

Grace Upon Grace VIII

Fred R. Coulter—July 7, 2012

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! I thought last week was my last one on *grace upon grace*, but no, there's another one.

Everyone understands that *under law* is everyone in the world who does not have the Holy Spirit of God *within* them—that's everyone. Within that then there are varying degrees of law-keeping in the letter and varying degrees of depths of evil. But they are all *under law*—the whole world, every person, as long as they live. They're also subject to all the laws that we call the laws of health. They're also subject to the laws of financing. They're also subject to all the laws relating to the earth and human physical behavior: air, water, food, etc.

We also know that in the end-time that the lawlessness is going to arise. As Dolores and I were discussing the other night, the worst kind of lawlessness is when they take lawless inactions and make it the law of the land. For example:

- same-sex marriage
- oppressive taxes
- executive edicts like in our government here by the President
- policemen who don't carry out the law but have their own agenda
- Judges who do not adhere to the Constitution or the law

They make and create more lawless acts. So we end up with, as Jesus said, 'because lawlessness shall be multiplied...' (Matt. 24:12).

If you feel frustrated watching the news and looking at all the lawless acts that everyone is doing and everyone is violating whatever laws apply to that section. Just take the financial laws of being in debt. We're all right here very close from the edge of a \$16-trillion cliff. The deceptiveness about borrowing money today is they get it at virtually no interest. What are you going to do when the interest goes up to 6%? *Everything will come crashing down!*

Let's understand *who* is *under grace*.

Can God extend grace to someone who does have God's Holy Spirit in forgiving their sins? *Yes, God can!* We find that throughout the whole Old Testament. Can God give mercy, which then is an act of grace, to hold back evil if people change their behavior? *Yes, He can!* But that doesn't mean they are *under grace*.

Let's look at the Protestant definition of *under grace*: under grace means you have no laws to keep. But that's an impossibility because every

human being is *under law*. As we saw last time, those who are *under grace* are not exempt from law. They have a higher spiritual standard in keeping the law and because it's written in their hearts and in their minds, which is an act of grace.

What is the cut-off point and the dividing line between being *under law* or *under grace*? The dividing line is when a person has been baptized, after repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit of God, *they are under grace*. Why? ***Because God Himself is personally intervening in their life and has given the Holy Spirit to them***, which is an act of grace on God's part. Grace is something you cannot earn. Grace comes from God. Grace does not come *from human beings* back to God, but grace comes from God *to us* as human beings.

Let's see how Paul describes the dividing line. We'll define this as we go along, so you will know who is under grace. What did Jesus say about the Church? '*Many are called but few are chosen.*' When you answer the call, we will see you become the elect or the select. *God selects you* to give you the Holy Spirit. This is the whole topic of Romans 8, the first part. Everything that God does:

- to give us His Spirit
- to put His laws in our heart and our mind
- to seal us with the earnest of the Holy Spirit, to give us understanding of His Word
- to grant us of His love and hope and mercy and grace
- to personally apply the sacrifice of Christ to our sins
- that we are joined in covenant in that baptismal death with Christ

—all of that is grace—*grace upon grace*—all comes from God.

Here's our standing before God--though we are still in the flesh with the Holy Spirit of God within us—God does not view us as carnal fleshly people because we are His begotten children. He has *selected* us.

After Rom. 7 explaining about 'the law of sin and death' and how we need to overcome it, then chapter eight tells us how that is accomplished. That is grace. People in the world, they can discipline themselves all they want. They can make themselves the best that they can be. You talk to athletes and they say:

- I'm going to be the best swimmer in the world.'

Okay, go ahead. Does that change your nature?

- I'm going to become the fastest runner in the world.
- I'm going to become the richest man in the world.
- I'm going to become the strongest man in the world.
- I'm going to be the most beautiful woman in the world.
- I'm going to own the most property that I can possibly own and I'm going to control and rule people.

All of that may be discipline and it does take discipline. It does take education. But none of those things equal conversion.

They can be very nice people. Many of the things that they do, if they're successful, follow along with the Laws of God in the letter. Now when they don't I recommend you watch *American Greed* on CNBC some night—good example of counterfeit; good example of stealing while appearing innocent.

With the Holy Spirit of God, how is your standing before God? You're not *under law*; you're *under grace*! So, you're standing before God is you receive God's Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there* is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit." What will the Holy Spirit do?

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth.
- The Holy Spirit will lead us into all Truth.
- The Holy Spirit is that which comes directly from God through His grace.

