

Who is a True Christian-God’s Dividing Line

Fred Coulter—March 12, 2011

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services. How does God view those who use His name—even have churches, read from the New Testament? Does He reject them? *or* Does He accept them? *or* Are they kind of in-between? They’re not really rejected, but they’re not really accepted. Let’s see how that works.

Let’s first of all come to 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.’ [They’re just trying to protect what Jesus was saying—right? *Yes!*] ...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). We will see there is a cutoff point to this a little later on.

Let’s look at how God deals with people. This has the parable of the wedding feast, Matthew 22:14: “For many *are* called, but few are chosen.” That’s quite a statement—isn’t it? So let’s see what happened with this being called to the wedding supper. And of course this parable tells us some things that are very important, so let’s go back and see the whole flow of it here so we can understand it.

The Word of God goes out, just like Jesus said, it’s like the sower sowing the seed. Many people hear it, many people are excited over it, there are things of life that come along that deter them. There are those who don’t stick with it. There are those who Satan gets to. There are those, who especially in this age, have a weed patch which is likened to the cares and things of this world that it doesn’t grow.

So here’s this parable Matthew 22:1: “And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king, who made a wedding feast for his son, And sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast; but they refused to come’” (vs 1-3). So, you have those who reject God. You have those who just refuse totally and you know there are a lot of those.

Even in Sunday-keeping churches, how many out of the population of America go to Sunday-keeping churches. And out of that population how many are really serious. And out of that how many are leaving the churches, so you have some coming in one door and some going out another door. They are in a different category. They haven’t refused yet.

“Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Say to those who have been invited... [this is basically to the Jews; a parable to the Jews] ...‘Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast.’” But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*” (vs 4-6).

That’s what happened to the Christians—right? *Yes!* Remember, at that time there was no such thing as Sunday-keeping; it was never taught by Jesus, never taught by the apostles. And, of course, in order for Sunday to be the day of worship you would have to have a command in all of the Gospels that would sound somewhat like this: ‘You’ve heard it said in past time that you shall remember the Sabbath to keep it Holy. As Lord of the Sabbath I’m telling you, now you shall keep the first day of the week Holy.’ No other command would ever authorize any change from Sabbath to Sunday. *You don’t find that*, so they have to twist and turn it to get there.

In the case of the Jews, they didn’t like it because there was forgiveness of sin, because there was the Holy Spirit, that all of their traditions were stripped away and so the first Christians being Jews and then also Gentiles a little later, were in a very hostile environment. Christianity was totally foreign.

Now let’s continue on with the parable here against the Jews, the first part. “Now, when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.... [The destruction of Jerusalem in 70_{A.D.} Remember what He told the priests and the scribes and Pharisees that because they refused Him the way He came and what He taught, which is very important, that the kingdom would be taken from them and given to those who brought forth the fruits worthy of it. Now that also tells you something else, too—doesn’t it?] ...Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy’” (vs 7-8). So you have to have a certain level of worthiness.

1. What is it that makes you worthy? *Christ*
2. What are the garments of the wedding feast that are clean and white? What are they? *It’s the righteousness of the saints!*

We will see that becomes very important in this parable here in just a little bit. So He says v 9: “Therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and

invite all that you find to the wedding feast”... [preach the Gospel to the world] ...And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil; and the wedding feast was filled with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests...” (vs 9-11).

Because this is a parable and there is a point that is being made very clear, the parable breaks down, if you want to literally force it upon the time of resurrection, because this person would not be resurrected, just simply speaking. The only time this person would be resurrected would be at the resurrection for the evil, so it does overlap a little bit.

“And when the king came in to see the guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast” (v 11). Just put in your notes there, Rev. 19, it’s the righteousness of the saints. Those are the garments. And the righteousness of the saints come how?

1. through commandment-keeping
2. through the righteousness of Christ
3. through the Holy Spirit of God
4. through growing and overcoming

So, you have all of those things that add to it. That’s why you can’t take just one part of the Bible, separate it from the rest of the Bible, and use different Scriptures to fight against each other. You have to put it all together properly.

“And he said to him, “Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?” But he had no answer.... [you’re not going to come another way; you’re not going to come with different garments] ...Then the king said to the servants, “Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast him into the outer darkness.” There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.... [It goes to the resurrection of the wicked and the Lake of Fire—correct? *Yes!*] ...**For many are called, but few are chosen.**” (vs 12-14).

