty good, but a lot of wild ideas. Wonder if he’s a relation to this professor?] ...went on to argue that Christian churches in the Netherlands are ‘in a market situation.’ As he explained, “They can offer their ideas to a majority of the population which is interested in spirituality or some other kind of religion.”

Here’s the key: *You change the meaning of the words* like I said in the beginning.

Another pastor argued for using the words of traditional Christianity, but meaning “something totally different.”

Which they have already done! What happens when you change the meaning of the words? *You lose understanding!* It’s like with communist and Americans. You talk about democracy—two different things.

All this is familiar, at least in general terms, to anyone who has been observing mainline Protestantism—in either the United States or Europe...

That’s why we have the book, *Lord, What Should I Do?* And this has been going on:

...for the last half-century or more. The central doctrines of Christianity are first sidelined and hardly mentioned, then revised, and finally rejected.

Did you see any of that go on within the Church of God, as well? *Yes, indeed!*

Let’s see what God says about Himself; let’s come to Malachi 3:6; here’s what God says: “For I *am* the LORD, I change not....” Christ is ‘the same yesterday, today, and forever.’

Let’s see something else about God. Let’s come to Titus 1; this is why it’s important that we follow the Bible. This is why we need to prove things by the Bible. If the Bible doesn’t say so, we just have to conclude we just don’t know. They have never answered the question: Since there is no God, how did the Bible come down to us where we have it today? Essentially, even in the worst Bibles, the basic knowledge of God is there. The understanding of doctrines is not there, because they’ve had so many changes. In spite of all of the intellectual of the world, in the last 200 years the Bible is the best-selling book in the world. It has been translated into more languages and distributed widely around the world. If it has nothing to do with God, if there is no God, why is that?

Here’s why, Titus 1:1: “Paul, *a* servant of God and *an* apostle of Jesus Christ, according to *the* faith of God’s elect and *the* knowledge of *the* Truth...” That’s what’s in the Bible—the knowledge of the Truth.

- the Truth about God
- the Truth about mankind
- the Truth about Jesus Christ
- the Truth about our need to be redeemed
- the Truth of the commandments of God, the statutes of God, the precepts of God
- the Truth that the words that Jesus spoke they are spirit and they are life

“...and *the* knowledge of *the* Truth that *is* according to Godliness... [That’s what God wants us to become in our behavior. We all have a hard time doing that, because we still have human nature that we’re working against. But God gives us the strength to recognize it and understand it and repent so we can overcome and that we can stop those kinds of behaviors.] ...in *the* hope of eternal life, which **God Who cannot lie** promised before the ages of time” (vs 1-2).

Let’s see something else concerning God, James 1:13. If they would have read these verses they would have understood the difficulties and trials that they were going through. They would have been able to understand how to correct those problems as they came along.

James 1:13: “Do not let anyone who is tempted say, ‘I am being tempted by God’ because God is not tempted by evil... [He sets us before us choices: life and death/blessing and cursing. Is there life? Is there death? Blessing/ cursing in life? *Yes, indeed!*] ...because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*.” Satan likes to come along and say that he will give you a benefit which ends up being a big mess.

Verse 14: “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust.” And that’s exactly what all of this is that we are reading here. These men who are pastors, those who go to churches, have never taken the Bible to sit down and *to prove* the Word of God. And they’ve never had the strength of character to find out what the Bible says and to live by it. We’re going to see it’s coming down in this world, because there’s another brand of Christianity—which *looks like* it’s going to correct a lot of this—is coming along and gaining power. But it’s still going to lead to the coming one-world government. It’s going to come down to this:

- Sabbath
- Passover
- Holy Days

Those are the key things that are going to separate the true Christians

- from the near-do-wells
- from the tares within
- from the enemies without
- from the Christianity of this world that sounds good

Verse 15: “And after lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death. Do not deceive yourselves, my beloved brethren. Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning” (vs 15-17).

People need to read the Bible. The Bible is the complete book of life for every human being to have:

- to know how human life began
- to know Who God is
- to know Who Christ is
- to know what the Truth is
- to know what the calling of God is
- and the purpose of life
- and how you need to live your life

—It’s all there.