This does something within us that cannot be accomplished by all the discipline in the world. Yes, we need to use the Spirit of God to lead us, to guide us, to give us the strength.

Verse 2: "Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death." We know it has not been removed, but we are delivered from the enslavement of it through the power of God's Holy Spirit. That's why we are told to overcome. That's why we are to seek after the Divine nature because with the impregnation of God's Spirit we receive of the Divine nature. That's why we are to grow in the fruits of the Spirit.

If you're keeping the commandments of God and you're loving God, you have God's Spirit in you, you're striving, you're growing, you're overcoming, you are walking in the Spirit, not in the flesh. If you're in the flesh, you're out there doing everything you can to improve all the works of the flesh, breaking the commandments of God, denying

that God has rulership over you, etc. You see the difference? We have hope in overcoming. That's why with this series I want you to go back and review the (series) *Washing of the Water by the Word*, how God's Spirit does that. It doesn't happen in people who don't have the Spirit of God.

Here's a hard verse for people to understand, v 3: "For what was impossible for the Law to do... [The Law or any law does not have any inherent power to make you do something. The Law defines right and wrong, good and evil. That's what the Law does.] ...in that it was weak through the flesh..." That's what happened to the children of Israel. Look at the roller coaster of history that they had, from righteousness to the depths of sin. Finally, captivity and the Jews twice and still they haven't gotten the point, because they don't have the Spirit of God.

Remember this: ***if you are chosen and you reject it, you become the last, not the first.*** That's what's happened to the Jews.

Why was the flesh weak? What does it have inherently in it? *The law of sin and death!* So, as good as people want to be, there is no way they can overcome death; there is no way they can forgive their sins. You can't forgive your own sins; there is no way. You get rid of one of bad behavior another one pops up.

- What is the only solution?
- Who put 'the law of sin and death' in us? *God did*, through Adam and Eve.
- Who alone can take care of 'the law of sin and death'? *God!*
- Is God righteous? *Yes, totally!*
- Is God fair? *Yes, completely!*
- How then is God going to solve a problem that He left all human beings with to inherit from their parents? *It's within them!*

That's why Christ in the greatest act of grace divested Himself of His power and glory and became a human being born of the virgin Mary, so that He, by the grace of God, *would taste death for everyone.*

We've covered v 3 before, but maybe this will help you understand it even more. "...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This tells us that Jesus had to have full human nature with 'the law of sin and death,' which He got from His mother, Mary, yet, never sinned. So, the requirement for Jesus was high above the requirement for any human being—correct? *Yes, indeed!*

Here is the purpose in it for all of those who say that you don't have to keep the Law or the Law has been done away or the Law has been abolished, how do you read v 4? "In order that the

righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled **in us...** [The *us* are the ones who are *under grace*. The righteousness means the full spiritual aspect of it.] ...who are not walking according to *the flesh*, but according to *the Spirit*.”

That’s how God looks at it. That is the dividing line. What did Jesus say? He said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and **no one comes to the Father except through Me.**’ Can’t do it! There’s only one way! So, all the religions of men, all the borrowing of Scriptures, all the twisting and turning of the Word of God to bring an acceptable ‘religion’ to people, is all the *works of the flesh* and null and void.

Verse 5: “For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh... [they are interested in it] ...but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit.”

- How’s their relationship with God?
- How are they keeping the commandments of God?
- How are they overcoming?
- How are they changing?
- How are they growing?
- How are they praying?
- How are they studying?

All these things, are the works of the Spirit?

Verse 6: “For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace”—because you are under the grace of God. True life! True peace! Doesn’t mean we won’t have troubles and difficulties, but there is a way out of every one of them through God.

Verse 7: “Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*.” That’s why when people say, for example, they’re Christian, ‘We keep the commandments, except for this one.’ That’s carnal-minded. ‘Oh, well, the church changed it. So we now go to church on Sunday. Let’s make it convenient. Let’s make Sunday the seventh day of the week, how’s that?’

When everybody looks at the calendar, the seventh day, they don’t think Sunday is the seventh day of the week. Of course, after a generation or two people growing up in that atmosphere, what day of the week is Sunday to them? *Seventh day of the week!* You can see how complicated all of this gets.

“...not subject to the Law of God...” (v 7).

- they want their idols
- they want their crosses and crucifixes
- they want their saints
- they want their beads
- they want their temples
- they want their idol

It’s like this one judge said recently, because at the school they had the Ten Commandments, the U.S. Constitution and the amendments all on the bulletin board. Somebody got offended because they’re of the flesh. ‘Oh, we can’t have that, so I’ll go to court.’

