

Personal Fellowship with God

Fred Coulter—November 6, 2010

Now we're also working on another book, which we are going to entitle—it was originally going to be the *Seventy Weeks Prophecy*, but we're going to make a book entitled, *The Appointed Times of the Messiah*. We're going to start out: When was Jesus born? We're going to edit it a little bit and show that *at the appointed time*, which was probably the Feast of Trumpets, Jesus was born. *At the appointed time* He began His ministry. You probably heard me give a little of that from the Feast messages that I gave, the *Seventy Weeks' Prophecy*, and so forth. But to the very day He began His ministry, at the end of 62-weeks or 434-years. And all of those were to begin and end on the tenth day of the seventh month, which began the land Sabbath, every seven years, and then the 50th year, when there were 49-years, comes out. The 50th year was 26_{A.D.} in the fall and that's when Jesus went to the temptation in the wilderness after He was baptized by John.

So we'll have all of that, showing all of that, plus we'll have—like we have the calendar showing when Jesus was born, we'll have a calendar showing the events and the temptation in the wilderness. And then we're going to show *the appointed time* of when Jesus was crucified. All of these things were prophesied and they all came to pass. And when were they done? *According to the Holy Days of God, according to God's calendar!*

Here in Galatians 4:1, it talks about the birth of Christ: “Now then, I say, for as long a time as the heir is a child, he is no different from a servant, *although* he be lord of all; but he is under guardians and stewards **until the time appointed** beforehand by the father” (vs 1-2). Who was the child? *Christ!* Who was the father? *God the Father!* “...Until the time appointed...” That's why we're going to entitle the book, *The Appointed Times of the Messiah*.

“In the same way, when we were children, we were held in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the time for the fulfillment came, God sent forth His own Son, born of a woman, born under law.... [Now we won't get into the technicalities doctrinally of that.] (When the time came for the fulfillment): ...born under law, In order that He might redeem those who are **under law**...” (vs 3-5). Now what does the term ‘under law’ mean? *It means you're under the judgment of God because of sin!* Everyone who has not come to Christ and had their sins forgiven, and walk in the commandments of God is under law. Protestants claim that we're no longer under law, so therefore we can do anything we want. But because they don't keep the commandments of God and have not followed through in the proper way according to the Bible,

they are still under law because they're keeping human traditions; likewise Catholics; likewise all of those that are in the other religions of the world. They're all under law.

The only ones who are under grace are those who have repented and been baptized and received the Holy Spirit, and your whole relationship with God is under grace. And it is a whole spiritual thing that changes within through conversion. And in order to be under grace, you need to have the Spirit of God. That doesn't mean that people out in the world who pray and say, ‘Oh, Jesus, forgive me for my sins. I won't do it anymore.’ God will hear and answer that prayer, but that doesn't mean salvation. God can answer anybody's prayer at any time, even though they're not called to conversion.

You think God answered the prayers of those 33 miners stuck below in the mine in Chile? I'll bet they were praying to God, not to the virgin Mary very much. Sometimes God will do things to demonstrate His power and His mercy and His love and His kindness by doing something like that and inspiring how then they could bring the men out of there. And they really were as good as dead—were they not?

“...redeem those who are under law, so that we might receive the *gift of sonship from God*” (v 5). Now the Greek here is ‘*the* sonship of God.’ That's pretty powerful. That's why the first resurrection is so vitally important. You are a son or daughter of God. I'm going to have to give a sermon on why the first resurrection is better compared to the second resurrection. God uses *His appointed times*:

- Christ was born on Trumpets
- Began His ministry on Atonement in a Jubilee year to proclaim liberty
- He was crucified on the Passover as the Lamb of God slain from the foundations of the world (Rev. 13:8)

We find that that was *an appointed time*.

Romans 5:6: “For even when we were without strength, at the **appointed time** Christ died for *the ungodly*”—*the appointed time* of the Messiah.

There are other appointed times. What's the next appointed time for the Messiah? Well, one that He declared and the only one to declare how long He would be in the grave was Jesus Christ—three days and three nights. So He was resurrected toward the end of the regular weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That was the *appointed time*

of His resurrection. Then you come to the next day—the Wave Sheaf Offering Day. The appointed time for that was on the first day of the week during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus ascended to the Father, came back to the earth and appeared to His disciples. He appeared to them for how long? *Forty days!* How did He begin His ministry? Beginning on a Day of Atonement with what? *A 40-day temptation of Satan the devil*—right?

