

## Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You

Fred R. Coulter—November 17, 1990

I've been debating on what should I entitle this sermon, and I think one title would be:

- In spite of everything God loves you
- When all else fails remember God loves you
- In spite of all the trials and troubles you may be going through remember God loves you.

Let's begin with a survey of the world where we are; let's go to Matthew 24 and let's understand what Jesus told us about the world. It is a difficult place to live in, and I think that we are going to find that, increasingly it's going to be a far more difficult place to live in. Matthew shows how tough the world is going to be. And, of course, Jesus says:

Matthew 24:4: "...Be on guard, so that no one deceives you." Right now for the next couple of months we're going to be in the middle of defending the Truth in the Bible because there are people out there deceiving others with their various false doctrines.

Then it says there are going to be "...wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let *these things* disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these things* take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different* places.... [they're trying to predict the earthquakes now] ...Now, **all these things are the beginning of sorrows**" (vs 6-8).

How can a Christian, living in sorrows, increase in faith? Or put it another way: when the whole stinking, rotten world is against you it seems, how do you get along in this world? You've felt that; I've felt that. I've gone through the whole thing of many different things, some of which I will discuss with you and some of which I won't discuss with you. God doesn't necessarily tell us that we have to share our whole lives with each other to the point that everybody's privy to everything in your life and then you start judging that person's life, or their performance or whatever, that's not correct either.

It gets really bad here, v 9: "Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you... [that time's coming] ...and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake.... [That time is already growing and growing and growing.] ...And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (vs 9-10). In another place it says the father is going to betray the son; the son the father; the mother the daughter; the

daughter the mother; the mother-in-law, and the foes and the enemies that you're going to face **are those of your own household!** (Mat. 10:37) That's pretty tough when even those in your own household are your enemies. I've experienced that, too, and it's difficult.

- What do we do now?
- Do we throw in the towel because it's tough?

Look at the Church of Smyrna, they were destined to be killed, and yet God commended them because of their spiritual ability. We need to really understand how we can hold on in times that are like this, because they're going to get more difficult. I see somewhere down the road—two years, three years, five years—when all of the international bankers, controlled by Satan the devil, are going to call the debt on the nation and we're going to be bankrupt, and we will go down tubes just like the Soviet Union. That day is going to come. There is no getting around it. We can't run out and stop it and change it, and we can't necessarily change our own particular situation so that we can necessarily survive in it. **We have to trust in God and have faith!**

Then it says, v 11: "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many... [it's an ongoing thing] ...and because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold" (vs 11-12). We've covered this before. How many times in our lifetime in the Church have we read these Scriptures, and have heard sermons based upon these? *Many times!* How many times, as a minister, have I done it? *Many times!*

Verse 13: "But the one that shall endure to the end, that one shall be saved." Then it talks about the Gospel being preached in all the world, then the end shall come.

So, sometimes you feel like you're kind of like this little old lonely cow stuck in the flood. You know you're out minding your own stupid business with all the other cows munching grass, and in the morning and the afternoon—between munching grass and being milked in the evening—you chew your cud three times a day, you lie down and everything is nice. Then everything begins to be disturbed because here comes the rain. Now there comes the flood and you find higher and higher ground.

Sometimes you feel like this little old cow that was stuck out there when the flood came down

in Texas. Sometimes you have flash floods, like down in Texas. Wham! Everything is wiped out! So, here this cow standing on this mound of dirt, right up on top of this looking around, dripping wet, soaking in the rain that is coming down. The water is rising higher and higher, and the water is running down in the stream eroding the dirt around you and you're looking at all of this and you wonder: When am I going into the drink? There are going to be times when you feel exactly like that; I have felt that way.

So, *in spite of everything, remember, God loves you! In spite of everything remember, God is going to save you!* Maybe not in the time or in the way that you necessarily feel that God should do it for you. But in a way and a time that God is going to do it the way that He is going to do it.

Isaiah 41:10: "Do not fear; for I *am* with you..." Tie that right in with Heb. 13 where God said, 'I will not, no I will not ever forsake you or leave you.' And that's an important thing to remember, because when you're living in the sorrows of this world, and living in this world where iniquity is growing, abounding, *it's multiplying, it's increasing*. It sure is! So much that it's almost incomprehensible for me to grasp how that so many people are so fed up with so many things in this world, but they come back to the trough again like hogs addicted to alcoholic slop, and they just gobble it up.