The judge says, ‘The way we can solve this is only have six commandments. Get rid of the first four.’ The first four are more important than the last six, because you can’t be in contact without the first four. Is that enmity against God? Is that enmity against His laws? *Sure it is!*

“...not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*” (v 7). This means it has no power to be subject to the Law of God.

‘Yah, but, if you keep nine of the ten...’ Look at it this way. Here’s a cliff, here’s a cliff on the other side and below is a great, steep gorge, and you have to get to the other side. You get back and you run and huff and puff and you jump, and you get 90% of the way across! In your self-righteousness you say, ‘I’ll keep nine. Aren’t I good.’ Compared to someone who is locked up in prison for the rest of his life because of multiple murders, your conduct may be better by comparison *this way between man and man*. But ***how is your standing between you and God***, the comparison *this way*?

Verse 8: “But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God.” We’re going to see ***we can*** please God. So this shows the impossibility of it.

Now then, Paul brings us the dividing line, v 9: “However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, ***IF***...” [That’s the little two-letter word that needs to be big and printed in red. I guess that would be the way to print the Bible, capitalize all the *ifs* and print them in red.] ...the Spirit of God is indeed dwelling ***within*** you.” ‘En’ is the Greek, within, not with you, not among the people. Under the Old Covenant God said, ‘Build Me a tabernacle that I may dwell among the people, *not in them* with My Spirit.’

God gave them laws so that they would have laws that other nations would say, ‘What nations is there so great with all these laws and judgments and everything and has God near to them.’ *No*, this is *within*.

Come to John 14 because we need to get this into the record. We have covered this in different ways before, but now let’s look at it again. Sometimes some of the most familiar Scriptures that we deal with, it’s good if we go back and restudy them again when we’re looking at things from a different perspective.

John 14:14: “**If** you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.” [that’s subject to the will of God; that’s subject to the timing of God] (and subject to): **If** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments” (vs 14-15). That is a literal translation. This is magnified even more because someone will say, ‘I’ll go through all the commandments and see what Jesus said.’ That’s fine, but unless you know who Jesus was:

- He was the Lord God of the Old Testament
- Who created Adam and Eve
- Who gave the laws to all the patriarchs
- Who worked personally with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- Who gave the laws to Israel through Moses

it includes all of those.

Verse 16: “And I will ask the Father...” Very important thing indeed, because this is the dividing line. Who is the Father? *The great Sovereign of the whole universe*—correct? Where is the Holy Spirit coming from? *God the Father to you!* That’s grace! That’s the greatest grace that can be.

“...and He shall give you another Comforter [Holy Spirit], that it may be with you throughout the age... [until the resurrection] ...*even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 16-17). Do a word study on Truth.

- The Spirit of Truth is not going to come and tell lies.
- The Spirit of Truth is not going to do away with the Word of God.
- The Spirit of Truth is not going to lead you into lawlessness because lawlessness is founded on lies.

“...which the world cannot receive...” (v 17). Why? *Because they haven’t repented!* It’s impossible for them to do so, so they flock to their churches on Sunday, supposedly praising God on the wrong day, thanking Him for their lawlessness that they don’t have to keep the Law, and expect God’s Spirit to be there with them while they hear all of these lies from the pulpit. But **God’s Spirit is not with them because it is the Spirit of the Truth!**

“...the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you...” (v 17). There is a distinguishing factor right here. When you begin answering the call of God, God’s Spirit can come and lead you and draw you if you keep seeking God. If not, it will withdraw. Maybe you will come back at it at another time. Some people have started, backed off, years later God is still dealing with them. They come to their senses. God’s Spirit will again begin to draw them.

Why is it that before you’re baptized all of a sudden you’ve got to know what God is about?

You’ve got to know what the Word of God means. God works through our lives and disasters and things that happen in our lives so that we’ll ask, ‘Why this? What is happening?’ *You start seeking God!* Maybe you utter your first prayer, ‘God, I’m in trouble, help me.’ Then God’s Spirit, one of the seven Spirits of God will come be with you, lead you. As long as you keep seeking, it’ll lead you. Then you come to the point that God’s Spirit will be *with* you. What is that going to do?

“...dwells with you, and shall be **within** you” (v 17). That’s the dividing line. How many people are there out in the world that have God’s Spirit with them who may be seeking to understand about God, we don’t even know. Remember what God told Elijah when he said, ‘Oh, Lord, I’m just the only one. Poor me.’ He said, ‘Now, now, Elijah, cheer up, there are 7,000 that haven’t bowed the knee to Baal.’ So, we don’t know; God knows! “...dwells with you, and shall be within you.”

