

# Spiritual Blindness In Government and Religion

Fred R. Coulter—August 6, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. With the things that are going on in the world today, you take and look at all the problems that we're having, it seems that everything we do as a government doesn't work, comes out wrong. The President got up and said, 'Well, if you don't vote for this and if we don't get this done, they're going to downgrade our credit and the stock market's going to fall.'

What happened after they approved it, congratulated themselves and went out of town for a five-week's vacation, 'Don't disturb us, we're gone for five weeks'? The stock market went down over five hundred points in one day—a record. Then when the sun set on the west coast, the Standards and Poor downgraded U.S. debt from AAA to AA+. Now the President is saying, 'Well, it's their fault. They used the wrong information.' Of course, it's never his fault.

Congress tried to get a much better bill through, but the Republicans couldn't get it through, because the president wanted to add \$400-billion more in taxes, so now he comes out and says, 'Well, the way we're going to solve this is we're going to extend the tax-break that we've given all Americans on the payroll tax.' It's just like a flag in the wind. Whichever way the wind blows, that's how he's thinking.

Then down in Texas today at the Houston, Texas football stadium, Rick Perry is having a prayer and fasting get-together, probably will be 100,000 people there. And we know it's all the Protestantism and they're trying to do good. I covered this morning on if they're sincere God will hear and answer. If they're not, then we'll have to see what happens. Let's look at the thing concerning the Protestants. Let's come to Mark 9 because the Protestants use the name Jesus. They profess salvation through Him, and yet, almost everything else is their own doctrine or their own tradition.

Let's analyze this as we go through, Mark 9:38: "Then John answered Him, saying, 'Master, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbid him because he does not follow us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not forbid him; for no one who does a work of power in My name can easily speak evil of Me. And the one who is not against you is for you'" (vs 38-40).

Does it say that they have salvation? *No, it doesn't!* So there are people out there who use the

name of Jesus that don't have salvation. A lot of them think they do, but they don't.

In trying to understand how we can develop Church at Home more to appeal to the Protestants, because I have another report that shows Protestantism is collapsing even faster than we understood when we wrote, *Lord, What Should I Do?* We're sending out an awful lot of them and I think it's beginning to have some effect.

There's a man back near Edmonds, Oklahoma, Todd Olson, who was baptized a little over a year ago, he came out of growing up in a real devoted Protestant background, the Church of Christ. In coming out of it he also checked out every single Church of God, compared doctrine and all of this sort of thing, compared teaching. And finally got in touch with us.

Of course, we have our website with so many things on there. So I talked to him occasionally through the year, and I thought I would contact him, so I sent an email and I said, 'Could you please help me' because maybe we need to have some kind of program ready so when a lot of these Protestant ministers find out that they're signing up for the antichrist, they may start bailing. Maybe even the churches will.

And I don't think that the leaders are going to leave without people coming with them, so we need to probably have a program worked up, a series of things worked up so that we can help the minister understand the Truth, be able to teach it to the people. We don't want them necessarily joining us and becoming CBCG, but if we can help them come to God, we can furnish things for them and help them to understand the Scriptures the way that they should be. Perhaps we need to have some kind of series of Church at Home or things like that in order to do that.

He sent me back a very nice answer and I covered part of it while I was up north this morning. The second part of this I'm going to cover, because there are going to be a lot of people who are not against Christ, but they don't have salvation and don't know it, and they're following a lot of false doctrines and don't realize it.

The way that things are going, we don't know what's going to happen. I commented on the Rick Perry fasting and prayer things down there in Houston. And if it's in Truth and they're sincere, God will hear them. How much God will answer, what will happen, that will just depend on the

circumstances and what comes out. So we don't know, because we'll find out as the time goes by. He wrote back the second time and he said here concerning some key components:

I agree with your observation that church-goers whom I described above...[that's the first part I covered this morning] ...are at risk for accepting the antichrist...

And when I got here, Ken showed me an article how they're scholars are revising their estimate as to who wrote the Old Testament by analyzing it with computers. There were 40 different men who wrote the Bible, all tolled. If God inspires it, does it matter who wrote it? Amos was a shepherd and he told the 'religious' people, 'Look, don't get mad at me, I'm just a shepherd and God said go and tell them My message.'

...global government and economy.

We have a system today that has been developed, that if you do not have a number, you cannot conduct business. The only thing short of being the *mark of the beast* is, it's not on your right hand and it's not in your forehead. And as I mentioned before, in Salt Lake City they're developing, they want the whole city to become wave-technology throughout the whole city and that is this. You can have everything on your SmartPhone or on a credit card and all you have to do to conduct business is wave it by the terminal and bang, it's already taken care of.

Remember that ad years ago? Here's this man coming into the store and stuffing everything in his coat, and putting it in the shopping cart and look around. He's stealing the store blind and as he's going out he thinks, 'Oh, I got it made.' And here comes the clerk and says, 'Here's your receipt, Mr. Jones.' Remember that one? Well, they're having it that way.