So remember, v 10: "Do not fear; for I *am* with you; be not dismayed... [don't be discouraged] ...for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you... [God will help us regardless of the circumstances. And in order for the help to come it may get worse in the short run rather than better.] ...yea, I will uphold you with **the right hand** of My righteousness.' Behold, all those who were angered against you shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing. And those who strive against you shall perish" (vs 10-11).

I've seen that. I've kept sort of a mental running tab on all of those that got after us when we had the separation with Biblical [former Church of God]. It's a true thing that's actually happening to them. They're becoming ashamed and confounded, and buried in false doctrine, and deception. The things that are taking place, and that's just a natural occurrence, and for me to say that is not for me to get up and brag and say that God has done that to them because of what they did to me. No! God does that to everyone who does that to people who are trying to serve and love God—in spite of their mistakes.

I remember when, going way back when Herbert Armstrong would get up there and say, 'Yeah, and all those people that were against me they were struck down with cancer,' and he would rejoice in that. No, you don't rejoice in that. You just say God is right, and God is true, and God will take care of it. But you don't rejoice in their demise, because it may happen to you. God is just that way. God says, 'When your enemy is down and I'm dealing against your enemy, don't stand there and rejoice.' Because God says even He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

Verse 12: "You shall seek them, and shall not find them; men warring against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.... [as if it never existed] ...For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, "Do not fear; I will help you." Do not fear, you worm Jacob *and* men of Israel; I will help you,' says the LORD and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (vs 12-14). Notice how low they got before they had the help—felt like a worm; felt miserable. I think if you let the peaceable fruits of righteousness work in you when those times come, that you're going to find that God will help you, and you will find that God's help will be better and greater in the long run when it comes.

Psalms 57 is a very good Psalm to go through. Many of these are. It gives us what we need to do, how we need to do it, and the approach that we need to have to God. You know, sometimes we're fighting the battle so hard or we're fighting something so hard *ourselves*, that we forget to stop and ask God to intervene for us. In other words, we worked at it so hard we've exhausted everything we can do and we haven't asked God what He can do. And lots of times when we get to that point and we just say, 'God, I've done everything I can do. You show me what to do,' then you're finally at the right point. That doesn't necessarily mean that is the solution, but it may be the beginning of it.

Psalms 56:1 (and Psalms 57 follows right along): "Be gracious unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up; fighting all the day, he oppresses me." I didn't know they had freeways back then. I'm saying that in jest, but know that when you drive on these freeways you feel you're oppressed by the time you get home. Or, like when I mentioned to you about that situation on that commission payment. By the time I got done talking to some of those stupid bureaucrats I felt oppressed.

Verse 2: "Those who lie in wait for me would trample me, for many are those who proudly fight against me. When I am afraid, **I will trust in You**.... [Remember, *when all else fails God loves you*.] ... In God—I will praise His word—in God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can

flesh do to me?” (vs 2-4).

I am sure, brethren, that these are some of the prophetic words of the thoughts of Jesus. When you put it in the context of what Jesus went through during His ministry, this is a word-for-word verbatim situation that Jesus went through. Sometimes when we read the Gospels and so forth, we get inspired and we see what Jesus did and how He did it. The thought occurs sometimes that Jesus had everything nice and pleasant. No! He had it tough, and miserable, and wretched every day.

Verse 5: “All day long they pervert my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil. They stir up strife; they hide themselves; they watch my steps as they wait for my soul.... [Yes, a tremendous prophecy of the thoughts of Jesus and what He had to go through.] ...Because of iniquity cast them out. In Your anger cast down the people, O God. You number my wanderings, O put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book? When I cry out to You, then my enemies will be turned back. This I know because God is for me” (vs 5-9).

Psalm 58:1: “Do you indeed speak righteousness, O mighty lords? Do you judge uprightly, O sons of men? Yea! In *your* heart you work wickedness; you weigh out the violence from your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; they who speak lies go astray from birth” (vs 1-3). This is the generation we are dealing with. This is the thing we have to function within the world.

I mean, now they layout the statistics of those that are killed by gang wars in Los Angeles as if you're just reading a recipe. It's insane! Just yesterday a five-year-old kid was out playing in the front yard, shot dead because of a gang war. What can you do? So, now they are actually selling bulletproof clothes to parents who live in those areas. Did you see that on TV? Selling bulletproof clothes for kids rather than stand up there and go after these people.

