

How Can a Man or Woman Be Right with God? III

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Can a man or woman *please* God? Many of the ‘religions’ of the world have it that it almost impossible to please God, so they depict God as always there to watch over your ‘immortal’ soul and that you have to have the priest help you through the Eucharist, and that if you don’t do what the church says to do then you end up in purgatory or the lower burning reaches off hell. Then your surviving relatives have to pay for Masses to get you out.

The God of the Old Testament is depicted, especially in a lot of New Testament Sunday-keeping churches, as cruel, mean, harsh and therefore, ‘we reject everything in the Old Testament.’

- Is that true?
- Is it possible for a man or woman to please God?

God has given us free moral agency, and that means that *God has left the decision to us*. He’s presented His Word, created the world, created us and given us all the instructions on how we are to live. As we will see, yes, a man/woman can please God with a combination of faith, love and obedience.

Deuteronomy 30:11: “For this commandment, which I command you today, *is* not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It *is* not in heaven *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’” (vs 11-12).

You have a lot of people who like to go on treks to India or Nepal and try and find nirvana or what the truth is. Yet, the Truth is contained in the Bible, which is probably in their own home. So, God has made it easy access, especially in the western world, and more particularly in America, because there’s an average of four Bibles in every household.

Verse 13: “Neither *is* it beyond the sea *that you should* say, ‘Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?’ But the Word *is* very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it” (vs 13-14).

That’s very interesting when you get down to it and really think about it. There are two ways that this if fulfilled:

1. God has provided His Word in a language that you can understand, that you have learned and it’s in your heart and mind
2. He’s given conscience

Conscience is not necessarily God’s Law written in

the heart and mind, but when people lie they know they’re lying and they know it’s wrong even though they do it.

When people steal, they know it’s wrong. When people commit adultery or murder, they know it’s wrong. God gave us enough conscience that the very first time that we sin, our conscience is pricked. We can harden our conscience and we can go against our conscience. We can gloss over it and continue in sin. *God in His mercy allows the circumstances to bring a person to their senses!*

Even though ‘the wages of sin is death,’ He does not instantly bring upon them the death penalty. Otherwise there would be no human beings around, because there’s no man that doesn’t sin.

God is not interested in that, He’s interested in repentance and coming to Him. God made us in such a way that we need Him. God made us in such a way that we need His Spirit *within* us to unite with the *spirit* of our mind so that we can become *spiritually* complete.

Part of it is given here, but yet, He still gives us free choice. So, we have to choose. A lot of people believe in *predestination, that it is fatalism*. That is that you’re destined to be evil all your life, or that God calls you to salvation before you ever existed.

Verse 15: “Behold, **I have set before you this day...**”—in the Word of God. For the Israelites, before they were ready to go into the ‘promised land,’ the book of Deuteronomy was the *second giving* of the Law by Moses to recapitulate everything that God had given them.

“...**life and good, and death and evil...** [that can be every day, not just that one singular day] ...in that I command you this day to **love the LORD your God...**” (vs 15-16). That is the key: **love, faith, obedience!**

We get a sample of this with our own children. When our children love us, believe us and obey us, they make us happy, and they are happier simply because they’re not getting themselves in trouble. I know that I got myself in trouble when I didn’t do that. When I didn’t do that, I knew that what I was doing I shouldn’t do, but I did it anyway because of the weakness of human nature.

One man said that when he was growing up he did something very foolish, and he’s very thankful that God spared him. He was about 10 or 12-years-old and there was a can of gas that had the cap off of it. He thought to himself: *I wonder what would happen if I dropped a match in there?* Well,

he lit a match and dropped it and the flame went out. If it had gotten in there, it would have blown up and killed him! He says that he always remembers that, that God had mercy on him, or there must have been an angel there to blow it out.

Verse 15: “Behold, I... [Moses speaking for God] ...have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply....” (vs 15-16).

When a man or woman pleases God, which they can, then God’s blessings come to them.

“...And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it” (v 16)—wherever you are in the world today. Then Moses gives a warning. God always holds out the blessing and the relationship. That’s why we are made the way that we are:

- to have a relationship with God
- to have fellowship with God

spiritually

- through His Spirit
- through study

This is why when you pray to God, that’s only half of the equation; that’s you talking to God. When you read and study the Bible, this is God talking to you. God knows your desires in your prayers toward Him, and you know God’s desires in your reading and studying of His Word. In setting before you life and death, and good and evil, then there has to be both of these.

