

Scripturalism vs Judaism IX

Basic Ingredients of Christian Living

Fred R. Coulter—August 14, 1993

We want to finish all the way through and hopefully get past Matt. 7. I've spent quite a bit of time in Matt. 5-7, because those are very important foundational and profound chapters, which show that what Jesus was doing and starting was not an extension of Judaism, but was an extension of the Word of God from the Old Testament and carrying on into the New Testament.

We'll just do a little review, and let's think about these statements in particular since today we find in so many corners—and even in Churches of God—that the very Godship of Christ and the Family of God is coming under assault. Let's think about some of these things that Christ is saying and let's look at it from the perspective of the magnitude of this.

Matthew 5:17 **“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets...** [That's quite a statement in itself—isn't it? That is really a statement! Who gave the Law? *God did!* Yahweh Who became Jesus Christ gave the Law—didn't He?] (It's a very high level statement to say): ...Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets...” Can anyone destroy what God has given in the first place? *No! You can't destroy what God has made in the first place!* You might rearrange it a little bit, but you're not going to change the spiritual substance of what God does.

Then He makes this statement: “...I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill” (v 17). That is *to complete, magnify, finish, to fill to the full!* Would any other human being dare to say that? Think about that statement for minute. That's quite a statement, that you say as a person, ‘I have come *to fulfill and finish and complete* the Law of God! There's one Lawgiver—which is God—so He's the only One Who can do it.

Then you go back and look at what He was doing; you look at all of the healings; the preaching that He was doing; everything that was involved in the ministry of Christ. We are talking about an absolute event of a gigantic scale.

Verse 18: “For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away...” Think about it, here's someone who is saying ‘until heaven and earth pass’—indicating that He has the power and control over the heaven and the earth. We're not talking about an ordinary individual. We're not just talking about someone who was selected as the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary who was really just a human being. Did any of the prophets of old talk like this? *No, they didn't!*

Let's look at what God Himself said concerning His way, concerning His Law. We need to understand why they viewed Jesus as One speaking with authority. Whose authority was He speaking with? *The authority of God!* Not just a human being sent by God, but as God in the flesh! That has a tremendous authority to it, because not only did He say, ‘You have said it heard in old time, but I say to you...’

Deuteronomy 12:32: “Whatsoever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it.” Yet, Jesus did an awful lot of adding—didn't He? *Yes, He did! A powerful amount of adding!* So much so that He took the very Word of God and said, ‘You've heard that it's been said, *but I'm telling you...*’

We're going to see that when he was speaking with authority here, He was giving the very words of God. If God were there to talk to these people, this is what He would say—and God was there talking to them in the person of Jesus Christ!

Matthew 5:18: “For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled. Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven” (vs 18-19).

Let's see what this is telling us about Jesus when we put together the rest of the Scriptures. Brethren, I thought that we had so memorized the Gospel of John 1:1-3, 14 and that everyone in the Church of God would know that hands down, memorized, understand it, never turn away from it, never go back on it: *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and nothing came into being that He did not make. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.* Yet, there is a big movement to go back on that in the Church of God today. That's unreal to me, but it's happening. We're going to see a lot of unreal things happening in the world around us.

Hebrews 1:2 talks about Jesus Christ; His power; Who He is: “Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds... [the ages] ...Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power... [When Jesus was talking about ‘until heaven and earth pass’ He

had the power to make it stay or to make it pass. That's what He was really conveying there.] ...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high" (vs 2-3).

In every one of these things that He's going through in Matt. 5-7 you're going to find that these are the basic ingredients of Christian living. These are going to be the basic things that are going to be the trials in your life. These are going to be the temptations that come along, which are going to cause the problems.

Matthew 6:24: "No one is able to serve two masters..." No one has the capacity or the ability to serve two masters; we're just not made that way. Isn't this the test that comes along, always? Are you going to choose God? *or* Are you going to choose the physical things?

After all, we read in v 8: "...your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him." It's amazing the immediacy of the physical things that we need can become very paramount, number one in our mind and our heart if we don't truly love God. Then we end up serving two masters.

