

Passover Preparation V

Fred R. Coulter—March 22, 2003

We are covering the words of the New Covenant as found in John 14, 15, 16, and 17. You can also look at this as a letter from Christ. You can put it another way: this is a love letter from Christ, as well as instructions to us on how we are to live, because once we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, then we are to develop through prayer, study, and a direct living relationship with God. We have seen that this is hope and love.

He tells you to, John 15:9: "...live in My love. If you keep My commandments you shall live [abide and remain] in My love..." (vs 9-10) That's something you have to do. And you have to work at it. Love is not natural to the carnal mind. That's why the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, people can have a carnal love of family, of nation and so forth, but not the kind of spiritual love that God wants us to have; and we're to live in that love. What comes naturally, and the love that comes from the world then is all the things that come out of human nature. It talks about the works of the flesh, which are the things then we are to overcome in this living relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Galatians 5:19 "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the* Kingdom of God" (vs 19-21).

We need to understand that we cannot produce—in our lives without the Spirit of God, and without a direct living relationship—the love of God, unless we are constantly going to God, constantly yielding to Him, constantly repenting and changing and growing.

Verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love..." That can only come from God. That true love—love of the Father and love of each other—can only come from God.

1. **Love toward God.** You love Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being.
2. **Love toward the brethren,** that you are to love them as Christ has loved them—which requires an awful lot of forbearance.

From the different backgrounds, and the fact that we are the weak of the world, it is difficult for us to

have love—period—let alone love each other. Because in the world it is more natural to judge, to criticize, and all these things; as Jesus said, 'Judge not, lest you be judged. For with what judgment you judge you're going to be judged.' That is all carnality. God wants us to have forbearance. If God has called someone with a problem, does God know it? *Of course!* How are we to handle it? *We are to have forbearance!*

Verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering... [That's part of forbearance. We are to forebear each other in love.] ...kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law. But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts" (vs 22-24). That's a daily thing we need to do. Human nature is going to be there, and it's going to rear its ugly head and so forth, and it's going to keep coming. But we need to keep going to God in repentance and yieldedness to God: acknowledge our faults and our mistakes, and confess to God. He forgives them, and we need to do likewise with each other.

Verse 25: "If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit." That's why the relationship with God cannot be just study and prayer, but *it has to be living*. In the living comes the difficulty, the mental difficulties, because we all live between our ears in growing and overcoming, in 'bringing every thought into captivity to Christ,' and having 'the Word of God written in our hearts and our minds.'

John 15:17: "These things I command you, that you love one another." That's a command! If you think the Sabbath is a command, try this one. This is greater—is it not? If you think we ought to keep the Holy Days, this is greater—isn't it? *Yes!*

So, what do we need to do when we see someone who is a brother or sister in Christ that has a fault or a problem? Let's look at that. Here's what we are to do. Sometimes it will take a lot of prayer. Sometimes it will take quite a while to do it; things are not accomplished overnight. Everyone that God has called is a *work in progress*, in varying degrees or other. But God still loves us, because Jesus said that He loves us, and He said the Father loves us, and so that is where we retain our faith and our hope and our love, because it comes from God and is of God, and that's the whole purpose of our covenant, which the Passover pictures. This is why He gave these words on the Passover night:

1-John 5:16: “If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death...” That’s anything but the unpardonable sin.

- What are you to do?
- Judge them?
- Criticize them?
- Talk behind their back?
- Talk to each other about it?
- Complain about it?
- Criticize it?
- What are you to do?

“...He shall ask...” (v 16). That means he shall pray for the individual. Perhaps not even let the person know that you’re praying for them. If they come to you and say, ‘Hey, I’ve got this problem, will you pray for me?’ *Well by all means do so!* It’s the hardest thing in the world to admit problems, to admit difficulties. We’ll see what the unloving attitude really does.

“...And He [God] will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication to God.... [No, that’s the unpardonable sin.] ...All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death. We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him” (vs 16-18).

We will talk about *the wicked one* here in a little bit and how that affects us. It means the wicked one cannot take you away from God. It doesn’t mean that there will not be problems and difficulties coming from Satan’s side, because there will. That is what we are to do.