He started out 40 days and ended up with 40 days. Now the 40 days at the end were a special teaching and trying time for the disciples and apostles so that they would know that He was resurrected from the dead. Then we can show:

- The appointed time for receiving the Holy Spirit for those that God calls—Pentecost.
- The appointed time of the second return of Christ—Feast of Trumpets.
- The appointed time of the resurrection on Pentecost.

Now Pentecost is a mini-Jubilee in itself. It's counted the same way only for seven weeks. Then you have the 50th day which then is parallel to the 50th year—*The Appointed Times of the Messiah*. So that will be a really good book and we can send that out as a bonus when we send out the Bible.

Everyone wants to know: What is the seventy-week prophecy? Well, thanks to Carl Franklin, he's got all the historical things figured out. But that's so complicated that we took most of that and we're putting it as an appendix in the book, because the 70-week prophecy is just one part of the appointed time of the Messiah. So there we will have that all in one book.

We live in the digital-informational age—right? It's quite ironic that everyone wants everything in a short, quick summary—the drive-thru Christianity and salvation. You can have McDonald's or you can have Wendy's or you can have Chick Filet or you can have Foster Farms or you can have any one of these things, restaurant-like. But the truth is that there is so much to the Truth of God and so much false things that have been given that you really need to be able to absorb a digital-informational overload.

So it is an informational age and there is so much to do and so much to know, because of the ignorance that has been bred by the no works, free grace, no obligation, no commandment-keeping, do as you please, Christianity and religions of this world. Now some people are going to be offended. Sometimes I can get very offensive. Sometimes if I'm angry, frightening. I have one of those faces. Like Jon Hill said there at Ambassador College, 'Fred Coulter, he's got eyes like two burnt holes in a blanket.' So, hey, that's the way it goes, but we have

to live with what we have. But nevertheless living in this age we will have so much for people, so they've got to be able to handle it. You've got to be able to read, to study, to pray; and that's why we have this on the image for *Lord, What Should I Do?* It's down to serious cases and serious times, because we're going to be facing so many things coming down the road?

How many saw Glenn Beck yesterday? I ordered that book, *The Day After the Dollar Crashes*, and it's not coming out till March. How many have listened to the sermons on *Aftershock: Global Financial Meltdown?* Important! Tie that together with the next two sermons that are coming, which I'll give you just a quick summary: What about Afghanistan in prophecy? Never thought of that—have you? What about the army of 200-million coming from the east?

Now if you want a real exciting video thing to watch—how many here have National Geographic? It's been on for a couple weeks, but watch the truck drivers in India going, driving up the Himalaya Mountains. Anybody see that? *Yes!* That'll tell you a lot has to be done before the army of 200-million can come west. You have to have roads; you have to have rails; you have to have pipelines. And remember that an army of 200-million is 1-million divisions of 20,000 men each. You don't get those all in one spot. So listen to the two sermons on that. So there's a lot coming down that we'll be watching. And there may be a way out if the proposal that I got out of the news, and so forth, there may be a way of temporarily stalling the collapse of the dollar *if* the Chinese agree to buy our bonds and what would the circumstances be for that? That's answered in that sermon.

Even if the dollar collapses, it will still happen very similar to it. So I hope you're prepared, I hope you are storing up some of this and some of that and some of the other stuff. I hope you have a little money set aside. I hope you have all the essentials that you need. If not, you better start doing a little extra shopping every week and get some set aside, so when the dollar crashes—like Glenn Beck showed yesterday—everyone's going to run to the store to try and buy things and it's just going to be just like when a crisis hits or a snow storm is coming or an earthquake has hit, and you run to the store and everything's gone. And everybody's fighting each other. And it's going to be gone!

Most of the stores carry what is called 'in-time inventory.' Meaning, they get just what they need in time to fill their shelves. So they have to supply. So if you don't have a supply, you need something to get you through those tough times.

Now, let's cover what we need to look at in tough times. Let's come to the Epistle of 1-John. Now it's very interesting. The Apostle John was the apostle that Jesus loved and he wrote more about love than any other apostle. But also with the Apostle John, he wrote more about keeping the commandments of God and the love of God than any of the other apostles. What's going to see us through the difficult times, spiritually speaking? *That has to be your personal relationship with God!* That's what it has to be. The whole basis of everything that Christ wants us to do—is summed up, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.' That means all your emotions are controlled by the love of God, not how you just feel personally, but your emotions

- **with all your heart**, with God's Spirit.
- **with all your soul**, and that means *your whole living being*, your body and everything. So you take care of your body, health-wise and everything like that
- **with all your mind**, because you're having the laws and commandments of God written in your heart and in your mind—**all your mind**.

