

Sabbath During the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Gospel of Peace and Perfection

Fred R. Coulter—April 19, 2014

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

We're making our way through a number of years, in fact, ten years when the Passover does not fall in the middle of the week, does not fall on a Wednesday. After 2020 we then have five years out of ten when the Passover falls in the middle of the week. These things happen because of the variation with the calculations to keep everything in order, in sequence and on time as God has set the calendar through the Calculated Hebrew Calendar.

When Jesus began to preach the Gospel in Galilee, He said, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand, and the time has been fulfilled. *Repent and believe the Gospel!*' The Gospel is the *whole message* of God. That includes the Old and the New Testaments. Within that you have:

- the Kingdom of God
- the Gospel of Grace
- the Gospel of Peace

All of these are aspects of the overall Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today we are going to cover the Gospel of Peace and Perfection and how that relates to the Feast of Unleavened Bread and our lives.

Jesus is called the *Prince of Peace* and the *King of Peace*. However, **human beings are at odds with God!** We start out—because we have carnal minds—against God. That's why in Rom. 8 it tells us about the carnal mind.

Romans 8:5: "For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit." That's what the whole focus of our lives needs to be on:

- the spiritual things of God
- the Holy Spirit to lead us
- the Holy Spirit to guide us
- the Holy Spirit to give us the love and understanding of God and His Word
- to look forward to the Kingdom of God
- bringing peace to this earth

—which we can see really greatly needs that peace. It's just absolutely amazing the things that have been happening!

Verse 6: "For to be carnally minded *is* death..." The wages of sin is death. Yes, it is true, as

in Adam we all die, but then when we have the Spirit of Christ, then we are to develop:

- the character of God
- the love of God
- the grace of God

in our lives!

"...but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace... [we're going to talk about the peace of God] (here's where we begin): ...because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*" (vs 6-7). That's an amazing thing! We see that more and more in the world today!

Jesus is called *the King of Peace!* Jesus Christ is our High Priest right now. He is the One Who leads us to the Truth; He is the One Who leads us in righteousness. While we live *in* the world—as Jesus said—we are not *of* the world. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread we need to concentrate not only on getting sin out of our lives—that's one aspect of it—we need to concentrate on our relationship with God so that we have

- more yieldedness to God
- more love to God
- more peace with God

We're going to see that in the world there are going to be difficulties for us. Anyone who has peace of mind in spite of all the difficulties going on, that has to come from God.

Hebrews 7:1: "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God..." Wherever you read *the Most High God* in the Old Testament, that is an inkling of God the Father. Jesus came to *reveal* the Father. The Father was never revealed in the Old Testament.

"... Who met Abraham *as he was* returning from *his* slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, and to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is **King of Peace**" (vs 1-2). He's also called the King in our lives, and for the *peace of God*. This was prophesied to be in Isa. 9.

It's always been an enigma to the Jews to try and understand Isa. 9:6. How can God become a man, born of the virgin Mary and still be God? How is that possible? *All things are possible with God,*

according to His plan! One thing is not possible with God: **He cannot lie! He will not compromise against evil!**

Isaiah 9:6: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders...” You look and see in this world today, do we not need the government of God on this earth? *Yes, indeed!*

- The good news is, *it is coming!*
- The good news is that *we are being trained* for that right now!
- The good news is that *we are going to have peace with God now, and help Him bring peace* to this world!

“...and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God... [here it is, a human being born called *the Mighty God!*] ...The Everlasting Father...” (v 6). Jesus will not be an everlasting Father until those who come through Millennium with Christ and the bride and all of the saints ruling; then He will be an everlasting Father. Today we are the children of God the Father! During the Millennium they will become the children of Jesus Christ and the *perfected* Church.

“...The Prince of Peace” (v 6). How do we have peace with God? We’ll examine some of that. We have peace with God because *we love Him, keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight!* That’s how we have the love of God! The whole thing that is important for us to understand and realize is that we need the love and Spirit of God in our lives evermore, especially in what we are doing right now.

Isaiah 53 talks about and is a prophecy of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Of course, we have observed the Passover and the Night to Be Much Observed, and the first Holy Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Here’s an aspect of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that we need to understand: ***No one can be at peace with God without the sacrifice of Christ and His shed blood,*** and forgiveness. Remember, God has given us His Holy Spirit, and He has given it so we can develop the mind of Christ, the character of God and to be at peace with Him. However, this had to happen to Christ.