This is how we need to view Christianity in the world. Many of them may be being called, but are they being told how to answer the call? Do they want to be disciples of Jesus? *Yes!* Does God bless them in certain ways because they’ve turned from a certain amount of evil in their lives? *Yes!* Anytime you keep a commandment of God you’re going to receive a benefit, a blessing. Salvation and eternal life is a whole other story, because equating having people ‘churched’ *equals* many people for the kingdom *is a wrong equation*. “...many are called but few are chosen.”

Let’s see how the Jews received Him here. We’ll spend a little time in John 8 because this tells us an awful lot; John 8:21: “Then Jesus said to them

again, ‘I am going away; and you shall seek Me, but you shall die in your sin. Where I am going, you are not able to come.’.... [Where did Jesus go? *He went to heaven*—right? ‘No one has ascended to heaven.’ John said that.] ...Therefore, the Jews said, ‘Will He kill Himself? *Is* that *why* He says, “Where I am going, you are not able to come”?’ And He said to them, ‘You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world’” (vs 21-23).

A very distinguishing thing. Judaism, though they had the laws of God, rejected Christ and had their traditions and were of this world. That fits to the blame of Christianity in the world that we have today, exactly. Were some of them righteous, were some of them pious, were some of them doing good works? *Yes!* But a lot of the good works that they were doing were actually sin. Let’s go forward.

“You are of this world; I am not of this world” (v 23). Now what did Jesus say of those who were His in John 17? This also becomes important, too, because we cannot have a Christianity that is part of this world.

John 17:11: “And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, even as *We are one*.... [That’s another whole situation concerning conversion, too.] ...When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. I protected those whom You have given Me, and not one of them has perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking while yet in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them” (vs 11-13).

Here’s what happens. Here’s the *dividing line*, especially today with Protestantism. You bring up Sabbath-keeping and Holy Days, and you will immediately find out their hostility. Now some may be cool and not really bring up their hostility, but sooner or later you will find their carnality. The Jews had to give up their traditions and they had to follow the Truth. We’ll see that when we get back to John 8.

“I have given them Your words...” (v 14). These things come from God the Father. Everything that Jesus taught comes from the Father. Didn’t He say, ‘I of My own self can do nothing’? *Yes!* And if you reject what He teaches, you reject the Father.

I was recently sent something a Bible school in Atlanta, Georgia, that misquotes Rom. 15 where it says, ‘Jesus Christ was a minister to the circumcision.’ They lift that one verse out and say, therefore, everything in the Gospel they don’t have to follow, ‘that’s for the Jews.’ They use the name of Jesus but are they benefiting them with salvation?

No! They are throwing away part of the Word of God. If we were to walk into that Bible school and say, ‘Hey, look everyone, you better repent, because if you read the beginning of the Gospels of Paul’s epistles it talks about God the Father and Jesus Christ. And Jesus said these were the words of God.’ Therefore, that’s why living in this world of great deception, we have to realize though we live *in* it as Jesus will tell us here, we are not *of* it.

“...the world has hated them because **they are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world” (v 14). We’re not to be part of the world. You have worldly Christianity, they may be a force for good, keep the society from coming in total lawlessness, but does that equate to eternal salvation? *Different story!*

“I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [sometimes we pray that He will] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth” (vs 15-17). That becomes the important thing when we starting go through the rest of John 8. “Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth.” So then what you have to do, is do a search on what the Truth is:

- The Word of God is true
- His commandments are true
- His precepts are true
- Everything that God does is true

—etc, etc. But what do you do with that? You take that as a measuring checklist: Truth, *Truth*, **Truth**; error, error, error. Do they practice the whole Truth? *No!* Do they practice some of the Truth? *Yes!* We’ll answer the question: How does Jesus view that then. Even though they do a lot of good things.

Let’s come back here to John 8:24, after He said: “...I am not of this world. That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM... [I translated that with capital letters—I AM, because it comes from a special Greek expression, ‘ego emi’—both words mean *I AM*. ‘Ego’ and ‘emi.’ When they’re put together it is a very intense explanation referring back to Exo. 3, where we find that the name of the Lord is I AM that I AM; this kind of a shortened version of it. When Jesus uses it, it is applied to Himself.] ...you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins” (vs 23-24). They understand what ‘I AM’ is. They understood that that means God. But how could a man standing in front of them claim to be God?

Verse 25: “Then they said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ ... [I guess so] ...And Jesus said to them, ‘The one that I said to you from the beginning.’.... [He told them]: ...I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and

what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world.’ *But* they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, ‘When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM...’ (vs 25-28).