Then He says something very important because this becomes the vital key in understanding that you’re under grace. We covered part of this before, v 21: “The one who has My commandments... [tie that in with v 15] ...and is keeping them... [present tense participle] ...that is the one who lives Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.”

Judas Iscariot didn’t understand that. How can Christ manifest Himself to people without the world knowing about it? *He manifests Himself to you as you seek Him and He sends His Spirit to be with you!* That begins to open your mind. That begins to draw you to God. Why did you all of a sudden become interested in the Word of God? Why did you want to know what it says? *Because of God’s Spirit!* He does it that way.

He answers here, v 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We** will come to him and make **Our** abode with him’” That’s what we covered last time in 1-Cor. 3:16 that the Spirit of God is dwelling within us. We see two parts of the Holy Spirit here:

- from the Father
- from the Son

All of those who say they love the Lord but are not willing to keep the commandments of God, not willing to go by the sound words of Jesus Christ. Oh, they’re willing to take a few of the nice ones that make them feel good. But here’s what Jesus said.

Verse 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear

is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me." Under grace God the Father and Jesus Christ are personally dwelling within you by the power of the Holy Spirit. You are *a temple of God* and that is ***the greatest grace of God*** that He can give to you. The world is not under grace. Christianity of the world is deceived. They have a clever counterfeit but they don't have the Spirit of God.

Verse 26: "But when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which **the Father will send in My name...**" So, it comes from the Father in the name of Christ. That's why when you're baptized it's into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, because it's the power of the Holy Spirit that God gives to you as a begetting in your mind to become a begotten son or daughter of God, and the power of God's Holy Spirit so that God the Father and Christ are dwelling within you.

- it's the earnest
- it's the down payment
- it is the guarantee

Notice what it will do: "...that one shall teach you all things... [everything you need to know for salvation] ...and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you" (v 26).

- How do you think we got the Gospel?
- How do you think we have the words of Christ recorded for us?
- *God inspired them to be!*

We will see that the sending of the Holy Spirit is a joint operation between the Father and Christ.

John 15:26: "But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth... [Jesus sends it; the Father sends it; that means it's a joint operation by both of Them.] ...which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me."

John 16:12, Jesus said: "I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come" (vs 12-13).

Before the modern age when we could understand that God does things by power, because we didn't know about electricity, that God can do things without being there through the power of the Holy Spirit. Just like you can be in one room and press a button and you can make something happen in the other room. God does this across the universe.

The Spirit of the Truth! Do we need that to understand the book of Revelation today? Let's just do a little sidebar here before we finish this section

here. John was the one who wrote the book of Revelation. He did it while he was on the Isle of Patmos. He was exiled to the Isle of Patmos because they tried to boil him in oil and the oil vomited him right out of the hot oil and he wasn't touched with anything. So, they exiled him to the Isle of Patmos, all alone. I don't know if he was kind of like in a little dungeon, prison, or whatever. There he received the vision of the book of Revelation. He was told to write. Keep in mind this: a lot of the church members that at that time believed that Jesus said by time John dies Christ is going to return.

Have there been rumors in the church we have heard of about when Christ is going to return and the things that will happen? *Sure!* Did we believe them? *Yes!* Did they happen? *No!*

But Jesus didn't say that. So here comes the book of Revelation. I want you to read the book of Revelation in the timeframe that people thought Christ was going to return by the time John died. Read it in the timeframe of when it was sent to the churches. Right at first a lot of the churches didn't accept the book of Revelation. You know why? *Because when they got past the first five chapters—*and getting on in toward the end of the book of Revelation, chapters 13-22—"What is this?" It wasn't for them to understand at that time. 'You mean John wrote this? It doesn't make any sense. How can this be from what God has sent?' Yet, John wrote it. But it did disclose the things to come—did it not? Also this is prophecy for us. How do we understand it?

It's easier to understand 2,000 years later looking back and having some understanding of the book of Daniel in addition to it. That was done by the power of the Holy Spirit, by vision from Christ to John showing him things to take place.

With that in mind, Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." An absolute dividing point! No half-ways in between. Almost—doesn't count. You either are or you are not. You either have the Spirit of God within you or you do not.

If you don't have the Spirit of Christ within you, you do not belong to Him. 'God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ***obey*** Him' (Acts 5:32). Jesus said, 'If you keep My commandments...' What does this tell you about Christianity in the world regardless of the brand? Do they keep the commandments of God? *No!* 90% doesn't get you across the gap—does it? *No, it doesn't!* Do they belong to Christ? *No!* They are the ones that James and John found one man casting out demons in Jesus' name. They said, 'Lord, we forbid him.'