Isaiah 53:1: “Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?” *It’s revealed to us!* The strength of God is revealed to us!

Verse 2: “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look

upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him. *He is* despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not” (vs 2-3). Why did Jesus do all of this, and go through it? *So that He can save mankind!*

Verse 4: “Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; yet, we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* crushed for our iniquities; the **chastisement of our peace** was upon Him...” (vs 4-5). What does that mean? *We just read that the carnal mind is enmity against God!* We were enemies of God, cut off from God. In order to make peace with God, Christ had to die. That’s part of being the Prince of Peace and the King of Peace.

That’s important for us to know, to realize and to understand: ***we need peace with God and with each other!*** We’ll talk about all these things as we go through this sermon.

Let’s examine, again, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, because these things are the important aspects of what we need to concentrate on during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Which then, we carry over into our daily living. It is true that we do have to fight against human nature, and we’ll see how that is done as we understand what it means to be *perfected*. But here is the fruit of the Spirit:

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**...”—peace with God and with one another. We will see that *that peace* has to come from God. It’s not the kind of peace that we would get in the world. It’s not the kind of peace that would come because of the things that *we* do, or the things that *we of our own selves* with human nature can do. We have to realize that this peace can only come from God. It can only come from Christ. It can only come from the righteousness of God.

Let’s see what Paul writes concerning this peace and how it comes through Jesus Christ, Ephesians 2:12: “*And* that you were without Christ at that time... [we were all without Christ] ...alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” Look at what it is in the world without God, with all the things that are going on. Just as Jesus said would happen.

Verse 13: “But now in Christ Jesus... [only through Him] ...you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ.” That ties right in with Isa. 53.

Verse 14: For **He is our peace**, Who has made both one...”

- Peace with God!
- Peace toward God!
- Peace with the brethren within the Church!

You can see all the problems and difficulties that have happened within the Church, because too much carnality came about; too much carnality was allowed: fighting, warring and all of the things of the flesh. God has had to separate the churches, and the separation is still going on until we all come to the point that we love God and have peace with God, and peace with one another.

Verse 16: and *that* He might reconcile both to God... [both Jews and Gentiles] ...in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.” There are two things of enmity:

1. enmity against God
2. enmity toward Jews and Gentiles—toward people in general

Verse 17: “Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near.” Notice how this peace is established, that is *through the Spirit of God!*

Verse 18: “For through Him [Christ] we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father.” That’s how peace is made.

Let’s also understand that because of this we have great hope. Let’s see how God is working this out, and that it’s through His Spirit and His righteousness that we can change, grow and overcome, and become peaceful with God, peaceful with each other, and (as we will see) *be perfected in Christ*. That’s the whole purpose of it.

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom **all** the building...” (vs 19-21). God is building and working in you. He is *building, working and developing!* That’s why we need to be at peace with God and with each other. In the world we’re going to see that we have a little difficulty.

“...being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 21-22).

That’s a tremendous thing, brethren. Notice how this is really an important factor in what we are doing. Let’s see what Jesus told the disciples. The peace we have with God does not necessarily mean that we have peace with everybody in the world. We

are to have peace with God and have peace with each other. Let’s see how the Holy Spirit is connected with this. There can never be any peace with God if we are living in sin; it just won’t happen!

John 14:25: “I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you. But *when* the Comforter *comes, even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall teach you all things...” (vs 25-26). We’re led by the Holy Spirit. We read and study the Bible and it’s a spiritual process for us, because:

- we learn
- we are convicted
- we change
- we’re inspired
- we’re able—through the Word of God—to grow and overcome

“...and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you. **Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you...**” (vs 26-27). This peace is a *spiritual peace* that comes from God. It is not a truce. It is a complete change, and God the Father gives us that peace comes from Christ—“...My peace...”

“...not as the world gives do I give *it* to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it fear” (v 27). That’s how we need to lead our lives. We’re going to talk a lot about the things that are taking place in the world as we’re going along, and the world is not going to improve; in fact, it’s going to get worse. So, we need to have the *peace of mind* from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

John 16:32—Jesus says: “Listen, the time is coming, and has already come, that you shall be scattered each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone; and *yet*, I am not alone **because the Father is with Me.**”

Remember the song, *Alone, Yet, Not Alone?* Even though we are alone, if we have God the Father and Christ *in* us, ***we are not alone***. God is with us and working with us, helping us and changing us.