You know the way Christ would do it, He would gun them down. They either put down their weapons and repent, and crawl in absolute humility and abject submission, or they're dead. Wouldn't put up with any of this nonsense going on because it's just this way, as soon as they are born, because the world is so evil.

Then it talks about how they are, v 4: “Their venom is like the venom of a serpent; he stops his ear like the deaf adder, which will not listen to the charmer's voice, *though* a skillful caster of spells. O God, break their teeth in their mouth; shatter the fangs of the young lions, O LORD. Let them melt away like waters that run off continually. When he

aims his arrows, let them be as though they were cut off” (vs 4-7).

God is going to take care of it, but in His time. And we are living in the age when God is going to store up all of this for the return of Christ, and the final judgment is going to come. This again gives us the kind of attitude and the kind of trust that we need with God, and where we need to put our heart and our mind.

Psalm 62:1: “Only for God does my soul wait in silence; from Him comes my salvation.... [comes from God] ...He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my fortress...” (vs 1-2). Because of that, sometimes you may offend people in the world. There isn't anything you can do to get around it. It's like I explained about my little incursion with these people about the Truth. Should we teach our children the Truth? Oh yes, you know the actual fact of the matter is people do not want the Truth. They want to hear what they want to hear. They don't want the Truth. But in that you have to wait for God's defense.

“...I shall not be greatly moved. How long will you imagine mischief against a man? You shall be slain, all of you; you shall be like a bowing wall and as a tottering fence. They only consult to cast him down from his great height; they delight in lies; they bless with their mouth, but inwardly they curse. Selah” (vs 2-4). And nothing could be further from the Truth than that in today's world. And human nature hasn't changed, that's the way it was back in David's day too.

Verse 5: “My soul, wait in silence **for God alone**... [it is **only** God] ...for from Him comes my hope. He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory, the Rock of my strength; my refuge is in God” (vs 5-7). When it says that God is our Rock we know that's talking of Christ. ‘And that Rock that followed them was Christ’ (1-Cor. 10:4). But in Matt. 7, Jesus gives us an indication of what's going to happen when God is our Rock. It doesn't mean that everything is going to go smooth and nice and easy.

I saw the other night *Where Eagles Dare to Fly*. Very good movie! Very intriguing. They had this huge cliff, and up on top of it was this fortress. The only way you could get in was through cable cars or trams. When you think of a rock, too many times you think of something like that. You're up, you're out of it and nothing's going to bother you and you can control everything that comes to you and from you. But that's not the way it's described here:

In Matthew 7:24 it's described a little differently: "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine, and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man who built his house upon the Rock." We find back in Psalms that the Lord, 'He only is my Rock.'

Notice what happened, v 25: "And the rain came down, and the floods came..." You didn't have to be like that cow standing on that piece of dirt, watching it being washed away all around you wondering when you're going to slide into the flood and die.

"...the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall..." (vs 25). This is telling us that we're going to go through trials, that is, like the rain beating down upon us, the flood coming after us. Who sends the flood? *Satan!* Rev. 12:15 says that Satan sent a flood after the woman—right? This shows Satanic activity in our lives.

"...and the winds blew... [Just like in Job, a whirlwind came and took them away.] ...and beat upon that house..." (v 25). There are going to be times when the world around you feels like it's beating on you. I've felt that. I've felt that way. There are times when I just feel as though I've been beaten up by the things in the world:

- by the people in the world
- by the circumstances in my life
- by the difficulties in my own family
- by people that come to me with their problems.

You feel like you're beaten up.

"...but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock.... [If you're founded on that Rock, which is Christ, remember, when all else fails, God loves you.] ...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.... [just like that cow out there during the flood] ...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" (vs 25-27).

Psalms 62:6: "He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; **I shall not be moved.** In God is my salvation and my glory, the Rock **my strength, my refuge is in God.**... [notice how to call upon that]: ...Trust in Him **at all times**... [Not just when the going is good, or not just when the going is bad, but **at all times.**] ...you people, pour out your heart before Him..." (vs 6-8).

You have to take it to God in prayer. There are times when He let's you go through just downright misery, and don't think it any strange thing. that can happen. But God is there, He will help you, He will hold your right hand.

"...pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.... [then you look at the world and you see] ...Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie..." (vs 8-9). Oh, how true!