A lot of them did; a lot of them repented on that day of Pentecost. But I think it’s very interesting while Jesus was on the cross, and when He died and the veil in the temple was ripped, that was a huge outer veil. It was actually linen weaved together very thick with twelve sections in it depicting each one of the twelve tribes. So when that was ripped down the middle ending the Old Covenant, what did the centurion say when he saw and heard all these things, he said, ‘Truly, this is the Son of God.’ I’ve often wondered, ‘Wonder what happened to that centurion?’

Now we’re going to get into some heated conversation and some basic truths which then are the criteria of how we look at and analyze and be able to understand what these supposed Christian religions are doing. We’re going to be confronted with that. A lot of people will say, ‘Well, I’ve been good. I believed in Jesus. I gave my heart to the Lord.’ Really?

Verse 29: “‘And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him.’” That’s another whole sermon. (Put in your notes 1-John 3:23-24—‘We can do the things that please God’; it’s not just reserved for Christ. But if Christ is in us, will He lead us to do the things that please the Father? *Oh, yes, because He did!*

“As He spoke these things, **many believed** in Him.... [We have a lot of people today out there in ‘churchianity-world’ believe in Jesus, but are they converted? *Well, they attend church*. Does attending church equate to being converted? *There are other factors you have to look at it.*] (So here’s what Jesus told them; these were those who believed in Him): ...Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you continue in My Word...’” (vs 30-31).

All right. ‘My Word’ means His whole message. So now if you want to separate from worldly Christianity and true Christianity, then you’ve got to know what Jesus said—right? It has more than just to do with the Sabbath. It has to do with the Holy Spirit of God being *in* you and that’s the final analysis. All the other things,

- God’s Spirit being *with* you
- coming to understand some of the Word of God
- being a nice person

all of that does not equate to Christ *in* you because that is through the operation of repentance and baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 31: “If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And **you shall know the Truth**... [let’s reverse it: If you don’t continue in the words of Christ, you shall not know the Truth—correct? *Yes!*] ...and **the Truth shall set you free**” (vs 31-32). From what?

- traditions of men
- teachings of men
- your own sins, etc

Notice how they responded and this is much the way that the denominations of the world do. ‘Well, I go to this church. I’m faithful. I’ve gone for decades.’ *Yes, good, but are you converted?*

Verse 33: “They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed...’ And to this day the Jews can’t get over the fact that they are rejected and not the chosen. The chosen today are the few who repent. Even some Jews say, ‘If we’re the chosen people, man, we’ve sure gone through it.’ It is when your forefathers rejected Jesus Christ, then they brought that upon all of them.

“...‘We are Abraham’s seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do you mean by saying, “You shall become free”?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you... [Maybe that should all be in capital letters.] ...**everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.**’” (vs 33-34).

What is sin? *Transgression of the law!* Also it means *the one who practices lawlessness*, which is more than just simply breaking a commandment of God. The worst form of lawlessness is substituting the teachings of men in place of the teachings of God; that’s the worse lawlessness there is, because it looks good, it looks acceptable. The lawlessness, which is chaos—as we see in the world today—and upheaval and all of that sort of thing, that’s another type of lawlessness.

“...everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin.... [The whole purpose of being converted—through repentance and baptism and receiving of the Holy Spirit—is to truly have your heart circumcised so that you now receive the Holy Spirit and you are servant of God. What Jesus is laying out here is, there is a definite cutoff point.] ...And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever” (vs 34-35).

Remember, He was teaching here at the temple. Right there at the heart of where all of the religious system was. “Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free” (v 36). What is true freedom? *True freedom is not to live in sin!* Isn’t that right? *Yes!* But the message of Protestantism is:

‘you are free from that harsh law in the Old Testament.’ That is sin; that’s not true freedom.

And if they go to Galatians and Romans and Hebrews to try and twist and turn the Scriptures to justify what they are doing, they’re completely all wrong. So, even though they claim they’re not against Christ, in their very behavior they actually are. And even though they say they’re free from sin, in their behavior they’re actually the slaves of sin and are just as blind as the Jews here, standing right in front of Jesus who said, ‘**If you practice sin, you’re a servant of sin.**’ Now that might be an interesting sermon at some Sunday church.

“‘I know that you are Abraham’s seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father’” (vs 37-38). Now we’re getting into the source of the perverted Christianity beyond the good intentions of people using the name of Jesus. There is a spirit, ‘prince of the power of the air,’ who is behind it.

