

Rightly Divide the Word of Truth & Vital Topics

Fred R. Coulter—May 3, 2025

Greetings, everyone, welcome to Sabbath services. So here we are now at the end of the third week of the Count Toward Pentecost. You look at the world. I did today, earlier this morning. I checked out the Daystar and TBN and the Catholic Channel. The Catholic Channel was all ‘hail Mary, mother of God.’ Question for all Catholics:

- How much of the Bible do they really teach you?
- Show in the Scripture where we are to pray to Mary?
- How do you balance that out with that the only one who ascended to heaven was Jesus and no one else?
- How do you figure that an ecclesiastical synod of high-ranking Catholics in the 1800s could make the definite conclusion that Mary’s body was wholly assumed into heaven?
- Why do I bring that up?

Pretty soon I can say that this kind of speech will become hate speech. But why do people believe these things?

- there are a lot of Catholics out there who are considered good Catholics
- there are a lot of Protestants out there who are considered good Protestants

And maybe they’re more moral than the perverted sex community, but we need to understand the basic first fundamental. I have to bring this out many, many times because there are people who just don’t get it.

What is the basic fundamental first teaching of Jesus, even before He started preaching?

Matt. 4:4 and Luke 4:4. When He was tempted by Satan the devil to change the stones into bread, which He could have. He had been fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, so He was at His very weakest.

- What would you do at your very weakest?
- When you’re close to the point of expiring?
- Will you still hold to the Truth?
- Will you still believe in Jesus the way that He says?
- What was the first thing that Jesus said?

Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4: “Man...”—any man, woman, or child. Any age of life. Or at any

time in the history of mankind. Going clear back to Adam and Eve.

Why did they fail? *Because they didn’t believe what Jesus said later, which He told them in the Garden of Eden, which this summarizes. Everyone should memorize this, and understand that everything that we do must start with this:*

Matthew 4:4 (Luke 4:4): “...**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.**”

That’s what we need to always have in the forefront of our mind, and that we deal with Truth, and we don’t add our own ideas to it. Do any of our own ideas—even though they seem really, really good to us—be counted as the Word of God? **No!**

So what I saw on Daystar and TBN and on the Catholic channel was this.

2-Thess. 2—here’s what’s coming down the pike, and the leader in this is going to be Satan the devil. His apparatus is going to be, and it will be able to affect almost every man and woman in the world.

What do you think it will be? *Artificial intelligence!* And those who are locked into a total digital world. And believe everything that comes up on your smart-phone. *Be careful, it may not be what you think it is!* It says here about the coming lawlessness and when it takes place in the world:

2-Thessalonians 2:8: “And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming);

So, this tells us that this is going to be right up until the end. And one of the great deceptions coming at the end is a *temporary peace, and a building of the temple!* Everyone’s going to think everything’s fine. We’ll have the greatest leader the world has ever had. **And then all hell’s going to break loose!**

Verse 9: “*Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness...” (vs 9-10).

What does it say about Satan’s ability to deceive in the end-time? *He’ll deceive the whole world; **except those who have the Spirit of God!***

- it will look good
- it will be fine
- it will be wonderful

“...of unrighteousness in those who are perishing...”
(v 10).

Here’s the reason. Now this phrase applies not only to the end-time, but at any time, to anyone down through time in relationship to the Word of God:

- the Protestants have the Bible, but they only believe a few verses in it
- the Catholics claim that they’re the ‘real’ Church of God, but all they have is ***the pasted name of Jesus*** over all of their doctrines
- the Jews have rejected Jesus; as a consequence of that:
 - ✓ they keep the Passover on the wrong day
 - ✓ they don’t understand the meaning of Christ
 - ✓ they keep Pentecost on the wrong day

Now isn’t that interesting. The two important feasts that tell us about Jesus and the Church, ***because they reject Jesus!*** They can’t even understand what’s in ***their own law!*** Amazing! *Here’s why:*

“...because they did not receive the love of the Truth...” (v 10).

Now couple that with living by every Word of God, and every Word of God is true. Isn’t that it?

“...because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved” (v 10).

So what happens? *There’s a penalty that comes!*

A little later when we get into the Churches, partly today, and for next week, as well. We will see what happens ***when a little leaven leavens the whole lump in the Church!*** We’ve all lived through it, haven’t we?

Verse 11: “And for this cause God will send upon them **a powerful deception that will cause them to believe the lie.**” *What is the lie?*

1. that this man of sin, the son of perdition is ‘God in the flesh’
2. they will fight Christ

We’ll get into that a little later, *but let’s look at how we need to handle things today*, and how we need to:

- love the Truth
- believe the Truth
- live by the Truth
- defend the Truth

Even if you have to stand alone!

2-Timothy 3:13: **“But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse...”**

When I was watching Daystar and TBN this morning, that’s what I thought! They are so far removed from the Truth of God and Christ that it’s incredible!

“...deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*... [in the vanity of their own mind] ...But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus” (vs 14-15).