Trying to help the homeless is a farce. Those who are truly homeless and need help, that's fine. Did you hear about what happened to this one family somewhere back in the Midwest? This family said they we're homeless. 'We don't have a job. We have no place to live, and our children are hungry and suffering and without clothes.' So, the whole town—it was in a small town—decided, 'We're going to help these homeless people.' So, they did. They got them a job, they got them social welfare assistance; they got food for them; they got them a place to live; they got clothing for their children; they put them in school; and it lasted two months until the social welfare ran out. Then he quit his job, and she quit her job, and they left town. So men of low degree are vanity. That's true, we're all vanity—all people.

Psalms 39:4 is quite a Psalm: "O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am." That was not in one of his more humble times, but getting there. Don't worry; you're frail.

When I went down to L.A. I found out how frail and how quickly it can happen. In the motel I was staying in they had a tub with a shower, and then they have built in these nonskid things in the tub. I took a shower and I forgot to bring the shampoo. I thought, well I'll step out and get the shampoo, and BAM! just like that I slipped instantly. Didn't have even a split-second to try and catch myself. I landed on my shoulder, and the big toe of my right foot was just not quite well yet, it's well now, and it hit that big old heavy nozzle that comes out of wall real hard. So there I am, 'ahhhh,' and it really hurt.

Now I know why people can slip in showers and break their necks and drown, and all that sort of stuff, because it happens so fast you don't have a ghost of a chance. Believe me, next time, rubber mat *on* the tub floor. Boy! Believe me! And I'm going to take everything in with me, and I'm going to have a towel right there so if I have to do anything I can dry off, and I'm going to make sure that I'm standing upright, and before I take the weight off of one foot I'm going to make sure that I have the other foot safely down.

I didn't notice it right at first, but my toe swelled up and it was black and blue as can be, and then my shoulder got all black and blue and painful. I knew at that point 'you're frail, you're a stupid idiot.' Did you ever do that? Talk to yourself like

that? *Yes!* I looked in the mirror and said, ‘Oh, how dumb! dumb! dumb!’ I could have broken my neck, bashed out the side of my head, or anything. Kids get all upset when mothers say, ‘Watch out, be careful you don’t slip and fall, Johnny.’

“...that I may know how short lived I am” (v 4). You’re frail! We’ve all have had something happened to us that we know how frail we are somewhere along the line—right? *Right!*

Verse 5: “Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth... [Not too big a deal—right?] ...and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.” That means, meditate and think on that, folks.

Verse 6: “Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain. He **heaps up** riches... [It means he swells himself up.] ...and does not know who shall gather them. And now, LORD, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the fool” (vs 6-8). So, when you get down and out and you feel like that, you feel you’ve had it, don’t worry, God is there. He will help you.

Now let’s go to John 14, because I tell you what, we can only take so much of being beaten up. We can only take so much of being assaulted by Satan. We can only take so much of those kinds of things. We can just go so long until we need some real good encouragement from God’s Word. Let’s get the encouragement from God’s Word and see how that help comes, and see how it’s going to be, and see and remember that *when all else fails, remember, God loves you*, and how much he loves you. That is:

- in spite of your weakness
- in spite of your vanity
- in spite of your own self-deception
- in spite of your sins

—without saying that you take advantage of grace, because that’s not what I’m intending. *But God knows!* He didn’t call us because we were perfect, and he didn’t call us because we could become perfect by our own works. That’s just the way it is. But here is what is important.

John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him...’ You need to know even though the world hates you and though you feel like everybody on earth hates you, and maybe you feel your husband hates you, your wife hates you, all your kids hate you, **remember God loves you!** You need to understand that. I’ve gone through that, too.

Have you ever had a good knockdown drag out fight with your wife or your husband? Does that mean God has rejected you? *No! It means you had a fight!* God still loves you in spite of that, but maybe you’ve got some things you need to do, that’s all. Does God allow you to have a knockdown drag out fight? *Yeah, He’ll allow you to have a knockdown drag out fight* with your wife, or your kids, or whatever. Sometimes it’s necessary/sometimes it’s not; sometimes because of your own stupidity and weakness or your own temper or whatever. I’ve experienced that. Remember, that if you love Christ and if you keep His words, the Father will love you. His grace is great enough to see you through your difficulty.

“...and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me” (vs 23-24).