Verse 33: “These things I have spoken to you, so that ***in Me you may have peace...***” That’s a very interesting statement: “...may have...” That means there are things that God does for us, and there are things that we need to do, so that *that peace* may be perfected.

“...In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world” (v 33). That shows us that in order to change, grow and overcome *it has to be through Christ!* When we do

we will have *peace of mind!* We can understand the things that are happening, that are going on. We can realize all the grief and anguish that's going to be in the world. But regardless of the outside circumstances, if we have peace with God and Jesus Christ, we will have *peace of mind*. Our part in having that peace of mind is through the power of the Holy Spirit to grow, change and overcome, and not get emotionally involved in the things in the world.

To realize that even though there are difficulties and problems that we are going to face, and the circumstances that we are going to come across in our lives are going to be difficult, indeed. Jesus said, 'You will have tribulation, but *with the peace of mind of God* we can face all of it; we can handle all of it.

So, the key thing we need to do is *not let our emotions get carried away* when there are difficulties. That's hard to do, but that's all part of the peace of God. Nevertheless, we can do that.

Let's see something that is very important that Paul said, that we can do this. Let's see how Paul brings this out in such a clear way.

2-Thessalonians 2:13: "Now, we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the Lord*, because God from *the beginning* has called you unto salvation through sanctification of *the Spirit* and belief of *the Truth*." Sanctification means *set aside, made Holy by the Spirit of God!*

Verse 14: "Unto which He called you by our Gospel to *the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*. So then, brethren, stand firm, and hold fast the ordinances that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle" (vs 14-15).

Notice the next two verses, because this is important; *this is the fruit of the peace of God*: Verse 16: "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave us eternal encouragement and good hope through grace. Encourage your hearts..." (vs 16-17)—*within*; not to have anguish within and put on a facade that everything is okay, but to have peace within and then be able to overcome the things that are without.

Verse 17: "Encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work"—to accomplish the will of God.

1-Thessalonians 3:16: "Now, may the Lord of peace Himself **give you peace** always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all." That's something we all need to really pray about. Whatever it is in your life, don't worry, don't fret, don't stew. Have

the peace of God, and with that and with the Spirit of God, ask God to help you have the control of mind and emotion so that you are at peace with God, and with everyone that you can be, as far as you are concerned.

Let's see what Paul writes for us, to encourage us, to help us, to point us toward that peace with God. *Peace with God comes from God!* That's why if you are overcoming sin or you're being tempted and you're torn, what you need to do is really pray and ask God to give you *peace of mind* and obey and serve God. That's what's important!

Romans 15:4: "For all the things that were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patient endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Also, *peace!*

Verse 5: "Now, may the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be likeminded toward one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord and one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, receive one another, according as Christ has also received us, to *the glory of God*" (vs 5-7).

Verse 10: "And again it says, 'Rejoice, *all you Gentiles, with His people*'; And again, 'Praise the Lord, *all you Gentiles*; and praise Him, all you peoples.' And again, Isaiah says, 'There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that arises shall rule *the Gentiles*: in Him shall *all the Gentiles hope*'" (vs 10-12).

Notice all these words of encouragement that we need so that we can have a proper relationship with God in peace:

Verse 13: "May the God of hope fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope..." The more you believe in Christ, the more hope you have, the more peace you have, the more your life, dedicated to God, is going to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

"...and in the power of *the Holy Spirit*" (v 13). That's what God wants us to have, to be led of the Holy Spirit.

Paul also gives us an admonition showing that we have to put forth the effort, Romans 12:18: "If possible... [there are going to be times when it's not possible] ...as much as is **your part**, be at peace with all men." That's counter-balanced by what Jesus said, that 'in Him we will have peace, but in the world we'll have tribulation.' So, we have to balance that out, especially with those of us together in the Church.

All of us have gone through so much turmoil and difficulty and have not had peace the way that

we need it, so now is the time that we can begin concentrating on that. Can begin having the peace that we need among each other, and that comes from the love of God. When all of these things are put together then we find out that we can be *led in perfection*.

Let's look and see how Paul, in nearly every one of his epistles that he wrote, brings out this kind of production. This is really very meaningful to us. We need to understand—which we do—that all of these things come from God with His Spirit.

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus." That's interesting—isn't it? That is a projection clear out in time, wherever the faithful are.