Now I can guarantee you one thing that if you are having the laws and commandments written in your heart and in your mind then you can overcome sin within; you can overcome the lust that plagues, you can overcome the other things such as hatred and bitterness and resentment, all of these sort of things.

I feel sorry for all of the vets coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, because they live all of these battles and they've lived through these things. They see people killed; they see their buddies with their heads blown off and their guts ripped open. And that impacts the mind, so much so that when you watch a documentary on WWII, like the Guadalcanal and Okinawa, the ones that survived, even to this day cannot talk about it without crying because it left such an impression in their minds.

If we love God, all of those things can be over-ridden by the love of God and the Spirit of God and we can have our minds cleansed with the Spirit of God, which Paul writes is 'the washing of the water of the Word.' This is where the strength comes from. The physical things around we have to, yes, take care of, but that's not going to save us. That may give us some meals or two. It might keep us alive a little longer, but God has to intervene to change the circumstances, because there is undoubtedly going to be a whole lot more time than we ever thought.

Now here in the Epistle of 1-John we have a time of trouble within the Churches; that's what we're experiencing right now. What are we

experiencing right now in the Churches of God? Every single Church of God is going to go through their time of trouble unless they are living like it says here. This is why he wrote this epistle. This is why this epistle is so important in times of trouble! How many have ever heard of the Laodicean Church? *Hundreds of times!* Listen, we are all Laodiceans! So we all need to be about repenting and drawing close to God.

Also, the Churches have been infiltrated by those who want to take it down. That's also been true, because Satan wants to prevent Christians from really attaining to the first resurrection. So that's why we have the battle. That's why we have the testing of faith, so that

- we turn to God
- we look to Him for the strength
- we look to Him for His Spirit
- we look to Him through His Word

It's just starting in one of the major Churches of God now, and also it's all going to come out, in the long run, better. Why? *Because 'all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.'* So in the final analysis it'll work for good for everyone. Just a little sidebar: The Islamic terrorists are now going to target Christian churches, just like they did in Iraq last week. Remember that? What's the answer to that? *Church at home!*

Now this was—as there are cycles that take place first, and repetition in history, so likewise at the close of the apostolic era it was the last time for the apostolic era, but not the last time to the return of Christ. So he wrote: 1-John 2:18: "Little children... [I suppose at 95 you could call all of them little children—right?] ...it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up..." (v 18). Antichrists are manifest by their resistance and hatred toward the Law of God. Antichrists rise up in the form of ministers who set themselves up as little dictatorial Hitlers.

I remember one man writing and saying, 'Well I was glad to get out of the Hitler youth.' Just as I gave in a sermon *The Government of God in Your Life*; it is God the Father and Jesus Christ! Not the structure of a hierarchy within the Church. The peace of God and the Spirit of God and the love of God are to rule in our hearts.

- We need elders; God provides them.
- We need order; we do need to take care of that.
- We do need to stand for the Truth and resist those who come in to try and cause problems, and we can take care of that.

And as a matter of fact, the whole church can take care of it if they are all armed with the same spirit and love and Word of God.

“...many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time. They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us” (vs 18-19). That’s what happens. That’s what’s happening now.

Whenever there is trouble in the Church of God, those who love God and keep His commandments will remain faithful even though they have to do it alone for a while. But God then is the One Who is separating out the clingers, the flatterers, the unfaithful ministers, and so forth, and God separates them out. So don’t let the difficulties throw you. ***Use the Epistle of 1-John to stay close to God.*** Now, here’s why. Let’s come back here to 1-John 1.

Brethren, let’s understand something: This is why *no minister is to rule over the brethren in the way that too many have done*. As you will see, the ***ministers are to edify and to up-build and to teach***. The best way to receive correction is that through the Spirit of God and the Word of God you correct yourself. That’s where it needs to be. Now once in a while there may be something that needs to be brought up publically, because something has happened. But if we are all yielding to God and understanding our calling, and letting the Spirit of God work in our lives, we will be changing, growing, overcoming and correcting ourselves day-by-day. That’s what God wants.