Verse 18: “According to His own will, He begat us by *the* Word of Truth... [And they want to do away with Truth.] ...that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings.” That’s the plan of God there.

Now, let me finish off a little bit more on this report:

Behind that process is the argument that the world has changed, and that Christianity must change with it.

Really!

Harry Emerson Fosdick, one of the most influential leaders in American Protestant liberalism, argued that the modern world has simply rendered traditional Christian doctrines unintelligible to the modern man and woman.

The opposite is true! They are the most relevant to the modern man and woman.

John Shelby Spong, the retired Episcopal bishop of Newark, New Jersey, put the issue bluntly: “Christianity must change or die.”

So that’s what they are up against.

Well, as even some conservatives left in the Dutch church recognize, if the church changes in the way the Dutch liberals are changing it, it is spiritually and theologically dead already.

Hence you have *Christianity without God*. And Christianity without God will never work. You may have some success for a time, because you’re still following what you call values. What you need to understand, if that is successful for you, that is not because of *your* success; it is that God is giving you a space and chance to repent. So, don’t get all high and mighty against God.

There is a new religion of “something-ism” in the Netherlands, and it is not a new form of Christianity. It is a new religion meeting in the historic Christian church structures.

So much for that! Would you ever think that it would have gotten that bad?

Let’s finish this segment by seeing what Jesus said, Luke 18:8: “...Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find the *true* faith on the earth?” Remember what Jesus said? *‘The way to life is narrow and difficult. The way of the world or sin is broad, and many people go therein.’* What is happening? *You look around and you see there are few.* What we need to do is see how God is going to work to change circumstances in the world—because He’s going to do that and is doing that—so that the message that is in the Bible to this generation—which is old as can be—can be presented to these people so that it is to them *new*, rather than try and change Christianity to work to their approach.

You present it in a way after God has already worked through circumstances in the world so that it is available.

(go to the next track)

By the time you get this sermon, the commemoration of 9/11 will have already taken place. The current mayor of New York (Bloomberg) does not want any prayers. How can you have a memorial without prayers? It was also brought out on the History Channel—it's running some things about what happened on 9/11, talking to survivors, and different things—Mayor Guiliani asked one of the priests to go and pray for people. So, he went in to pray for people and to help them out. And he himself lost his life. There were a lot of people who were there sacrificing and doing things in order to save people.

For the *atheistic* mayor of New York to say doesn't want any prayers. He doesn't want any Christian memorial there, supposedly—not even worldly Christian memorial. There is a church that's closer to the 'ground zero' place where the Twin Towers were destroyed, then the mosque that is now going to get government funding to be built. And they can't get any money to build that so-called Christian church.

Once you start turning things upside down, where does it go? Where does it stop? The Bible even answers the question: How did these things get started? *You start from within!* Where was Lucifer before he fell? *He was the covering cherub right over God*—right? Where was Judas on the Passover night? *Right there at the Passover*—correct? *Yes!*

Satan likes to get his people in positions of influence so therefore, they can take down true Christianity. He has his program working to bring the whole world, as we've seen in other sermons, to worship him as God. If you understand that's the goal, regardless of where people are starting, whether they're in a Christian church, whether they're a Muslim, whether they're a Buddhist, whether they're a Hindu. He's already got them worshipping him. So the main target is any form of Christianity—right? And the Bible.

You either pervert the Bible, like the *NIV* and the other modern translations, so you take away meaning and understanding from the Bible. Or you reject the Bible. Or you have people that you inspire, like the Jesus Seminar, to denounce and get rid of the Bible by saying it's nothing but mythology.

If you have some authority within the Church, that's the key—isn't it? Well, yes, it had to begin right within the Christian church itself. Now let's go to the book of Jude for just a minute; let's see how that was brought out by Jude, the half

brother of Jesus and the brother of James who wrote the epistle of James.

There is a responsibility for us. Remember there comes a time when you have to stand alone. Everyone's going to have to come to a time when he or she has to stand alone for the Truth. Doesn't mean you won't make mistakes along the way, but you have to take a stand for the Truth. That's what has to be done for those who know and understand the Truth. Satan is trying to get in to undermine. And he always sends those who have talent, who have ability, who have skills, good personality, good speakers, knowledgeable.