Then that will be the last step before the *mark of the beast*. So think about this: Why don't they go after identity theft more harshly than they do? *Because if they did, there would be no need for the mark of the beast!* This way, then, you can't walk into the store with someone's cut-off hand, because it probably won't work without the bio-electrics of your body. There will be a lot of people for accepting the antichrist, global government and economy.

Who is another factor in downgrading Christianity just this year? Harold Camping, big time! People are becoming disillusioned with Christianity in the world. And they don't know their Bibles and the Bibles that they have, have so many mistakes in them intentionally

deleting things. The *NIV* is reported to have 65,000 fewer words.

I'm going to have someone do an analysis of the *Faithful Version* and compare that with what the *NIV* and those others have. But there's a whole long list of the modern translations that are worthless. It's setting people up for it.

Also, the way that the churches are structured in Protestantism and how they carry out their mission is also setting up people for accepting *the antichrist, world government and the mark of the beast*. So Todd writes:

First I estimate that far fewer than 5% of the church-going population is prepared for a major economic disruption.

If you've heard the sermons I've given, *Aftershock*, the day after the dollar crashes and all of that. Did we have kind of a dry run last week with the market going down 500 points? Well, the G-7 can't get together for a meeting, so they're going to have a phone conference tomorrow: What do we do to stabilize the markets on Monday morning? *Because they lost \$2-trillion in value last week!*

If we have such a real break down, remember, all the stores have on-time inventory, which means this. You know what on-time inventory is? *The supplies are delivered just in time so that the inventory is down!* They don't have a supply on hand. That's why I've said, you need to prepare. We are going to go through the collapse of the dollar. The Church is going to go on beyond that, and there isn't going anyone to a place of safety when that comes along. So don't depend on that false doctrine.

The false doctrine of the Protestants of a 'rapture' is not going to happen, because they think that when tough times come, the rapture's going to take place and we're out of here. So, why prepare for anything. We really are truly vulnerable.

Societies dependence on banking, public energy service, and just-in-time inventory at the supermarket is almost universal. Any disruption causing prolonged suffering would make this population desperate for an answer, for relief, for their immediate suffering.

Second, the purpose of mainline Christianity has evolved into the process of community building with the promise of heaven.

I've got to do some Church at Home: Who's in heaven? *Because no one's there!*

The church experience occurs only under the poorly defined idea of Truth. Their version of the Truth is not the whole Word of God, every Word of God, etc.

Here's their version of it. Two primary purposes:

Community building

And as I've have been given in the *Coming One-World Religion*, there are millions of these community organizations everywhere, even here in Hollister. I went out on Nob Hill the other day and here's a man taking donations for community cooperation services. And I just read it in the *Coming One-World Religion* for the universal-religion initiative. Let's have cooperative circles, community circles. And guess who's a community organizer? *Our President!*

Community building: The development of a social network...

Everything is social—friends, you get together.

...a place to belong, a means of dealing with death, dying, living, birth, marriage, finding personal purpose. This experience is guided by the tradition Sunday, Christmas, Easter, Wednesday night Bible study, plus additional traditions unique to particular denominations.

He grew up in this. He knows all about this and his father is an elder in the Church of Christ. And he began to believe in some of the things and then later it didn't work out for him.

Rarely are these activities tested against the authority of Scripture... [do gooderism]

Next, the central purpose served by the church experience is personal development... [self-help; a-la of Joel Osteen] ...Most who attend church do so in a pursuit of an idea, a technique, an inspiration, a new acquaintance, anything that can make them a better person or enhance the quality of their life. Unfortunately, the poorly developed definitions of better person and quality of life are established by the entertainment media and the opinion of their immediate social circle.

Again—Scripture is not the standard.

Third, mainline Christianity has been reduced to a lawless interpretation of the writings of Paul, just as Peter warned in 2-Peter 3. One obvious consequence of this theology is a church-goer who has no awareness of the promises of God, no

awareness of prophecies yet to be fulfilled. In many Sunday-keeping circles the book of Revelation is taboo.

That's why we have so many people asking for the *Daniel/Revelation* Series. The truth is, that's one division of the Bible in its original order and you have a good understanding of all the other six divisions before you come to Revelation. And Revelation when you read it encompasses today's modern world, worldwide events: the whole world—all nations, peoples, languages, nations, tongues, and so forth. So no wonder it's hard for them to understand.

And besides, when you bring those things up, it creates a controversy in the church and they don't want to have anything rocking the boat. This is also true in Churches of God. And there are changes coming down in the different Churches of God right now. So be prepared. If the Church of God you attend is just a social club, watch out—the doctrinal shift is coming.

It is considered to be a source of argument and contention. Since it cannot really be understood, the benefits of open debate are not worth the consequences of disrupting the fellowship. Of course, without God's Holy Days they have no framework upon which to study and understand God's promises and all discussions are reduced to the realm of opinion.