Jesus said, 'Don't forbid him.' *Well, Lord, they're not of us.* He said, 'If they are for us, they are on our part.' But they have nothing to do with the reality of conversion because they didn't receive the Holy Spirit, unless they happened to come there on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given and they repented and were part of the 3,000 that were baptized that day.

So, all of these churches that say they are Christian—I don't even think they could tell you what Christian is. I know there are a lot of people who will just say, 'Who do you think you are in saying that!' I understand that. I'm just reading the Word of God, that's all. I'm reading what God has decided, what He is inspired, what He has put in His Word. So if you do not have the Spirit of Christ *within* you, you don't belong to Him. You can profess it, you can have a 'religion over it'; you don't belong to Him.

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead... [What Spirit was that from? *The Father!* We have the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the Father combined together right here just like it showed us John 14.] ...is dwelling with in you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you" (vs 10-11). *That is the dividing line between being under law or under grace.*

(go to the next track)

Under grace does not mean *above the Law*. I may have to give one more sermon on lawlessness to cover that. *Under grace* means you have a direct relationship between you and God the Father because you have received the Holy Spirit of God. Having received the Holy Spirit of God, you are now required to keep the commandments of God in the Spirit. You are now required that they are written in your heart and in your mind. God's Spirit will do that for you. For those to say, 'We're under grace and we don't have to keep the Law,' they are *under law* and they are lawless.

Jim said it is to legalize lawlessness. That was first done in churches. They have set the tone for how the society is. When you walk into a church and they tell you, 'Hallelujah, brother, we're under the New Covenant. Raise your hand, look at the preacher and give your heart to the Lord. You are saved and now you don't have to keep any law.'

That sounds so deliriously simple, but it is the greatest lie in the world and deceives millions of people into a lawless religion that claims to follow Christ Who is the Lawgiver. So what they are

actually doing is judging God and saying, 'We are above God.' They are not under grace at all.

- they may be well intentioned
- they may have a lot of 'do-gooder' works
- they may be thought well of in the community
- they may have nice personalities
- they may be good people in the world

—but *they don't belong to Christ because they do not have the Holy Spirit of God!* For all of those in Protestant-land, that's a hard one to take. Because they say, 'We're under grace. We don't have to keep any laws.'

Like one man was approached recently. He was told, 'You're getting legalistic.' Who is the Lawgiver? Is God legalistic in who He gives His Spirit to? *If you don't obey Him, you don't get it!* If you don't repent and if you are not baptized in covenant baptism, you do not receive the Holy Spirit of God within you—period! Don't bring to me about Cornelius and his household. That was an exception so God could show Peter that the Gentiles could receive the Holy Spirit without physical circumcision. Then they were baptized after the fact.

Let me tell you what that means in the Greek. That is called a *hapax legomenon*, which refers to a word meaning a 'one-time occurrence' of the word. This was a one-time event when the Holy Spirit was given before baptism to show Peter from God Himself what God was going to do. Let's add a little bit more to it, which is this:

- Can any man tell God what to do?
- Can any man plead with God to accept his way instead of God's way and demand that God do it?
- Will God honor that? *Of course not!*

The one trying to enforce that upon God is trying to make himself greater than God.

Likewise when they put themselves above the law, saying it is 'done away' when Jesus said 'don't even think that I come to abolish the law,' that you don't need to keep the Ten Commandments. We're going to see that's one of the evidences that you belong to God.

Let's finish this section of it. The only way you're going to be guaranteed of eternal life is Romans 8:11: "Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead... [from the Father] ...is dwelling within you, He... [God the Father] ...Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you." No one's going to be in the resurrection unless they have had the begetting of the Holy Spirit of God—period! That's why there's the second resurrection.

Verse 12: “So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die... [Isn’t that what is happening in the religions of this world? Are they not all fleshly religions? Think about it!] ...but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live... (vs 12-13). Here shows our part:

- we must work
- we must overcome
- we must use the Holy Spirit

Here’s what the Holy Spirit will do for us, v 14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.” That is not said of anyone who does not have the Spirit of God.

That’s not to say that you must belong to the Christian Biblical Church of God. No, you must belong to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Rev. 2 and 3 shows us that as God views His churches on the earth, and lo there are many fellowships and churches, but they fall into seven categories of the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3. They all have to have the Spirit of God within them. Some may have a few different doctrines than others. Some may have problems with sin amongst their midst, etc. But nevertheless they still belong to Christ and He wrote a personal letter to all seven churches.