Here's what Jude had to write; this is the church that Jesus personally started—right? Jude 3: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith... [That's what we have to do. Jesus said when He comes to the earth will He find the true faith?] ...which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints." Knowing the completed Word of God.

"For certain men have stealthily crept in..." (v 4). You don't even notice them. They are nice. They say the right things. Maybe for a time are even convinced of some of the Truth. But even in the Churches of God we have seen how those who come in who believe all of the false Protestant doctrines. Then more came in and more came in, and pretty soon there was a whole group of them in power. Stealthily. They didn't say, 'I want you to know, number one, before I'm hired by this church, I'm coming to destroy it.'

"...stealthily crept in, 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..." (v 4). Changing the definition, changing the meaning. You've heard me say in recent sermons:

- thesis
- antithesis
- synthesis

That's how it's done. A belief—*challenge to the belief*. Knock it down, synthesize, *bring in a new modified belief*. 'Well, we're not changing much, we're just improving it.'

"...perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v 4). Is that not what they have done in the church in the Netherlands? *Absolutely, yes, indeed!*

If you don't have the book, *The Seven General Epistles*, I place side-by-side 2-Peter 2 and the book of Jude. They were writing at

approximately the same time. This was a church-wide problem that was coming along. Now notice what Peter wrote here.

2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you...” When you first read that you think, ‘Oh, well, how could that be?’ I remember one minister in a Church of God saying that he couldn’t understand why the book of 1st and 2nd-Corinthians was in the Bible, because we didn’t have any of those problems. Lo and behold, years later they all budded forth.

“...false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies...” (v 1). Remember the key word: *incrementalism*—a little change, a little change, a little change. ‘Let’s improve it here just a little bit; improve over here a little bit.’ That’s a counterfeit of growing in grace and knowledge—is it not? We’re to grow in grace and knowledge. We are to have greater understanding. God will give that through His Spirit and through His Word. So you have the Truth on the one hand and how to operate with that and then you have the stealthy *incrementalism* of false teachers creeping in, gradually changing things.

“...personally denying *the* Lord who bought them... [That’s what they do. Give Jesus a demotion. Too bad you’re already dead there, Mr. Funk, because I would suggest you get a rocket and you go up and demote Jesus, if you think that; see how far you will get.] ...and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.... [here’s the bad part about it]: ...And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; and because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed” (vs 1-2). And that’s what they have said—right? *Blaspheming!*

‘We don’t need the Bible. Oh, that’s outdated. We are modern. Man is evolving.’ We’re soon going to have with the addition, and I need to bring a sermon on that, too, of animal genes and things like this into our bodies. We’re going to improve our minds. We’re going to improve our lives. We’re going to live longer. We’re going to have nano-technology. Raymond Kurzweil has pronounced that by 2030 we will be on the verge of immortality. Remember those sermons I gave—*Singularity is Near* (FOT 2008). I remember Jim was here and we were doing the videotaping of those and I said, ‘Ah, man, I got going in this and I just read a little bit too much.’ He said, ‘Well, maybe you did.’ I said, ‘Well, it’s recorded.’ So we did what we did. I remember got a couple of nasty letter from people saying, ‘Why did you spend all that time on that?’ Now you know.

Verse 3: “Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain...

[listen to the Trinity Channel] ...for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force... [God never changes. The same judgment is coming.] ...and their destruction is *ever* watching.” He wants you to understand that if man thinks he is so important that he can stand there and reject God, reject His Word, He reminds them of His judgment against the angels who are greater than men—right? Wouldn’t you say angels are greater than men and women? *Yes!*

Verse 4: “For if God did not spare *the* angels who sinned, but, having cast *them* into Tartarus... [Tartarus is a place of restraint] ...delivered *them* into chains of darkness.” (v 4)—bound by their rejection of God. Remember what Jesus said to the Jews in rejecting Him that ‘you will be cast into outer darkness and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ And a lot of people think, that’s the Lake of Fire. *No!* That’s the ultimate judgment of being cut off from God. Darkness means you *have absolutely no understanding*. Gnashing of teeth because of the pain and things that you will go through for rejecting Jesus Christ, not only to the Jews, but any who do that.