Then there’s a warning, v 17: “But if your heart turn away so that you will not hear...”—*listen* to the Word of God; *hearken* means *to hear and do*. So, here is *hearing, but not doing*.

“...but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them” (v 17). There are many gods out there, and there are many idols that people setup in their heart, which is the favorite thing that they do, favorite sport or whatever activity it is. Or in the case of these defunct movie stars that die early deaths, unfortunately they idolize themselves so much, and they’re not able to cope with their own weaknesses and balance that off with the propaganda concerning themselves.

Verse 18: “I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish...” That’s why the fifth commandment is to *honor your father and mother so that your days may be long on the earth*. Beyond that, as adults, you honor God.

No one can say that they have no witness or

any written document. You have the Bible, and God gives a greater witness: *His creation to show that He means what He says!*

Verse 19: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you...” It doesn’t take any faith at all to understand that there’s a heaven and the earth; you’re on the earth!

“...that **I have set before you life and death**, blessing and cursing. Therefore, **choose life**, so that both you and your seed may live, **that you may love the LORD your God, and may obey His voice**... [contained in the Bible, what He has spoken, and in the New Testament the teachings of Jesus] ...and may cleave to Him... [describing the kind of relationship that we need with God] ...for He is your life... [because He’s given life] ...and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them.” (vs 19-20).

Let’s see some things in the New Testament on how a man or woman can please God. This is what puts you in right standing with God more than anything else, and where we will see that God can be pleased with you and you can please God.

The religious leaders were always arguing back and forth about what was the greatest law, how one should do this, that or the other thing. Read the book: *Code of Jewish Law* by Gansfried and Goldman. That is an eye-opener!

Sidebar:

No one can understand the writings of the Apostle Paul concerning law and grace and works of law unless they have an acquaintance with *Code of Jewish Law*. You do not know what the traditional laws of Judaism really are unless you have read them. When you read them, you will find exactly why Paul said that you can’t be justified by *works of law*. Those are not in accord with the laws and commandments of God.

Matthew 22:34: “But after the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they came together *before* Him.... [they all surrounded Jesus] ...And one of them, a doctor of the law... [probably a pre-arranged thing] ...questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, ‘Master... [they didn’t believe Him to be the Master] ...which commandment *is* the great commandment in the Law?’” (vs 34-36)—the greatest or the most important commandment.

Verse 37: “And Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God...’” Here is the relationship that pleases God.

“...with all your heart...” (v 37). Our heart is the thing that emotionally moves us to do things.

There is emotion, love, obedience, a full effort that God expects from us. Also, He gives us the strength and power to do it with His Spirit once we repent and are baptized and receive the Spirit of God. "...love *the* Lord your God with all your heart..." This is not a part time affair.

"...and with all your soul..." (v 37)—your physical being, because the soul is merely the physical power of life contained in the blood to keep the physical chemical body going. That's why it says that 'the soul that sins shall die.' There's no such thing as an immortal soul. You could also say *with every fiber of your being*, physically speaking. But this also shows that we are responsible to take care of ourselves, as well.

"...and with all your mind" (v 37). This is very profound from this point of view: the Word of God is so great and so spiritually layered that God shows that within His Word there are layers of understanding that are called *the deep things of God!*

Psalms 119:18_[transcriber's correction]—David said: "Open my eyes so that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law." So, what we need to understand is that the Bible has been inspired by God, Who lives forever; Whose great wisdom is so far above ours that contained within the words that He has given and recorded in the Bible, we can learn more and more, because it is a lifetime education. That's why it's with all of our mind and not to be going out and doing our own thing.

Once that relationship is established between us and God, He says; Matthew 22:38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **On these two commandments...** [what He's saying is that here is the foundation or the founding pillar from which]: ...**hang all the Law and the Prophets**" (vs 38-40).

Everything that God does is based upon His love. Even the curses that He gives so that people may, in their misery, come to repentance. Rather than destroy them instantly, He lets the circumstances in their lives come up against them so that they realize that they have nothing in their lives and nowhere to go except to God.