Verse 2: "**Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**" Think about that! Every epistle starts out: "Grace and peace..." We need to have the peace of God, which passes all understanding, to rule in our lives.

Notice how we have this peace and continue to maintain it, is by keeping our mind and our heart on the goal and our calling, and what God has done for us. This is what we need to do, brethren. Let's understand the great significance of our calling. Let's understand why God has brought us through all of these things, because:

- He loves us
- He cares for us
- He wants us to be at peace with Him

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

- To have the fruits of the Holy Spirit, *those are heavenly things!*
- To grow and develop in those things, *those are heavenly things!*
 - ✓ not carnal things
 - ✓ not physical things

But coming from God!

Always remember this in case you get discouraged, v 4: "According as He has **personally chosen us...**" *The called, chosen and faithful!* Think about that! He has done it not because of who we are, but He has done it because He loves us and because we answered the call. 'Many are called and few are chosen' *because few answer the call!* We have answered the call, and He has personally chosen us. When we answer the call, that's what He does.

"...for **Himself** before *the* foundation of the

world... [He had this plan before the foundation of the world, that He would choose those who would respond to His calling] ...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love" (v 4). That can only come through the peace of God.

Verse 5: "Having predestinated us for sonship **to Himself...** [God Himself] ...through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has **made us objects of His grace in the Beloved Son**" (vs 5-6). That is fantastic for us to know and understand, brethren. Having peace becomes a mindset. That mindset comes from Christ. That mindset comes from the Father.

Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in *the* Lord always..." Even in times of difficulty and trouble, because those times of difficulty and trouble can be overcome.

"...Again I will say, rejoice! Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord *is* near. Do not be anxious about anything..." (vs 5-6). Isn't that what Jesus said, 'Don't be anxious; don't have turmoil in your mind about anything (Matt. 6).

"...but by prayer..." (v 6). You pray about it:

- you ask for guidance
- you ask for deliverance
- you ask for understanding
- you keep at it until the answer comes

"...and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God in everything" (v 6).

Notice what happens when we do that. Just like we have covered, and just like you know, when you study the Word of God, God is talking to you. When you are praying to God, you are talking to Him. Since you have His Spirit within you, He is there! He hears! The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us. Communicating to God the deepest, innermost part of our being so that we can have peace.

Verse 7: "And the peace of God, which surpasses **all understanding** shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." Think about that! ***That gives us strength, character and helps to guard our heart and mind*** against all the strife and difficulty in the world.

Yes, it's horrible to see the things going on in the world. Yes, they're going to be a lot of people affected, die and suffer. But with the peace of God within us, then we can endure to the end, as Jesus has said. Then we can truly overcome and accomplish what God wants us to do.

Remember, *this is the Gospel of Peace*, and it is *to those who have the Spirit of God!* I hope this really helps you during this Feast of Unleavened Bread in understanding what we need to do and how we overcome.

(go to the next track)

God wants to *perfect* us:

- in His image
- in His character
- in His person

We have our part in developing that perfection through using the Holy Spirit of God within us. We know that the final perfection will come at the resurrection.

Let's understand that Jesus said, right in the Sermon on the Mount, 'Become perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect' (Matt. 5:48). What did He state there with that? *The whole goal of the Gospel, the whole goal of His coming to this earth!*

Let's see some of the things that we need to understand. Let's see where we start from, because we are imperfect. It's really quite a thing when we understand it, that Jesus Christ Himself *was perfected*. That though He were a Son, *He learned* from the things He suffered. Let's see that Jesus Himself, as God in the flesh, *was perfected*. Why? *So that He could fully understand the human perspective!*

Hebrews 5:7: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He feared God.*" Notice that this had a profound affect upon God Himself. That's why God has given all judgment to Jesus Christ.

Verse 8: "Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and **having been perfected**... [He set the way; He is the forerunner; He set the example] ...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him" (vs 8-9). Quite a thing—isn't it? ***Jesus Christ Himself was perfected!***

Let's see what we need to do, how it is that we begin and what we need to strive for, 2-Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?..." You can't have one foot in the world and one foot in the Church. You have to be wholly with God. To have one foot in the Church and one foot in the world you're really not developing the kind of relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ that you need to do in order to be perfected.

"...And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?... [Think of that!] ...For you are a temple of *the* living God..." (vs 14-16).

What idols are we talking about? *Not just the things in the world, but the idols in the mind!* You are a temple of the living God, because God the Father and Jesus Christ have made Their dwelling place *with you!*

"...exactly as God said: '**I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people**'" (v 16).