Of course, that's also fostered by the media. All you have to do is watch the news and you're getting a lot of opinion. We get the *San Jose Mercury News*, which through the years has shrunk and shrunk and it's all Dolores can do to carry the ten pages of the paper up the steps in the morning anymore. And she reads it, then she asks me, 'Do you want to read it?' And I always tell her no, because I get my news from the Internet. I get things that people don't even know anything about.

So what this does, it makes them prime for the ultimate deception, especially if economic hardship relief is offered by a system that carries the banner of the cross.

If you have all 'religions' together, and by the way, go on Church at Home and see what Randy has done with all the insignias of the different religions. He's got a globe and then he has coming out like brass all around the different logos for all the 'religions'—very good. So Todd said he has tested this many times:

I have one good friend who truly believes that the Ten Commandments are

important and that she and her family obey the Ten Commandments.

A lot of people think that. I think God did well. Judge Roy Moore, who put the Ten Commandments in his courtroom and he's a staunch Protestant. Finally it was removed by order of the U.S. District Court. Everyone was all upset about it, but the truth is, I think God sent those people to get rid of it, because they have steadfastly refused to keep the Sabbath.

That's why in the *Faithful Version* we have an appendix that covers *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants* (Appendix N), and 1893 was a tremendous year of witness to all the Protestants, because the Protestants wanted to close down the World's Fair. The Seventh-Day Adventists came along and said, 'Sunday is not the Sabbath and you can't close it down,' and they won their case.

So, Cardinal Gibbon—the cardinal of Baltimore—wrote four parts to an article, *Rome's Challenge to the Protestants*. It was published every Sabbath for the four parts. We have it right here in the *Faithful Version* Bible. You go back and read it. You read how that in 1893 all of the Protestants were warned by the Catholic Church that if you don't keep the Sabbath and if you claim 'sola scriptura' that you keep the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible, and you keep Sunday, which is a Catholic institution, you are like committing suicide. And you are bringing upon yourself a death sentence.

In the same year, 1893, was the first Parliament of World Religions in Chicago. That's the basis for the movement of bringing all religions together today. We are what, almost a 120 years removed from that? *Yes, indeed!* Where are they on it? You go on Church at Home, you'll find out where they are. The sermons that I did here, too.

Now then, in his discussion, here's what he did:

When we talked about the fourth commandment, she immediately went into a poorly formulated, emotional defense of Sunday based on a lawless interpretation of the writings of Paul. I have engaged in similar discussions with no fewer than 20 people in the Oklahoma City area...

Pew sitters!

...to preachers, to elders, to professors of Old Testament law at Sunday-keeping Christian university.

It's ingrained!

It's also easy to demonstrate the primary focus and important place on the fostering

and development of a loving, caring, service-oriented community church members (aka *believers*).

Protestants want people 'churched.' And if they accept Jesus on their simple formula, Protestants believe that you have your sins forgiven, you are saved, you're right on your way to going to heaven, you have nothing else to do except be a good person.

Of course, needless to say, of secondary importance is Biblical Truth.

Biblical Truth should be number two after God the Father and Jesus Christ. But they've already left off a relationship with God, so they have community, the activities that they have—going to rest homes, helping the poor, feeding the hungry, all of that sort of thing. Those things are okay to do, but unless they teach them correctly about God's way and unless they teach them how not to be poor, but how to make something out of their lives according to the Scriptures of God, then all of that do-goodism just is in and out and it's over and done when it's done.

You see it every year at Thanksgiving, feeding the poor. Dolores told me one Thanksgiving when they were showing it, she said, 'Come here, Fred, I want to show you something. Look at how well-dressed these people are'—because they get down there and they get a free meal. I know that Rush Limbaugh was talking about poor people, or was it Hannity, (I forget which one), but anyway, poor people in America have an apartment or a house. They have access to public transit or they have a car. They have at least two televisions in their house. They have a refrigerator. They have a stove. They have other appliances. If you want to compare that to poor people, say in Africa, then they're rich by comparison; so it's all relative.

And then, we've created such an upside down government that people are paid not to work. And whenever there's a downturn, the latest thing that the administration wants to do is extend unemployment benefits. Well, it's already 84 weeks. You add another 12 months of unemployment and what do you have? [transcriber's correction—states vary, see <http://www.cbpp.org>] Several years of unemployment—huh? So people don't have to work.

All one has to do is ask the local pastor why we engage in a church-sponsored community Easter egg hunt on the Saturday before Easter Sunday, which we have asked of more than one pastor. What we have found is an uneasy admission that the Easter activities are not Biblical, but it serves the purpose of building a strong integrated community, while praising the name of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Any question of Truth that threatens unity and fellowship activity is quickly quieted and squelched.