So, even that is in love and mercy. We need to understand it in that way. Of course, in the Church we are going to learn that we need to love one another, too; so that's in addition to it.

Let's see how a man or woman can please God; we've seen here that we are to love God; now we are going to see that in order for that love to be reinforced it has to be an active love that becomes part of how you function as a human being. This has to do with *faith*.

Everyone has works based upon whatever faith they have; whether it is faith in God and you love and obey God, or it's no faith in God but faith in an ideological thing such as atheism or another 'religion,' and they act upon what they have faith in. Faith then becomes one of the most important things in pleasing God, because it means that not only do we hear Him, **we believe Him!** We accept what God says because:

1. God says it
2. He expects us to prove all things
3. He expects us to know what is right and hold fast to what is good

Hebrews 11:1: "Now, faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for..." Faith is a spiritual quality that comes from:

- 1) the spirit in man, which gives him a beginning faith and hope in God
- 2) the Spirit of God to reinforce and build up that faith

Then when the *spirit in man* and the *Spirit of God* come together—after baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit—then you have the substance from God, the spiritual substance, which is greater than anything that we can work up ourselves by having hope in what we do and belief apart from God.

Notice what this also does, "...and the conviction of things not seen" (v 1). Conviction becomes very important. We are to believe things with a conviction, not have a belief in something that when the going gets tough we give up.

"...of things not seen." The whole plan of God is to have us enter into His kingdom, which we don't see, to receive eternal life and live forever, which we can only partially understand with our physical being. But we have not seen it, yet. *These things give us the hope!*

Verse 2: "For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report.... [in other words, God was pleased] ...By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* Word of God..." (vs 2-3)—didn't evolve. Like we've said so many times, every evolutionist and atheist trying to explain where we came from: *go get your own universe and big bang*, and tell us where that came from.

Sidebar: when you read Genesis 1:1: "In *the* beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It doesn't give us any timeframe. When people read that, they assume that He did it all instantly at the same time. But it doesn't say that! It just tells you that He created it. When you look out at the vastness of the universe you see any of the things that God has given man the technology to do, as His own witness to men on earth about how great the

universe it. They've put up a satellite telescope that is a hundred times greater than the Hubble.

One man said that he can now prove everything came from scratch and he started out with DNA. That's convenient to start out with. It's like saying that I can bake a cake from nothing, and you've got on the counter flour, butter, sugar, honey and chocolate. If you are able to create your flour, butter and sugar and say, 'Okay, I made this cake from scratch.'

We believe and know, *by faith*, that the worlds—the ages of time and everything out there in the universe...

To finish this about the new telescope, they are going to discover more fantastic things about the universe that have never ever been seen. It is my personal conviction, since hearing that there's not one astronomer who does not really believe in a Creator, that God has given this technology so that He can show His glory and His creation to mankind before He has to come and nearly destroy the world because of their sins.

What makes you think that God—Who is the Creator—ceased creating? Is He also now creating? *They can see that out in the universe!* Is He not creating human beings through pro-creation? *Yes!* Same way with all the animals; He says, 'All the beasts of the field are Mine.' So, God never ceases creating.

The key in understanding what evolutionists think are evolution through species, a lot of it is God created and added to what He created to make a different species or to make a variation of it.

Men, through breeding—and now they have all kinds of gene-splicing and everything—can create different sizes of dogs, horses, cows and everything like that. You have these huge horses that are 10-feet tall, and then you have a little miniature horse that's barely 2-feet tall. But it's still a horse!

Same way with a dog; you can have a Great Dane or big St. Bernard dog. How about this: you're lost in the snow and you have your little Chihuahua in your pocket and a Great Dane comes and rescues you? It's still a dog.

So, we understand the world, Hebrews 11:3: "...so that **the things that are seen...** [which is a scientifically proven thing] **...were made from things that are invisible.**"

When they get down to the atoms, they know that there are protons and neutrons. What's behind those? And what's behind that? *God!*

In the light of that, here's what we are to do; here's how we are to respond to God; v 4: "By

faith... [in the Word of God and what He says] ...Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain..." What did Cain do? *Cain didn't believe God and wanted to do it his way and force upon God that He must accept what Cain did as good!* God said, 'What you did is not right, and sin lies at the door. If you do well, will you not be accepted?' In other words, God would be pleased with it.