Understand how tremendous that that is. In the letter that I wrote concerning the Holy Spirit of God within us—Dec. 2013—that is a letter that is designed to help you understand how you can grow and overcome, and how you can love God even more. ***They're dwelling in us!*** There can be no greater thing in this life! Christ and the Father want to *perfect* us through the power of the Holy Spirit. We will see how that is done. That's why we have the Days of Unleavened Bread. To put the leaven—SIN—out of our lives; that's half of it. The other half is to ***put in the unleavenness of God!***

Verse 17: "Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate," says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the* Lord Almighty" (vs 17-18). Those are tremendous words, brethren!

Notice what our response needs to be, 2-Corinthians 7:1: "Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, **we should purge ourselves from every defilement of the flesh and the spirit**... [that means overcoming the idols and sins *within*] ...**perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.**" That means you are *perfected day-by-day*; that comes with:

- prayer
- study
- overcoming
- recognizing the sin within

We will see how all of this comes together.

Psa. 19 is very important when we combine that with Heb. 10:16, that God is writing, inscribing it, in our heart and mind His laws and commandments. Psa. 19 talks about the laws of God and what it does.

Let's understand a very important function of the Holy Spirit of God—the Spirit of the Truth—to reveal to us in our mind the sins we need to

overcome, and expose those thoughts that are not right so that we can be *perfected in Holiness*. It's accomplished with:

- God's perfection
- Christ's perfection
- the Holy Spirit
- the laws and commandments of God

This is how we can love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being; that's what it is.

Psalm 19:7: "The Law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul..." It restores your thinking, your health and your perspective; it grants you the love of God.

"...the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (v 7). That means the uneducated in the way of God. You grow in wisdom, in righteousness, in Truth, and all of these things are what we might call *the building blocks* of perfection that God is doing within us.

Always keep in mind that *the final perfection is the resurrection!* That's going to be an awesome thing, indeed!

Verse 8: "The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the LORD are pure, enlightening the eyes."

- giving understanding
- giving truth
- giving strength of mind
- giving strength of thought

That's why we have the Proverbs for the youth. Having the program where you can go through one chapter of Proverbs a day for a month. If a month is less than 31 days then you double up on some of the shorter ones. After the month is over, you go back and start again.

This way it's helping to train the mind! They call it in the world: *programming*. God wants to train our minds and to program us with His Spirit. That's quite a thing indeed, when we understand it.

Verse 9: "The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired than gold, yea, much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (vs 9-10). Isn't that a great thing to understand; what we have with:

- the Word of God
- the Spirit of God
- the Truth of God
- the love of God

is greater than the greatest riches of the world.

Look at gold. Every one of the Pharaohs—and they're still dead because their bodies are still here—to show their wealth and immortality, supposedly, they covered their coffins with gold. But it didn't do them one bit of good. Neither can all the gold in the world.

Here's what happens when you have them written in your mind and heart:

- you're loving God
- He's bringing you to perfection
- He wants you to overcome
- He wants you to get rid of the sins and the idols within

Verse 11: "Moreover **by them...**"

- the laws of God
- the commandments of God
- the precepts of God
- every aspect of the Word of God
 - ✓ coupled with the Spirit of God
 - ✓ the Father and Christ dwelling in us

Look at how many things we have going for us to be unleavened in Christ!

"...Your servant is **warned...** [Ut oh, don't do that!] ...in keeping them there is great reward" (v 11). Remember this: Jesus said, '**Blessed is the one who keeps My works unto the end.**' That means that when we walk in the commandments of God, love Him, keep His commandments, *those are spiritual works!*

Not works of some ritual, not works of doing some thing, *but works of building the character of God within you to perfection!* God is the One Who is doing it. There is a great reward in it. Why does God work this way?

Verse 12: "Who can understand his errors?..." We all justify ourselves—don't we? We don't want to admit that we're wrong—do we?

So, David says: "...Oh, cleanse me from *my* secret faults" (v 12)—that's *within*; that's how the perfect Law of God works with us.

Notice what it does and what God will do, v 13: "And keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins..." Impetuous things that you do:

- Oh, I never thought about that.
 - Why didn't I think about that?
- and after you do it:*
- Why did I do that?

We've all said that; we all say that—don't we? *Yes!* Because now we are imperfect, but we are on the road to *perfection*.