Verse 5: “And *if God* did not spare *the* ancient world, but saved Noah, *the* eighth, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought the Flood upon the world of *the* ungodly” (v 5). When we ask: How bad is it going to get? When you read Gen. 6, you’re just given a summary of what happened. We don’t know the degree of things or how bad it was, except when we come to the New Testament when Jesus says, ‘As it was in the days of Noah...’ Look what’s happening now and the new technology that’s coming out.

Remember the sermons we’ve done on *The Mark of the Beast? Yes, indeed!* It’s coming. And the thing we need to understand, it’s all going to come like a tsunami wave when everything is spoken of. It’s like a man down in Texas they were showing. Think of the nation. If you don’t think God’s judgment is on this nation: we’ve had how many tornados this year? *Over 300!* Most killed in tornados for decades. We had also this back in the 30s. God’s judgment was then at that time, too. Here we are, over 70 years after the end of that judgment, which ended with the end of WWII, we’re right in the middle of another judgment—aren’t we? Many wars, tornados, hurricanes, floods, drought, fires and dust storms. Showed a picture from a high rise building in Phoenix when they had the dust storm; up 3,000 feet coming as a wall.

Down in Texas it was on the news just last night, this town burned down, 30 houses gone. And one of the survivors said he looked up and ‘here was a wall of fire over 100-feet high coming just like a tsunami toward us’ They’ve had four years of drought. They’re having to kill cattle as fast as they

can to get them to market, because there's nothing to eat. All flesh is as grass: human flesh, animal flesh. ***When we go against God, those things come upon us!***

Verse 6: "And having reduced *the* cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes..." I've got another article here which shows that not only are they accepting the witchcraft pagan holidays for excused absences at the Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, but chaplains are being told to resign their position in the military if they won't accept and implement the new 'openness' to homosexuals.

So, God made that as an example. If you've ever seen where Sodom and Gomorrah were, they have found huge balls of sulfur. You take one of these balls of sulfur and you light it on a teaspoon and it burns right through it in a few minutes. Then you look over and you see where Sodom was and here are the outline, if you look carefully, of all of these buildings that have been just burned to a crisp. It looks like they are cliffs, but if you look carefully, you'll see one story, two story, three story. And when they go up to it and they take, say like a little pick axe to it, it crumbles. All burned.

And also, with that, this is to be an everlasting remembrance: Do not do that! "...condemned *them* with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example *for those* who would be ungodly in the future" (v 6). Then He rescued Lot, and so forth.

Come down here to v 12: "But these—..." Those who are bringing these destructive teachings. And I imagine when Peter got done writing this he said, 'Wow!' Some people read that and say, 'Boy, that's pretty tough.' That's what God wants. When things get so bad, it's tough judgment and it's a tough message and you better repent.

"..But these—as irrational brute beasts, born to be caught and destroyed—blaspheme those things of which they are ignorant, *and* shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption. They are bringing upon themselves *the* reward of unrighteousness, while finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires day by day.... [Notice what it was doing to the church.] ...*They are* stains and blemishes... [That how you felt when you went to church and when some of these things were going on during our lifetime?] ...reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you. Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings—cursed children Who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, *the son* of Beor, who loved *the* reward of wickedness" (vs 12-15).

Those are pretty strong words. You combine the E of Jude and 2-Peter 2 and that's breathtaking. But now is the time for some breathtaking analysis of what's going on. Isn't it breathtaking what's taking place over there in the Netherlands and also in the churches in America? Right today, while we're here studying the Word of God, what do they have going on across the nation? *College football!* 'Lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God.' Right? *Yes!*

Isn't it interesting, every team virtually is named after an animal, which has been worshiped by people in the past as one of their gods. Even a professional team called the Tennessee Titans. Supermen! Think of it! Look at the sports through God's eyes.