So, here's a lesson from Gen. 4: ***You can't take the way of God and modify it with your own ideas and expect God to accept it!***

- if God *is* God, which He is
- if God is greater than we are, which He is
- if God's Word is true, which it is
- if we have a sinful nature, which we do

Can we, as sinful human beings, do anything to add to what God—Who is perfect—has done, commanded or said? *No!*

"...by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he* is yet speaking" (v 4)—because the Word of God is the living word of God, though it is printed on paper. When we read it, we have a spiritual inner action with our mind and words that God's Spirit inspired.

Verse 5: "By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death..." That merely means that He was *moved from one area on the earth to another area*. He did not go to heaven!

Maybe God did pick him up and carry him away and put him in another place, and his journey was partly in heaven—called the atmosphere around the earth—just like when we fly by planes we go into heaven. So, every time I fly and go somewhere, I go to heaven and come back; I'm transported from one place to another. They were after Enoch to kill him, because he was witnessing of God's way.

"...and was not found... [by the enemies] ...because God had transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God" (v 5).

Let's also understand that if we please God—which we can please God... You don't have to go around with dread or a guilty conscience. If you do, the way that you get rid of dread and a guilty conscience is through repentance and *the washing of the water by the Word and the Spirit of God*.

If Enoch can please God, we can! Then Paul explains *how* to please God; v 6: "Now, without faith... [or belief] *...it is impossible to please God...*" Someone may have the Bible and they say—like a lot of ministers do—that God didn't mean this. Or, 'Paul wrote this over here, which does away with this part of God's Word, which we don't

like anyway, especially the Sabbath and Holy Days.’

- What are they demonstrating? *A lack of belief in God!*
- Where did we start? *Obey My voice!*

Today in Protestantism, they are moving away from any commandment-keeping and are moving toward the New Age religion. But if someone opens the Bible and says that ‘Paul wrote this and it does away with the Old Testament,’ what are they doing? *They are taking away from the Word of God!* What is the warning in the Old Testament and the New Testament? *You shall not add unto or take away from!*

So, just a clever little thing that most people don’t understand: when you eliminate part of the Word of God and say, ‘We don’t need this.’ Or whenever they come to what Jesus did...

Let’s just ask a simple question here: Since God gave His Word—and there are changes from the Old Testament to the New Testament—who is the only One Who can change it? *God!* Whenever He changes it, He takes the standard and makes it higher and spiritual. One example:

Circumcision in the flesh on the eighth day made one a physical member of the community of Israel, being the 12 tribes. It did nothing spiritually. All you have to do is see how much in history that they sinned against God.

Circumcision of the heart is spiritual, of the heart and mind, which now applies to both men and women. So, it’s a higher standard! Rather than something in the flesh, now it has to do with the very process of your being and thinking.

Verse 6: “Now, without faith *it is* impossible to please *God...*”—which contrary-wise it means that it is possible to please God. We’re going to see that.

“...For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists... [to be everything that He says that He is] ...and *that* He is a rewarder... [in order to be rewarded you have to please God] ...of those who diligently seek Him” (v 6).

Jesus gave the promise that if we seek, we shall find. If we ask, we shall receive. It also means that if we seek, we keep on seeking because it’s a lifetime process. Then Paul gives some more examples:

Faith always has works that follow! Verse 7: “By faith Noah, after being divinely instructed by God about the things *he could* not yet see, was

moved with fear *and* prepared an ark for *the* salvation of his house; through which he condemned the world and became heir of **the righteousness which is by faith**”—you believe God and act upon what He has said.

It’s interesting that all these verses start out “By faith...”

Verse 8: “By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place, which he would later receive for an inheritance, **obeyed...** [faith without obedience is empty] ...and went, not knowing where he was going.” God doesn’t tell us everything that lies in store. ***We walk by faith, believe in hope and live in love!***

All of it was *by faith!* This is important in our understanding of our relationship with God, and how we can have faith and how we can please God.