Of the seven He told five of them to repent. And of all seven He said, ‘The one who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ That comes direct from Jesus Christ! This is why if you’re not putting to death the deeds of the body, you’re going to have problems as described in the seven churches, Rev. 2 and 3.

Verse 14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [that comes from Satan the devil] ...but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father’” (vs 14-15). That is you have direct connection to God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above because you have the Holy Spirit within you. That is the greatest grace that God can give you.

Verse 16: “The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God.... [Paul understood this]: ...Now, if *we are* children *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ...” (vs 16-17). He’s going to inherit the whole universe—joint heirs. Think of that! What is it going to be like? Just like we could not conceive that we were just a little speck at conception, and however old you are trying to look back to that time, you can never understand what that was like. Likewise, in the flesh that we are with the Spirit of God within us, we can have a deep

understanding what it’s going to like to be a spirit being. We look through a glass darkly and we can see some things. We are told some things. But think about it this way: if God has put so much into this physical body and to give us the spirit of man and then give us of His Holy Spirit so that we now become the begotten sons and daughters of God, we are no more than just a little speck of what it’s going to be like at the resurrection when we receive the full glory that is going to be given to us.

He says it right here: “...if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him” (v 17). Paul writes that He’s going to transform our bodies to be made like His glorious body. I don’t know about you, I can think about that all day long, I can pray about it, I can read about it, I can study in the Greek, I can look through the glass darkly, but what is that going to be like?

The Epistle of 1-John becomes very, very important in understanding what do we do because God has not given us this body in mind and spirit of man and Spirit of God that we just sit back and do nothing. We have to be active. Every one of the seven churches were told by Christ, ‘to the one who overcomes shall be...’ whatever the promise was. We have to constantly be overcoming. This is why Paul said that he ‘forgets the things that are behind and reaching forward to the things which are before.’ You’ve got to do that. We all have to do that. We’re all going to have enough difficulties and problems that what was yesterday, that’s over and done. What we have today, don’t spoil it with feelings from yesterday. What you do tomorrow, don’t carry anything over into the next day.

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What glorious love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!....” The word here in the Greek is ‘*teknon*’—*God’s own begotten children*. The *King James* translates *sonship* as ‘adoption.’ Adoption means that you’re taking someone who is not of your genetic bloodline and you legally make them a son or daughter. That’s not what God is doing. He is giving of His Spirit in our minds, and we are begotten by God. We are His begotten children.

“...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know... [we can know this]: ...that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (vs 1-2). We can look at each other and we know exactly what we’re like—right? Think what it’s going to be like to be a spirit being, raised from the dead and we say, ‘There is God! There is Christ!’

I’ll have to tell a little one on myself. The other night in channel surfing I came across the Sci-

Fi channel—science fiction. The world is really being programmed to fight Jesus Christ. I'm going to have to give some sermons on 'I believe in aliens,] not the kind that the movies try to tell you to believe in. But since you don't know God the Father, you don't know Jesus Christ, you don't know the whole Holy angels. You deny Satan the devil and the demons, you want these aliens over here from Satan in your life, but the true aliens to you are God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy angels. They are coming to this earth and the world is going to fight against them. That was the whole thing concerning this movie.

What was interesting, you've heard me talk about the Sea of Glass that is huge. In this movie they had great space ships that were gigantic. I couldn't help but think of the Sea of Glass and how when the sign of the Son of man appears in the heavens it'll be there for about a year and a half. Then it will all of a sudden streak to the earth. Just as it gets to the clouds it'll go ZOOM! into this giant Sea of Glass and the world is going to gasp. Then they're going to see the sons and daughters of God raised from the dead being carried by the angels up to the Sea of Glass. I think God is going to show that to them because they're going to say, 'Look what they're doing, body snatching. What is this?'

They do have agreements, all nations, if there is an alien invasion they'll all come together and fight. So, all the presidents are on the phone and all of this, and television, 'Aliens are here. All the armies gather together.' Called Armageddon. That's what they were doing. The movie ended this way: One brilliant man who was drunk the night before, because he thought he was worthless, came up with a computer program where he could put a virus into the space ships, because there were a lot of these spaceships over the major cities of the world. It would take away their supernatural protection from any of the weapons, ballistic things to shoot them down. So that's how they defeated them.