Why is that? Why are we in such a predicament? Remember the Scripture that says ‘Satan the Devil is deceiving the whole world.’ What happens when you believe the lies? There’s a division between Truth and deception. Let’s come to 2-Thessalonians. Let’s show you how important truth is—Biblical Truth.

1-Thess. 2—here it’s talking about the man of sin, the son of perdition, who is the antichrist, who is going to go to a temple of God in Jerusalem, which is yet to be built, and he’s going to set himself up as God and say that he is God. Think of all the false alarms about: There’s supposed to be a ‘rapture’ and Jesus is supposed to return, and how people then will not believe that Christ is really coming from heaven. And when they see this *beast* who is an overwhelming, charismatic person, and goes into the temple of God and declares himself God, and is greater than anything that is an object of worship as well.

2-Thessalonians 2:8: “And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)... [this is just right before the end] ...*even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan... [Satan possessed. And this will be Satan’s greatest hour.] ...with all power and signs and lying wonders.... [remember the false prophet is with him, too] ...and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing... [Unrighteousness can sound really good. Sounded good to Adam and Eve. Sounds good to people who want to commit things and lie and cheat and steal.] ...in those who are perishing... [We’ll see why they’re perishing and what happens.] (notice the reason; notice how important the Truth is): ...because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved” (vs 8-10).

When that happens, like I said last time, there is a dividing line between Truth and deception. Because of that, we need to be very diligent about our personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, with prayer everyday, study everyday, so that we are armed with the Spirit and the Word of God. Remember, Jesus said, they’re going to perform signs and wonders to even deceive the elect. We need to really understand. When the Bible says something like that, it means exactly that.

Here’s what happens. *God does something!* Remember people ask, ‘What happened to the Russians and the Chinese and the Germans?’ And every time there is a dictatorship that comes in and

sweeps people off their feet and brings in all kinds of good things. When Hitler started, he ended unemployment over night, put everybody back to work. ‘Oh, this is great, oh, this is marvelous.’ People had food, they were starving. They had a stable mark. The other one they needed wheelbarrow’s full of those worthless marks to get off work at 10, 2 and 4, and run down and buy bread at the bakery before the price went up again. He was a miracle worker. The German people just went absolutely in total worship for him. And little did they know the satanic occult power behind him, behind Stalin, behind Mao Tse-tung, behind the forces in Vietnam.

When that happens and people believe a lie, v 11: “And for this cause...” You can key that to Rom. 1, because it says there 4 times that ‘for this cause God gave them over.’ And it has to do with your personal behavior, whether it is sinful or not. And the more into degrading sins that people go, the more that God turns them over to their very worst and Satan the devil. “And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie.”

*The lie* is what? *That this Messiah is a physical human being on the earth!* That’s why Jesus said, ‘When people say to you, oh, the Christ is over here.’ He said, ‘*Don’t go!*’ ‘He’s in the desert’. *Don’t go!* ‘He’s in the secret chamber.’ *Don’t believe it!* He is coming in power and glory from heaven.

Here’s another reason to this, v 12: “So that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth...” It’s like these people here that I read of. They intend to do ‘good,’ but they have reduced Christianity down to community service. And that’s the whole basis for organizing a one-world religion of *unity through diversity*. ‘We will accept your religion and your beliefs for you. You accept our religion and our beliefs for us. And we’ll all work together and we will be one happy family.’ “...did not believe the Truth... [of God] ...but who took pleasure in unrighteousness.”

Let’s come back here to 2-Corinthians 4. And again, we’re going to see the power of Satan behind it. Again, we are going to see that he comes along and he blinds. Remember what Jesus said? ‘*The eye is the light of the body and if the light that is in you is darkness*’—and darkness comes from Satan the devil—‘*how great is that darkness!*’

Paul had to defend himself here, so many times. Here in chapter four he did, so that we understand the power of what is happening and think about it. Everywhere you go, everything you see—every magazine, every newspaper—the majority of them are all designed along with the politics, along

with the education, along with most of the medical system, along with all of the things that are in the world to keep you locked into the way of the world. That includes all the entertainment, all the music.

Why do they have to have music everywhere you go shopping? *They want to keep you spending money and keep you in a deceived system!* They want to keep you busy, *busy, busy!* They've got the ideal tool, the SmartPhone. If you lose your SmartPhone you're instantly stupid, because you have all your information on there. Oh, phone number.

I remember asking someone for a phone number, and they said, 'Just a minute.' They checked on their phone and said, 'Here it is.' I said, 'Well, what would happen if you lost it?' They said, 'I don't know.' I said, 'It might be good to memorize some phone numbers, just in case.'

A couple comments concerning cell phones and texting: One man said if he lost his phone he'd have to take a cab home because he couldn't remember the number to call home. Then especially the young people: so many people are hooked on texting and everything like this, that you see them every spare minute, they've got it right here, doing this, and you see a couple of girls or a couple of boys walking side-by-side. They each have their cell phone on and they're all looking as to what it is. And they think this is so great, this is so 'kool.'