Matthew 6:24: "...for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

The things I've gone through have gotten me down many times; down to that point! How are you going to learn to trust God unless you get down to your last? Think about it for a minute. Just like Satan said to God concerning Job: God said, 'Look at My servant Job, perfect and an upright man.' Satan says, 'Ha! He doesn't do this for nothing! You have hedged him about. You have covered him. You have blessed him. Take it away from him and he will curse you to Your face.' What did God say? 'All right, I'll put him your power, but you can't take his life.' You know the rest of the story.

Then Christ says He gives us a tremendous example. I tell you what, the next time you get down and you get discouraged and you're down to your last penny—I've been there—and you don't know from where the next one is coming from, then you drive to the store to spend what little you have left and you see someone standing there with a sign, 'I will work for gas and food.' I know that some of them are phonies—I know that! But there are some who are really sincere in it. Everyone who goes to the store, when they get to the point that they are down to their last, they're just doing the same thing that everyone else is doing, they're trying to get enough to live a little longer. It's kind of a rat-race, this world that Satan has set up—right?

God says, 'I'm going to give you a little

lesson, and the lesson is: *If you're down and discouraged, go bird-watching!* That's what it is!

Verse 25: "Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious about your life *as to* what you shall eat and what you shall drink; nor about your body *as to* what you shall wear. Is not life more than food, and the body *more* than clothing?" *Yes, it is!* God will take care of you.

Verse 26: "Observe the birds of heaven: they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor do they gather into granaries; and your heavenly Father feeds them..." Think on that for a minute! The greatest Being in the universe provides for the birds in such a fantastic and powerful way. We don't even think about it. So, Jesus says: *go bird watching!* Think about what God does for them. What is the pinnacle of His creation? Birds? *No! Human beings! We are!*

"...Are you not much better than they? But who among you, by taking careful thought, is able to add one cubit to his stature?" (vs 26-27). In other words, He's talking about your own mind-power. You don't have much mind-power compared to God! Think about that for a minute. Jesus is comparing that something that would be simple for God to do—as an impossible task for us to do—and yet, we fret about what God can do and provide for us.

Verse 28: "And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor, nor do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these" (vs 28-29). He had the greatest kingdom in the world; was the smartest man on earth; had more gold and silver than any other king that there was; was so rich and the people in Jerusalem so rich that it was said that silver was counted as gravel in the streets. I cannot fathom that kind of wealth myself. My brain just does not allow me to do it. But that's what Jesus said.

Verse 30: "Now if God so arrays the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, *shall* He not much rather clothe you, O *you* of little faith?" We can draw an awful lot of parallels here between physical clothing and spiritual clothing. Spiritual clothing is the *righteousness of the saints*—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* God is going to clothe you. He's going to provide for you physically. He will provide for you spiritually. God the Father has called you and given you His Spirit and loves you, so therefore, we have no doubt that God will take care of you.

- You may have to suffer—*Christ did!*
- Did God take care of Him? *Yes, He did!*
- You may have difficult times.
- Did Christ have difficult times? *Yes, He did!*

- We all have difficult times.

That's why He says that when you are going through a trial, **'Rejoice!'** If not while going through it, at least afterwards!

Verse 31: "Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we be clothed?' For the nations... [all the nations of the world] ...seek after all these things. And **your heavenly Father knows** that you have need of all these things" (vs 31-32). After all, did not God create everything that there is? *Yes, He did!*

This past week I had a couple of really severe trials. When you have them, sometimes the only thing you can do is go to God and say, 'God, I don't know! I do not know what to do! I do not know how to handle this!' Every time I try to handle it it's just been bad news. Ever had that? I just ask God to help me understand what I need to do. He inspired me what to do, and it was just exactly what was needed. Lot's of times when we get to the point that we don't know what to do, **that's exactly where God wants us!** Why? *Because then we're trust Him!*

As human beings we like to worry—you've heard of the 'worry wart.' That's true! We do! We fret and stew and then add a little envy, add a little jealousy, add a little depravation, add a little communism—it's not fair—all those different things! Remember the Canaanite woman who had the demon possessed daughter and she came after Christ and the disciples. Just picture one of these Middle Eastern women with her shawl and her loud voice coming after Jesus, saying, 'Lord, my daughter is vexed with a demon, come and heal her.' He answered not a word, just kept walking along. The disciples finally said, 'Can't You hear this woman?' She finally caught up to Him and said, 'Lord, my daughter is at home sick, vexed with a demon.' He said, 'It's not proper to give the children's food to dogs.'