- Why is self-righteousness so hard to see?
- Why is it so destructive to love?
- *It is destructive to love!*

Luke 18:11: “The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men... [First of all, there’s the comparison: ‘I’m better than the other person,’ look down on the other person.] ...—extortioners...” Of course, you shouldn’t do that. You can read the newspaper and condemn everyone in the world for all the things that they do—can’t you? *Sure you can!*

“...unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector” (v 11). There’s a comparison. It is a self-righteous thing in criticizing, condemning, and putting down, because that’s what this is. Christ wants us to overcome that. That’s why **He has commanded us to love one another**. That’s very profound and important. Also He makes it very clear that in loving you are also to forgive, because **He makes forgiveness of your sin contingent upon**

your forgiving others their sins! That’s very important, and it’s easy to forget.

Here is this Pharisee. He pretty well figures that he’s doing right. Notice in comparing himself, he says: “...I fast twice in the week... [That’s a great religious sacrifice— isn’t it?] ...and I give a tithe of everything that I gain.” (vs 11-12). What is so important here is that you can be right without love, and that is self-righteous hate when you come to understand that. The publican, obviously to be condemned, and even he himself knew it. What this tells you is this: ***you can never read another person’s mind***. That is where we do get into trouble and difficulties— isn’t it? *Yes, we do!*

Verse 13: “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled... [we could just put in there, ‘over the criticized dead bodies of others’] ...and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted” (vs 13-14).

In our direct living relationship with God, love ought to bring us humility and loving each other rather than condemnation and all the other things that come out of human nature. That is a command! So, as we come in preparing for the Passover we need to ask ourselves: **Are we loving each other?**

John 15:18: “**If** the world hates you... [and the world will; you can’t please the world] ...you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own....” (vs 18-19). That’s why we’re not to be part of the world. That’s why it’s an impossibility, as we see with the experience of several of the churches in Rev. 2 and 3, it’s an impossibility to marry Satan’s way to God’s way in the case of Pergamos and eating things sacrificed to idols, and the Nicolaitans. Also, it’s impossible to have one foot in the world as the Laodiceans do and one foot in the Church—we need to understand that. The world, when it gets down to it, *will hate us!*

Verse 19: “If you were of the world, the world would love its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this.” Right now we live in a time when it’s not as manifest it will be. But you can be guaranteed that it will be. The apostles and disciples lived it immediately— didn’t they? *Yes, they did!*

Verse 20: “Remember the word that I spoke to you: a servant is not greater than his master.... [He said that ‘a servant is not greater than his master,

neither a messenger greater than he who sent him.'] ...**If** they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also...." That will happen. Now on the other hand, we cannot go out and be carnally instigating this kind of thing because He also said we need to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves.'—that's true. But the persecution will come.

Here's the other side of the coin: "...**If** they kept My word, they will keep your *word* also" (v 20). In talking to the apostles, meaning *what you would be teaching and preaching*. We now have that in the Scriptures so we know what we are doing.

Verse 21: "But they will do all these things to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me. **If** I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have nothing to cover their sin" (vs 21-22). In other words, they have no excuse because Christ came, and particularly to that generation, and in particular to those that were promised to receive Christ first. Then they have no excuse for what they did. Likewise with us, once we have Christ our *cover* is with Christ. We do have that.

Verse 23: "The one who hates Me hates My Father also... [because you can't have one without the other] ...If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done..." (vs 23-24). John said at the very last that if everything that Jesus ever did were written in books, he said, 'I suppose that even the whole world couldn't contain it.'

"...they would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this has happened so that the saying might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause'" (vs 24-25). What we find here is hatred of the world, and hatred is against God, because you cannot love God and hate your brother. You are to grow in faith and hope and in love. He makes it very clear here.

Now here is how it's to be done, v 26: "But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the Truth... [that's what we will have when we receive God's Spirit] ...which proceeds from the Father..." I've already covered concerning the facets of the Holy Spirit in previous sermons leading up to this. But this means that you have direct connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above {see sermon series on *Hebrews*}.

"...that one shall bear witness of Me. Then you shall also bear witness, because you have been with Me from *the beginning*" (vs 26-27). What did they do? *They went out and they preached, and their writings were preserved!* They are bearing witness according to what Jesus said there, 'unto the ends of

the earth,' still to this day. Isn't that an amazing thing? *That's why we have the Word of God!*

Here we're going to find part of this continues on hope, but you could put there, 'in the midst of trouble.' John 16:1 "I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended.... [it's going to get rough]. ...They shall cast you out of the synagogues; furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you will think that he is rendering service to God" (vs 1-2).