But what it's doing, it's sucking them right into the whole system to become part and parcel of the whole system. I think even some parents are rebelling and saying, 'No more cell phones for my kids.' Well, that might not be a bad idea.

(go to the next track)

2-Corinthians 4:1 is very instructive as to how someone who is a teacher, or preacher of the Gospel is to conduct their ministries. Too many, like these community things that they have, that is an organization of men that now they are trying to do good works, so they can keep a community of people together. They have minimum doctrinal understanding because they don't want any disputes. They don't want to search the Scriptures, but just use enough of the Scriptures, so that it comes across as though it is Christian or it's New Testament.

Here's a good lesson, 2-Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain..." (vs 1-2). Also, he talks about handling the Word of God deceitfully, corruptly.

And that's what happens in the churches of the world. They handle it dishonestly, false interpretation. 'Well, Sabbath doesn't matter,

Sunday is the day we keep.' Well, you might try this on as an argument for them: 'Oh, well, then you think that's changed?' *Yes, indeed!* 'Well, what about if we change the commandment, *You shall do no murder?*' Just let everybody go around and kill anybody they want to. If they think it's okay to kill them, kill them. *Why, you can't do that. That's lawless.* Well, what do you think Sabbath-breaking is, but lawlessness?

"...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the Truth... [Who is 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life'? *Jesus Christ!*] ...we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe..." (vs 2-4).

When you're given over to the deception of Satan the devil, you don't believe God. You can profess Christ all you want. You can claim it's from Him. You can do many wonderful works. You can prophesy in His name. But at judgment day Jesus is going to say, 'I don't know you, depart from Me you who are workers of lawlessness.' Once you give yourself over to *the deception* and you accept it and you embrace it, here is the lock that has to be opened to change the minds of these people. And the only thing that's going to do it is hard times.

Verse 4: "In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them. For we do not preach our own selves..." (vs 4-5). That means *our ideas, our interpretations, our words.* That's exactly the same as Jesus said—wasn't it? He said, 'Of Myself I can do nothing.' But

- as He saw the Father do it, that's what He does
- as the Father commanded Him, that's what He does
- as the Father came Him the words to speak, that's what He speaks

Same way with the Apostle Paul here.

"For we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake, because *it is* God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ" (vs 5-6). That's why God is the One Who has to open the mind. God is the One Who has to call. *But we need to respond!*

Let's look at the blindness in government. Down there at the fast and prayer meeting that Rick Perry had today, they had demonstrations outside the arena—separation of church and state. Well, it

wasn't establishing a religion in the name of government; the Constitution forbids that. But what he was seeing all the problems in America, and knowing enough about the Bible that we need to have a day of prayer and fasting for the nation. I hope that that is a good thing, and I hope concerning Isaiah 58, that it's not fasting for strife and arguing. But here's what happens to a nation that forgets God. God is still always there.

Isaiah 59:1: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy that it cannot hear.... [No! God is there all the time.] ...But your iniquities... [Iniquities are the transgressions of God's laws, His commandments.] ...have come between you and your God, and your sins have hid *His* face from you, that He will not hear" (vs 1-2). There comes a time that God won't hear. Remember what God told Jeremiah, 'Don't pray for this people. Don't lift up a cry to Me for them, because I'm not going to hear you. I've given them plenty of warnings.'

Verse 3: "For your hands are defiled with blood... [Isn't that the way the nation is? Think of the nation, think of the conditions that are here.] ...and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perverseness." Boy! Can we get one truthful statement out of a politician today? A few are trying to do it, but not very many.

Verse 4: "None calls for justice... [No, they want their ideology. They don't want Truth, they don't want justice.] ...nor does anyone plead for Truth; they trust in vanity and speak lies. They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity." Look at what has happened with the solution to this reducing the debt. It all backfired—right? *It wasn't done in honesty and Truth!*

First you need to seek God. So, I hope that whatever Rick Perry and the other ones with him are doing are really seeking that. Maybe that will give us a little respite for a while. But stop and think: How long will it really last? How much can really be done?

You listen to Donald Trump, what he would do and he knows how to make a deal, and all of this. But he has never been confronted with the odds of trying to work a deal with a whole body of legislative lies and lawlessness, and never having to deal with a man whose word is totally rotten and will not stand by anything—the President.

If he could make a better deal, then let's have him come in and be the negotiator. He doesn't have to run for office to do it. Just appoint him as negotiator. Let's see what he can do against those odds. He's had to cut many good deals in business, but not with those odds; not with the reality that you

have 2/3 of the people against you. And even those in the Congress, where the Republicans hold a majority [in the House of Representatives], even there's division among them. How can you make it right? Because look, here it is, describes it perfectly.