Now that’s one verse that the Protestants need to read, because Paul is telling Timothy that through Christ you can have salvation, even through the Old Testament. Now then. Jesus came and expanded that:

Verse 16 is the fundamental anchor on everything that we do, and there’s a reason I’m bringing this out. We’re going to cover what we’ve covered here recently. But there’s still some people who do not understand.

Verse 16: “All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* **profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness** so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17).

Now that’s talking directly to elders. But also to everyone who has the Word of God, who has the Spirit of God so they can grow in grace and knowledge. Today we have the whole Word of God available to us. That’s a great and marvelous blessing.

2-Tim 2:15—Here’s what we are to do; this is important. Note what Jesus said here:

John 6:63: “It is the Spirit that gives Life; **the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life.**”

When we use our carnal minds to interpret the Word of God and do not use the Truth of God to let Scripture interpret Scripture, ***it profits nothing!*** But it can open the door for more deception because of what principle? ***A little leaven leavens the whole lump!*** That always happens.

1-Timothy 2:15: “Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly... [correctly Truth to Truth] ...dividing the Word of the Truth.”

Verse 16 becomes very important. I couldn't help but think of that when I was watching Day Star and TBN in the Catholic Channel this morning, for just a little bit. Right here:

Verse 16: “But **avoid profane and vain babblings, because they will only give rise to more ungodliness.**”

Now that's important to understand, and this is not picking on any one individual. But, if a minister does that, and he doesn't correct it, and it doesn't matter where the correction comes from.

If he can correct himself, that's good! *That's Spirit-led self-control.* If someone says, 'Hey, you're wrong, and you're wrong. Doesn't matter who it comes from, Truth is Truth!

What are ministers to do? *They're not to be overlords!* They are ***not to rule in the lives*** of the brethren.

- our job is to understand the Word of God
- faithfully teach the Word of God
- help all the brethren
 - ✓ to grow in grace and knowledge
 - ✓ to develop the relationship with God individually

When we come together, all together, that's fine and well and good!

Sidebar: Recently I got a real nice e-mail from one of our elders. He was kind enough to remind me: 'Fred, remember when you said this.' And he was right. So, I sent him back an e-mail and I said, 'Thank you for your admonition, because Truth is always Truth! ***No one's above the Truth! No one can invent their own Truth!***

Verse 17: “And their words will eat away at the body like gangrene; of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus, who have gone astray from the Truth, claiming that the resurrection has already taken place, and are destroying the faith of some. Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands firm... [that's His Word] ...having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and, 'Let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness'” (vs 17-19).

Now those are very clear instructions. On how we're to use the Word of God. Is that not true? *Yes it is!*

Let's go to Isa. 28 for just a minute, because God has designed the Bible this way so that those who rightly divide the Word of God will understand it. And those who don't rightly divide the Word of

God, or have their own ideas, will never come to the Truth. They might come to part of the Truth.

I'll give you an example: Every single Catholic priest and Protestant minister know which day is the Sabbath in the Bible. 'BUT, we keep Sunday.' Same way with all the holidays. 'Oh we know they're pagan, *BUT...*' That's what they do with everything. What does that do? ***They close their eyes to the Truth,*** as Jesus said. That's ***the first step in blinding!***

- the ***next step in blinding*** is: You ***don't believe*** the Word of God
- the ***next step in blinding*** is Satan comes and deceives you
- the ***final blinding is God blinds you***

Because you come to the point that:

- you will not hear
- you will not see
- you will not obey

That's the state of Christianity today in the world! An amazing thing, all based upon:

Isaiah 28:7: “But they also stagger through wine...”

What does it say about Babylon the Great in Rev. 17? *All nations have drunk of the wine of her fornication.*

“...and reel through strong drink. The priest and the prophet stagger through drink; they are confused by wine; they reel through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble *in judgment*” (v 7).

If that doesn't describe what's going on in the so-called Christian world today! I mean, to say nothing of:

- the Muslims, who want to destroy everybody but themselves
- the Buddhists, who believe in all kinds of nonsense
- Hinduism

I mean, think about how the world really is!

So then the question is. With this kind of environment:

Verse 9: “Whom shall He teach knowledge?... [Is there anyone who wants the Word of God?] ...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts, for precept ***must be upon precept...***”

We have two things here. You're beyond the milk of the Word. You have to come to the point of

understanding the stronger teachings of the Bible. Those come with a conviction that God's Truth is always there, and with the understanding, as Paul did.

That down in the depths of our own psyche, or spirit of man, the carnal mind is *'deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!'*

There are a lot of people who won't believe that, because their wickedness is on the good side of doing evil, and that's how they get deceived.

"...precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little"; for with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people" (vs 10-11).

So, the first part is ***IF*** you rightly divide the Word of God, God will give you understanding, because:

- you believe the Truth
- you obey Him
- you love Him

God will give you understanding. Not all understanding all at once, because you have to **grow in:**

- grace
- knowledge
- understanding
- living
- experiencing
- knowing
- repenting

Like the model prayer is: *Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us!* Because in the depth of human nature until we die, there's always that little grain of truth, or a bigger grain of truth, of deception, that is always there. What happens for those who read it?