Let’s see some things concerning Jesus Christ and what He did. Here is a principle of what Jesus did and how we are to follow that same example:

Romans 15:1: “Now, we who *are* strong *in the faith* are obligated to support the ones who are weak, and not to please ourselves. Accordingly, let each one of us please *his* neighbor for good, unto edification” (vs 1-2). That is by good behavior.

Some people you can never please under any circumstances, because they don’t want to be pleased. That’s because their minds and hearts are not based upon love, but upon self and probably hate and contempt. So, there are certain ones you can’t please.

We have a neighbor right in back of us that there’s no way on earth you could ever please him concerning anything under the sun—*period!* So, we just ignore him and let him go his way.

Verse 3: “For even Christ **did not please Himself...**” That doesn’t mean that we can’t do things and experience things that are pleasurable. The key is that we’re not to set our lives in a pattern to serve the self, but rather to serve God and to please Him. We will see that, yes, we can please God!

“...rather, as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who are reproaching You have fallen upon Me.’ For all the things that were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patient endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (vs 3-4). That we have hope in Christ, because He did this for us!

Had not the Creator God—Who created all mankind—given up His power, glory and Divinity to become a human being, to then live a perfect life and

be the perfect sacrifice:

- Where would be as human beings, sinners that we are by nature?
- How could we overcome it in any way if it weren't for Christ?

Verse 5: "Now, may the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be likeminded toward one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord and one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 5-6).

So, there we have a perfect example that is given. Let's see how Jesus did that.

(go to the next track)

Jesus said, 'I always do the things that please the Father.' Here's how He did it:

John 12:42: "But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue." What we have here is belief, but as political consideration was first.

Sometimes that happens in our lives. We believe, but we get caught up in what we are doing and we push it out of our mind and say that we'll do it later. We hope that many of those who were in this position later believed in God.

Verse 43: "For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God." That's why we can't have our lives based upon what people think of us.

I mean, all you have to do is just look at the political scene and see how if you believed every one of the things that were said by your opponent, if you were running for office, you wouldn't be able to stand. You just ignore that. That happens when people love the glory of men because they have those who are against them, yet, they have those who are for them, and they're all cheering and saying that they are going to win, and some of them when they know they are not going to win.

Here's Jesus' witness to them. These were the ones who had the Word of God. These were the ones who should have understood, and most of them did, that He was the Christ. You can read the Gospel account how they were waiting for the Christ, and they even knew which town He was going to be born in. The reason that they didn't accept Him as the Christ and the Messiah is because He did not *politically* join them to then help develop an army and root out the Romans. He had to please God, *not men!*

Here's what Jesus said; His witness to them; v 44: Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him

Who sent Me'" (vs 44-45)—because the one who sees Jesus was made in the image of God.

So, if you believe what Jesus says then we believe that that came from God. If we believe in Him—and what He represents—we believe in the Father and what He represents. This also goes against modern evangelical Protestantism today, in which they say, 'Jesus' message was only for the Jews.' *No!* Jesus came from the father, so you're believing in the Father. Those that say that Jesus' message was only for the Jews and 'we believe in the Father.' If you don't believe in Jesus Christ you don't believe in the Father.

Verse 46: "I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness." The power of darkness is of Satan the devil.

Let's really concentrate on the rest of the verses in this chapter, because this becomes important:

Verse 47: "But **if anyone hears My words and does not believe**, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world... [at that time; at His second coming He's coming to judge the world] ...but to save the world The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; **the Word, which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day**" (vs 47-48).

Here's the reason for what He said, v 49: "**For I have not spoken from Myself...** [that is originating within My own heart and mind separate from God the Father] ...**but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself**, what I should say and what I should speak."

{note sermon: *The Covenant Between God the Father and the Son* (Hebrews series #27)} That covenant was made before Christ came to the earth. It's really interesting how that is buried in the Bible, but it is quite a thing when we understand that.

Verse 50: "And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, **whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me.**"

That does a pretty powerful bulldozer job to those who say that Paul revealed the Father and 'we don't have to do what Jesus says. We don't repentance or baptism. All we do today, because of new writings that we find in the writings of the Apostle Paul, is that we believe.' Like the silly prayer that Joel Osteen has at the end of his program:

'repeat these words after me and you'll be saved':

Jesus, I repent of my sins and welcome you into my heart.