You talk about being put in a terrible situation by the very One Who was God in the flesh telling you that it's not proper to give 'the children's food to the dogs.' That's a pretty insulting statement, just on the surface, if you're a sensitive human being. But what did she say? *'Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs from the children's table!'* That moved Jesus and He said, 'Woman, go home, your daughter is healed.'

Has God ever put you in such a tough situation as that and you got that kind of answer? And you had enough trust and faith in God to say, 'Yea, Lord, I know I'm the worst crumb in the world, but at least the dung beetles eat.' Think about it, this is really something!

And the whole reason for all of this is that

we, v 33: "But *as for* you, **seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...** [the very righteousness of God given to you. That's the whole purpose in everything that there is.] ...and all these things shall be added to you." When they are, we ought not gloat and think it's some greatness on our part, that we have whatever we have *or* that whatever we don't have, we don't have. A lot of people like to blame God because they have it or don't have it. What happens to so many people when they have it? *They're empty, miserable and hollow!*

Verse 34: "Therefore, **do not be anxious about tomorrow**; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day.*" In other words, don't complicate the day by making a problem out of something that is not a problem to God.

We've got enough trouble overcoming, not only human nature and the world and Satan. The pressure is getting more and more every day; it's just absolutely unreal what is happening in the society and the pressures that are being brought upon people. As we go through life, especially now going forward we're going to have to trust more and more in God for everything. There are going to be people who will lose their jobs. There are going to be people who will lose their homes. If we have an economic collapse come, we're all going to be together in the same boat.

- Can God see us through that? *Yes, indeed!*
- Is that not going to be the test of the *mark of the beast?* *Yes, it is!*

Think about not being able to buy or sell! Just think about that! Those are going to be some pretty tough circumstances. Is not the temptation going to be powerful? Are we not moving closer to the time when we can see that that is a reality? I mean, we've got all kinds of proposals for identification cards now. Yes, indeed! These words that Christ gave back then are living today.

Matthew 7:1: "Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned... [judging unto condemnation] ...for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you" (vs 1-2). You think about that the next time you're going through a trial and 'you know' what the other person is thinking.

Have you ever done that? Have you ever gotten into a situation that you just get so worked up and the problem is so difficult for you to handle and you *think* you know every reason why that this is, especially if there is someone else involved—husband/wife, employer or whatever it may be. You *know* exactly why these things are being done and you are being offended and it is not fair and is not

right. Have you ever had it come around that everything you thought was totally wrong? There might be some times when you're right about what you think, but the biggest thing that happens here with this kind of judging is that *you judge that you know* what the other person is thinking. And *no one knows* what the other person is really thinking!

As it says in Rom. 2 that 'you who teach others, do you not teach yourself?' This past week I had to look this square in the face, because I was making judgments about thoughts of other people that I did not hold correct. Lots of times what you see on the outward appearance from someone has nothing to do with what's really going on in their mind. It may be something entirely different. And *you may think* that what you see is the result of *what you think* they're thinking, but *what if* they are not thinking *what you think* they are thinking. That's why this is a 'judgment unto condemnation.' Isn't that always true? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 3: "Now why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye?" And the greatest justification in the world for holding your anger and judging the thoughts of other people, and judging their heart and mind is that *you are right!* Isn't that true? *Yes!* You look at some small, little thing and you blow it all out of proportion, and

- you *know* you are right
- you *know* you have been offended
- you *know* that you have been hurt
- you *know* that you want the other person to work it out and straighten it out

But it's all going to come home to the thing that Christ did not wait for the world to repent before He said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

Maybe God is waiting for you and for me to make the first effort to try and get the problem squared around, rather than let it go to the hardness of heart. I submit, brethren, that's why in the Church of God there are so many divorces that have taken place—because of that very thing.

God wants us to run our relationships this way: ***That we love God, and then we love each other as Christ loves us!*** That solves an awful lot of problems. A lot of this thing of marriage counseling; I was talking to someone about that and they said the way to solve the marriage problems is that you get the husband over here and get the wife over there and now husband you list seven things you want your wife to change, and wife, you list seven things you want your husband to change. That sounds 'fair'—but is it

right? How about letting whatever change needs to be motivated to come because you love God and love each other. That's what needs to be.