The highest *mass* in the Roman Catholic Church is the Inquisition Mass and the death of heretics, thinking they're doing service to God. When Saul was persecuting the Church, did he think he was doing service to God? *Yes!* When he killed them, did he think he was doing service to God? *Yes!* There is a prophecy of this in Isa. 66:5. Let's see how that happens. It will even happen to those **who claim to serve God; they will do it to you because they do not know God**. Either that or they have been so compromised with the Truth that they count you as *an enemy*.

Isaiah 66:5: "Hear the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word, 'Your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My name's sake, said, "Let the LORD be glorified." But He will appear to your joy and they will be ashamed.'" It shows that not only is the world going to hate you, but those who claim they know God are going to go even further. Here you have the viciousness of religious persecution unto death.

John 16:3: "And they shall do these things to you because they do not know the Father, nor Me. But I have told you these things so that when the time comes, you may remember that I said *them* to you. However, I did not say these things to you at *the beginning* because I was with you.... [the whole thing is going to change] ...But now I am going to Him Who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are you going?' But because I have spoken these things to you, grief has filled your hearts. But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away; because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you" (vs 3-7). This is the operation of the Holy Spirit. It does it in two ways:

1. to the world
2. to the Church

Verse 8 is a key: "And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning **sin, and righteousness, and judgment**... [the three phases to this] ...**Concerning sin**, because they do not believe in Me... [That's quite astounding — isn't it? That if you don't believe in Christ *that is a sin* — isn't it? Never thought of it that way, but it is.]

...Concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me..." (vs 8-10). As we have covered and will cover on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we receive the blessing of this righteousness, which is right-standing with God the Father in heaven above. Not just law-keeping in the world, or the laws of the world, but this is the righteousness of God, and the Holy Spirit has to bring that conviction.

Verse 11: "...And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged." We know that he will be removed.

Now let's see the final act of this judgment coming. We will see that Satan is there to try and bother us and cause us difficulties and so forth. What we need to realize is *we are not of the world!* We overcome the world and overcome Satan the devil, even in spite of his accusations against us. Here's the final act of Satan the devil: He'll do the things of the Great Tribulation, but this is the final act as far as the final judgment coming upon him:

Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels [demons] were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down...' (vs 9-10). Remember, we said that the wicked one *doesn't touch you*. Doesn't say he can't bother you. But he can't take you away from God, even though he accuses you.

"...who accuses them day and night before our God. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb... [through repentance and justification and righteousness that comes from God] ...and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death (vs 10-11). That ties right in with what Jesus was saying here on the Passover night.

The 'ruler of this world' has been judged. Satan was defeated when he tempted Christ, as we see in Matt. 4 and Luke 4, overcame him completely. He has been judged, and his judgment is going to be finished when Christ returns.

Now let's come back to John 16:12: "I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, **it will lead you into all Truth...**" (vs 12-13). What do we have revealed here in these chapters?

- John 14:6—Christ is the Way, the Life, and the Truth—**He is the Truth!**

- John 12:13—"...even the Spirit of Truth..."
- John 17:17—"...Your Word is the Truth."

Combine all of these things together and this gives you the understanding of:

- the Word of God
- the power of God
- your relationship with God
 - ✓ you can believe God
 - ✓ you can trust God
 - ✓ you can hope in His promises continuously

"...will lead you into all the Truth..." Not only is it to just lead the apostles, but it is to lead us and all things in our lives—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* It is a proof, an internal proof, having the Spirit of God, as the Spirit of God leads you.

That doesn't mean you're not going to make mistakes. That doesn't mean that your human nature is not going to rise up against you from time-to-time, which is all part of overcoming.

Romans 8:14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God." Not only will the Spirit lead you into all Truth, ***it will lead you into all the Truth that is necessary for you to be saved and to enter into the Kingdom of God.*** It led the apostles into the Truth that needed to be preached and taught and written. It is a fantastic thing to be able to have the Spirit of God.

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [because that's the spirit of the world: to bind you in fear, bind you in superstition, hatred, malice, wickedness, all the things of the fruit of the flesh.] (But contrariwise): ...but **you have received the Spirit of sonship...**" (vs 14-15) That is the whole goal and key that we need to keep our mind focused on. If we have received the Holy Spirit and are led by the Holy Spirit, we are the begotten sons of God. In this life there can be absolutely nothing greater than that.