Those words sound good and Biblical, but that's the action that God requires. He requires deep repentance and baptism, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

Now let's see how Jesus did the things that He did; John 5:19: "Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power... [Greek: 'dunamis'] ...to do anything of Himself...' He didn't initiate anything other than what the Father told Him to do.

"...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner" (v 19).

Here is the relationship that Jesus and the Father had. They had communication with each other all the time. That actually started out when Jesus was an infant. The spiritual connection between God the Father and Jesus Christ would be like He could see into the throne of God at any time He desired to.

Verse 20: "For the Father loves the Son... [we are to love the Son and the Father, and They in turn love us] ...and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder." That's referring to the resurrection, which was going to happen after Christ's crucifixion.

The reason that we are going through these things is so that we can understand how Jesus pleased the Father.

John 14:28: "You have heard Me say to you that I am going away..." They really didn't understand it. Even after He was resurrected, before they saw Him, they still couldn't put it all together, because Jesus hadn't come to open their minds to the full understanding they needed until after He was resurrected.

"...and *that* I will come to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, 'I am going to the Father'..." (v 28). That happened when He ascended into heaven as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.

"...because My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe. I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me.... [because Jesus never sinned]...Yet, *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father..." (vs 28-31). The very purpose of the sacrifice of Christ was to show:

1. His love to the Father
2. His love for mankind

3. to rescue mankind from their sins

"...and that **I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me**. Arise, let us go out" (v 31). This was done on the Passover night.

Let's see what else Jesus said concerning that. Talking about being the good Shepherd; He didn't come to please Himself, but to please the Father. He sets us an example of how we can do that.

John 10:14: "I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice..." (vs 14-16). How are they going to hear His voice? *Through the writings of the apostles!*

"...and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd. On account of this, the Father loves Me..." (vs 16-17). Here, again, is that relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ.

"...because I lay down My life, **that I may receive it back again**" (v 17). That's part of the covenant that was between God the Father and Jesus Christ. When Jesus died, He died! Part of the covenant was that the Father would raise Him back to life.

Verse 18: "No one takes it from Me, but **I lay it down of Myself**.... [that's what makes His sacrifice so great, because He loves us] ...I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. **This commandment I received from My Father**" (v 18).

That's quite a thing! Notice all the things involved in how Jesus pleased the Father. Here's an interesting confrontation that took place:

John 8:23: "And He said to them... [after He told them He was going away and they were not able to understand that] ...'You are from beneath; I am from above....'"

Where did Jesus come from? *Heaven!* That means that He was God and existed as God before He became a human being.

"...You are of this world; **I am not of this world**" (v 23). Neither are we part and parcel with this world. We have to live in it, and many times we wish we could be taken out of it—because of the circumstances that are here—but that's not going to happen until the resurrection.

So, they are of this world and they listen to the deceptions of Satan. 1-John 4 talks about the *spirit of antichrist* **vs** those who are the true believers in God the Father and Jesus Christ!

1-John 4:4: “**You** are of God, little children...” that means:

- if you have the Spirit of God
- if you love God
- if you keep His commandments

“...and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world” (v 4). With the power of the Holy Spirit of God, we are able to overcome:

- sin
- temptation
- self-serving
- Satan the devil
- society

That’s how we get the strength to do it.

Verse 5: “They are of the world... [just like Jesus told them in John 8] ...because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them.” That’s why there are so many false Christians in the world. Jesus said, ‘Many are called and few are chosen,’ and that’s because few really repent to really do what God says.

Verse 6_[transcriber’s correction]: “**We** are of God...”—talking about the apostles; the ‘you’ in v 4 is talking about the brethren. John is establishing the authority of his message.

“...**the one who knows God listens to us...** [they understand it] ...the one who is **not of God does not listen** to us...” (v 6).

Let me give you an example of what happened to me when I was ‘up in heaven’ on one of my plane trips: I was coming back from Tulsa, OK, and I had *The New Testament in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* in my briefcase, and I saw sitting just one seat up across the aisle, a man reading a Bible. He was reading almost all the time that we were flying, so I thought to myself I will give him my New Testament, because I can get another one. I asked him if he would like to have a New Testament. He said, yes, so I gave it to him. I felt real good about it. I did something nice for someone.