Whatever your circumstances or situation is, in coming into a situation of judging and judging each other, how many times have you and I been wrong? Let's put it the other way around, since we can understand it a little better: How many times have people been wrong about you? That you know of? *A lot of times!* Do you not suppose that you could be wrong about people the other way as many times? That's why he has this here. This gets down to the nitty-gritty—doesn't it? This gets down into the dagger in the stomach time.

Verse 3: "Now why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye? Or how will you say to your brother, 'Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye'; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye? *You* hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother's eye" (vs 3-5). In other words, go to God *first!* Ask God's solution *first!* Ask Him to help you—*He will!*

Verse 6: "Do not give that which *is* Holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn around and tear you in pieces." So many times this happens. You try and be nice to someone and they turn around and just chew you alive. Ever heard that statement: 'They'll chew you alive!?' Some of them get so nasty they spit you out again. That's all part of being 'wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.'

Verse 7: "Ask, and it shall be given to you...." Now He comes full circle around. He starts out with

- no one can serve two masters
- seek first the Kingdom of God and God will take care of you
- don't judge others, in particular: comparing yourself with other and judging them and exalt yourself by finding fault with them

Then He says here, v 7: "**Ask**, and it shall be given to you... [ask and keep on asking] ...**Seek**, and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you who, if his son shall ask *for bread*, will give him a stone?" (vs 7-9).

It's really kind of a contrast in extreme. He's showing how kind, how loving, how understanding our Father is and then compare that with our own that, no, I wouldn't be giving stones

for bread, or:

Verse 10: “And if he shall ask *for* a fish, will give him a serpent? Therefore, if you, being evil...” (vs 10-11).

- compared to God Who is totally good
- compared to God Who knows what to do and how to do it
- compared to God Who is willing to give
- compared to God Who gives to the birds; Who provides for every animal

Are we not the pinnacle of His creation? *Yes, we are!*

Verse 11: Therefore, if you, being evil, know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?” How much more? ***God will do it! God will provide!***

- Has God ever failed you? *No! God has never failed you!*
- Has He let you go through trials? *Yes!*
- Have you had some difficulties? *Yes!*
- Has God ever failed you? *No! He hasn't!*
- After you've gone through what you've gone through, have you learned from it? *Yes, indeed!*
- Which is more valuable: *the thing?*

or

- the *spiritual character* that you learn from going through the trial?
- Which is going to last into eternity? *The spiritual character! The love of God!*

That's why all those things are there!

Verse 12: “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; **for this is the Law and the Prophets.**” Notice that He ends this here in the same way He starts out in Matt. 5:17—do not think that I have come to destroy the Law and the Prophets. Then He amplifies on all of that: “...for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Not only was He just expanding the meaning, He was giving the whole purpose of the Law and the Prophets.

Go back and look at all the depravations that Israel suffered, and God said that He did it for their good. How much time did God give Israel? How many repentances did God accept of Israel? *Hundreds and hundreds of years!* How quick is God ready to forgive? *Remember David! Remember Ahab!* He even remembered *Jeroboam*—dedicated to evil! And the prophet went up and said, ‘Oh, Jeroboam’—cursed the altar and Jeroboam reached out his hand to take hold of the Prophet and his arm shriveled up. Here's a man Jeroboam dedicated to evil, changing the whole system politically and religiously in northern Israel to the whole

Babylonian system with the two calves out of Egypt and the whole thing. He's taking the priesthood and he's up there on the altar and offering and offering, and he virtually tells God's prophet to get out of here and don't come and say these words. His hand shrivels up and he says, ‘pray to God that my hand be not shriveled’—and it was restored as whole.

- How loving is God?
- How patient is God?
- How kind is God?
- How willing is God?

That's the whole Law and the Prophets! That's the whole reason for it. Also, He was summing up the whole meaning of it.

Now we come into a whole different section, the rest of Matt. 7. {see sermons and booklet *Judge Righteous Judgment*} Jesus said in John 7:24 that we are ‘judge righteous judgment.’ That means we are to judge things the way that God would want us to judge things, not just by appearance.