“...do not let them rule over me...” (v 13). That’s what Paul said in Rom 6: ‘because you are under grace, sin shall not *rule* over you.’ It doesn’t say you won’t sin, but you can repent and get rid of it.

“...then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer” (vs 13-14). Quite a powerful understanding of how God perfects us through His laws and commandments.

Stop and think about this: How can Protestantism or Catholicism have anything to do with *God’s way* when they do away with the laws of God. Not just on the outside, but *God wants them to have them written in their heart and mind*; that is how we govern and control our lives. We need to keep that in mind.

Psa. 138 is a tremendous Psalm to also show us how we overcome, and how we are perfected. Psalm 138:1: “I will praise You with my whole heart; before the gods...” Think of that! Wholeheartedness! That’s what it brings to us, and how God wants us to be perfected.

Verse 2: I will worship toward Your Holy temple, and praise Your name for Your loving kindness...” That’s what we do every day. When we get down on our knees and pray, we’re praying directly to the temple of God in heaven above. We have direct connection with the Holy Spirit of God.

“...and for Your Truth...” (v 2). Every word of God is true. God is true, righteous, Holy, loving, kind and good.

“...for You have magnified above all—Your name *and* Your Word” (v 3). The Word of God is Him speaking to us. Isn’t it wonderful that we have it written down so that we can all hear what God wants us to know, by reading His Word.

Verse 3: “In the day when I cried, You answered me and made me bold with strength in my soul. All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O LORD, when they hear the words of Your mouth. Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD” (vs 3-5). This has to do with the coming Millennial reign of Christ and the saints together.

Verse 6: “Though the LORD is high, yet, He has respect to the lowly; but the haughty He knows afar off.” They’re way out there. Look at it this way: We are in the bosom of the Father because of Jesus Christ.

This ties right in with what Jesus said; we will have peace with Him, but trouble in the world.

But when we have trouble in the world:

Verse 7: “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You shall stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand shall save me.” As we’re going to learn on the last day of Unleavened Bread, *God fights our battles* for us. That’s what’s important to understand.

Verse 8: “The LORD **will perfect His work in me...**” Think on that! Apply that to yourself! Didn’t we read where we are ‘*the workmanship of the Father, created unto good works, that we should walk in them*’? Yes, indeed!

“...Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever; do not forsake the work of Your own hands” (v 8). Isn’t that interesting? *We are the work of the hands of God!*

- physically created
- spiritually being created
- being renewed
- being perfected

That’s quite a thing that we need to understand and look forward to.

Let’s see how Paul framed all of this in relationship to the Gospel and what he was writing having to do with our lives and what Christ is going to do with God in us and with Christ in us. This gives us the ability, the strength and the Truth to do what God wants us to do.

Colossians 1:24: “Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the Church; of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was given to me for you in order to complete the Word of God*” (vs 24-25). That is finish writing the Word of God.

Verse 26: “*Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom **God did will to make known...**” Think on that for a minute. You and I are here; all of us who are God’s *by His will*, as we read in Eph. 1, that He has predetermined that we are going to be His sons and daughters.

“...did will to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v 27). Not a ‘religion’ out here that’s outside. That’s why God hates ‘religion.’ But

- conversion *within*
- the power of God’s Spirit *within*
- God the Father and Jesus Christ *dwelling in us*

As it says in 2 Cor. 6, ‘I will dwell in them and walk in them.’ Think on that!

Verse 28: “Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man **perfect in Christ Jesus.**” That is the goal! We know that there are things we have to work on to change, grow and overcome. Without a doubt, that is true. We’ll see how we need to do that.

Verse 29: “For this cause I also labor, striving... [he’s striving] ...according to His inner working, which works in me with power.” That’s how it needs to be with us. We do our part, but it is Christ *in us* doing the work; working the inner working of it. That’s what’s so important.

Now let’s see what we need to do, and how we need to handle this, Colossian 4:12: “Epaphras, a servant of Christ who *is* from among you, salutes you. He is always striving for you in *his* prayers... [notice how God is working with us, with the things that we do] ...**that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**” Of course, that will come with the resurrection.

This tells us:

- how we use the Spirit of God within
- how we use the commandments of God written within
- how we have that relationship with God

What do we do when get up from our prayers and study and go about our daily lives? We are still warring against the flesh, and we are still being perfected. Here is how we have got to do it:

2-Corinthians 10:3_[transcriber’s correction]: “For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh.” It is a spiritual warfare.