Verse 12: "To whom He said, 'This is the rest He gives to the weary,' and 'This is the refreshing,' yet, they were not willing to hear."

- What is that talking about?
- What is *the rest* that gives you a blessing? ***The Sabbath!***
- What happens when you keep the Sabbath? ***You begin to understand!***

Since they didn't do it, v 13: "So then, the Word of the LORD was to them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; **that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken.**"

So, that's what it is. When we come to difficult Scriptures, we need to understand what we're going to do. There's a proper way to understand it, and there are other things that we have to bring in from other Scriptures that fit; but not all Scriptures fit in the same way.

Lev. 23—let's read about the command for the Wave Sheaf Offering. We find in Exo. 16 that manna came for 40 years. And for 40 years every 6th day of the week the manna was double. *No manna on the Sabbath!* But remember what happened when it first came.

Some got up, went out looking for manna. Today there wasn't any out there. What happened? *God got angry!* He said, ***'How long do you refuse to keep My Commandments?'*** They went out there, ***and God had to correct them!***

This ties in with manna. I just told you about the beginning, and we will see the end.

Leviticus 23:9: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them...'" (vs 9-10).

Now notice carefully this statement, because this is a one-time, one-event statement!

"...**'When you have come into the land, which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest of it...'**" (v 10).

What does this tell you? ***When they came into the land there was a harvest that was ripe!***

I checked everything out. You can find in the last part of Lev. 11, that even if a dead body falls against hard grain, the grain is not contaminated; it's not unclean.

It becomes unclean if it has moisture on it, and a dead body falls on it. Why? *Because then bacteria. can grow in the presence of water, so it's unclean. Never is grain unclean, never!* Doesn't matter who planted it. Some say that the heathen planted it, so they can't use the grain.

- Does it say that? *Look at it, and no it doesn't say that!*
- Does God differentiate between clean grain and unclean grain? *Grain stands alone, and it's neither. clean or unclean! It is grain!*

"...**and shall reap the harvest of it...**" (v 10).

- When was this grain planted?
- In order for it to be ripe in the spring when do they plant it? *They plant it in the fall!*

Then it has its first growth, and that's called the winter grain. Then if the frost and snow comes, the

stems die, but the roots are there. When everything thaws and the sun comes out then it grows up into a really nice harvest.

“...**and shall reap the harvest of it...**” (v 10). When were they to reap the harvest of it? *When they came into the land!*

“...then you shall bring *the premier* sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest” (v 10).

It is “...the harvest of it...” ***If God gave it to them, it's their harvest!***

If I give you a hundred dollars, and you have it. I gave it to you, and it's yours. Even though I just gave it to you, you own it.

Verse 11: “And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. **On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.**”

That's the key phrase that trips up a lot of people. Because it was said in the past that it has to be the Sabbath. Then whenever the first day of the week comes, when the Wave Sheaf Offering is waved, that generally falls somewhere after the day of Passover.

So, this year we had the Passover—the 14th—on the Sabbath Day with the Passover ceremony being the evening before. Because some people say that ***‘there was no Sabbath so we have to go to the end of Unleavened Bread.’*** Because that last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, in that instance, is the weekly Sabbath, and then the Wave Sheaf Offering is waved then.

But notice, that could not be in Josh. 5. Notice what else he says:

Verse 12: “And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering to the LORD.”

Notice He didn't say, ‘Clean grain,’ He didn't say to wave ‘unblemished’ grain.

Verse 13: “And its grain offering *shall be* two tenth parts of fine flour... [that's the grain that goes with the offering of the lamb] ...mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD for a sweet savor. And the drink offering of it *shall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of a hin.”

Remember where we started. They had manna every day for 40 years.

Verse 14: “And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched grain, nor green ears until the same day, until you have brought an offering to your God. *It*

shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And you shall count to you beginning with the next day after the Sabbath, **beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete**” (vs 14-15).

Josh. 5—let's examine that carefully. Remember what God said, ‘You shall not eat any bread, or have any parched grain or anything until you have waved the Wave Sheaf. He was referring specifically to which day? *The day that they entered the land!*

In that year the Passover was like it did this year, it fell on a Sabbath Day. what have we learned about the Passover Day in Mark 14:12—also the parallel account in Matt. and Luke? What is the Passover Day called?

Mark 14:12: “And on **the first day of the unleaveneds...**”

So, it is an Unleavened Bread day, separate from the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In fulfillment, why is that important? *Because that day—that 14th Passover in the middle of the week* when Christ was crucified—

- everything in the past leads up to it
- everything in the future leads back to it

The day of His sacrifice!

Then He was in the tomb three days and three nights, was resurrected, and ***on the first day of the weeks*** He ascended to the Father, and then came back.

That is easy to figure. But when you have Passover 14th ***on a Sabbath Day***, and the next day is the first day of the week and also is the 1st day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—the 15th day—then the day after the Sabbath, in this case was the Passover, 14th.

When they are back to back that doesn't picture a week when Jesus was crucified, and it will fall that way occasionally.