“They answered and said to Him, ‘Our father is Abraham.’ Jesus said to them, ‘**IF** you were Abraham’s children... [There’s a difference in being the seed of Abraham—correct? *You have to be the children!* Was Ishmael the seed of Abraham? *Yes!* Was Esau the seed of Abraham and Isaac? *Yes!* So who you are physically, Jesus is saying, *has no standing* with the New Covenant.] ...If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this’” (vs 39-40).

You see the progression here. They’re at the temple, they’re all thinking they’re good, they’re all wanting to do good, but that good is misled because it’s defined by the traditions of men. And they want to kill Christ. Didn’t Jesus say on the Passover night, ‘The day’s coming when they will kill you and think they’re doing God service’? And if you’re doing God’s service, are you not doing what is good?

He gets right down to the heart and core of it, v 41: “‘You are doing the works of your father.’ Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication. We have one Father, *and that is God.*’” This was an intense argument. If you can picture this, how intense and aggressive the Jews really are. This was not some little teaching over in the corner. There were those watching and there were those debating and those challenging Jesus. Isn’t it true, don’t we have those who say, ‘We have one Father; we have God; we are Christians; we are true’? And ‘we love our pope and kiss his ring and his feet and we are on our way to heaven.’ *Same thing today!*

“Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘**IF** God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me.... [Then He asked a question; here is another defining point]: ...Why don’t you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words. You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice....’” (vs 42-44).

Where does all of this false Christianity come from using the name of Jesus, and there are many who will go that way, the broad way, and everything like that? *Satan the devil is a false Christ!* He preaches the name of Jesus, but when you go beyond the name and looking to the goodness, and ‘we are fine people’—who do they really serve? Because ‘*many are called, but few are chosen.*’

“...and the lusts of your father you desire to practice...” (v 44). What was one of the sins of Satan? *Changing the Word of God, changing the commandments of God*—correct? And didn’t he do that with the angels that followed him? *Yes, indeed!* Did he not say the same thing to Adam and Eve? *Yes, he did!*

“You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the truth because there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it” (v 44). Another marker—right? How many lies do they teach in these Sunday-keeping churches? *Christmas, Easter, Lent!*

I was watching a little bit of sports the other night and here is this ex-coach of Notre Dame who is a commentator, I forget his name. I saw several on Fox News with the same thing. They had the cross with the ashes on their foreheads. *Totally pagan!* As people, they’re pretty nice people. They think they’re righteous in doing this. So they have to give up something for God for 40 days. But if you told them that this was based upon ancient pagan practices, they would respond to you just like these people responded to Jesus. Oh, by the way, I talked to a man, too, who said that he talked to a Baptist who just came back from Lent. So it’s all going home to Rome. *Satan is the father of lies!*

Verse 45: “And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin? But if I speak *the* Truth, why don’t you believe Me?... [Let’s understand something: *If you believe, that requires action*, because belief could also be translated ‘faithizing,’ and *faith requires obedience!* ‘You do not believe Me.’] ...But if I speak *the* Truth, why don’t you

believe Me? The one who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God” (vs 45-47). But they thought they were of God—right? Are there a lot of people who think they’re of God? *Yes! But they’re not of God!* How do you get through to them? *God must deal with them!* That’s why it says, ‘None can come to Me, unless the Father draw Him.’ And Jesus said, ‘None come to the Father except through Me.’ It’s not a matter of your own choice and your own volition and you deciding to go to a church. A couple would say one Sunday morning, ‘Let’s find us a good comfortable church that we can go to.’

“...For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God” (v 47). Let’s see what Jesus is going to say to all of these good people.

(go to the next track)

Matthew 7 has to do with human relations, but then it will come down to relations with God. And almost everyone will agree to this when you read it. However, when you get down to the details of explaining what it means, then they’re like a bunch of lemmings running away.

Matthew 7:12: “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.” So you have to go find out what is the correct conduct with the Law and the Prophets. So what is Jesus doing here? He’s endorsing the Law and the Prophets, not abolishing it— isn’t He? *Yes, indeed!* “...this is the Law and the Prophets.”

You go back and you read those statutes and judgments. What do you do when you find that if even an enemy of yours has lost one of his horses or his cows and it’s in your pasture? What do you say, ‘Hooray, now I’ve got his property’; even your enemy. You would say, ‘Oh, yes, I’ve been waiting for this day.’ What is the command of God? *You shall keep it until he comes for it or you shall return it to him.* That’s the Law and the Prophets.