What Paul brings out here in the rest of the chapter is to *never let that get out of your thoughts*. Let that:

- inspire you
- give you faith
- give you hope
- give you understanding
- give you endurance in trial

—if you are led of the Holy Spirit; because you are. and have received the Spirit of sonship and are the son of God. So, we have the Spirit of Truth, the Word is Truth, and Christ is Truth. He sends the Holy Spirit:

John 16:13: "...because it shall not speak from itself... [We know it's the power of God, so

whatever it does is the power of God; it's going to convey to you what God wants done.] ...but whatever it shall hear, shall it speak.... [just like sound going out, that's what it is] ...And it shall disclose to you the things to come..... [Which it did, and in particularly concerning the Apostle John with the book of Revelation.] ...That one shall glorify Me, because it shall disclose to you *the things* that it receives from Me" (vs 13-14). This is why a continuous, constant, living relationship with God and the covenant that we are in—which we renew every Passover—is so very important.

Verse 15: "Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you." That's necessary, because Christ would not be there any longer. He begins to explain that to them, and He says:

Verse 16: "'A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me, because I am going to the Father.' Then *some* of His disciples said to one another, 'What is this that He is saying to us, "A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me," and, "because I am going to the Father"?' Therefore they said, 'What is this that He is saying, the "little *while*"? We do not understand what He is saying.' Then Jesus, knowing that they desired to ask Him, said to them, 'Why are you inquiring among one another about this that I said, "A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again A little *while*, and you shall see Me"?''" (vs 16-19). They didn't understand about the resurrection that was going to come.

Verse 20: "'Truly, truly I tell you, you shall weep and lament... [when He's crucified and died] ...but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be grieved, but your grief shall be turned into joy." I imagine so. because they were to be the witnesses of the resurrection that He did, in fact, rise from the dead. Then He explains this joy:

Verse 21: "A woman when she is giving birth has grief, because her time *of travail* has come; but after she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world. And likewise, you indeed have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and no one shall take your joy from you" (vs 21-22).

Let's look at what happened here. Remember, after Jesus was crucified they were hiding for fear of the Jews. They didn't know what to do. The only one who truly believed, when he saw the things at the tomb that Jesus had been raised from the dead, was John. The others didn't. Even

Mary Magdalene said, when she saw Jesus and thought He was the gardener, said, 'Where have you taken His body that we may get it?' Never in the history of the world has anyone been resurrected from the dead to eternal life, except Christ.

He previewed some of this by resurrecting and raising from the dead the son of a widow, and a daughter of a leader of the synagogue, and Lazarus. Then after His crucifixion and resurrection then many who recently had died rose out of their graves and went into the city. None of them received eternal life; they were just resurrected back to a physical life. But Jesus was raised *to eternal life*. He could then, as one born of the Spirit, go wherever He desired. He could walk through walls, He could walk through doors, and all of that sort of thing.

Luke 24:36: "Now as they were telling these things... [that is, the two disciples that came back and said, 'We've seen the Lord'] ...Jesus Himself stood in their midst..." 'Now yet in a little while you shall not see Me, and yet in a little while you shall see Me.' Here it is fulfilled right here. He died on the Passover Day, was buried just right at sunset, and put in the tomb. He was in the tomb three days and three nights, resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, and ascended into heaven to be received of the Father. Then at the end of that Sabbath Day He came and appeared to the disciples who were assembled for fear the Jews. So, here is the 'little while' that they would see him.

"... and said to them, 'Peace *be* to you.' But they were terrified and filled with fear, thinking *that* they beheld a spirit [a demon] ...Then He said to them, 'Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I. Touch Me and see *for yourselves*; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having'" (vs 36-39).

So they did. Because John said, 'That which was from the beginning, that which we have seen, that which we have handled.' So John and the apostles did handle Him.

"...for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.' And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy..." (vs 30-41)

Now, didn't Jesus say, "You're going to grieve, but you'll see Me again and your joy shall be full"? There He fulfilled it right there.

Verse 41: "But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy... [I guess so] ...He said to them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?'.... [or that is, any food to eat] ...Then they

gave Him part of a broiled fish and a *piece* of honeycomb. And He took these *and* ate in their presence. And He said to them, ‘These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me. in **the Law** of Moses and in **the Prophets** and in **the Psalms** must be fulfilled’” (vs 41-44). That shows the three divisions of the Old Testament.

I’m going to mention here that there is a big move to reinsert the Apocrypha books back into the Bible. As a matter fact, most of those that the American Bible Society are printing out now have the Apocrypha put back into it. So, what you really are getting is now a Catholic Bible without the name ‘Catholic’ on it. That is the Ecumenical Bible. But Jesus made it very clear that it was the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

Now v 45: “Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.” That is the key thing of the working of the Holy Spirit, to open your mind to understand. And since Christ is directing it, when you read and study the Bible and you understand it, He is opening your mind. As we read before, it is the Father Who is teaching you. So, these are very profound things, brethren, just tremendous.