Verse 13: “Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way... [the Greek for *broad* is the word we have for ‘plateau’—means *high and flat*.] ...that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it.” I tell you, the more time goes by and the more I see what people are doing to the Bible and to the doctrines of God *with in the Church of God* it sure is true.

Verse 14: “For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.” That's something! You ponder that! I think I'll again reiterate this statement. People are interested in ‘religion’ and not in the Truth.

The pope comes down here to Mexico and every time he lands it's a rainstorm. When he landed in Denver it was thundering and lightening and a rainstorm. And almost every time I read where the pope lands someplace, it's a rainstorm. I wonder if God is trying to tell him something. He visits in Mexico before coming to the United States and he goes out to the Yucatan Peninsula where the Mayan civilization was, and he praises that; what a glorious civilization that that was, and now we have a chance to all come together.

Brethren, the Mayan civilization was one of the most hideous on the face of the earth: cannibalism, human sacrifice, demonism, Satan worship. He comes down there to tell these people what they want to hear. ‘That's okay, you go ahead and you keep your native god, but by all means, come to our good ole Catholic Church.’ And little does he know that they've already hoodwinked the Catholics, because they go to the Catholic Church, especially in the Andes. Do you know what they do? *They still have all of their Andes' gods that they*

worship on the side! When they come to the Catholic Church, though it's supposed to be a saint day for a particular saint, the native Indians have one of their own gods that they are honoring and just renamed him. *Broad is the way!*

There is the Parliament of the World's Religions meeting in Chicago in August (1993). Remember what we said, that there's going to be a new one-world religion that's going to come. Brethren, it is going to come! We are going to be on the outs! I will read you a report...

(go to the next track)

...on the official government watch on cults. Did you know that they had a watch on cults? There's a network that advises the government on cults. Guess what the profile of a cult is? You would think it would be someone who worships Satan, someone who is a witch, someone who believes in demons. *NO!* A cult is someone who

- believes in the Bible
- trusts in Christ
- keeps the Sabbath
- looking for His return

Now maybe you understand why God is scattering the Church in many different little groups. When I read that report, it's going to be shocking.

Verse 15: "But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves." It says in Isa. 8:19-20 that if they speak not according to this Word, there's no light in them.' If they don't preach Christ and they don't constantly point you to Christ, watch out! Some of them may be 'half-breeds.' Not only are they ravening wolves, but they may be kind of tempered down a little bit with a little experience of how to deal with people.

Verse 16: "You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they?" You have to look at the overall picture, and that overall picture is not that you are held someplace because of a governmental or organizational structure. That's one of the first claims of a false prophet. Who was the first false prophet to claim that? Who was the first false prophet to say 'follow the organization'? Who was the first false prophet to say, 'follow my organization and not God'? I will tell you what God says: *none other than Satan the devil!*

The old trick is that 'God called me into this government structure.' If you look upon the government of the Church *as God*, then you do, indeed, have an idol before you! And you, indeed, have fallen into the path of following a false prophet—subtle though it may be, as well intentioned as it may be—that's what happens.

Verse 17: "In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire" (vs 17-19). God is going to take care of it one way or the other.

If there are any who are out there wondering 'which way should I go' let me tell you, the only way you better go is *God's way!* The only One you ought to follow is *God the Father and Jesus Christ*, and don't follow any minister who is going to tell you anything other than that—period! The only foundation is Jesus Christ, *not any man!*

Verse 20: "Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father Who *is* in heaven" (vs 20-21). What is the will of the Father Who is in heaven? *What Jesus just got done saying in Matt. 5-7—that's the Father's will!*

- The Father loves you!
- The Father cares for you!
- The Father will provide for you!

Are you willing to do His will, which includes the 'least' commandment?

Verse 22. Many... [the majority] ...will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work **lawlessness**'" (vs 22-23)—'anomos'—against law, against commandments.

Last week I had tapes. This week I've got literature. One of them sent to me—and I'm thankful they sent it to me—someone said that 'nowhere in the New Testament is there a command to keep the Sabbath Day. And furthermore, the Church began on Pentecost, which was a Sunday, and Jesus was resurrected on a Sunday. Therefore, we keep the Lord's day.'

- Was Pentecost kept on Sunday *before* the giving of the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*
- Did that change the Sabbath? *No!*
- What day was the Law given on? *Pentecost!*
- The Law contained what? *The Sabbath commandment*—didn't it?