I like the ones on stealing. If you steal a lamb, found in your hand, alive, you repay four-fold. If you kill it, it’s five-fold. That would be very effective with car thievery—wouldn’t it? You steal a car and caught, ah-ha—you must buy him four more. So he says, ‘I don’t need four.’ Okay, then you give him the equivalent in cash. If you do that, you’re home free.

“Everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.... [It’s also endorsing the Prophets, too, isn’t it? *Yes!*] (He goes right on defining what Christianity is going to be from that point forward): ...Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction,

and many are those who enter through it.... [*many* means the majority of people] ...For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.... [That ties right in where we began—right? ‘**Many are called but few are chosen.**’] (Then He gives a warning. He’s given many warnings on this. We need to be careful of especially of the things of Christianity of this world): ...But **beware of false prophets** who come to you in sheep’s clothing, for within they are ravening wolves” (vs 12-15).

And it always ends up that way—doesn’t it? May start out nice and good and well intentioned, huggy-kissy, lovey-dovey, and all of that sort of thing, but human nature gets involved in it. Of course, we have the infamous story of Jim Jones. Look what happened there. So if you get a chance, watch the history of it on the History Channel.

Verse 16: “You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they?... [*No they don’t!*] ...In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit...” (vs 16-17). What is good? Then you have to define what *good* is. Not all apparent good is *good*. Did it appear good to Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? *Yes!* There is good from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, but it’s not the good that comes from God. We need to understand that.

“...but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire. Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits” (vs 17-20). What do they do? How do they live?

Not only in their relationship between person to person, but in their relationship with God. A lot of people, you would get absolutely 99% of the people—maybe 95%—to agree that the last six commandments are good commandments and we all ought to follow that—right? So you would have that that looks like it’s good fruit. You say, ‘Okay, now, we’re only going to have one God and that’s a God defined by the Bible. We’re not going to have any idols and statues and bowing down to them. We’re not going to be having any prayers in the name of God that’s not according to His will. And we are going to keep the Sabbath Holy with the Holy Days.’ You just lost 99% of the 95% that said they agree with the first six.

You have this group of people that agree with the first six, they think they’re following #1, but they’re not. They may have the idols reduced down just to a cross. They have sermons given in the name of the Lord, spoken in such a way that it’s

really not what God said. And they’re against swearing and cursing, but they don’t want to remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy.

Do they have good fruit or do they have evil fruit? James said, ‘If you keep all the commandments and violate one, you’ve broken all of them’—right? So, there you go. Verse 21 comes right down to the thing we’re talking about here: false prophets. There are a lot of them out there. Will a false prophet come up to you and say, ‘Stay away from me. I’m a false prophet, I’m an evil person, I’m a lying dude and don’t believe anything that I have to say.’ *No!* Comes to you and says, ‘I have an idea. Doesn’t this sound good?’

Verse 22: “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?... [They’re preachers. A lot of them do. ‘Let’s gather here Sunday morning and let’s study the will of God. My topic will not be the Sabbath, anything but the Sabbath, because that gives me a guilty conscience. And if I cover the Sabbath, I’m going to apply it to Sunday.’ *Sleight of hand!*] ...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?... [They had a casting-out-demons ministry. People flocked to them.] ...And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’” We built buildings, we built churches, we had colleges, we had universities, we had doctors of this and doctors of that.

Verse 23 is a key: “And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.’” And that is ‘*anomos*’—*anti-law*. Where does that come from?

Verse 21: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who is in heaven.**” That’s a big order— isn’t it? Is the will of the Father *the visible* according to the choices of men? *No, it’s not!* That’s a problem with traditions. They add on; they take away. That’s the problem with Protestantism, Catholicism, all the other religions in the world. They are not doing the will of the Father Who is in heaven. What did Jesus say? *He spoke the words of God!* They weren’t His. Those are the will of the Father. What is the whole rest of the New Testament? *The will of the Father!*

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them... [Hearing is not enough. Believing is not enough. Attending is not enough. **You have to practice them.**] ...I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock.... [and that Rock is Christ—right?] ...And the rain came down, and the floods came, and winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock.... [So we have to build on Christ. He’s the Chief

Cornerstone—right? *He’s the Head of the Church!*] ...And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice them shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand” (vs 24-26).

Since we just watched all the tsunamis over in Japan, take a good look. Even built on firm foundation there, when the floods come and the waves beat... I looked at that as the ocean was just coming in, just moving everything along its way. And one cubic yard of water equals the force of 2,000 pounds. Everything moved: buildings, cars, bridges, everything! They even lost four complete trains! A whole town of 9,500 disappeared—gone! So the moral of the story is, you can’t fight against God; you can’t go against Him or His Word.