Joshua 5:9: “And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’ Therefore, the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day. And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover **on the fourteenth day of the month at evening...**” (vs 9-10).

We know it's the 1st month because back in Josh. 10 it tells us *the tenth day of the first month*. Fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. Now notice what it says.

Verse 11: “And they ate of the new [this was previously corrected by Fred from the word ‘old’] grain of the land on the next day after the Passover...”

- What does this tell us?
- What command in Leviticus three tells us?

You can’t eat it until the Wave Sheaf Offering is waved!

So if they eat it, what had to happen first? There had to be the *Wave Sheaf Offering!* That means that they counted toward Pentecost. Passover was the Sabbath before the Wave Sheaf Offering.

Whereas when you have the Passover in the middle of the week—Wednesday:

- then you have a preparation day
- then the first day of Unleavened Bread
- then you have the preparation for the weekly Sabbath
- then Christ ascended on the first day of the week after the Sabbath ***during*** Unleavened Bread

But you can’t have that here when they’re back to back, and the Passover is on the Sabbath. The next day is the *Wave Sheaf Offering* day, and also the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it’s the 15th.

- the Passover is the 14th
- the next day is the 15th the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Verse 11: “And they ate of the new grain of the land...”—*because they had conquered the land!* They probably got everything that was in storage.

“...on the next day after the Passover...” (v 11).

Now they couldn’t eat any bread or any grain or anything until the *Wave Sheaf Offering* was waived, which tells us that the *Wave Sheaf Offering* ***had to be waived the day after the Passover!*** Had to be, otherwise if you save it to the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, you have no unleavened bread.

Now you’re also stuck, because, as we will see, there’s no more manna. I don’t know if they thought of that.

Verse 11: “And they ate of the new grain of the land...”

Remember what it said. You shall not eat: bread or grain, roasted or whatever.

“...on the next day after the Passover, on the very self-same day they ate unleavened cakes and ***new*** grain in the same day” (v 11).

Verse 12: “And ***the manna stopped*** on the next day after they had eaten the grain of the land...”

- When did they eat the grain of the land? 15th, 1st day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- When did the manna stop? *No manna on the 16th!*

Now question for all of those who believe that the *Wave Sheaf Offering* ought to be waved on ***the day after*** the 7th day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread when it falls like it did today.

They couldn’t have had any Feast of Unleavened Bread at all, *because:*

- there was no manna
- they couldn’t eat any of the grain until after it was waved on *the day after* the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

you see

- you cannot use human reasoning
- you cannot add any other Scriptures to these to try and make your doctrine work

It won’t work!

“...and there was no more manna for the children of Israel, but they ate the fruit of the land of Canaan that year” (v 12).

This shows, by what was done and what was numbered.... We have two numbers for the 1st month, 10th day of the month when they crossed over and then they had their circumcision ceremony for all who were not circumcised.

Then the Passover Day on the 14th day. That’s what it says. So, what’s the next day after? The 15th. What is the 15th day of the 1st month? *The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread!* So, the *Wave Sheaf Offering* had to be waived there, or they couldn’t have eaten any of the grain!

The Jews to this day make the mistake of saying they count beginning with the day after the 1st Holy Day of Unleavened Bread, which is the 16th

- they miss the start of the count to Pentecost
- they don’t keep a 14th Passover
- they reject Christ

But, they have their own religion called *Judaism*, with the ***tradition*** of the elders!

This is how we understand difficult Scriptures. We compare Scripture with Scripture. If we have ideas that conflict with that, ***that brings in***

error—a little bit of leaven leavens the whole lump! It's very simple:

- they kept the Passover on the 14th. which was on a weekly Sabbath
- the next day was the 15th—the first day of the week
- the *Wave Sheaf Offering* had to be waved on that day

Why? *Because they ate of the grain!* Because what was the command in Lev. 23? *You can't eat of it until the Wave Sheaf Offering is waved!*

The command was particular: 'when you enter the land.' That was only one time.

For those who believe that the *Wave Sheaf Offering* is the day after the 7th day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover falls on a Sabbath, then at that time with the children of Israel if it wasn't waved on the 15th day of the 1st month they couldn't have eaten the grain.

The manna stopped on the 16th so they had no manna of any kind. They had no bread from heaven. They would not be able to have any of the of the bread of the land. How could they have the Feast of Unleavened Bread without either one.

I hope this straightens out everybody; it becomes important.

- Do we follow the Truth?
- Do we rightly divide the Truth?
- Do we do what God wants us to do or not?
- Do we rightly interpret these seemingly difficult Scriptures?
- Beginning with Scriptures that are easy to understand so that we know what's going on?

I hope that everyone really gets it! You'd be surprised the number of e-mails that I got last week!

(break@50:05)

The Seven Churches of Revelation 2 & 3:

Now, let's continue on with Sabbath services and let's look at the seven Churches in Revelation and we will see some very interesting things for us. But it's always been on the minds of all Christians everywhere:

- When will Jesus return?
- How many false alarms have there been?

The biggest disappointment was in 70 A.D. when the temple was destroyed and Jesus didn't return!