Verse 46: “And said to them, “According as it is written, it was necessary... [obligatory] ...for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day.... [Why not the second day? Why not the first day? You can read in *The Christian Passover* book why.] ...And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.... [That’s what it’s all about, **repentance and remission of sin**, and your relationship with God—direct relationship. That’s what it’s all about.] ...For you are witnesses of these things” (vs 46-48).

In 1-Corinthians 15:3 we find out that more than just the apostles saw Christ. As a matter fact, it was really quite a contingent of people. “For in the first place, I delivered to you what I also had received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures... [both Old and New Testament at this point] ...and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures; And that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve” (vs 3-5). Remember, He said, ‘Go into Galilee and meet Me there on the mountain that I appointed you.’

Verse 6: “Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time... [That was an astonishing meeting. This is the only place that we have it recorded that that meeting took place.] ...of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen sleep. Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles... [all the apostles, again] ...and

last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage [or due season]” (vs 6-8).

Now let’s come to Acts 1, and let’s see not only this private meeting that He had with the apostles, and the public meeting He had with the five hundred, but He did other things, too.

(go to the next track)

This then fits right in with what we’re talking about, Acts 1:1: “The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach, Until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; To whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days...” (vs 1-3). That’s why their joy remained because Christ showed Himself for 40 days, did many things; gave them extra instructions—didn’t He?

Because it said: “...and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God... [He gave them a lot of instruction during that 40 days.] ...And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to ‘await the promise of the Father, which,’ *He said*, ‘you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.’ So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?’” (vs 3-6). That’s what everyone has wanted to know from that time until this.

Verse 7: “And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority.’” That’s not the important thing. Prophecy is always interesting. Prophecy is always titillating; and especially when you can see some of it fulfilled before your very eyes, which they did with Christ.

Here’s the important thing, v 8: “But you yourselves shall receive **power**... [‘*dunamis*’—*energetic power*] ...when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth.” Obviously, the apostles didn’t get there—did they? *No!* That’s why we have the written Word. The written Word has gotten there.

Now then, here was their last great experience before Pentecost, v 9: “And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men... [who were angels] ...in white apparel suddenly stood by them, Who also said, ‘You men of Galilee, why do you

stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven” (vs 9-11).

The message was, ‘Go, get busy and do what He said.’ In other words, this was a graduation speech: ‘Now is the time.’ So, on Pentecost after they received the Holy Spirit, that was the time; and they did the preaching, and that’s why they had the joy. That’s why they had the conviction. That’s why they had the hope. That’s why they had the faith and the love of God. So they went through unique experience because they were apostles.

Notice that all the way through we’ve seen the promises that God has given concerning prayer. That’s why prayer is so profound and important. ***Prayer is, with the leading of the Holy Spirit, that direct link between you and God the Father and Jesus Christ.*** Now granted, it’s easy to get discouraged; granted, it’s easy to let human nature come along and drag you down, and so forth. But I want to emphasize how important that it is. And when you pray you need to understand the significance of it.

John 16:23: “And in that day... [the day that He ascended to heaven that we just read of] ...you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever **you shall ask the Father in My name**, He will give you.” All you have to do is go through and read the first part of Acts and see what they did. Absolutely fantastic! But here is also a promise given to us. Whatever we ask, of course, *it has to be according to the will of God*, and it has to be *upon our repentance, and forgiveness of God to us*, and us to others. All of those things play into it. So, this is an over-all blanket statement where the other factors come into it.

“...Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you.” Who answers prayer? The Father does. Isn’t that amazing? That’s something! That’s why prayer is so significant.

Verse 24: “Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” That’s the way God wants it to be. Overcoming human nature really is a joyful thing, though the struggle is difficult. That’s why He brought out here about the woman having a child. There’s pain and there’s grief. But once you get through the trial, and once you get through the difficulty, and once you see the love of God, and everyone’s going to go through that.

I guarantee that one thing that all Christians are going to do, they are going to come to the very bottom of the valley of the pit of despair. God will

let you go there so that you can look up to Him and realize there’s no way out but His. That’s what God wants you to understand—‘that your joy may be full.’ So remember, ***the Father is directly involved in your life, and you are a brother and a friend of Christ!*** That’s all a part of the words of the covenant.