That is no argument at all whatsoever! I couldn't believe it! It was unreal! I'm amazed that we just cycle through these things and we go along and BAM! we're brought right back to square one

again. We're going to be brought back to square one again on which day is the Sabbath—you wait and see! I couldn't get over that reasoning.

The fact that the commandments were given by God on the Day of Pentecost—which included the Sabbath commandment—therefore, means that the Sabbath should be kept and the Sabbath is not attached to, nor does it take away from, the Day of Pentecost. They're two separate operations and you can't compare one with the other to fight against the Word of God to annul the Sabbath commandment.

One man said that since that is so 'it certainly weakens the argument for the Sabbath.' I thought to myself: Have you never read Heb. 4, which says: 'There remains for the people of God the keeping of the Sabbath'? Have you never read where Jesus said He was 'the Lord of the Sabbath'? I mean, we crossed that the first time we opened the Bible, almost—right? So, this man is going to walk up and say, 'Lord, I did lots of good things,' and Christ is going to say, 'I never knew you. You were against My Sabbath!' *Yeah but, Lord, we're so good, we kept the Lord's day. 'Which day?' The Lord's day, the day You were resurrected on. 'I was resurrected at the end of the Sabbath.' Oh, the day that You were accepted of God the Father by the Wave Sheaf Offering; that's the greatest day. 'That is separate and apart from the weekly Sabbath.'*

We're going to see why, v 29: "For He taught them as one Who had authority, and not as the scribes." The scribes could *quote* Scripture. Christ *made* Scripture! Greater authority—right? Not only that, He is saying that these words that He gave have to do with your eternal salvation. These are not just nice platitudes.

Verse 24. Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and **practices** them... ['poieo'—this is a present tense participle, which is *the one who is hearing My sayings*, and that is with understanding. How many times does the New Testament say, 'He who has an ear, let him hear'?] ...I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock." We've had a lot of lessons on floods this year—haven't we? A lot of rain—haven't we? It's really something when you see those flood waters and all of a sudden it comes rushing in.

I never will forget: Here's a family farm home that had been in family for 75 years and they had other floods that came up, but not like this one. The water came through and it was a two-story house. Picture a two-story house with the water up to the windows on the second story. It just moved that whole house, smashed it up and it crumpled up like just so much paper—gone! Though it looks safe, it may not be. You've got to build upon the Rock, and that Rock is Christ! (Psa. 18; 1-Cor. 10:4).

Verse 25: "And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock." Brethren, if you truly love God, and truly follow what He's saying, and truly founded on that Rock, ***you will not be moved!*** There is nothing that is going to move you!

- Christ is with you
- God's Spirit is there with you
- God wants you in His kingdom
- God Himself loves you

Why would anyone want to build on anything else? Stop and think about what people do.

Verse 26: "And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.' Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching" (vs 26-28). Just aghast as it were!

Here's a Man Who came and said, 'I'm completing the Law of God; I am the fulfilling the Law of God, and I'm showing you the straight way and the narrow way, and your trust in God is to be such that you're not even to worry about what you eat, what you drink, what you wear, where you live. Furthermore, don't compare yourself to others and judge others. You do what I say!' Then He likened it *unto salvation!* No wonder they were astonished at His doctrine. This is powerful, brethren! This is something!

That's why they said, v 29: "For He taught them as one Who had authority, and not as the scribes." He did! the Authority is the Son of God "...and not as the scribes."

This whole section in Matt. 5-7 is really a basic and profound fundamental foundation of all Christianity—*true Christianity!* There are people who go along and they like to have all the nice platitudes that come from the New Testament. They like all the nice words, but they don't like the harsh words of Christ—which tells you

- you better *hear*
- you better *obey*
- you better *believe*
- you better *love*
- you better *follow* God

Let's see the separation of *true* Christianity from Judaism. I'm going to focus more on this now in the way of a survey than anything else. You know for sure that none of the scribes, Pharisees and priests were casting out demons and healing the sick.