The reason was, there was no *abomination of desolation* to stand in a Holy Place. So, that's why we know that there's going to be a temple built.

Why is God going to let them build a temple? Now, let's come back here to Isaiah 66. This is quite a lesson for everyone. So, let's read what this says, and then we'll find out why God is going to let them build the temple *but destroy it again!*

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven...'"

Now, you might do a little study, look up **heaven, heavens, and heaven and earth** and see how many times that God bases His Word on the heavens.

"... 'The heaven *is* My Throne, and the earth *is* My footstool....'" So then, He asked the question.

I thought of this when I was watching all those thousands pass by and look at the body of the pope laying there—*thousands!* They had a camera way up high in the St. Peter's Basilica and it showed all the statues and all of the gold and all of the fancy things. Then you look down there where his body was and then behind it was the grand canopy with the four serpentine pillars and then on top of it a big sunburst; tells you what they worship.

So, God says this; ***He's going to let them build it so that they will learn this lesson!***

"...Where then *is* the house that you build for Me?...." (v 1).

All of those of you who believe that Ezek. 40-48 will be the Millennial Temple, ***no, it won't be!*** Read Isa. 4, it will be over Jerusalem a great tabernacle, because He's going to destroy that temple; the one that's listed in Ezek. 40 *are the instructions based upon the first temple* given to Ezekiel to write down so when the Jews came back out of captivity they would have instructions on how to build the temple.

You're not going to build a temple that God wants you to build *unless He gives you the plans!*

"...Where then *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD...." (vs 1-2).

- What's more important than a physical temple?
- Do we have to have one today?

When the Church of God built the auditorium down in Pasadena did they not have a lot of trouble after that? *Herbert [Armstrong] should have read this!*

Verse 2: "For all these things **My hand has made....**"

There isn't one thing you're going to use to build a temple that God didn't make. All you're doing is bringing back to Him something He already made.

“...‘**But to this one I will look...**’” (v 2)

- Isn't that interesting?
- What is salvation? *It's individual!*
 - you answer the call
 - you repent of your sins
 - you are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit
 - you have connection, *direct connection*, with God

We become His workmanship, because He wants to develop in us:

- the character
- the love
- the mind of Christ
- the knowledge of Truth

all of this together! That's more important than any building.

He says, “...‘**But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word**’” (v 2).

You'll see them every once in a while if you see a shot of the Wailing Wall where they're praying, and that's an interesting thing, too. They think they're praying to where the temple used to be, **but the temple wasn't there!** So, they're praying to a wall and behind that wall is the Mosque of Omar.

Do you know what's inside the Mosque of Omar? *I've got a picture of it!* A big dome of a rock. So, they're standing at a rock wall trying to pray to God thinking that's where the temple ought to be, but it's a Muslim mosque and inside it is a dome of a rock from which it is said that Mohammed ascended to heaven. **How's that for blindness?** *Pretty good case!*

Verse 3: “He who kills an ox *is as if* he killed a man; he who sacrifices a lamb *is as if* he broke a dog's neck...”

Now what are they going to offer at the temple when they get it there? *For 1290 days after they build the temple there are going to be sacrifices!* They're going to be cut off. How effective will these sacrifices be? *We're reading it right here!* Go back and you read in the book of Luke between the Pharisee and the publican who came to pray.

The Pharisee said how great I am and I've done all these things. The tax collector stood back

with his head down and he said, ‘O Lord, be merciful to me the sinner.’ Jesus said, ‘That one went home justified rather than the Pharisee.’

So, same thing here. *Conversion is more important than every sacrifice in the world except Christ!* That's why when they offer the sacrifices when the temple is built ***it is again a rejection of the sacrifice of Christ***, because only His blood, as God manifested in the flesh, is able to forgive our sins.

Only God's Spirit puts us in contact with God, not a temple, which:

- doesn't care how much gold you have in it
- doesn't care how beautiful it is
- doesn't care how hard that all of the men work to build it

When Christ returns it's going to be dust and ashes!

“...he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood...” (v 3).

Remember what the desecration of the temple was during the Maccabees? What was it? Antiochus Epiphanes came in there and he offered swine's blood on the altar that was there.

Why did God allow it? ***Because the Jews had become so corrupt He wanted them to learn a lesson!*** Your sacrifices to Me are no better than all of these swine that Antiochus Epiphanes slaughtered.

God wants repentance. God wants us to love Him and that He loves us. We can't be like the Protestants, or whatever, who say ‘the love of God is unconditional and it doesn't matter what you do.’

That's not true! God's love is conditional! What did Jesus say? And they miss the whole point. They all want the love of God, ***but they don't want to love God back!***

- What did Jesus say?
- Go do anything you want? *No, He said, **IF**...*
- What is **IF**? *That's conditional!*

It's set on what you choose to do!

‘IF you love Me’ go do anything you want. NO! IF you love Me keep the Commandments, namely My Commandments! Then He said, ‘The one who loves Me will keep My Word and My Father will come to him and ***WE*** will make Our abode within Him.’ No need of a temple.