Verse 5: "They hatch adders' eggs and weave the spider's web; he who eats their eggs dies, and that which is crushed breaks out into a viper." Try and destroy it and another ten snakes come out. What does this tell us? These are Satan's schemes. These are not honest schemes by men or schemes based on the Word of God.

Verse 6: "Their webs shall not become clothing, nor shall they cover themselves with their works; their works *are* works of iniquity, and the acts of violence *are* in their hands." I think it's very interesting also today, look at the calamities that have come since the President signed the so-called solution.

- stock market went down over 500 points
- the rating went down to AA+
- today in Afghanistan the largest number of American's were killed—31 in a rocket attack against the Chinook helicopter

and that was the Navy Seals and it was the Seal unit #6 which got Osama bin Laden. So look at the wonderful blessings that have come—huh? *No! It's just like it's described here!* They are dishonest! They have no Truth in them!

And we have someone in the Presidency who is more concerned about running for a second term and playing the rich playboy, than he is to try and solve the problems. He claims he's a Christian, but most believe he is not. Some believe that he's a Muslim, some believe that he is here to destroy America. Who knows?

Notice what happens, v 7: "Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction *are* in their paths. They have not known the way of peace..." (vs 7-8). Man is incapable of directing his own steps. The only way he can do it is with

- the commandments of God
- the Word of God
- the Spirit of God

And God made us to function that way, but

- if we choose to go *our way*
- if we choose to *reject God*
- if we choose to do things *our way*

—then that's what we'll get.

"...and *there is* no justice in their ways...." (v 8). Oh, yes! You know it's a crime for children to

sell lemonade and cookies anymore? The government says you have to close down or buy a \$250 license to sell lemonade—and the whole process has to be approved by the health department, because we don't know whether this is good lemonade to drink or not. And, now, we can't have anyone on the farm driving a tractor who is underage. And he must take a test and he must have a license to drive a tractor. No justice! Look at all those that are let off crimes, 'falsely charged.' No justice!

"...They have made crooked paths for themselves; whoever goes therein shall not know peace.... [Sounds like Washington, D. C.—doesn't it? *The District of Liars and Corruption!*] ...Therefore, justice is far from us; nor does righteousness overtake us. We wait for light, but behold, darkness; for brightness, *but* we walk in deep shadows. We grope along the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes. We stumble at noonday as in the night; among those who are strong, we are like dead men" (vs 8-10).

Isn't that true? Our vaunted military—one shoulder rocket launch takes down a helicopter. God said, 'If you love Me and obey Me, five of you will chase a thousand. A hundred of you shall chase ten thousand.' But now we have one and what happens? *Thousands are affected!*

Verse 11: "We all roar like bears... [That means you're of ill temper. You get ill-tempered because of all these problems going on? *Yes!*] ...and mourn grievously like doves; we look for justice, but there is none, *we look* for salvation, yet it is far off from us... [I think this perfectly describes what's going on in the world today, not only in America, but in every other country of the world.] ...for our transgressions *are* multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us..." (vs 11-12).

Yes, the Sabbath is the most desecrated day in the world. Starts our Friday night: partying, drugs, all of those things, on into the night, murders, thefts on Friday night. Then Saturday you've got all the sports, all of the idolaters for sports: the college sports, football, basketball, professional basketball. Some people are glad the professional football's on Sunday, but for the Sunday-keepers that desecrates Sunday. But for those who are Sabbath-keepers, if we have a team, and we should not idolize them, but if we enjoy watching it, that's okay. But nevertheless, look at what it results in: everyone trying to do his own thing!

"...for our transgressions are with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them... [What does it matter?] ...In rebellion and denial of the LORD, and turning away from our God, talking perversity and revolt, conceiving and speaking from the heart

words of falsehood" (vs 12-13). Dedicated to lies! Dedicated to believing deception!

What happens when that happens? What is a community like? Remember I read to you about how Detroit has become just a terrible plight, to say nothing that the suburb of Detroit, Dearborn, is totally run by Muslims. And there are going to be Muslim Sharia zones in America, just like there are Muslim Sharia zones in the U.K. They have big signs: Don't enter here, Sharia law applies.

Verse 14: "And justice is driven backward, and righteousness stands afar off; for Truth has fallen in the street, and uprightness cannot enter." That's why with CBCG and Church at Home we want the Truth. Now it doesn't mean we're perfect, we make our mistakes and we do things and say things we ought not, because we're all human beings and that's why we have to repent everyday. But truth is fallen in the streets and it has failed. It's not here just in America. Look at in Mexico. A whole police force resigned because the drug cartel killed three of the officers and they've been killing policemen right and left. Poor Mexico is a blood bath right now. It's a terrible situation.

And then look at any other country of the world. There are parts in every city, big city of the world, you don't go there because the local gangs run it. And if you don't belong to them, you're history. Not just here in America, but America's getting that way.