Right after that was the movie, *Independence Day*, but it was about 10 o'clock so I said sayonara, I'm going to bed. But think what it's going to be. When 'He is manifest, we shall be like Him because we shall see Him exactly as He is.' Here's what this is to do for us. This is so when, in overcoming the world and overcoming sin and overcoming self you get a little discouraged.

Verse 3: "And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure." That's through Christ, that's through repentance, that's through growing and overcoming.

Let's see what God has done for us. We're going to see some other things which we do in concert with God's Spirit and motivated and led by

God's Spirit so that we know that we are of God. That's not to treat other people in a bad way. We don't categorize people. God does—*under law* or *under grace*. That comes from God.

Verse 4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness... [The *King James* says, 'Sin is the transgression of the Law.' That's not a literal translation. This is a literal translation. Lawlessness. I've got to give a sermon on that to finish this off.] ...for sin is lawlessness."

Verses 5-9 is the most correctly translated section of the Epistle of 1-John than any other translation. Some others come close to it. The *King James* has one verse there which says—v 9—that 'he who is begotten—or that is born again—cannot sin.' That has caused so much confusion. That's why they say the Law is done away and it has nothing to do with that.

Verse 5: "And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him... [because you have the Spirit of God] ...does not *practice* sin..." (vs 5-6). Doesn't say they don't sin.

1-John 5:16 says: "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death..." We'll see, what are we to do with our sins? First chapter—*confess them*—correct? *Yes!* It is he does not *practice* sin, doesn't mean he won't sin or she won't sin, but you can't *practice* it. Why? *Because God's Spirit will bring it to your attention that you are sinning so that you can repent and get rid of it!* That is a spirit-motivated conscience.

1-John 3:6: "...anyone who practices sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous" (vs 6-7). In other words, because Christ in us is motivating us, we do it according to the Spirit of God, comes from Christ.

Verse 8: "The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning... [That's pretty clear—isn't it?] ...For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil." That's the ultimate goal! Get rid of all of that! Nullify everything he has done as if it did not happen!

Verse 9, the key. "Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of *begettal* is dwelling within him..." That comes from the Father and from Christ to develop the mind of Christ. So, you don't practice sin. It doesn't say you won't sin. But what happens when you sin and you are convicted of it in conscience? *You repent*—right? *Yes!* That's what God's wants. The word in the Greek for seed is 'sperma.' You can draw the parallel there.

“...is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil.... [There is the dividing line between the world.] ...Everyone who does not practice righteousness... [What is righteousness? *Keeping the commandments of God!*] ...is not of God... [regardless of what they profess] ...and neither is the one who does not love his brother” (vs 9-10).

Let’s look at some simple-to-understand Scriptures so we know that we know God. We know that we have a relationship with Him. Let’s see where it tells us about being begotten again. So this ties in with 1-John 3:9.

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers, scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father...” (vs 1-2). What is that predetermined knowledge?

- repentance
- baptism
- receiving of the Holy Spirit

That was predetermined by God. You have to repent before the whole process begins.

“...by sanctification through the Spirit...” (v 2)—because you are sanctified when you receive the Spirit, because sanctified means *to be made Holy*. If you receive the Holy Spirit, you have been sanctified.

“...unto obedience...” (v 2). There is that word again. Not above the law. If you obey the law, you’re not above the law—correct? *Yes!*

“...and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you” (v 2).

The whole topic we’ve been going through is *grace upon grace, grace upon grace*. That Jesus ‘was full of grace and truth and His fullness we have all received and grace upon grace.’ Every act that God does in our lives is through the grace of God.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, **has begotten us again**... [The Greek there is ‘anagennao.’ We read back there in 1-John 3:9, *His seed*; that’s the seed of His begetting.] ...has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead.”

1-John 1: 3 shows that with the grace of God we have fellowship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ.

1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.” Look at how many times it says *obey, practice, Truth*. Isn’t this exactly where Protestantism is? They proclaim to have fellowship with Him, but are walking in darkness. We’ll see because they don’t keep the commandments.

“...we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.... [Again, you can take the study. What is Truth? All the way through. Verse 7: However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [Our fellowship starts with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Then with each other.] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us... [present tense] ...from all sin” (vs 6-7). We don’t practice sin, but we do sin. So therefore, we need forgiveness. “...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin,” and that is another operation of grace.

Verse 8: “If we say that we do not have sin... [That’s why the translation there in 1-John 3 cannot read: ‘the one who is born again cannot sin.’ That would contradict what he has written here.] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins... [To whom? *God the Father and Jesus Christ*. Right? Doesn’t say if you confess your sins to the priest. If you sin against God, how can *a man* forgive you your sins? *He can’t, only God can!*] ...He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.” (vs 8-10). How are you going to make God a liar, Who is Truth? He’s stating the impossible to know that you don’t dare say you have not sinned.