Isn't that an amazing thing? I mean think about how great conversion really is. Now we're going to read some of the things that have happened in the Church in Rev. 2 & 3 and some of those things are still going on today.

So, He says, "...Yea, **they have chosen their own ways...**" (v 3).

Nothing expresses the religions that are supposed to be Christian or Jewish today than that one sentence, right there.

"...and their soul delights in their abominations" (v 3). *What is an abomination?*

- other gods
- statues
- changing the Commandments of God
 - Do they delight in that?
 - Do they delight in the holidays of this world?

Yes! I mean look here in Isa. 66 what we can find if we really understand it. What is God saying?

Verse 4: "I also will choose their delusions, and I will bring their fears upon them, because..."

- Doesn't that sound like what we read in 2-Thess. 2, that they believed a lie, so God will send a strong delusion upon them? *Yes, indeed!*
- Is the Old Testament viable today? *Yes!*
- Is the New Testament viable today? *Yes!*
- Do they agree one with the other? *Yes!*

Here's why:

"...because when I called **no one answered; when I spoke, they did not hear.** But they did evil before My eyes **and chose that in which I did not delight.**" (v 4).

Acts 1—we will see that one of the last questions that the apostles asked Jesus, before He ascended to heaven, is the question that is asked over and over again from the time of Christ down to our time today.

It talks about how He came and He was with them 40 days and speaking things concerning the Kingdom of God.

Acts 1:4: "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.'"

That's the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is the power of God *not one of a trinity!*

Verse 5: "For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.'.... [actually 10 days] ...So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You restore the Kingdom to Israel at this time?'" (vs 5-6).

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; but you yourselves shall receive 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**" (vs 7-8).

Now they didn't understand how far that would go; they didn't understand it was going to be 2,000 years. But the key is that ***the Father must make that information available!***

We find that in the book of Revelation, so let's go to Rev. 1. Who wrote the book of Revelation? *God!* John was the scribe; he did the writing, ***but God did the revealing!***

Now let's see what's very interesting right here in the first verse, because what did it say back there in Acts 1? That those things of His 2nd coming were under whose authority? *The Father's!* Jesus didn't say His! *He said the Father's!*

Revelation 1:1: "*The* revelation of Jesus Christ, which God [the Father] gave to Him [Jesus]... [the Father gave it to Jesus] ...to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly..."

From that time to this almost 2,000 years; that's shortly! That shows you that God thinks in different terms than we do, and living forever: 'a day is a thousand years and a thousand years is a day,' *because time to God is different than time to us!*

"...and He [Jesus] made *it* known, having sent *it* by His angel to His servant John" (v 1).

How many Johns were there of the disciples? *One!* John the Baptist was the forerunner to pave the way, but there is only one John. What is it said of John? ***The one whom Christ loved!***

- Isn't it interesting that it was given to the one who loved Jesus?
- Why was that? *Because he would handle it correctly!*

Some commentators write and say that John couldn't have written the book of Revelation because that's not his style of writing, when you look at the Gospels and the Epistles of John.

Well, if you are a scribe—which he was in this case—are you writing ***your own words?*** OR ***the words you're told to write?***

So therefore, ***this is in the style of whom God the Father and Jesus Christ!*** So, all of the philosophical arguments that people have about the Bible just don't hold up!

Verse 2: Who [John] gave witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all the things he saw.”

That’s a summary of what’s coming! What did he see? *A lot of things he never understood!*

Let’s just use an example; Revelation 12:9—which he wrote concerning Satan the devil: “...who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world...”

So, you write that down because God told you to write it down, but what does it mean? One thing in Revelation when it talks about *the whole world* it doesn’t mean the Middle East, *it means the whole world!* Even in our day:

- Who would believe that there would be things that we have now that are unreal? *But we accept them as every day!*
- What if you resurrected someone who lived 300 years ago and you put them in the middle of a shopping mall?

Here are all the stores and all the lights and all the people and everyone walking around with this device in their hand, and some of them are walking around and they’re talking into it!

- What what’s going on here?
- What is this?
- Where are the horses?
- Where are the donkeys?
- Look at those stupid shoes, where are the sandals?

We are living in a time that is absolutely incredible! John had to write it, and a lot of those things he didn’t understand!

Verse 3: “Blessed *is* the one who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things *that are* written therein; for the time *is* at hand.”

That’s an amazing statement there, isn’t it? Two thousand years ago “...**the time is at hand...**” It says: *hears the words and keeps them!* What do you find in the book of Revelation: *Those who have the testimony of Jesus and keep His Commandments; blessed are those who have the faith of Jesus Christ and keep His commandments!*

What are His Commandments everything that’s in the rest of the Bible is it not one way or the other, either *spoken by God* or *told to be written* by the prophets or historically compiled by the priests and so forth.

Verse 4: “John to the seven Churches that

are in Asia: Grace and peace *be* to you from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; and from the seven spirits that are before His Throne.”