Verse 25: “These things I have spoken to you in allegories; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in allegories, but I will plainly disclose to you *the things* of the Father. In that day, you shall **ask in My name**... [He says it twice—you ask in His name] ...and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (vs 25-27).

That’s quite contrary to the Catholic doctrine—isn’t it? That supposedly the saints intercede, which they don’t, because they are dead and buried. Christ does intercede for us as our High Priest, but supposedly Mary makes intercession for us because she supposedly knows Jesus better than we do. So therefore, she can have more influence with her son than your prayers. All of that is a bunch of gobbledygook nonsense and contrary to the Word of God. Jesus said you pray to the Father ***in His name***, and the Father Himself loves you, and He’s going to answer that prayer. However He does it, He will do it.

Verse 27: “For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

Now let’s see another glimpse of that relationship and how we need to really keep that in the forefront of our minds always. Living in the world the way that it is, you have got to have something so firm in your mind with it there by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that nothing is going to move you from God. And this is it:

1-John 3:1: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!” When we, as it were, were led of the devil and out in the—right? *Yes! Now we’re called the sons of God.* It’s very profound here; the Greek word for *sons* is ‘teknon’—meaning *own children*. Now granted, Jesus Christ was the only begotten, unique Son of God, born of the flesh and resurrected from the dead. But we are also the children of God *by begetting* for the Family of God. That’s what God wants us to really grasp and understand. Never let that leave your mind and thought, *ever!* And especially when you get to the bottom of the ‘valley of the shadow of death,’ remember that.

“...the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us...” That means it cannot understand us:

- You’re a Christian? *Yes!*
- You go to church on Sabbath? *Yes!*
- Are you a Jew? *No!*
- Why don’t you keep Christmas? *Because it’s pagan!*
- How could that be?
- You mean you don’t keep Christmas or Easter? *No! I keep Passover and the Holy Days!*
- You’ve got to be a Jew. *No, I’m not a Jew!*
 - ✓ They don’t know us!
 - ✓ They don’t know what motivates us.
 - ✓ They don’t understand these things

—and that’s why eventually the world is going to hate us! You can be guaranteed that the laws are already on the books under the Patriot Act I and II, to where all they have to do is just redefine who the enemy and terrorist is. You wait and see, lo and behold, sooner or later we’ll be entered in on the list. You can be guaranteed that. That’s why you’ve got to keep this in mind.

Verse 2: “Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be...” Just like when a woman is carrying a child, you don’t know who it’s going to look like. Even though you can do one of those ultrasounds and tell whether it’s a boy or girl, you still don’t know what it’s going to look like.

Same way with us today; having the Spirit of God and growing and overcoming and having the physical body that we have, we still don’t know what we’re going to look like until the resurrection.

- What is it going to be like to be a spirit being?
- What is it going to be like to get rid of all the weaknesses of the physical body and the physical flesh?
- What is it going to be like to be resurrected as a spirit being, though you died in the ignominy of physical death?
- It’s going to be something!

“...it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know... [we can count on this] ...that when He is manifested... [resurrected] ...we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is”(v 2). And that’s the whole purpose that God wants us to really keep right there in the forefront of our brain, and let the Holy Spirit lead us in that continuously. That’s why He is our Father, and He gives us direct access to Him. That’s why Paul said

we cry, ‘Abba, Father’—correct? *Yes!*

Now let’s come back to John 16:28: “‘I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father.’ Then His disciples said to Him, ‘Behold, now You are speaking plainly and are not speaking in an allegory.... [We can understand this. That’s different from, ‘a little while.’] ...Now we know that You understand all things, and do not need to have someone ask You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Do you now believe?’” (vs 28-31).

That’s a good question—isn’t it? Remember, Thomas said, ‘I’ll believe it when I see His hands and His feet and His side.’ So, eight days later when Jesus appeared He said, ‘Thomas, come here. Thomas says, ‘Oh, my Lord, my God!’ “...‘**Do you now believe?**’” The truth is, until Christ was resurrected their belief was not complete. And He explains that:

Verse 32: “Listen, the time is coming, and has already come that you shall be scattered each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone... [and even Peter denied Him three times] ...and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace...” (vs 32-33).

You are not going to have peace any other way. You are never going to have peace without Christ. You are never going to have peace until you make peace with God through repentance, and prayer, and study, and yieldedness to God. But in Christ you may have peace.

“...In the world you shall have tribulation... [that is true; and they did] ...But be courageous! I have overcome the world” (v 33).