But you also need to understand something else, which is really important. You’re not in the Church because you’re here to be better people in the world. That’s not the primary thing. That is a secondary or tertiary thing. ***You are called for a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ by God the Father and Jesus Christ.***

This is why, regardless of the circumstances, regardless of the troubles and problems that you may be confronted with, remember this:

- God loves you
- God has called you

and it is the Great God, the Almighty God, Who rules and controls the universe, has moved in your life to call you. That’s what’s important. That means to God, in your own life, you are important to God, otherwise, why would He call you? God hasn’t called us to failure. Oh, yeah, we’re all going to die one day, especially those of us who are getting older and withering up. That happens. That’s part of God’s plan. And also that means we need to be about doing things to prepare for the next

generation, because they’re not going to have the time to do the research. They’re not going to have the time to do the writing.

So what we need to do—all the Churches of God need to do—is understand the Truth, publish the Truth. This is why we’ve done the Bible, why we do the books, so that people can know, that they can prove for themselves. But the most important thing to always keep in mind: ***God the Father Himself loves you. Jesus loves you and have called you.*** That’s what John is writing here.

So this gives us the first thing we need to know and understand concerning: What do we do in times of trouble? Then remember, He said, that there’s going to be trouble and tribulation ‘such as not has been since the beginning of the world’ or since there was a nation. So we’ve got to really be strong in the Lord through our relationship with God. That’s what’s important. Everything else comes in a sub category under that.

This is our connection. I want you to understand this profoundly with the Spirit of God. 1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own handled, concerning the Word of life.” That goes right back to John 1:1—right? ‘In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God. And nothing came into being that He did not create.’ This is Who we’re dealing with.

All of us, every single one of us, are an individual, special creation by God. That’s something! Now we’re being re-created in the image of Christ and the mind of Christ. That’s why he starts out with this.

“(And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us:) ***That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us...***” (vs 2-3). Now fellowship with each other is important, undeniably important. But *it can never replace your fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.*

So when a church becomes so socially oriented that they lose their first love, God has got to intervene to wake the people up. ***Never lose that first love.*** “...fellowship with us; for ***the fellowship...*** [That’s the way it is in the Greek.] ...indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ” (v 3). That is the whole central focus of what God is doing and what we reciprocate back to God in fellowship.

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we're to grow in that. We're to have the laws and commandments written in our hearts and in our minds, and *we are to be led of the Holy Spirit of God*. And God will lead you to do things that you would never, never think of yourself, but it happens that way—right? Happened on this trip. So things like that will work out. When God leads you with the Holy Spirit and you're loving God and serving God and trusting in Him, many different things will happen in even seemingly little ways that will work out for the best in the long run, because we have that fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Now then, notice what he does here. He tells you how to stay right in that fellowship with God and how to recognize problems and difficulties that would come from those who are preaching wrong things, as we covered here in 1-John 2:18-19.

Verse 4: “These things we...” In the first chapter it is *we*. We'll see in the second chapter, it switches to 'I.' So what John did here in the first chapter is he wrote this when he was canonizing the New Testament and who was with John when this was being done? Philip, Andrew, probably Mark. 'We.' Here's what they wrote:

“These things we are also writing to you, so that you joy may be completely full.... [Now remember, your joy may be completely full in spite of the circumstances around you, because you have peace with God, cause Christ is ruling in your heart.] ...And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him” (vs 4-5).

Then he begins clarifying it. Because there are people say: ‘Well, I know the Lord. Oh, yes, I believe in God. Oh, yes, I believe in Christ.’ How are you going to know? Verse 6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness...” Now that is darkness? Where does that come from? *Satan the devil!*

Jesus said He was what? *The light of the world*—right? We're walking in His way; we're walking in Christ's way. Let's see what He says here in John 3:16, which most people generally read, but they fail to read the verses afterwards. And we're going to see something that is very interesting here. This is in what is called the subjunctive tense, for the participle. And the *King James* says ‘should,’ and it really should be translated ‘may’—showing that there are conditions to it.

John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.... [Right below are some of the conditions.] ...For God sent not His Son into the

world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (vs 16-17).

Judgment is coming pretty soon and really judgment is on us all the time everyday through the laws and commandments of God, if you understand that. Just like we're subject to the law of God all the time, God is judging us. But what is the best judgment that you can do? If you judge yourself with the Spirit of God and the love of God and the Law of God and repent of your sins, then you've just corrected yourself—right? *Yes!*

“The one who believes in Him is not judged... [This means judged unto condemnation because we've repented, accepted Christ, been baptized, received the Holy Spirit, etc.] ...but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.... [Now that implies everything that goes with Christ. That implies all of His message that He has brought.] ...And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil” (vs 18-19). A lot of people who have evil works think they are good.