That’s the first time we’re introduced to *the seven spirits*, which we will see a little later on, *are before the Throne of God*, and the seven spirits are those spirits that *go to and fro on the earth seeking those who were seeking God!*

How did you come, how did I come, how did any of us come to the point *that we repented and wanted God?* *Had to be one of the seven spirits to lead us and then the Father begins to draw us!* Then Christ begins *to lead us to the Father!* That’s a marvelous thing!

Verse 5: “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God and His Father...” (vs 5-6).

All of that is saying *this is what you’re going to be when I return!*

What does it say in Rev. 20? *Blessed are those who are in the first resurrection they shall what be priests—and kings—of God! The first and the last tied together*

See how great the Word of God is; it’s amazing!

“...to God and His Father; to Him *be* the glory and the sovereignty into the ages of eternity. Amen” (v 6).

- to all of you who believe in a secret rapture, listen up!
- to all of those who believe that Jesus can appear at any time

We will see that’s not true!

Spiritually speaking, with the Spirit of God, if you repent like we started in Isa. 66—*with a contrite heart and trembling at God’s Word and a meek spirit and repent of your sins*—God will send one of the seven angels to lead you to Him and to Christ. And you can repent and be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.

Verse 7: “Behold...”—He’s going to come invisibly and no one’s going to see Him! **NO!**

Verse 7: “Behold, **He is coming with the clouds...**”

Where are the clouds? *Right above the earth, in the atmosphere!*

“...and every eye... [not a single eye of a person who is living will miss this] ...**shall see Him**, and those who pierced Him...” (v 7).

When we accept His sacrifice, we accept the sacrifice that the soldier with the spear pierced His right side and it went up and pierced His heart *so that every drop of blood that He had would be shed!* But the physical ones who actually did it will not see Him **until the second resurrection!** So, how far does God’s Word go? *Think about that!*

And all the tribes of the earth will welcome Him with open arms and say, ‘Jesus, where have You been all these years?’ **NO!**

“...and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen” (v 7).

They’re going to end up fighting Him. So here’s what He says; here’s what we’re dealing with. This is quite a thing!

Verse 8: “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the Ending,*’ says the Lord, ‘Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty.’”

Now that covers everything, doesn’t it? That tells us that God’s Plan from the beginning to the ending is going to be fulfilled the way that He desires.

He’s given us free moral agency **so we can choose!** He’s given us free moral agency **because He doesn’t want robots!** He wants those:

- who *love* Him
- who *obey* Him
- who *believe* Him
- who will do the things that He wants them to do

That’s why we’re here!

Many times we have to be alone, and it just works out that way, because everybody else around us have been blinded.

Verse 9: “I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.” **He was alone!**

Verse 10: “I was in *the* Spirit on the Day of the Lord...”

There’s one translation which translates that ‘Sunday.’ Look what happens when evil men come along and want their own ideas. They don’t

understand the ‘Day of the Lord’ **is talking about Christ’s return to the earth!**

“...and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, and what you see, write in a book...’” (vs 10-11)—*no oral tradition!*

Why? *That always changes*, doesn’t it? **IF** you don’t think that is so, well, get the book: Code of Jewish Law by Ganzfried and Goldin. *There are thousands of laws*, some of them so funny that they ought to be on the cartoon show. They were all orally devised and then later written down.

God wanted this written down: “...and what you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the Churches that *are* in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea” (v 11).

Now we’ll look at those Churches in a minute, but first look at how Jesus looks. Here’s John, all alone on the Isle of Patmos. God brings this vision—from God the Father, Jesus Christ—the seven spirits of Christ, all coming to John *to write!* Then Christ gave John a vision of Himself.

Verse 12: “And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me...”

That’s interesting, isn’t it? How do you see a voice? *Well, you don’t!* He turned to see **where the voice was coming from!**

“...and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands” (v 12).

We’ll see what those are. Those seven golden lampstands **are the seven Churches** all the way through God interprets many of it.

Verse 13: “And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *One* like *the* Son of man...”

So this is not the candelabra with the seven candles. These Churches were in a circle, and Christ was standing in the middle of them. Christ is the Head of His Church. **No man can be!** We’ve seen the mistake that was made with that, haven’t we? *Yes!* Here’s how He looked:

“...clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire” (vs 13-14). *That’s something!*

Verse 15: “And His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as

the sun shining in its *full* power” (vs 15-16).

Imagine what John felt when he saw that! ‘John, you’re going to write what I tell you.’ *Yes, Lord!* That’s something! That must have been something! That’s why it was saved for the very last. ***And saved to the disciple that Jesus loved.***

Verse 17: “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the One Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death” (vs 17-18).

That’s for all people! Now you look at what we know about down through the Millennium and then the Last Great Day.

I got an email from a man some time ago he’s just starting to listen to us and he said, ‘I’m worried about my family and those who have died.’ I think he was believing in hell and probably thinking that most of them were confined to hell. I guess he would be all upset.

So, I answered back and told him to watch this Last Great Day message that I bring, so Ron Cary gave him a click through to that. He saw it and wrote back and said, ‘Oh what a relief it is to know that they can be saved.’