Matthew 8:18: “But when Jesus saw great multitudes around Him, He commanded *His disciples* to depart to the other side. And a certain scribe came to *Him* and said, ‘Master... [A scribe was one of the religious leaders; this probably was not a Pharisee, but a scribe undoubtedly was one who know all of the traditions of Judaism. If Christianity came out of Judaism, then Jesus would not have responded this way.] ...I will follow You wherever You may go’” (vs 18-19). That’s willing attitude—isn’t it? It’s quite something, here’s a volunteer! “...I will follow You wherever You may go.”

Verse 20: “Then Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes... [That’s not much of a dwelling place—is it? Dig a hole in the ground and that’s your home. Reminds me of these wild dogs on the Serengeti, they have their little burrows that they go in.] ...and birds of heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man has no place to lay His head.’” Wonder how that scribe felt? Here’s a religious, sensitive scribe. He came to the One Who many of them thought He was the Messiah. He was enthusiastic enough—wasn’t he? *Yes, he was!* ‘I’ll follow You wherever You go.’ But what did Jesus say? *Beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees!* In another place, *the Pharisees and the Sadducees!* Christ was not going to have someone coming along, bring all the baggage of Judaism to clutter up what He was teaching, so He said to the man, ‘If you follow me it’s going to be tough.’

Verse 21: “And another of His disciples said to Him... [Here’s one of those, remember we’ve asked: Wonder what happened to those disciples who turned and followed Him no more?] (Here’s a disciple, mind you): ...‘Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father.’” That is a notable thing to do. It was his own father. Not a cousin, not an uncle, not an aunt—it’s your own father.

Verse 22: “But Jesus said to him, ‘Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.’” The dead, brethren, God has consigned the whole world to death. Think about that! That’s a pretty strong statement, but He has! Do all die? *Yes, they do!* No one has been able to overcome it—have they? Let “...the dead bury their own dead.” Imagine that! Jesus again made a very tough statement. He’s saying to this disciple, ‘all your relatives are dead people, let them bury the dead.’

Both of these statements were not kind; they were not understanding; they were not sensitive. If, in the work place today, this kind of answer were given, in order for Christ to have continued employment, he would have to go through ‘sensitivity training.’ What Jesus was doing was really showing that it is the *straight way*, it is the *narrow way*, it is the *way of God*. If you’re going to

follow God, circumstances do not count and relatives do not count. That’s a pretty tough saying. You compare that with the religions of the world. Once a Catholic always a Catholic: ‘my mother was, my father was, I will be’—whatever the saying goes.

Matthew 9:1: “And after going into the ship, He passed over and came to His own city. And behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Then Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the paralytic, ‘Be of good courage, child; your sins have been forgiven you.’” (vs 1-2). Notice what the scribes and Pharisees did:

- They judged—didn’t they?
- They had the beam in their own eyes—didn’t they?
- Were they concerned that a paralytic was healed?

or

- Were they concerned with their own power and authority?
- Who were they concerned about?

Verse 3: “And immediately some of the scribes said within themselves... [Jesus had to tell them this at some time]: ...‘This *man* blasphemes.’ But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts... [Jesus can perceive the thoughts; we can’t.] ...said, ‘Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? For which is easier to say, ‘*Your* sins have been forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? But *I speak these words* so that you may understand that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins.’ Then He said to the paralytic, ‘Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house’” (vs 3-6). This did not set well with the scribes and Pharisees. Immediately, right at first, they’re after Him—right? How could it possibly be said that Jesus was an Orthodox Pharisaic rabbi? But that’s what’s taught today in many places.

Verse 7: “And he arose and went away to his house. Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they were amazed and glorified God, Who had given such authority to men.... [after He called His disciples] ...And passing from there, Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ And he arose *and* followed Him” (vs 7-9). A Levi—an IRS agent—wrote the book of Matthew, *converted!*

Verse 10: “Then it came to pass, when Jesus sat down *to eat* in the house that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.” Think about this for a minute. Where did Jesus have His meal? What do the scribes and Pharisees do in their meals? *They wash their hands vigorously!* Remember, they attacked the disciples: ‘Why don’t Your disciples wash their hands?’ (Mark 7).

Verse 11: “And after seeing *this*, the

Pharisees said to His disciples... [they were complaining about Jesus] ...‘Why does your Master eat with tax collectors and sinners?’” The Pharisee was one who separated himself from people, separated himself from what *he thought* were sinners, lived in a *closed* community. Jesus was not a Pharisee! He wasn’t living in a closed community. He was not avoiding the pariahs of the Pharisees. He was welcoming them! Obviously, He wasn’t sinning with them. Obviously, He wasn’t taking bribes from the tax collectors. But He surely was avoiding the Pharisees—right?