John 16:27: “For the Father Himself loves you...”—in an ongoing active way. Regardless of what you have gone through, and there are a lot of people who listen to these sermons who feel as though that God doesn’t love them because they’ve been beaten up by a church; or beaten up by a minister; or they’ve gone through some terrible situations in their life. But remember, *when all else fails you*—and people will fail you, because that’s the nature of human nature—“...**the Father Himself loves you**, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

Those are really tremendous comforting Scriptures. These are the kind of Scriptures that when you’re down, and you’re out, and you’re discouraged, that you can go pray to God and open up the Bible and claim these promises:

- God can *heal* you
- God can *help* you
- God can *work with* you
- God can *uplift* you from it

I tell you one thing, if we’re going to share the same suffering that Jesus shared, which Paul said that he prayed for there in Philip. 3, that we are going to come to the very depths of despair, too, in our own lives. You cannot but help but go through it.

Don’t feel as though that God has rejected you, or turned you aside, or cast you off, because He has not. ***The Father Himself loves you because you love Jesus!*** Did God the Father love Jesus? *Yes!* He said, ‘This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.’ But what did Jesus go through? ***The very depths of despair, and every miserable rotten thing that possibly could be!***

Come on down to v 32: “Listen, the time is coming, and has already come, that you shall be scattered...” Maybe that will help answer the question that so many people ask: ‘Why are there so many little groups?’ **God said there would be, that’s why!**

“...each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone because the Father is with Me” (v 32). Of course, that happened that very night. The very disciples that stood up and said, ‘Yes, Lord, this won’t happen to you.’ Peter denied Jesus directly three times, and even swore and cursed. But yet what did He tell Peter? *He said, ‘Peter, Satan has asked for you, but I have prayed for you that your faith be strengthened.’* Did He reject Peter? *No!* How did Peter feel? *Miserable!*

Verse 33: “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation, But be courageous! I have overcome the world.” *Remember, when all else fails—which it will—God still loves you!*

1-John 3:1: “Behold! what *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!.... [Remember that! If you get discouraged and down, you turn to 1-John 3:1 and read it, and pray about it, and do it on your knees.] ...For this very reason, the world does not know us... [The world doesn’t understand us. Why?] ...because it did not know [or understand] Him [Christ]. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (vs 1-2).

And there’s nothing that can replace that. If you have that buried in your heart and mind, and let it burn in your soul, there is nothing that can take that away from you. They can destroy you, they can kill you, they can do anything whatever that happens to you, and they can’t take that from you.

I read a report about the pagans going against the evangelical rally over in San Francisco? You know what the homosexuals and pagans said? *‘Bring on the lions, open the Coliseum. They need to be fed to the lions!’* You don’t think that attitude is there? Ho! Ho! Ho! Yes, it is!

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Verse 3: “And everyone who has this hope **in him**... [it’s got to be *in* you] ...purifies himself, even as He is pure.” How does he do that? *He overcomes the world!* You trust in the love of God, that’s how you do it. That’s how it’s done, brethren.

1-John 4:19: “We love Him [God] because He loved us first.” When did He first love us? How did He first love us?

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them.... [it sure does] ...We are of God; the one that knows God listens to us; the one that is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of the deception” (vs 5-6). We’re going to have to come back here when we start dealing with some of these false doctrines. First of all, before we start dealing in them and going into them, what I’m going to do is go through and do a survey of the New Testament and show the forewarning of the different doctrines that would come. They’re all there, believe it or not. What we’ll be dealing with in every one of these things is no different than what has gone on from almost time immemorial, but because we haven’t been exposed to all of those, therefore, it seems new to us.

Verse 7: “Beloved, we should love one another...” That’s what we need to do in the Church, brethren, wherever we are. As we’ve nicknamed our church here ‘the little no hassle church’ because we love each other. Part of that love is that we understand we may have problems and difficulties, but we don’t go running galloping around with a huge great giant mouth and the sledgehammer of self-righteousness and destroy each other.

It can be done, so we don’t do it. Doesn’t that make it a lot better with each other and the brethren? I can see one of the reasons why in church groups that there become cliques and there become groups that sort of get together, and that’s because they’re on the same gossip loop. That’s the worst thing that can ever take over a church, because people become busybodies in other people’s business when maybe it’s between God and the person. *Pray for them, rather than talk about them!* I’m not saying this because we have any gossip. I’m saying this because we don’t have any. And keep that in mind.