And the comment was made that the Island of Japan was moved eight feet out of its place. Think of it this way, just like it said: ““And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it” (v 27). Is Japan going to be reduced to near poverty because of this one act? And remember, the whole earth is subject to earthquakes. This one was a thousand times more intense than it was in New Zealand just a few weeks ago.

I haven’t had a chance to look at a globe yet to kind of draw a line up from New Zealand up to where this took place in Japan, but I have a big National Geographic thick map book, which also shows all of the canyons and mountains below the sea. So I’m going to look at that and see where that fault line goes. I just wonder, is it the same one? May very well be. (audience comments) Oh, they did say it was. Hang on everybody. We shall never say that Hollister is the earthquake capital of the world after this!

This helps us to understand what goes on in people’s minds. So if you are hostile toward the Word of God—let’s come back here to Romans 8. A person can have a nice personality, be a pleasant person, entertaining, all of this sort of thing, but all of that is just personality.

- What does it come down to in relationship with God?
- What is it that He wants to do in giving us eternal life?

and in giving us eternal life:

- What does our behavior need to be?

Needs to be led of the Spirit!

Romans 8 is talking about how we live. How we live is called ‘the way we walk.’ Do we walk in the way of the Lord? We have a book for children, *God’s Bible Pathway for Children*. If you want that, you can write in for it. We’ll send you whatever you need.

Romans 8:5: “For those who walk according to the flesh... [that means *unconverted*] ...mind the things of the flesh; but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit... [We will see to whom God gives His Spirit] ...For to be carnally minded...” (vs 5-6). Carnally minded means to be fleshly minded. In other words, you do not have the Holy Spirit of God in you. You can pretend all the Christianity you want. You can be as nice as you want to be and have a wonderful group, whether you meet on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and you don’t take seriously the Sabbath. You may be recognized as a wonderful group of people, but you don’t belong to God. You’re still carnally-minded.

To be that: “...*is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace... [notice how he defines the carnal mind]: ...because the carnal mind is enmity against God...” (vs 6-7) The word *enmity* is from where we get enemy, even though the people intend good. But it’s good in their own eyes. Is it good to feed the poor? *Of course, God says to!* But what should you do then? Teach them how not to remain poor and take care of their lives according to God’s way. You think you’re doing good.

Same way like Billy Graham said of the Sabbath. He said, ‘Well, I can reach more people by preaching what I’m preaching and not preach the Sabbath, and bring them to Christ. Now that seems like a good thing—doesn’t it? *Reach more people*— isn’t that wonderful? Where is all of that that he did going? *It has to be measured by what God wants!* Can you preach the Gospel without preaching the Sabbath and the Holy Days? *No! It’s all wrapped up in it!* So if you bring it up to him, you find the hostility. Enmity means *hostile against God*.

“...for it is not subject to the Law of God...” (v 7). What does this tell us then? If you’re spiritually-minded, you are what? *Subject to the law of God!* Does it not tell us this? Do we have the equal and more equal where then we’re exempt from this and we’re exempt from that? Listen, anything that is changed since it’s from God Who gave the Word, the only One Who can change it is God. ***No man has the power to change the Word of God***, but the world doesn’t understand that. They think it’s just— ‘this was given by word of mouth and tradition and wasn’t written for two or three hundred years afterwards and the Catholic Church canonized it.’ ***That’s the biggest lie that there ever was!***

Same thing: ‘Peter was in Rome.’ He was never there, unless all of the Italians are circumcised. Do you think that’s possible? A well-hidden secret that we never knew anything about? *He was an apostle to the circumcision*—right? And when they had the circumcision wars. {see sermon series:

Circumcision Wars, they even had spies. What would they do? They’d go in the men’s latrine and see who was and who wasn’t. That’s when you get into carnality—right? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 8: “But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God.” Now your degree of hostility to God may vary from very intense to very little. But even with that little bit, what is the lesson of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? *A little leaven leavens the whole lump*—right? *Yes!*

Here is the key, v 9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh... [Even though you’re still walking in the flesh, but in relationship to you and how God looks at you.] ...but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed... [or truly] ...dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”

Some people think they have the Spirit of Christ, but they don’t because they’re really not in covenant. I could probably walk into a Sunday-keeping church and find many wonderful people there—good, sincere, attended, well meaning. But do they have the Spirit of God in them? What does it take to receive the Spirit of God and be in you?