So, about three weeks later I get the front cover of the hardcover of the New Testament mailed back to me with a nasty message. That message was that I’m dangerous, I’m a false prophet, because I preach repentance and baptism and baptism is no longer required, just believe and you will receive the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1).

Jesus said, ‘Man shall not live by food alone, but by every word of God.’ So, you have to take the whole thing. This was my very first encounter with modern evangelical fundamentalism, which has gotten rid of obedience; you just believe.

Well, *you can’t believe without obedience!* That was a shock to me! It was a nasty message: you’re a false prophet, you’re the kind that needs to be gotten rid of. I thought: Whoa! Does that not tell you how they’re going to turn against those who really believe in God. Yet, they claim to believe in God.

Verse 5: “**They are of the world;** because of this, they speak of the world, **and the world listens to them.**”

Now, I picked on Joel Osteen because he has a mammoth service three times every Sunday. He has three groups of 16,000 come into his refurbished basketball stadium. He does three services. He preaches a message of:

- do good
- expect the good
- think good
- not going to preach against sin

He never really preaches about things that are hard and evil that are coming; just think good thoughts and everything will be fine.

We do need to think good thoughts, that’s true; but that doesn’t mean that everything will be fine. You also have to be warned for the things that will come against you to try and plow into those good thoughts and take the thoughts of God away from you. *He uses the Bible, but he doesn’t preach the Word of God!*

This kind of ‘no works’ salvation is moving toward the New Age ‘religion’ of no sin and no works, just do good.

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. We... [the apostles] ...are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means*... [by the very fact of understanding the Word of God and having the Spirit of God] ...**we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception**” (vs 5-6).

The **Spirit of the Truth** is this:

- God is true
- God’s Word is true
- we are to live by the words of God
- we are to keep the commandments of God

which are

- true
- righteous
- Holy

And God gives us the strength to do it.

The **spirit of deception** is this:

- be good

- come to church on Sunday
- the Sabbath and Holy Days have been done away
- the Old Testament has been fulfilled

That's speaking of the world, because that goes right back to the first thing that Cain did, which was ***modify the instructions or words of God and expect God to accept it, which He does not!***

That's why it says that 'many false prophets have gone out into the world.' We have to test their message, because they come in the name of Jesus. If they come in the name of Jesus, do they tell the truth, or do they tell part of the truth? What happens when you tell part of the truth? *You don't give the whole story, and if you don't give the whole story the truth presented partially can become a lie!* You add to and subtract from; that's what they do.

- you hear good words
- you hear wonderful things
- you hear great encouragement

Let me tell you: sit in on the pre-meeting for any football or basketball game and how they hype-up all the players and tell them how good they are, go do it, you can accomplish it, think good thoughts, everything is fine, and we are going to win. If they win, they say, 'Great! You psyched us up!' ***That's all of the world!***

God wants us to be a Spirit of Truth to avoid the spirit of deception! This is why Jesus said, 'You are of this world and I am not of this world.'

John 8:24: "That is why I said to you that **you shall die in your sins**... [Num. 16:26] ...for **if you do not believe that I AM**..." That's quite a very profound statement in the Greek this is a double: I AM, I AM. Where have you heard that? *Exodus 3!* That's the eternal name of God: *I AM that I AM!*

When He said that to them, they understood that. They knew what He was saying. {Note sermon: *I AM that I AM*}

Verse 25: Then they said to Him, 'Who are You?' And Jesus said to them, 'The One that I said to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world.' *But* they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, 'When you have lifted up the Son of man... [a prophecy of His crucifixion] ...then you yourselves shall know that I AM...' (vs 25-28).

Many people did believe after He died, and many of the Jews were converted on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given. They did believe that He was.

"...and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, **because I always do the things that please Him**" (vs 28-29).

Can we please God? *Yes, we can!* Let's look at some things on how we can please God. When we do things that please God, here is how God views us:

Psalm 35:27: "Let those who delight in my vindication be jubilant and rejoice; and let them say without ceasing, 'The LORD be magnified, Who delights in the peace of His servant.'.... [this is not just physical alone, but spiritual] ...And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long" (vs 27-28).