“For everyone who practices evil hates the light... [And you've probably seen that demonstrated many times—right?] ...and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be exposed... [But notice the opposite]: ...But the one who practices the Truth...” (vs 20-21). What is Truth?

- Your Word is Truth
- Your laws are true
- Your commandments are true
- Your precepts are true
- Christ is the Truth

He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. “But the one who practices the Truth comes to the light... [You're constantly coming to Christ.] ...so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (v 21).

So with these works, whose works are these? *God's works in you*—correct? *Yes, indeed!* And just put in your notes there, Rev. 2:26, where Jesus says you ‘keep My works unto the end.’ Any work that you do that is based in the Word of God is not your work. Keeping the Sabbath is not your work. That's a work that God says to do. Keeping Sunday is Sunday-keeping work *for men*. Keeping Friday is as the Muslims do is *from men*. Keeping Sabbath as the Jews do without Christ is *of men*.

Today, President Obama is over in India when they are celebrating the Diwali. Ever heard of Diwali? That's an Indian holiday at this time of year and did you know that pope himself every year sends a special message of greetings and warm

brotherly love and that you enjoy your feast of Diwali—did you know that? There are a lot of things going on in the world we don't know anything about.

So the light, you must practice it. You come to Christ and it shows that your works may be manifest that they are accomplished by the power of God.

Now here's another thing. If you have been in the light and you turn around and start walking away from the light, there is a self deception which is this: The light is coming from behind you and you can still see some things—right? But you're going further from it. The further you go, the dimmer the light gets until you're in darkness. So that's why you have to keep coming to the light.

(go to the next track)

1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him... [a deep personal relationship with Him] ...but we are walking in the darkness, we **are lying** to ourselves...” Very interesting verb here. That is a Greek verb, which there is no real comparison in English. It is called the *middle voice*. You are the subject and you are the object. If you're lying to yourself, please understand this, that's the worst kind of lying, because you're deceiving your own self. If you lie to someone else, you know the truth from the lie—correct? Hopefully, you can repent of that. But here if you're lying to yourself, you're deceiving yourself by saying, ‘Well, it's just fine. I'm just good.’ And you are forgetting that it was God the Father and Jesus Christ who have called you and have intervened in your life personally.

Notice what happens then: “...we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth... [Ties right in with John 3—right? *Practice the Truth.*] ...However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from **all** sin” (vs 6-7). Now *all* means each and every one. That's why Paul says we are to pull the strongholds down, grab a hold of those things in your mind that are sin in your mind, and you know that they are. Go before God, repent of them, and ask Him to cleanse your mind; erase it from my memory, dim it from being in the forefront of my thoughts.

This is something, if there were any message I could give say, to all the troops who are wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, that would be the message. The ones who overcome the difficulties are the ones who do that to a high degree—isn't that true? The ones who succeed, though they've lost their limbs and are positive in what they are doing, they are applying an automatic Law of God, though God

hasn't called them. They succeed in this life because they're following a principle and Law of God in their lives and they do well. The ones who sit back, ‘Poor me, I don't know how I'm going to do it; this is terrible; I'm never going to accept it.’ They have traumas over and over and over again and difficulties come along. They need to go to God, put it all on Christ. He's there. He's the only One Who can carry the load, because He was Creator and is creating in us, and God the Father with Him, the very mind of Christ.

“...cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves... [There it is again.] ...and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins...” (vs 7-9). So there it is. You know what your sins are. Confess them to Christ, to God the Father. Get on your knees. Ask for forgiveness. If something happens during the day as you're going along, and whoop-ty-do, temptation comes in your mind. And always remember this: *a temptation is not sin*. You go through and follow the twelve steps to sin in James 1 and sin starts with temptation. If you fight against the temptation when it first comes along and get it out of your mind with the help of God's Holy Spirit, you don't sin.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from **all** unrighteousness” (v 9). Remember when you see the word *all*, it means *each and every one*. Because we're human and have the *law of sin and death* in us, this is why Jesus said in the model prayer, ‘Forgive us our sins.’ Now that's a daily prayer: Give us our bread day by day. Well, forgive us our sins and the carry through is day-by-day. That's why. If and when you do sin, don't say, ‘Oh, well, I'll pray to God when I get myself right.’ You can't make yourself right. You go to God first and if you're not any place you can pray, you pray right there on the spot directly to God the Father. That's why you have the Holy Spirit. That'll straighten you out. That's why some people have a hard time overcoming drugs, because *they haven't totally closed the door*. Whether it's drugs, or whether it's alcohol, whether it is pornography, whatever it is.