- repentance
- keeping the commandments of God
- baptism
- laying on of hands

And you know that when you go under the water, you are in an *irrevocable covenant* with God and you cannot back out of that. Baptism pictures your symbolic death and your part in the New Covenant. You’re conjoined to the death of Christ. So this becomes very serious business.

This is why you can have a lot of people on church rolls; you can have youth movements; you can have summer camps; you can have senior this, feeding the poor; taking care of the homeless—all of those are fine and wonderful, but ***unless you have the Spirit of God, you don’t belong to Him.***

Verse 10: “But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.”

Let’s come back up here to v 1 so that we can understand the whole goal of Christianity: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh... [you’re walking in God’s way] ...but according to *the* Spirit.... [As led by the Spirit within you.] ...because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (vs 1-2).

You have had your heart circumcised; your mind is changed and converted. That’s what that means. “For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh...” (v 3). The truth is, the law or any law cannot make you do anything. You must know and understand and prove why the law is good and choose to do it, that it’s right and good. But the law can’t make you do it. What gives you the power to do it? *The Spirit of God!*

“...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh... [And that’s what I talk about in my March letter, so I won’t go through and explain it here] ...In order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us... [That’s the true spiritual righteousness of the law. Not the righteousness of tradition. Not the righteousness of men. Not the righteousness of some of the commandments of God, but *the whole Truth of God!*] ...might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit” (v 4).

Now how does this come about? So we’ll go ahead and answer that question. Come down to v 11. I just want to emphasize here—v 4 which is very important to understand—for everyone who says that the law is done away, then you might ask them how is the righteousness of the law going to be fulfilled in us being Christians if we do away with the law and we don’t have to keep it? Or as some do, go so far as to say since Jesus was a minister to the circumcision, the whole Gospel was to the Jews and ‘we don’t have to follow anything in the Gospels.’ *Nonsense!* Those are real loonies, but people believe them. Why? *Because it appeals to the carnal mind!* No law!

I just talked to a man who got pulled over because of a deficiency in his car. I said, ‘Did you get a ticket?’ He said, ‘He gave me a warning.’ Yes, that means you have a chance. But if he pulls you over and he says, ‘I’m the law.’ You look at him say, ‘Ah, nah, you can’t do that. You’re in the wrong business, there’s no law. I’m a Christian. I believe Jesus did away with the law. I don’t believe in any law. You can’t do anything to me.’ He wouldn’t give you a warning, he’d give you a ticket and say, ‘You go do this’—right?

I remember one time when they first put in the diamond lanes, I forgot all about it and I looked down there and I was in a lot of traffic. I thought: there are hardly any cars over there. ZOOM! So there was a motorcycle policeman down there. ‘Did you know this was a diamond lane?’ *A what?* ‘A diamond lane!’ *What’s that?* ‘It’s where you have two or more people in the car.’ *No, I didn’t know it.* He gave me a ticket. I went to court. I said, ‘Judge, I didn’t know.’ He said, ‘There’s no excuse. You

cannot appeal it. Did you or did you not go in the diamond lane?’ *Yes, I did!* \$275!

There are going to be people that will say to God, like we read back in Matthew 7, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we do all this sort of thing?’ But they didn’t understand that the true spiritual righteousness of Rom. 8:4 must be fulfilled in us, and it’s only possible to do with the Spirit of God in you.

Verse 11: “Now, **IF** the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you.... [Isn’t that something? *Give you eternal life!*] ...So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh; because if you are living according to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live” (vs 11-13). Showing that the whole Christian walk is a matter of

- overcoming
- growing
- changing
- yielding

to God and all of that through our lifetime.

Verse 14: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.” So if you don’t have the Spirit of God, all your good works—though God will not neglect them entirely—cannot be for eternal life.

Now, let’s come to John 14 where we covered a little bit earlier: Jesus spoke of the same thing. *Here is the dividing line!* Now right here in the table that we have, we have two tables put together lengthwise and the dividing line is where the two tables meet. You have one table and you have another table and they’re not one. So here’s a dividing line that Jesus Himself stated.

When we talk about commandments here, we’re talking about keeping them *in the spirit*, not just in the letter, the whole spiritual intent of everything. For example, the Sabbath is a day of learning, to learn God’s way. And anyone who’s going to be a teacher or preacher, claim to teach the Word of God:

- better live by the Word of God
 - better preach the Word of God
 - better teach the Word of God
 - better apply it to himself
 - do repenting and things like that himself
- because no one has arrived.