Verse 7: “Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God because God is love.... [*Remember, when all else fails, God loves you!* That is the key and important thing to keep in mind.] ...In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.... [When did He send Him? *Not when we were perfect!*] ...In this act is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the propitiation for our sins*” (vs 7-10). That means a *continuing ongoing basis* even now.

Verse 16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us...” Do you know and believe that love that God has toward us? *That’s what we need to really capture, brethren!* That’s what we really need to hold on to, otherwise we’ll end up just playing religion like everyone else, and trying to be good people because they want to be good. That’s not all there is to life, and that’s not the righteousness of God. Sometimes the greatest righteousness of God can be worked after you realize how miserable you are, not how good you are.

Verse 16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment...” (vs 16-17). We can have that, and judgment is now upon the house of God. We can now have boldness toward God.

“...because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in the love of God; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God” (vs 17-18). That’s what we need to have, and sometimes it’s hard to do. Sometimes it’s difficult to come by. Sometimes you’ll almost literally be spit in your face when you try and show it. But be of good cheer, **God loves you in spite of everything!**

Verse 4 is the key: “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them... [That is all the false prophets and false spirits in the world.] ...because greater is He Who *is* in you, than the one who *is* in the world.” That is tremendous to know and understand. **Christ is in you**, and He’s greater than anything that’s in the world, or anything that the world can do to you.

Let’s see this love in action in us, in spite of what we were, in spite of what we are. Why do I say that? *Because only God can change us!* Do you know that? Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now working within the children of disobedience; among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh...” (vs 2-3)—and still have our troubles overcoming the flesh, and overcoming the world, and overcoming Satan, and so forth.

“...in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of the world. But **God, Who is rich in mercy**... [in spite

of all else, *know that God loves you*] ...because of His **great** love with which **He loved us**” (vs 3-4). That’s the most important thing for you to understand and realize: *God loves us!*

Verse 5: “Even **when we were dead in our trespasses**... [that’s when God loves us] ...has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For you have been saved by grace*.)” That is **having been saved from the world, having been saved from Satan**. So, now you’re on that Rock, and let the floods come, and let the wind blow, and let it beat against it, because you’re on the Rock and there isn’t anything that’s going to move you, because **by God’s Divine grace you are saved!**

Verse 6: “And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So that in the ages that *are* coming...” (vs 6-7). That’s when we’ll be there in those heavenly places. But in effect having God’s Holy Spirit *in* us, as we see in the first chapter, that is the down payment, the earnest of that. So, in a sense then we have those heavenly things, that is God’s Spirit *in* us.

Verse 7: “So that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith... [*having been saved* (past tense) from Satan, from the world, from the ‘prince of the power the air’] ...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God” (vs 7-8). That’s why in spite of yourself, in spite of anything that goes on in your life, God loves you. **Remember, when all else fails God loves you.**

Verse 9: “Not of works... [Has to be of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, not of works. What can you do for God?] ...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (vs 9-10).

- you can take cheer
- you can be encouraged
- you can be thankful
- you can praise God

Romans 8:28, a very key important verse: “And we **know**... [It’s something you have to know and comprehend, and sometimes it’s difficult to do when you’re going through it.] ...that all things... [**everything**] ...works together for good...” You might have to insert there, ‘in the long run,’ after the raining, after the flooding, and after the beating.

“...work together for good to those who love God... [in that raining and flooding and beating, then you determine whether you love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being]

...to those who are the called according to *His* purpose Because those whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son... [great and fantastic destiny that God has for you] ...that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren.... [the firstborn from among the dead (Col. 1).] ...Now, whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, those He also glorified.... [not yet happened, but it's going to] ...What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who... [or what] ...*can be* against us?" (vs 28-31). **Nothing!**

Let's see how this love of God works in us. Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access by faith **into this grace** in which we stand..." (vs 1-2). That's a tremendous thing. That grace covers all. It covers the sins and problems and difficulties that you get into.

God can get you out of them. Obviously not the unpardonable sin, but I don't think anyone here is wanting to do that—do you? If they were they wouldn't be here—correct? I don't think anyone listening to the sermons is ready to do that, because if you were you wouldn't be listening to the sermons—correct?

"...and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations... [that's awfully hard to do, but looking back you can] ...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* [experience] character..." (vs 2-4). That's what we're going through, brethren. God is giving us experience. That is what is so important.