We do have tribulations in the world. And I’ll tell you what, the difficulties and problems we’re going through now I am sure are not to be compared to what they’re going to be in the future. I mean, as we’re going through this on this Sabbath right now the American forces are in Iraq along with some other contingencies of other nations with them, and look at what they are going through. You look at how the world is hating us more and more. You know the time is coming when they are going to be itching to carry out their plans to do to us the very same thing.

- And **we** will be the *cause* of it because **we** will not accept the beast and the false prophet.
- And **we** will not accept the false religions of this world.
- And **we** will not take the mark of the beast.

- And *we* will not submit to these things.

If you think you have difficulties now, stick around! These may be only kind of strengthening us and building us up for the things to come.

On the other hand, don't go out and ask for it. I walked into a local supermarket here, and as I walked in, here is all this display of all the Easter things: little Easter bunnies, little baskets, and all this sort of thing. My human nature said: Boy, that would be so good to just get up there and just throw them all off, and break them to pieces and tell the world what an absolute deception this is.

Well, needless to say, I didn't do it because I'm here and not in jail. But when it comes time for that it will happen. How far down the road it will be, we don't know. But one thing for sure, they will have the ability to know where everybody is at all times—period! You can see that coming. It's going to be one of those things. There is no escaping the future when it comes to you. It will happen! Just look at the trials and tribulations you're going through now as very minuscule. ***He has overcome the world, and through Christ we can overcome the world!***

John 17 reflects not only faith and hope, but love; very profound love, because ***this is Jesus' personal prayer for us!*** Did you realize that? It's Jesus' personal prayer for us. This truly is the Lord's prayer, because this is the prayer that He prayed. The 'Lord's Prayer,' so called, in Matt. 6, is a sample given by Jesus on how we need to structure our prayers. That was not His prayer. This is His prayer. He was out in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed this prayer.

Luke 22:39: "Then He left *the house and* went, as He was accustomed to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He arrived at the place... [a particular place in the Garden of Gethsemane] ...He said to them, 'Pray *that you* do not enter into temptation.' And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed, Saying, 'Father, if You are willing to take away this cup from Me—nevertheless, not My will, but Your *will* be done'" (vs 39-42). This is a perfect example of how we need to pray. It was God's will that He go through that. He's just reaffirming it.

Verse 43: "Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (vs 43-44). When we read this prayer in John 17, this is part of what He went through.

Now let's see the true Lord's prayer. This is what the Lord prayed. It's interesting that John was

inspired to write this. No one else wrote this prayer, not even part of this prayer; only John, the disciple whom Jesus loved.

John 17:1: "Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come... [it's here] ...glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You; since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send" (vs 1-3). That's the whole purpose of it, to know God and at the resurrection to see Him face-to-face. That's profound!

Verse 4: "I have glorified You on the earth.... [through the whole ministry, through His life, through never sinning, through overcoming the world, calling the apostles, everything that He did.] ...I have finished the work that You gave Me to do" Yet, He still had one part of the work that He still needed to finish—right? We're going to see that there are two finishes:

1. John 19:30, the next to last thing that He said: "And so, when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, 'It is finished.' And bowing His head, He yielded up *His* spirit" When it says in John 17 that He finish the work that He gave Him to do, He was also including the coming crucifixion, beginning with the trial that He was soon to have when He was arrested.

Now let's look at the other 'finished.' There are two phases to finishing the work:

- the work to provide a Redeemer, and the way of salvation;
 - and the other one to finish the whole plan of God.
2. Revelation 21:5, "And He Who sits on the throne said... [that's the Father] ...'Behold, I make all things new.' Then He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' And He said to me, '**It is done**.... [Or that is, it's finished. In the Greek it's the same]. ...I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (vs 5-7).

So we're looking for that second finishing line—aren't we?

Through the crucifixion redemption and salvation was opened, and *when it's all done*. It's

finished! When that is finished, then the whole plan of God going out to all eternity goes forward from there. That's going to be very exciting—isn't it? Have you ever thought about traveling out in the universe?

John 17:5: "And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You **before the world existed**. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours... [we all belong to the Father] ...and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word" (vs 5-6). All the words of Jesus were the words of the Father—right? *Yes!*

Verse 7: "Now, they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me" (vs 7-8). That's the whole process of faith that we are to come to also.

Verse 9: "I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. All Mine are Yours, and all Yours *are* Mine; and I have been glorified in them. 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*" (vs 9-11).