Verse 15: "Yea, truth fails; and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey...." Someone comes to the knowledge of the Sabbath and announces it to his former Friday night partying buddies, 'Well, I can't go out Friday night anymore, because I keep the Sabbath.' *You what? What on earth is that?* They begin to attack him. Someone tries to point out what's been happening with the false things in the government, and he's fired by the government for speaking the truth. He is hunted down and gotten rid of.

"...And the LORD saw, and it was evil in His eyes that *there was* no justice. And He saw that *there was* no man... [That's why if the thing with Rick Perry is really sincere and honest and those people who fast and pray with him, maybe God will hear. Maybe things will back off for a while and give us a little respite; I mean, we need it!] ...And He saw *that there* was no man, and was astonished that there was no intercessor. Therefore His own arm brought salvation to Him; and His righteousness sustained Him" (vs 15-16).

Then it develops into what God is going to do when Christ returns. Let's come to Matthew 23; let's see what God says of the religious leaders. We saw what it is with the government, but let's see

what happens with the religious leaders. This is a real condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees, but let's understand something.

Judaism has its traditions. Catholicism has its traditions. Protestantism has its traditions, following in the shadow footsteps of the Catholics. Every other religion has their own traditions. So, as I pointed out in the book, *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*, the question always comes up: Who killed Christ? A lot of people like to say, 'Well, the Jews killed Him.' Who did they represent?

I put it this way, the high priest represented all the religions of the world. Pilate represented all the governments in the world. The other leaders who were urging, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him,' represent all the leaders who reject Christ and Truth. And all the people that rejected Him, even the thief on the cross, who said, 'If You're the Christ, come down and save us.' All the people of the world, all the leaders of the world, all the religious leaders of the world, all governments of the world, had their part in killing Christ.

When I read Matt. 23 where Christ condemns in no uncertain terms the religious practices which reject the Truth of God. And they had it right there—didn't they? Don't the Protestants have the Bible in their churches? Do not the Catholics have an ornate Bible right up on the altar, which they use and open up and read some verses out of, and they do their hocus-pocus, kissing, incense, and all of that. They kiss the Bible and it's almost like a kiss goodbye, 'We don't want anything to do with it.' Rather than, 'We are going to live by it.' But that's what I think when I see them in their long robes and doing their incense, holding their hands like this. But I saw the best one yet, was advertisement for the German pope. He changed the mass. Instead of holding up a glass of wine, it's a stein of beer; and instead of a host, it's a pretzel. (Got to have a little humor in it.)

Matthew 23:5: "And they do all their works to be seen by men. They make broad their phylacteries..." You've seen how the scouts have their little sash that comes along diagonally across the front of them and on it they put all their merit badges. Well, the religious leaders had broad phylacteries and they put their merit badges on their phylacteries. It's like these generals who have been in the army for a long time and they put on their uniforms and they've got fifteen pounds of medals hanging on this side and they are big, important people. That's what they did religiously.

"They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments; And they love the first place at the suppers... [Oh, yes!] ...and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in

the market-places, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'.... [*Yes, or: father, father; or minister, minister; or elder, elder; or mister, mister.*] ...But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren. Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven" (vs 5-9). And every time you get a Catholic on a talk show, someone calls in and asks this question: Why do you call yourselves 'father'? 'Well, the truth is, it's very hard to answer, because we're supposed to be celibate.'

It's like this one man was standing waiting for the bus on the street corner and here comes a priest. He said, 'Good morning, father.' Then here comes a mother superior, 'Good morning, mother superior.' And here comes some of the other little nuns and so forth, and then the children that they're supposed to be teaching. The other man who was standing there observing all of this, and he made the remark, 'My, what a lovely family.'

The comment was made that sometime back he had to call a Catholic church and he wanted to talk to the pastor there. So phone answered, 'Father so-and-so.' And he said, 'May I speak to the pastor, please?' And he hung up.

Christ said, v 9: "...do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father... Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant.... [Before He starts bringing out all the sins of the scribes and Pharisees]: ...And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled; and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted" (vs 9-12). You can take that and see many difficulties and problems within churches because of that.

Verse 13—notice all the *woes*: "But **woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!**.... [The scribes were Levites; the Pharisees were Jews.] ...For you devour widows' houses, and as a pretext you offer prayers of great length. Because of this, you shall receive *the* greater judgment." This comes back upon the people. And many are led into sin because of the religious people and what they do and they say and how they scheme and work out their plans.

Verse 14: "**Woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven before men; for neither do you yourselves enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter." 'Oh, no, don't believe that. Oh, you don't have to keep the Sabbath. Oh, no, you don't have to worry about eating unclean foods. Why, you know, the *NIV* says all meats are clean.'

Verse 15: "**Woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel the sea and the

land to make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of Gehenna than yourselves.... [Can you think of Guyana?] ...**Woe** to you, blind guides... [Blindness comes from whom? *Satan!* Who did Jesus say they served in John 8? Who was their father? *Satan the Devil!*] ...who say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath’” (vs 15-16). That gold is really something!