Verse 4: “For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds.” Where do those strongholds lie? *Right here in the mind!*

- our thoughts
- the things that come into our mind
- the things that come in because of the world we live in and see

That’s why we are not to have (as it says in Eph. 4), any bitterness, any anger. If we’re angry we get over it and we move on.

Here is what we do; here is the stronghold, v 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing... [sin in your mind] ...that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ.” That is the work of the Spirit within us to bring those into

captivity, to grab hold of them, repent of them: Ask God to clean us with the *washing of the water by the Word*, to cleanse us, purify us from all of these things. That is a day-by-day-by-day operation that we have to do. No doubt about it! **“...and bringing into captivity...”** You control and you expel! Just as our minds have been made to remember, our minds can also reject and forget and get rid of; especially with the power of God within us! **“...every thought into the obedience of Christ.”** That is a full time operation—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 6: “And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.” That shows the operation of what we need to do.

Let’s look at another aspect of overcoming and perfection; let’s see how Paul was overcoming every day. He was fighting against these things. Every Christian who has ever been has been fighting against these things.

So that we can see the whole process of

- overcoming
- changing
- growing
- controlling our mind
- being perfected
- developing the love of God

All of this ties right back with *the Peace of God.*

Philippians 3:7: “Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ” (vs 7-8). Of course, the finality of that will be the resurrection.

Verse 9: “And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is* by the faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (vs 9-10). Notice how Paul yearned for this, with everything that there is: All his being! All his might! We need to do the same thing!

Verse 11: “If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead... [notice his thought process at that time, which needs to be our thought process at this time]: ...not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but **I am striving...** [in the spiritual battle] ...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (vs 11-12).

- even if there has been backsliding
- even if you have not been fighting the battle the way that you should

You can now! There is always repentance. Remember:

- *as long as there is life, there is hope*
- *as long as there is hope, there is repentance*

God will not reject you!

Verse 12: “Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, **I do not count myself as having attained; but this one thing I do—forgetting the things that are behind...**” (vs 12-13). How? *By bringing every thought into captivity to Christ by the washing of the water by the Word!*

“...and reaching forth to the things that are ahead” (v 13). *Remember the goal!* That’s the whole purpose of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We are to become sinless, and that sinlessness is through Christ. The ultimate of it is the salvation and resurrection.

Notice what Paul does; this is what we need to do, v 14: “I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Always reaching forward; always forgetting the things that are behind. Don’t let them grab hold of your mind and keep you from overcoming and changing, and keeping you from the peace of God and the perfection of God.

We can attain a certain level of perfection before the resurrection, v 15: “So then, let as many as ***be perfect be of this mind***. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you”—so that you can repent and overcome; so that you can get it out of your mind. Let the sweeping of the Word of God cleanse it with the Spirit of God, and replace that with the Holiness of Christ.

Verse 16: “Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.”

- that is what God wants us to do
- The perfection that comes from God!***
- that is the plan that God has for us
 - that is what He has laid out for us

This is a magnificent thing, brethren, so that we can accomplish all that God wants us to do. Yes, if we remember, it is the ***peace of God and the perfection of God***. That perfection comes with our working with the Spirit of God within us as God the Father and Christ are dwelling in us, so that we can

- bring *every thought* into captivity to God
- bring down *every idol* that is in the mind
- overcome *every sin and temptation* that comes along

That’s how then we are completely unleavened in Christ, in the power of His perfection!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 8:5-7
- 2) Hebrews 7:1-2
- 3) Isaiah 9:6
- 4) Isaiah 53:1-5
- 5) Galatians 5:22
- 6) Ephesians 2:12-14, 16-22
- 7) John 14:25-27
- 8) John 16:32-33
- 9) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
- 10) 2 Thessalonians 3:16
- 11) Romans 15:4-7, 10-13
- 12) Romans 12:18
- 13) Ephesians 1:1-6
- 14) Philippians 4:4-7
- 15) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 16) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 17) 2 Corinthians 7:1
- 18) Psalm 19:7-14
- 19) Psalm 138:1-8
- 20) Colossians 1:24-29
- 21) Colossians 4:12
- 22) 2 Corinthians 10:3-6
- 23) Philippians 3:7-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 6; 5:48
- Hebrews 10:16
- Romans 6
- Ephesians 4

FRC:bo
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