Now, sometimes we don't like the experiences. I look back and see some of the things that I've gone through. I didn't like them at all, but I can look back and say now that those were exactly what God wanted me to go through, because I've learned by experience—you, also, by your experience in the things you've gone through. You can talk to people—not from a point of view that it's academic in the head—from the heart because you've experienced it, and that means a whole lot more.

"...and character *brings forth* hope.... [because *when all else fails, remember God loves you, and that's what gives you hope!*] ...And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.... [because God loves you] ...For even when we were without strength, **at the appointed time** Christ died for *the* ungodly.... [at the set time or ordained

time] ...For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But **God commends His own love to us**, because when we were still sinners Christ died for us" (vs 4-8).

That's how much God loves you! Even not only while we were yet sinners, but **before we were even born**, Christ died for us. God doesn't have any pleasure sin. Even when it got so bad:

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth..." It's that way today. It is terrible. I'm sure the time is going to come when you know the time has already come. There are times when I feel like just taking a .45 gun to the TV. Since I don't want to pay for that, and my wife would not put up with it, and my kids would be enraged, I use the channel switcher and the mute, and that takes care of it. But it is compounded, it is multiplied, it is expanded through all the media, and the education, and everything as never before. We are almost right here at this same point today. Remember Jesus said, 'As it was in the days before the flood in the days of Noah'—here it is right here

"...and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.... [**Continuously!** How did God feel about this?] ...And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart" (vs 5-6). And yet, in spite of all of that, **God still loved the world**. And He loved it enough to save it through Noah and his family. He loved enough to promise never to flood it again. So remember, **when all else fails God loves you!**

Let's go back to 1-John 5, and this becomes important for us to understand, because we can overcome it all, brethren. **We can!** That's the important thing. **We can overcome it all!** It's going to take some work. It's going to take some dedication. It'll take some suffering. It'll take some agony. It'll take pulling heartstrings, pulling emotions, and the whole thing. But in the final analysis we can overcome it all, without a doubt.

- God *is* God
- God is for us
- God will help us
- God will be with us

1-John 5:2: "By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments." That's what we're trying to do. That's the whole reason why we're here. I'll just have to say here, if anyone preaches or goes to church for any other reason, they're only kidding themselves and *God knows it*. Doesn't God know all the thoughts of every heart? **Sure He does!**



Verse 3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.... [What has God ever asked you to do that’s real burdensome? *Not a single, solitary thing!* Whatever God has asked us to do is for our own good.] ...Now then, everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world...” (vs 3-4). We are overcoming it; we have to fight it. We have to be against it, and all that sort of thing. But we are overcoming the world.

“...and this is the victory... [which is the result of overcoming] ...that overcomes the world—our faith” (v 4) Our faith becomes stronger

- *when we love God.*
- *when we know that God loves us*
- when we understand in spite of everything
  - ✓ your own sins
  - ✓ your own circumstances
  - ✓ your own difficulties
- that God still loves you

—then you can have even more faith—isn’t that so? You may have to go off to a private place, or climb atop a hill, or go someplace alone and pour out your heart before God, as it says there in Psa. 62, and let the tears flow and let everything, every emotion in you. Remember, you start out that you love God and God loves you, and then you can have more faith. You can overcome the world.

Verse 5: “Who is the one who overcomes the world? Even the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” That’s the one! Again, on an ongoing believing, overcoming basis.

What if Satan is right there, right there at the very throne of God? And he is there (Rev. 12:10). Satan is there before the throne of God accusing us day and night saying, ‘See, see, look at that, look there, look at that, look at this. God, how dare You put up those people.’ But through Jesus Christ and the grace of God, God sees you as His sons and His daughters, and in His family, and glorified with Him. And there is no problem that cannot be overcome.

But here’s how you overcome Revelation 12:11: “But they overcame him... [and his accusations day and night] ...through the blood of the Lamb... [because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ] ...and through the word of their testimony... [because of what you speak and believe] ...and they loved not their lives unto the death.” They love God with all their heart, mind, soul, being and strength. That’s why, and that’s how, and that’s the way it needs to be.

Ephesians 3 is what I call the lifting up of the feeble hands (Heb. 12) because of what you go through. Ephesians 3:4: “So that when you read *this*... [this epistle] ...you will be able to

comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ.)” It certainly is a tremendous mystery—isn’t it?

- That God could love us *before we were even born.*
- That God could love us *while we were yet in our sins.*
- That God can love us *even though Satan accuses us* day and night.
- That God loves us *in spite of all of our mistakes and difficulties* that we go through.