Verse 17: "These *false prophets* are fountains without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever." No understanding at all. Yes, they will be in the Lake of Fire. And it talks in the book of Jude about the wandering stars, the angels that have sinned, will be reserved for the blackest darkness forever.

And isn't it interesting. What have they discovered out there in the universe? *Black holes!* Once you're in a black hole, you can't get out of it. Will they always be there in that place, forever? So that those who are in the Kingdom of God will know not to ever even have the slightest thought about rebelling against God.

Here's what they do, v 18: "For they speak bombastic *words* of vanity, 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..." (vs 18-19). Isn't that it—freedom? *Yes!* How does Sean Hannity's program start out? *Freedom!* See the mixture of truth and error? What is true freedom? *True freedom is having access to God*, so you can become free from the pulls of human nature and sin. So you can change and overcome. That's true freedom.

"...promising them freedom, they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage" (v 19). What is your passion? What is your thing that you do as an individual?

You have the sports' nuts. Yes, they go to the baseball stores and the NFL stores, and the NBA stores, and they buy what? They buy the jerseys, they get the numbers, they get the letters, they get the footballs, they get the jackets; they get all of these things, but tell them to quit that and go to church on Sabbath—you're going to find a real big problem. Are they held in bondage to that? *Yes!*

Every waking thought is about it. And then what happens, like what has happened to the Oakland Raiders, they've been in 12 years of nothing-land. But they still go by their fallen gods. If they do show a Raider game, watch it, watch how they dress up, all satanism—right? *Yes!* Darth Vaders! Clubs! They can buy these balls with the spikes on them. Of course they're rubber, but they take them to the game and here are they with these Darth Vader masks on and these big broad shoulders, in silver and black, and holding this club. Are they caught up in it? *Yes, indeed!*

What's the difference between that and those who belong to a religious order who wear their garb and walk piously? I remember the thing that caused me to go be baptized was: I couldn't get to Ambassador College, so I had applied to go from San Mateo Junior College to go to the University of San Francisco, and I didn't know it was Catholic. But I found out it was Catholic. Right in the front office, they've got a big picture of Jesus about this wide and about five times as high, right there in the office. And they have crosses and crucifixes everywhere. I remember all of this going through my mind and I'm up on the third floor of one of the buildings where they have the classes, and I'm looking down on the center square at the University of San Francisco. I had just read about the scribes and Pharisees who were hypocrites who would go around in long robes and loved to be called, 'rabbi, rabbi,' or 'father, father.'

So I'm looking down and here are the Jesuit priests with their long cossacks on at 8 o'clock in the morning, walking down the paths reading their little missals. A student would come by and say, 'Good morning, father.' And he would nod and so forth. And I said to myself, 'What are you doing here? This can never work, not with what you have learned.' So, I went down to the registrar's office and because you can withdraw before eight weeks and you don't have any record. I went down and withdrew and then I went on down to Pasadena and was immediately baptized. They live in the deception—don't they? Oh, and I remember sitting there in first class of philosophy. And what are they talking about? *All the ancient philosophers and then the order of life, according to the philosophers!* And that got to me. Then plus looking down and seeing those priests going along with their missals, 'Oh, yes, bless you, my son. Bless you, my daughter.' 'Oh, I had a good day. I saw one of the fathers and got a blessing.'

Verse 20: "For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them, and are overcome... [they can repent up to certain points] ...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. 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 21-22).

Very descriptive words—right? *Yes!* That's the church today, going back to Sunday—unclean meats, Christmas, Easter, New Years, the whole thing. Let's come back here to Psalm 50. Very instructive, because here is what they are doing. They are still using the name of God. Why don't you just give up the name of God and Christ and just come out and say Baal, Ashteroth, Tammuz.

Psalm 50:7: "Hear, My people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you; I am God, even your God. I will not reprove you for your sacrifices, or your burnt offerings which are continually before Me. I will take no bull out of your house, nor he goats out of your folds, for every beast of the forest is Mine and the livestock upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is Mine, and all the fullness of it. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?" (vs 7-13). *No*, God is not interested in ritual. He wants our hearts.