Someone wrote me and said, ‘I've been addicted to pornography. Every time I get around a computer, I end up being on a pornographic site. Should I throw away my computer?’ I said *that's up to you, but if you don't close the door on it and make the decision to the point of death—through repentance to Christ—you can throw away a hundred computers, but if you still have not had your mind cleansed that you are not going to and you have resolved with the Spirit of God, get hooked on pornography again, or whatever the sin, then you're not going to overcome it. God wants us to overcome. And we can overcome, but you have to*

close the door. You have to expel it out of your life and that can only come through Christ. But He will “...cleanse us from **all** unrighteousness...”—*each and every one!*

Now let me explain another thing that happens. A lot of people wonder why after they’re baptized, they have a lot of sinful thoughts in their mind. Why do you suppose that happens? *They’re there all along! It is the Holy Spirit in you that is revealing those sins to you so you can repent.* Did you ever think of it that way?

So if a sin comes along in your mind, you repent of it, ask God to cleanse it out of your mind, and then if it keeps coming back, you get on your knees before God; you fast, you pray, you ask God for help and strength and whatever the difficulty is, have Christ take it from you and *close the door and walk away from it.* You will find it works. God is there to forgive.

1-John 2:1, now notice this. “My little children, **I**... [not *we*—I] ...am writing these things to you so that you **may not** sin.... [Doesn’t say *does not*.] ...And *yet*, **IF** anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins...” (vs 1-2). What is a propitiation? *A continual atoning source of mercy and forgiveness from God*, because He gave the promise here, ‘If we confess our sins, He is righteous to forgive us our sins’—right? *Yes!* One thing to always remember, when you have your sins forgiven, do not get a high and mighty attitude when you see someone do something, and then you say, ‘Oh, how could that person do that?’

“...propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world” (v 2)—according to the appointed times of God. Now what we’re reading here is also explaining to us why the calling to the first resurrection is so important—this personal relationship.

Then we have a reality check! You always have to have a reality check, v 3: “And by this *standard*... [the Greek here is ‘en toutoo’—which means *in this*—a literal translation. *King James* has ‘hereby.’] (In this or): ...by this... [‘en toutoo’—what? The Greek is asking to supply a word in English.] ...by this... [what follows afterwards then is]: ...*standard*... [So that’s why I added the word in italics—‘en toutoo’] ...by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments” (v 3).

Now here is a very, very simple Scripture—right? *Basic! Applies to everything!* We have the series, *God’s Grace and Commandment-Keeping*, on two CDs all together. So if you would like those, but those of you who are on iPods—now you can load Church at Home down on your iPod, your iPhone,

your iPad, your BlackBerry, all of that. And we’re #1 download right now on those devices.

So this is the standard here. “...**IF**... [There’s that little word again.] ...**IF** we keep His commandments...” (v 3). How do you do it? *Through the Spirit of God spiritually through the grace of God!* That’s why this series is so important and this is really a basic, fundamental grounding that in the New Testament *with the Spirit of God through the grace of God, you keep the commandments of God in a spiritual way that is not possible without the Spirit of God.* So that destroys forever the argument, law or grace. It is by grace you keep the commandments of God through His Spirit. Quite a different thing—*isn’t it? Yes!*

“...**if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (vs 3-4). Those are kind of harsh words, aren’t they? But spoken by the apostle of love—correct? *Yes!* It’s a matter of truth and fact. As God looks at it, there is that dividing line, there is no blending. That’s why

- we are to come out of the world
- we are to come out of the way that the world thinks and acts
- we are to come out of the way of all religions of the world

In the Bible belt, we’re all used to Protestantism, but it’s still the same message if it’s in Europe, and Catholicism, or if it is in Egypt and Iraq and Afghanistan with Islam; or if its Hinduism in India. It’s all the same message!