That is a mystery!

Verse 5: “Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men...” Aren’t you glad you were born after Christ? Aren’t you glad that God called you? What would you do if you were in some of these past civilizations that didn’t know, which God didn’t reveal?

“...as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by *the Spirit*” (v 5). It says in John 16 that the Holy Spirit will *lead* you into all Truth and will reveal things to come. Part of that is drinking out of the Word of God all that God inspired and put in there by His Holy Spirit.

Verse 6: “That the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel, of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which was* given unto me through the inner working of His power” (vs 6-7). You know no minister knows anything but by the grace of God. No minister can preach but by the grace of God if he can truly preach. That means that the minister is nothing more than what God wants him to be, to preach His Word.

Verse 8: “To me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—*even* the unsearchable riches of Christ; And that I might enlighten all *as to* what *is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God...” (vs 8-9). That’s quite a thing! If you want to have hope in God, remember that He’s revealed the greatest secret in the world to you, and to those that He has called. That it was hid from the beginning of the world until the preaching of the Gospel.

“...Who created all things by Jesus Christ; So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places*, According to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 9-11). God has that purpose for you, and that calling for you, and that love for you, and a place in His kingdom, which He’s already

reserved for you. Which Jesus said, ‘In My Father’s house are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place for you.’

Verse 12: “In Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith. So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working for* your glory” (vs 12-13).

You read some of things that Paul went through and you would think, looking at it strictly from a human perspective, that God was against him—but God wasn’t.

- God was with Paul in the deep
- God was with Paul when he was being stoned
- God was with Paul when he was beaten five times, 39 stripes

And I bet his back was sore, and I bet he had scars.

- God was with Paul and loved him in spite of the fact that He didn’t heal him of his eye affliction
- God loved him even though the brethren turned against him

In spite of it all, ***remember that God loves you!*** If you have difficulties or tribulations, don’t faint at them even though they’re faintable. Don’t give up because of them. Ask God to help you see the solution. *He will!*

Verse 14: “For this cause... [The purpose of God, what God has done, and *He loves us in spite of everything.*] ...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory...” (vs 14-16). The very glory of God! All the wealth and power of the universe and the glory of God.

“...to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man” (v 16). That you have that conviction and love. That in spite of everything, you know God loves you. In spite of everything, you know that God is right, and that you have the experience, and the patience, and let God’s Spirit work in you.

Verse 17: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love... [Again, this love works both ways—from God to you, and from you back to God, and you being rooted and grounded in that, on that Rock.] ...you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints...” (vs 17–18).

This is what we need to grow into, brethren. This is what I hope we can grow into in these next few months. Grow a little more in it this year

- to learn more of God’s plan
- to learn more of God’s way
- to learn more of God’s love
- to learn more of God’s faith and hope for us

“...[that] you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height... [of the very purpose of God, which is revealed by God with His Spirit as we’re strengthened with might, with the very power of God] ...and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge... [You cannot know the love of Christ when compared to knowledge.] ...so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (vs 18-19). That’s a tremendous and wonderful thing to contemplate and understand. And that’s why I say that, in part, to pick up your feeble hands, and strengthen the feeble knees, and lift up your heart and mind and attitude, because God still loves you in spite of everything.

Verse 20: “Now, to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, To Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen.” (vs 20-21).

***So remember, when all else fails, God loves you!***

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

Scripture References:

- 1) Matthew 24:4, 6-13
- 2) Isaiah 41:10-14
- 3) Psalm 56:1-9
- 4) Psalm 58:1-7
- 5) Psalm 62:1-7
- 6) Matthew 7:24-27
- 7) Psalm 62:6-9
- 8) Psalm 39:4-8
- 9) John 14:23-24
- 10) John 16:27, 32-33
- 11) 1 John 3:1-3
- 12) 1 John 4:19, 5-10, 16-18, 4
- 13) Ephesians 2:2-10
- 14) Romans 8:28-31
- 15) Romans 5:1-8
- 16) Genesis 6:5-6
- 17) 1 John 5:2-5
- 18) Revelation 12:11
- 19) Ephesians 3:4-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 10:37
- Hebrews 13
- Psalm 57
- 1 Corinthians 10:4

- Revelation 12:15
- Philippians 3
- Colossians 1
- Revelation 12:10
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