Verse 17: “*You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple which sanctifies the gold? And *you* say, ‘Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gift that *is* upon it, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath’” (vs 17-18). If he takes what he would use to support his elderly parents and donates it to the church or to the temple, it’s *corban* and he’s free. And Jesus said, ‘By your traditions you reject the commandments of God.’ That’s why he’s castigating them here. But this applies to all the religious leaders of the world, regardless of what religion it is.

So He says, v 20: “Therefore, the one who swears by the altar swears by it, and by all things that *are* upon it. And the one who swears by the temple swears by it, and by Him Who dwells in it. And the one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God, and by Him Who sits upon it” (vs 20-22). And that all goes right back to what Jesus said in Matt. 5. He said, ‘Let your ‘yes’ be *yes* and your ‘no’ be *no*.’ That’s the challenge in overcoming human nature—isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 23: “**Woe** to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, but you have abandoned the more important *matters* of the law—judgment, and mercy and faith. These *you* were obligated to do, and not leave the others undone. Blind guides, who filter out a gnat, but swallow a camel! **Woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess” (vs 22-25).

Isn’t that the way it is? *Yes!* All of the government leaders, the religious leaders, they lay down laws, lay down commandments, give requirements and restrictions, make themselves appear real wonderful and nice. You know, like Harold Camping. He has done more to destroy Christianity in the world than any man single-handedly in the last how many ever decades. That’s going to make people disbelieve in Christ, disbelieve in God.

Verse 26: “Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean.” How do you do that? *By repentance, confessing your sins!* Let there be

conversion within, not all the trappings of things on the outside. I mean, look at the hypocrisies in every religion.

Verse 27: “**Woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!.... [He pulled no punches—did He?] ...For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the* outside, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness.... [Boy! When He got done with this, there was no question they were going to get this Man! No question at all.] ...Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men to be righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. **Woe** to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the righteous; and you say, ‘If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets’” (vs 27-30).

“So then, you are testifying against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets; And *as for you*, you are filling up the measure of your fathers. *You* serpents... [That means offspring of Satan.] ...*you* offspring of vipers, how shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna? Because of this, behold I send to you prophets and wise *men* and scribes; and *some* of them you shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them you shall scourge in your synagogues, and *some of them you* shall persecute from city to city; so that upon you may come all *the* righteous blood poured out upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation” (vs 31-36).

*And it did!* And all these things on a worldwide basis are going to come upon this generation and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was only just a little bit of foretaste of what’s going to happen before the return of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was not happy that He had to say this. He was not pleased that He had to bring this condemnation to them, so He says, v 37: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who have been sent to you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under *her* wings, but you refused! Behold, your house is left to you desolate.... [Did that happen to Jerusalem? And was Judaism cast into outer darkness? That doesn’t mean lake a fire. Outer darkness means *they were cast out of Jerusalem and their land and were given over to their own religious darkness* under Satan the devil. And that’s every religion in this world.] ...For I say to you, you shall not see Me at all from this time forward, until you

shall say, ‘Blessed is He Who comes in *the* name of the Lord’” (vs 37-39).

So, there you have the indictment of the governments of the world in Isa. 59 and the indictments of the religions of the world in Matt. 23. So Satan is the one who is blinding and deceiving the whole world

We’ll have to see what’s going to happen. There are going to be a lot of people up at what, when the markets open up in Asia, because their Monday morning comes tomorrow night sometime. And they’re going to watch what’s going to be happening.

- Is there a sell off?
- What’s going to happen to the dollar?
- What’s going to happen to the interest rate?
- What is going to happen to all these things that are going to be a result of the debt that we have?

And yet, the politicians are not willing to tell the truth. They’re not willing to turn to God and repent of all their lies and their schemes and everything that they do. Oh, they want to make a deal! Make a deal! Like someone said, ‘Sit down at the table and let’s see the televised proceedings for ourselves.’ And it’s a shame that the average, common person today has more understanding than the politicians that they elected.

Once they get there, they do their own thing; same way with the religions of the world. Oh, they have the religion. Oh, yes, they placate the people, but turn around and do whatever they pretty well please. ***So that’s the state of the world today!*** So wait for Monday morning and let’s see what happens.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 9:38-40
- 2) 2-Thessalonians 2:8-12
- 3) 2-Corinthians 4:1-6
- 4) Isaiah 59:1-16
- 5) Matthew 23:5-18, 20-39

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2-Peter 3
- Romans 1
- Isaiah 58
- John 8
- Matthew 5

#### Also referenced:

#### Books:

- *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Day Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Sermon Series:

- *Aftershock*
- *Coming One-World Religion*
- *Daniel & Revelation*
- *Spiritual Blindness—Traditions of Men*

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