These here are the ones who are the deceivers. “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him” (v 4). What if they’re so convinced they’re doing the Truth that they don’t realize they’re lying? Have you ever had that? Have you been so convinced about something that you knew you were right and later found out you were wrong? *Yeah, verily, many times!*

And when the facts come later, it’s awfully hard to say, ‘I was wrong.’ This is a fact, not an emotion: Too many people get emotions first, rather than facts first. Let me put it this way: I saw the interview of the man who was the one to lead the reelection of the Democrats in the House of Representatives. Now I don’t know if he really knew what was going to happen. If it did, his lie was more blatant, but he appeared to give the impression that he really, really, really believed that the Democrats weren’t going lose—right? Remember seeing that? Nice looking guy, very convincing looking guy. ‘Oh, no, we’re going to retain power.’ So they got wiped out to the tune of 65 seats. What did he do

yesterday? He resigned, because the truth was too overwhelming to keep up the pretense. Now that's a good example of sometimes how we get stubborn and cling to things and really are not willing to admit the truth. We may not be deliberately lying, but we are so convinced that we are right that we haven't entertained the possibility that we're deceiving ourselves and lying to ourselves and hence then, are a liar to others.

Since we're here in 'Protestant land,' and I don't mean to pick on Sunday-morning preachers. But if you were to go right across the street is a nice large Protestant Church, Assembly of God. They're all coming Sunday morning and a lot of them take their Bibles. Some ministers can really give good sermons from the Bible, but when it comes to the Sabbath and commandments they're like a pole vault. Some of them are really high, but they're very skilled at jumping over it. And you can hear them give good sermons on how to overcome emotions, cry out to God, and things like this. God honors that from this point of view: They're preaching the Truth. But then they turn around and say, like one minister did, he said, 'Well, when I was in depression, what always brought me out of it was, that I had to prepare a sermon for every Sunday.' And he said, 'Another thing that brought me out of it was I knew I was going to heaven.'

So if you would go to a church like that, and say, 'The Apostle John says if you say you know Him. Do you know the Lord?' *Well, yeah, I know the Lord.* 'Do you keep the commandments of God?' *Oh, we don't have to do those anymore.* 'Well, I'm inviting you to come to our church next Sabbath and see the difference.' *Boy, who do you think you are!* The deacons would be coming out and escorting you off the property—right? Pretty quick. Try that at a mosque and ask them: Where are your wives? If you're praying to God, wouldn't you want them to pray with you?

Have you ever seen a Muslim worship service? *They take their shoes off, have a carpet, it's all men!* They all bow their faces down to the carpet. And every time I see that, I say to myself: Where are their wives? Well, women don't count. So if any American woman says she's abused, you better read and study about the abuse of Muslim wives. You can go online, Muslim wives recovering from rape and beating, and all this sort of thing; it's there. So it applies everywhere. Keep that in mind.

"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... [That means His whole message.] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [That's what you want in your life—right? *Yes! It is a process!*] ...By this *means*... ['en

toutoo'] ..we know that we are in Him.... [You claim to be a true Christian regardless of your previous religious belief. Any of the other aforementioned religions I mentioned]; ...Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked" (vs 4-6).

- Now how's that for a high standard?
- How did Jesus walk? *Sinlessly*—right?
- How do you remain in the state of sinlessness?
 - ✓ by repentance
 - ✓ by forgiveness
 - ✓ by your relationship with God

This is what is important. ***This is what will sustain us*** whenever there are personal problems, family problems, church problems, political problems that affect you, and problems in the world that are so great and overwhelming that they're almost too much to handle, because it brings you

- right back to Christ
- right back to God the Father
- right back to that fellowship

—so ***that you can have the strength spiritually.*** Then when difficulties come, you can handle them, because you'll turn to God and ask for the help.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 4:1-5
- 2) Romans 5:6
- 3) 1-John 2:18-19
- 4) 1-John 1:1-6
- 5) John 3:16-21
- 6) 1-John 1:6-10
- 7) 1-John 2:1-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 13:8
- John 1:1
- Revelation 2:26
- James 1

Also referenced:

- Sermons:
 - ✓ *The Seventy Weeks Prophecy*
 - ✓ *God's Government in Your Life*
- Sermon Series:
 - ✓ *Aftershock: Global Financial Meltdown*
 - ✓ *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*
 - ✓ *Fulfilling End Time Prophecies*
- Books:
 - ✓ *The Appointed Times of the Messiah* (coming soon)
 - ✓ *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter
 - ✓ *The Day After the Dollar Crashes: A Survival Guide for the Rise of the New World Order* by Damon Vickers
 - ✓ *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

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