Verse 14: "Offer to God thanksgiving; and pay your vows to the Most High; and call upon Me in the day of trouble; and I will deliver you, and you shall honor Me" (vs 14-15). That's what we are to do when difficulties come along. He'll deliver us. A lot of the difficulties are our own makings, so we have to repent. Ask God for mercy and kindness. Open the doors and change the way.

Verse 16: "But to the wicked God says, 'What right have you to declare My statutes, and to take up My covenant in your mouth?... [why even use the name of God] ...Yes, you hate to be taught, and you cast My words behind you. When you saw a thief, then you were pleased to be with him, and you have taken part with adulterers. You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit; you speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's sons. These things you have done, and I have kept silence; you thought that I was like yourself, but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes" (vs 16-21). So that's what's going to happen with all of this.

Verse 22: "Now consider this, you who forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoever offers praise glorifies Me;

and he who set his conduct aright, I will show him the salvation of God” (vs 22-23).

As we read this, let’s see exactly how God views this, Psalm 53:1: “The fool has said in his heart... [When they declare themselves wise and reject God, they’re fools. Read all of Rom. 1.] ...‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, and have worked out abominable wickedness; there is no one who does good.” Why don’t you go online and look up all of the liberal drug policies in Holland and their sexual policies in Holland. You will see why they don’t believe in God and you’re looking at two of the same things.

If you don’t believe in God and reject Christ, look at how your society becomes. Then you look at the society the way it is and then you reject God. It’s kind of self-feeding circle when it sets in. That’s why when Christ returns, most of this world, frankly, brethren, is going to be destroyed because of the evil of men. Look, there are so many things yet to be fulfilled. It’s going to be beyond many of the lifetimes of those of us. Dolores and I thought we would live to see the return of Christ. We even thought we wouldn’t get old. Here we are. So we don’t know how it’s going to be, but we do know this:

Verse 2: “God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any who understand, who are seeking after God.... [God is always looking for those who are seeking Him.] ...Everyone has turned away; they have altogether become corrupt; no one is doing good, no, not even one.... [they think they’re doing good; good in their own eyes] ...Will the workers of iniquity never learn? They eat up my people as they eat bread; they have not called upon God. There they were in great fear where no fear was, for God has scattered the bones of him who camps against you; you have put them to shame because God has rejected them” (vs 2-5). That’s what’s going to happen.

So for us, notice v 6: “Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God brings back His people out of exile, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.” We need to see and understand that that’s what’s going to happen to us. *God will!*

Let’s come to the very first Psalm. If you walk in God’s way, God is with you. God will bless you. Psalm 1:1: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked... [or the ungodly. That’s what we just read about, get rid of Christ.] ...nor stand in the way of sinners... [He’s obedient to God.] ...nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD...” (vs 1-2).

What is the New Covenant to do for us? *So that with the Spirit of God, the laws and commandments are written in our hearts and in our*

minds—right? “...and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper” (vs 2-3). *Spiritually!*

If you’re faithful to God, He will bless you physically, too, because God says He changes not. Does God bless those who follow the laws of tithes and offering? *Yes!* But how many people even within the Church of God don’t believe that? Don’t get after me when I say that, because people do. They say, ‘Ah, there he goes again.’ No, look at it from the other way around. If you say that to me, God looks down and He says, ‘Oh, there you go again.’ Just the opposite way around. Think of that; read Mal. 3 very carefully.

Verse 4: “The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous... [What is the ultimate congregation of the righteous going to be? *The resurrection and the Sea of Glass!*] ...for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish” (vs 4-6).

Psalm 16—the last two verses go into a prophecy of Christ. Psalm 16:1: “Preserve me, O God, for in You do I take refuge. I have said to the LORD, ‘You are my LORD; I have no goodness apart from You.’...” (vs 1-2). That’s the important thing to come to understand. In God we live and move and have our being. If we do the commandments of God and do what is good, that’s from God. It’s not our works. It’s the workmanship of God.

Verse 3: “As for the saints in the earth, ‘They are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.’” There is that dividing line and God knows those who are His, regardless if you’re just one person in your own home. You have the Spirit of God, God is there with you. He knows you. He delights in you.