Verse 12: “But when Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, ‘Those who are strong do not have need of a physician, but those who are sick. Now go and **learn what this means**... [He’s giving a lesson to the scribes and Pharisees] ...‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (vs 12-13). The righteous were those who *thought* they were righteous—‘unless your righteousness shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of God.’ He was really creating a stir!

Verse 14: “Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, ‘Why do we... [here’s the comparison]: ...and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?’” If Jesus were a Pharisee, how would His conduct be? What was one of the requirements of being a Pharisee?

- a Pharisee was to separate himself from the people
- a Pharisee was to not keep company with sinners
- a Pharisee had a religious regimen
- a Pharisee followed the traditions of the elders

What was the question that the disciples of John asked? ‘Why don’t your disciples fast?’ *We and the Pharisees fast!* Notice when the Pharisee said as he was praying to himself, judging others, condemning others.

He prayed, Luke 18:11: “...‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week...” (vs 11-12). So, if Jesus were a Pharisee He would be fasting twice in the week—right? Furthermore, what would a Pharisee have to do? Remember what we learned about the Pharisaic community? *You had a leader of the Pharisaic community to whom the disciples of the Pharisees would come and they would have to submit to the rules and regulations of the Pharisaic community and the Pharisaic leader!* Then Jesus would be placing Himself not under God’s authority, but under human authority. As we go through this,

you’re going to see how ridiculous it is to claim that Jesus was a Pharisee. Then He gives the example of the new wineskin, the new piece of cloth and so forth.

Matthew 9:32: “And as they were leaving, behold, they brought to Him a dumb man, possessed by a demon; and when the demon had been cast out, the *one who had been* dumb spoke. And the multitudes wondered, saying, ‘**Never** has the like been seen in Israel.’ But the Pharisees said... [‘He’s one of us.’ *He didn’t say that!*] ...‘By the prince of the demons He casts out demons.’” (vs 32-34). Immediately there was this great gulf between Christ and the Pharisees and continued all the way along.

Matthew 10:1: “And when He had called His twelve disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every kind of sickness.”

Verse 16: “Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men... [which men?] ...for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues” (vs 16-17)—*the scribes, Pharisees, and chief priests*—right? Judaism sat in the seat of Judaism and rejected Jesus! How can you say the teachings of Jesus came out of Judaism? *Cannot be!*

Verse 34: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” This is so true! Think of all of those Jewish households in the time of Jesus. Guess what the topic of conversation was; and, of course, as you know, arguments and disputations are well known among the Jews. Can you imagine some of those households? *I believe! I don’t believe! Oh, he’s going against the scribes and Pharisees!*

Jesus said, v 34: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s enemies *shall be those of his own household*” (vs 34-36). And to this day, over the name of Jesus, that is true! But especially then! How important is Jesus?

Verse 37: “The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it” (vs 37-39). Those are pretty stout words! Those, brethren, are pretty stout words! No compromise at all! Complete separation from the religions of this world, the way of the world, the people of the world. God calls them

to repentance. God offers mercy—He wants mercy and not sacrifice.

I'll try and do some reading in the *Code of Jewish Law* and when I do some of the reading there, we will ask: Did Jesus ever teach any of the commandments of the Pharisees? If He were a Pharisee He surely would have—wouldn't He? *Yes, indeed!* But we will see that He didn't!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 5:17-18
- 2) Deuteronomy 12:32
- 3) Matthew 5:18-19
- 4) Hebrews 1:2-3
- 5) Matthew 6:24, 8, 24-34
- 6) Matthew 7:1-23, 29, 24-29
- 7) Matthew 8:18-22
- 8) Matthew 9:1-14
- 9) Luke 18:11
- 10) Matthew 9:32-34
- 11) Matthew 10:1, 16-17, 34-39

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 John 1:1-3, 14
- Romans 2
- Isaiah 8:19-20
- Hebrews 4
- Psalm 18
- 1 Corinthians 10:4
- Mark 7

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series & Booklet: *Judge Righteous Judgment*
- Book: *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin

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