We’ll read some things here in 1-John 2 and then in chapter 3, because this tells us some very important things. It’s interesting that in talking to some Protestants the very first time, one man mentioned to me, ‘In the church that I attended they hardly ever read from the Gospel of John and never from 1-John.’ Now we’ll see why.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [Temptation comes along; you can put it down; you have not sinned.] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin... [It can’t be that you cannot sin.] ...we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation... [the continual atoning mercy seat for our sins] ...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world” (vs 1-2). However, according to God’s plan.

Verse 3: “And by this...” Let me explain those three words to you. The Greek word for *and* is ‘kai’—pronounced *key*. *By* is ‘en.’ *This* is ‘toutoo.’ It

reads: 'kai en toutoo.' He uses this over and over again in the Epistle of 1-John. We are to supply the meaning of *by this* or 'en toutoo.'

"And by this *standard*..." (v 3). We derived that from the context because we are measuring something so you need a standard.

"...we know... [this is what God wants you to know] ...we know that we know Him..." (v 3). That's

- by faith
- by grace
- by God's commandments
- by the Word of God
- by the Spirit of God within us

And all of this is grace.

"...we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments" (v 3). Because there was already the changing of the grace of God into something else, John is writing here to make it clear.

Verse 4: "The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him." Where does that put everyone who says we don't have to keep the laws and commandments of God? What does that make them? *Liars!* They may be nice people. They may be well intentioned, but they are liars.

Always remember this: *Con men*—you watch *American Greed*—are always the *slickest liars*. What did Jesus say? 'Many will come in My name saying I am the Christ and deceive many.' If you deceive someone, how do you do it? With truth? or With a lie? 'We know Jesus. He's abolished the law.'

John says, 4: "The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [key that to John 14] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [Why? *Because you're loving God and keeping His commandments.*] ...By this *means*... [of this perfection taking place—'en toutoo.'] ...we know that we are in Him" (vs 4-5). *We know* we know Him if we keep His commandments. If we are keeping His Word and the love of God is being perfected, *we know* we are in Him. God wants us to *know*. The power of faith and the Holy Spirit of God gives the conviction that it is so.

Notice what v 6 requires: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked."

- Did Jesus sin? *No!*
Which means He didn't break a law or commandment of God—correct?
- Did He love God? *Yes!*

- Did He always do the things that pleased the Father? *Yes!*
- Did He preach the words that the Father gave Him to preach? *Yes!*

With that in mind, 1-John 3:13: "My brethren, do not be amazed if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren. The one who does not love *his* brother is dwelling in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him" (vs 13-15). That's why there's always repentance because of sin and difficulties that come along.

Verse 16: "By this *very act* we have known the love of God because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him? (vs 16-17).

Now it comes out, how do you live and practice your life? Verse 18: "My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth." What does this do for us? Notice how much we are to know, because of the Spirit of God, the love of God, and what we do.

Verse 19: "And in this *way* we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him... [have confidence in God] ...That if our hearts condemn us... [Which happens when you sin—doesn't it? *Yes!*] ...God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.... [You can repent and have that wiped away.] ...Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God" (vs 19-22). You have faith, you have confidence, you have hope, all these things together.

Verse 22: "And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight.... [*Yes, we can please God.* There it is right there.] ...And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us. And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him... [Remember what Jesus said back in John 14?] ...and He [Christ] in him... [that is the one who has the Holy Spirit.] ...and by this... [kai en toutoo] ...we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us" (vs 22-24).

Those are the ones who are *under grace*. Under grace means that **God has intervened in your life directly**. Every part of the operation of God in the New Testament *is part of His grace, so we receive grace upon grace!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 8:1-9
- 2) John 14:14-17, 21, 23-26
- 3) John 15:26
- 4) John 16:12-13
- 5) Romans 8:9-17
- 6) 1-John 3:1-6
- 7) 1-John 5:16
- 8) 1-John 3:6-10
- 9) 1-Peter 1:1-3
- 10) 1-John 1:6-10
- 11) 1-John 2:1-6
- 12) 1-John 3:13-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 24:12
- Romans 7
- 1-Corinthians 3:16
- Acts 5:32
- Revelation 2, 3
- 1-John 1:3

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

The Washing of the Water by the Word

Copyright 2012—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.