Verse 4: “Their sorrows shall be multiplied who run after another god... [Sound like what is happening in America, happening in the world? *Yes!*] ...I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood; and I will not take their names upon my lips. The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; You shall uphold my lot” (vs 4-5). Completely trusting in God.

Verse 6: “The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a beautiful inheritance.... [And nothing can be more beautiful than the Kingdom of God. Nothing can be more beautiful than the New Jerusalem—correct?] ...I will bless the LORD Who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the nights. I have set the LORD

always before Me... [And that's of Christ talking to the Father.] ...because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in safety" (vs 6-9). Then it goes in talking about Christ's view of how things would be going through the crucifixion. This is what He was thinking on.

Verse 10: "For you will not abandon My soul to the grave; neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will make known to Me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy. At your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (vs 10-11).

That's what we have to look forward to. Now let's come clear back to the New Testament, to the Second Epistle of John. Notice how important this is for us. This was also written at a time of confusion and rejection of the true Jesus. In 1-John 2, John wrote that there are many antichrists. Yes, there are many out there today.

2-John 1: "The elder to *the* chosen lady and her children... [That's an eloquent way of speaking to the church.] ...whom I love [#1] **in Truth**, and not I alone, but also all those who have known [#2] **the Truth**." Now I want you to circle **Truth**, because Jesus is the Way, **the Truth**, and the Life. That's why we must prove all things, whether they are so. Prove the Truth so you know it's the Truth.

What happens if all of a sudden you may have a doubt in your mind. What do you do? You just say, 'Oh, I shouldn't have a doubt in my mind.' Don't think of it. Unless you stop and take that doubt, put it right smack in the middle of the table, so to speak, examine it for what it is, study in the Scripture for what you need to study to disprove that doubt and get rid of it. If you don't, more fiery missiles from Satan are going to bring more doubt.

"For *the* sake of [#3] **the Truth** that is dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever: Grace, mercy, *and* peace shall be with us from God *the* Father, and from *the* Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, [#4] **in Truth** and love" (vs 2-3). Now there we have it already four times—right? *Yes!*

Verse 4: "I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who are walking [#5] **in Truth**... [Now that means in *the Truth of the Way* of God.] ...exactly as we received commandment from the Father. And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have *observed* from *the* beginning, that we love one another" (vs 4-5). That's the most difficult thing to do, especially in this age.

All of us have, and we are confronted, with so many different problems. Just like we are living

in the end-time when all of these prophecies are going to be fulfilled.

- There's going to be the *antichrist*.
- There's going to be the *mark of the beast*.
- There is going to be a *complete rejection of God*.
- There is going to be *surveillance type of society* that will be so pervasive.

None of the saints in the past ever had to face all of the things we're going to have to face. This is what we need to understand.

Therefore, when we slip and fall, we need not get entrenched in our own ways. We need to come back to God and realize the truth and what it is and what we're looking forward to. 'Love one another.'

Verse 6: "And this is the love of *God*: that we walk according to His commandments..." *For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments* (1-John 5:3)—walking in His commandments.

Verse 6: "...This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it. Because many deceivers have entered into the world—those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.... [They even deny that He's come at all or He's a mythological figure.] ...This is *the spirit of the deceiver and the antichrist*" (vs 6-7). Right smack in the middle of what used to be called a Christian church.

Verse 8: "Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward." That's what it needs to be with us.

Always remember: the world is going to go its way. ***There is a dividing line between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of deception. We need to***

- love the Truth
- love God
- adjust our lives accordingly

What a shame that's going on there in the Netherlands and the rest of the world.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Proverbs 21:2, 4
- 2) Proverbs 16:2
- 3) Proverbs 14:12
- 4) Malachi 3:6
- 5) Titus 1:1-2

- 6) James 1:13-18
- 7) Luke 18:8
- 8) Jude 3-4
- 9) 2-Peter 2:1-6, 12-15, 17-22
- 10) Psalm 50:7-23
- 11) Psalm 53:1-6
- 12) Psalm 1:1-6
- 13) Psalm 16:1-11
- 14) 2-John 1-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 5:12
- Genesis 6
- Romans 1
- 1-John 2; 5:3

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