John 14:15: Notice the *ifs*: “**IF** you love Me... [A lot of people say, ‘Oh, yes, I love the Lord.’ How do you love Him? ‘Oh, I feel good about the Lord. Every time I think on His name, I want to cry.

I get a thrill down my spine.’ *No!*] (Jesus said): ...If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely My commandments.... [Now when you understand that He was the Lord God of the Old Testament, what also does that include since He said, ‘I did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets?’] ...And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age.... [That applies to every one of us, because He said, ‘I will be with you to the completion of the age’—correct? *Yes!*] ...*Even* the Spirit of the Truth...” (v 17).

Now what is the Spirit of the Truth to do? *The carnal mind is hostility and enmity to God!* It is ‘desperately wicked and deceitful above all things.’ It doesn’t want the Truth. *That’s a dividing line!* The Spirit of Truth will never go where the Truth is not really wanted, though we all have carnal minds that we have to be working and overcoming, true, with ‘the washing of the water by the Word’ as we’ve explained.

“*Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it... [as we covered in John 8, not willing to do the things of God.] ...but you know it because it dwells **with you**... [They were being taught of Jesus. The Spirit of God was within Jesus, but was only *with* the disciples until they received it *in* them—correct?] ...because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you” (v 17). Isn’t that what we read back in Rom. 8? ‘If the Spirit of Christ is *within* you.’ Then it talks about the Spirit of the Father there, too.

“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you” (vs 18-20). Yes, He spent forty days after His resurrection—didn’t He?—teaching the disciples. Isn’t that interesting? He began His ministry with forty days of being tempted by Satan the devil. And He ended His ministry of forty days teaching the apostles and disciples. They knew that He’d been raised from the dead. So they *knew* it.

Verse 21, here is the *dividing line*. “The one who has My commandments... [Everybody have a Bible? *You have the commandments of God*—don’t you? *Yes!*] (there’s something required): ...and is keeping them... [not enough just to have them, but is keeping them] ...that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.” That’s quite a statement— isn’t it? *Yes!* God the Father loves you. Christ loves you. If you seek after God, He will draw you and call you and lead

you to repentance so you can have the Spirit of God within you.

Verse 22: “Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” So He gives the criteria. After He was resurrected from the dead, did He appear to the rest of the people in Jerusalem or in Galilee or in Nazareth? *No!*

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word... [that’s a perpetual thing that needs to be preached. And ‘word’ when it’s used singularly means His whole message.] ...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him’” (v 23). Christ and the Father dwelling within you by the power of the Holy Spirit. That puts you clear across the chasm to the other side.

“The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the Word... [Notice the play on words here. *Words*—everything He said. *Word*—His entire message.] ...that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me” (v 24). Those are pretty powerful words. But these are the dividing lines. These are the things that separate the true believers from the pretenders. The pretenders can be very sincere, but they have got to meet the standards of what God says. If they do, God will be with them. God will lead them to repentance. They will then want to be baptized. And upon true repentance and baptism they will receive the Holy Spirit.

God does not give His Holy Spirit to anyone who does not obey Him. His Holy Spirit can be *with* them to help lead them, if they will answer, if they will further pursue. Too many people come right up to the point and then they back away. Come right up to it again and will back away. Come right up to it again at a later date. God is working with them to bring them to that point, even though they’re backing away. They need to ask the question: How long can I back away and not move forward?

That’s the dividing line! That’s how God does it and it’s a spiritual thing. I had a man write me and say, ‘Why do the Churches of God not have buildings?’ I wrote back and said, ‘Because there are so few of us and because ***the true building is Jesus Christ.***’ We have to have God’s Spirit living in us, called God dwelling in us, like it says right here. That’s the true building.

And besides, today even with the Christianity, there are lot of things that are happening, concerning the buildings with that. I won’t get involved in that, but ***I hope this helps you understand the dividing line between who is and who isn’t.***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Mark 9:38-40
- 2) Matthew 22:14, 1-14
- 3) John 8:21-23
- 4) John 17:11-17
- 5) John 8:24-47
- 6) Matthew 7:12-20, 22-23, 21-27
- 7) Romans 8:5-10, 1-4, 11-14
- 8) John 14:15-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 19
- Romans 15
- Exodus 3
- 1-John 3:23-24

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- Circumcision Wars
- Washing of the Water by the Word

Book: *God’s Bible Pathway for Children*

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