Psa. 147 tells us something very important about God, and how God is just waiting to be pleased with His people.

Psalm 147:7: "Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praises upon the lyres unto our God, Who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow upon the mountains. He gives the beasts their food and to the young ravens which cry. He delights not in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, who hope in His steadfast love" (vs 7-11).

So, if you love God, you fear Him, and you hope in His plan, He takes pleasure in you. In other words, *you please God!*

Verse 12: "Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion."

Psalm 149:1: "O praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints.... [of course, it is His Church that God has pleasure in, and His eyes are on] ...Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise His name in the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the drum and lyre, for **the LORD takes pleasure in His people**; He crowns the meek with salvation" (vs 1-4). That's going to be something! That's why we have hope in God!

What are we going to be like as spirit beings? *All of things of the flesh are going to go by the wayside!* However God is going to take ***our spirit of man and Spirit of God that is in us***—and I'm sure along with whatever our DNA is, because maybe DNA is more than just a physical thing—and gives us a new mind and body of glory!

If you want to know what that's going to be like then be faithful to the end! Let's see what it's

going to be like *after* the resurrection, and the showers of blessings and things that God will give to us forever! Here's a good Psalm—Psa. 16—that shows the relationship between the believer and God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Psalm 16:1: “Preserve me, O God, for **in You do I take refuge**. I have said to the LORD, ‘You are my LORD; **I have no goodness apart from You.**’ As for the saints in the earth, ‘They are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight’” (vs 1-3). God delights in His people that:

- love Him
- fear Him
- serve Him
- believe Him
- hope in Him
- understands His way and plan
- keeps His Sabbath, commandments and Holy Days

Verse 4: “Their sorrows shall be multiplied... [especially those living in the world] ...who run after another god. I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood; and I will not take their names upon my lips.” Not going to go off and follow a combined paganism and Christianity.

Verse 5: “The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup... [having to do with the Passover and the bread and wine, etc.] ...You shall uphold my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a beautiful inheritance” (vs 5-6). We're going to inherit what God has prepared for us.

Verse 7: “I will bless the LORD Who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the nights.” God deals with sometimes at night when we're lying in bed and can't sleep. We get up and think about God or we read the Bible or pray. God is dealing with us. When we think about the great love that God has for us:

- to call us
- to deal with us
- to help us

It makes those times, when they occur, very profound.

Verse 8—this is of Christ: “I have set the LORD always before me. Because **He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved**. Therefore, My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices; My flesh also shall rest in safety” (vs 8-9).

This is also a prophecy of Jesus and of how Jesus pleased the Father, v 10: “For You will not abandon My soul to the grave...” Peter quoted this referring to Jesus in Acts 2 when Peter was preaching about the resurrection of Jesus.

“...neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.... [Jesus never sinned] ...You will make known to Me the path of life... [talking about eternal life after the resurrection]: ...**in Your presence** is fullness of joy At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” 10-11).

Though He has pleasures down to the very smallest portion, so He could become flesh, now He receives back the glory that He had with the Father before the world existed. *Yes, we can please God!*

Psalm 17:15: “**As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake...**[out of the grave and resurrection] ...**with Your likeness.**”

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 30:11-20
- 2) Matthew 22:34-37
- 3) Psalm 119:18
- 4) Matthew 22:38-40
- 5) Hebrews 11:1-3
- 6) Genesis 1:1
- 7) Hebrews 11:3-8
- 8) Romans 15:1-6
- 9) John 12:42-50
- 10) John 5:19-20
- 11) John 14:28-31
- 12) John 10:14-18
- 13) John 8:23
- 14) 1 John 4:4-6, 5-6
- 15) John 8:24-29
- 16) Psalm 35:27-28
- 17) Psalm 147:7-12
- 18) Psalm 149:1-4
- 19) Psalm 16:1-11
- 20) Psalm 17:15

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 4
- Ephesians 1
- Numbers 16:26
- Exodus 3
- Acts 2

Also referenced:

Book: *Code of Jewish Law* by Gansfried and Goldman

Sermons:

- *The Covenant Between God the Father and the Son* (Hebrews series #27)
- *I AM that I AM*

FRC: bo
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