Isn’t that something! You know, you look at the whole experience of human life and it’s war and death and killing and sickness and disease and every problem that comes along. People wonder:

- Is there a God?
- Where is God?

Then the atheists look around and see all the religions and see how stupid they are, and they say, ‘How can anyone believe in God?’ *That’s because they never were taught about what’s in the Bible!*

But God’s Plan is going to go beyond what any human being has ever thought!

Verse 19: “Write... [we see it tells him to write many times] ...the things that you saw, and the things that are, and the things that shall take place hereafter. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, *is this*: the seven stars are *the* angels of the seven churches; and the seven lampstands that you saw are *the* seven Churches” (vs 19-20).

All of the Churches in the first century to whom this message went were all there at the same time. Now, we like to take those and put them in *eras of time* going down in time. Now, there may be

some substance to that, but it may not be working that way all the time.

Example: we have one Church of God which is called the Philadelphia Church of God and Gerald Flurry is the one who is the head of that Church. *Philadelphia* means ***brotherly love***, but he runs it with an iron fist claiming that he is a special prophet from God—which he’s not—and that he is the Prophet that John spoke of *when Peter*, in Acts 3, ***said that Jesus was the Prophet!***

So, here’s a man who has a lot of the doctrines right but he holds all the brethren in fear. He tells them that:

- they can’t talk with anybody outside of the Church
- they can have nothing to do with them
- the only one they can listen to is him
 - Has that Church been subverted? ***Yes! God’s judgment is coming!***
 - Did it happen to Worldwide Church of God? ***Yes it did!***

We’ll talk about that a little later, *but know this: **no punishment comes without a reason from God and He gives time to repent!*** Time to repent needs to ***always*** be kept in mind!

Let’s talk just a little bit about Ephesus and we’ll pick it up next week.

Revelation 2:1: “To the angel of the Ephesian Church, write: ‘These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks in *the* midst of the seven golden lampstands.’”

Jesus Christ is always with His churches; He’s always the Head.

Verse 2: “I know your works...”

Protestants say ‘if you have faith everything is good.’ Jesus *didn’t say I know your faith*, He says:

Verse 2: “I know your works...” Why? *Because whatever you believe you do*; that’s your works:

- whether for good or evil
- whether for righteousness or sin

“...and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars.”

That’s one thing we’re supposed to do all Churches all the time, Whatever anybody says something about God or the Word of God or who they are and what they represent, ***we check it with***

the Word of God and if it's not correct by the Word of God it's a lie!

Verse 3: "And *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary; nevertheless, I have *this* against you... [Christ brings out correction for all the Churches except two] ...that you have left your first love... [agape, which is Godly love] ...Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, **and repent...**" (vs 3-5).

We're going to see all the way through, even in the worst possible most deadly times, ***God is interested in repentance!***

"**...and do the first works...**" (v 5).

So you have a chance this is for everybody: ***if you find that you're slipping from God you've got a chance to come back as long as you're alive and breathing!*** You better take the opportunity to repent and do what you need to do

"**...for if you do not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent**" (v 5).

I submit to you that that was not limited to the Church at Ephesus, I'll end with this: Where are the three colleges?

- Bricketwood
- Big Sandy
- Pasadena
- Were they removed because they lost their first love?
- Did God let it be encroached with false prophets?

The answer is yes!

What does this tell us? All the lessons in all seven Churches are not restricted to a space in time for the duration of that Church, because Christ says:

Verse 6: "But this you have: that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. **The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches...**" (vs 6-7). How many Churches? *Seven!*

Verse 7: "**The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches...**"

It's like when I first started it matters not where correction comes from if the correction is true acknowledge it and repent it's that simple see and if the correction comes from God

Don't point the finger and say he did she did they did no you point the finger back and see when

you point you've got what you've got the thumb up you've got the finger out and you've got three coming back to you. The three coming back to you are pointing to you for your own sins so that you can repent! ***This is why the Word of God is so great!***

It doesn't matter where you go in the Word of God, it is consistent:

- Do you *believe* God?
- Do you *obey* God?
- Do you *love* God?

That's through the whole Bible!

We'll examine some of the other Churches and we'll look at them and we will see how God views the Churches and what we need to do as we come down to Pentecost.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 4:4
- 2) 2-Thessalonians 2:8-11
- 3) 2-Timothy 3:13-17
- 4) John 6:63
- 5) 2-Timothy 2:15-19
- 6) Isaiah 28:7, 9-13
- 7) Leviticus 23:9-15
- 8) Mark 14:12
- 9) Joshua 5:9-12
- 10) Isaiah 66:1-4
- 11) Acts 1:4-8
- 12) Revelation 1:1-2
- 13) Revelation 12:9
- 14) Revelation 1:3-20
- 15) Revelation 2:1-7

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 4:4
- Revelation 17
- Exodus 16
- Leviticus 11
- Joshua 10:1
- Ezekiel 40-48
- Isaiah 4
- Acts 3
- Revelation 20

Also referenced: Book:

Code of Jewish Law by Ganzfried & Goldin

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