This is the whole purpose of God. And notice what Jesus kept His mind on when He was facing the crucifixion. He is keeping His mind on the whole purpose. He was keeping His mind on finishing the work that the Father had given Him to do. The ultimate purpose, that "...they may be one..." as He and the Father were one. That's the whole prayer.

That's the whole purpose of why we are here; the whole purpose and reason why we take the Passover and renew the covenant, and go through the things that we do.

Verse 12: "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.... [internal joy] ...I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [that's not going to happen] ...but that You would keep them from the evil one" (vs 12-15). The

promise given there—though Satan accuses us day and night—he can't take us away from God.

Verse 16: "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 16-17). That's what we are to have written in our hearts and in our minds:

- Christ in us, Who *was* the Truth;
- the Holy Spirit *in* us, which *is* the Spirit of Truth
- the Word of God *in* us, Who *is* the Truth
 - ✓ that sanctifies us
 - ✓ that sets us apart
 - ✓ that makes us Holy before God

Verse 18: "Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be **sanctified in Your Truth**" (vs 18-19). There it is again. Have you ever thought about the fact that you are *Holy*, brethren? What makes you *Holy*? *Having God's Spirit means you've been sanctified, and sanctified by the Word of God and in the Truth of the Father!*

Here is a prayer directly for us, v 20: "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word." Preaching of the Gospel going out. This is always continuously being fulfilled in our lives. Never think that God is against you.

- God is *for* you!
- God *wants* you!
- God *loves* you!
- God *has called* you to eternal life!
- He wants you to overcome!
- He wants you to put away the deeds of the flesh!
- He wants you to grow in grace and knowledge!
- He wants you to be in the resurrection.

That's what this prayer is all about. And again, the final goal: vs 21-24 tie directly in with the fulfillment of Rev. 21 and 22.

Here's the prayer for us, all that are Christ's, v 21: "That they all... [not excluding anyone] ...may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one" (vs 21-22). *That's the ultimate goal!*

See sermon series: *Why God Hates Religion*, God truly does hate religion, because religion places men in a position of God over people and cuts them off from this knowledge in relationship with God.

Verse 23: “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one...” That’s why we are a work in progress. We are to be perfected.

1-John 2:5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [That’s how we are to be perfected. It is the love of God that does that, and it’s through the Spirit of God that this is accomplished.] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him.” That goes back as a direct part of what we have just read in John 17.

Here is how we are perfected, 1-John 4:10: “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. Beloved, if God so loved us... [and the Father says directly He loves you] ...we also are duty-bound to love one another.... [There again, repeating the very words of Christ, right?] ...No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us.... [a process] ...By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us” (vs 10-13). That’s a tremendous thing, brethren!

Verse 16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love... [That’s what the whole thing concerning the Passover and renewing of the New Covenant is all about.] ...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... [There are a lot of rough edges to knock off—aren’t there?] ...so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment 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*. We love Him because He loved us first” (vs 16-19). That’s all part of Christ prayer.

John 17:23: “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them” (vs 23-26).

Those are the words of the New Covenant. It is a covenant, and actually when you go back and you review each of the chapters here you will see that in these four chapters, John 14-17, it’s also an encapsulation of *our life and relationship with Christ*, the things that we will face and be confronted with, the difficulties and problems that we will have in the world, and how the ultimate goal is to be in the Family of God as a son of God, and that’s what the Passover is all about.

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

Scripture References:

- 1) John 15:9-10
- 2) Galatians 5:19-25
- 3) John 15:17
- 4) I John 5:16-18
- 5) Luke 18:11-14
- 6) John 15:18-27
- 7) John 16:1-2
- 8) Isaiah 66:5
- 9) John 16:3-11
- 10) Revelation 12:9-11
- 11) John 16:12-13
- 12) Romans 8:14-15
- 13) John 16:13-22
- 14) Luke 24:36-48
- 15) I Corinthians 15:3-8
- 16) Acts 1:1-11
- 17) John 16:23-27
- 18) I John 3:1-2
- 19) John 16:28-33
- 20) Luke 22:39-44
- 21) John 17:1-4
- 22) John 19:30
- 23) Revelation 21:5-7
- 24) John 17:5-23
- 25) I John 2:5
- 26) I John 4:10-13, 16-19
- 27) John 17:23-26

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2, 3
- Matthew 4
- Luke 4
- John 14:6
- Matthew 6
- Revelation 21; 22

Also referenced:

Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series:

- *Hebrews*
- *Why God Hates Religion*

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