

The Love of God For Us

John 14 & 15 and 1-John 1-4
Fred R. Coulter—January 7, 2023

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services!

Last night before I went to bed, I thought I would check the news to see how they were doing for voting for the Speaker of the House of Representatives. They elected Kevin McCarthy, so let's see what they can do, and see if they will do the common sense thing or are we going to be in absolute gridlock! Either way, it's going to be interesting to watch.

For us, we're preparing to takeover the world! All of us are preparing to take their places, because they don't do things God's way! Satan is always in the mix.

- we need to prepare
- we need to work
- we need the love of God

The title of the this message is *The Love of God For Us*; God's love for you and your love for God. We will see that *it's a wonderful thing that God is doing!* A lot of people like to do *great works* for God: big buildings...

I was watching a special the other day and they were talking about the Taj Mahal and how it was build and everything, how precise it was. Well, that's going to be gone pretty soon.

Let's understand that what we are going to do *must come from God with His Spirit, and with our full love and cooperation!*

Let's see how people want to do great things for God. I remember when they were going to build the auditorium in Pasadena (the former WCG), they tried to make it after the Temple of God. It didn't turn out to be that way at all!

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My Throne, and the earth *is* My footstool. Where then... [How is it going to be?] ...*is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest? For all these things My hand has made..." (vs 1-2).

God is telling Isaiah that everything you want to do for Me 'I've already made!' *So:*

- What are you going to do for God, Who is God that created the heavens and the earth and all that there is in it?
- How big and important is any man? *We will see!*

"...and these things came to be,' says the LORD. '**But to this one I will look...**'" (v 2).

When someone starts seeking God, we find from Rev. 1 & 5 that the *seven eyes of God* are constantly going throughout all of the earth seeking those who are seeking Him. That's how we find God. We come to the point that *we realize that we need God*, because our lives are messed up to whatever great or minor degree that it may be.

"...to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit..."

Not lifted up in vanity! Poor doesn't mean lack of wealth; it means *not thinking of yourself as highly exalted!*

"...and who trembles at My Word" (v 2).

- **when** they don't
- **when** they go on their own way
- **when** they go against God

Then things don't work out! They wonder, like in the world today:

- Why is the world so bad?
- Why are there so man evil people around?

I just covered that in a recent message—*Why is America Dying?*—and we are half way through that third generation leading to destruction. So, we'll see if there's any turnaround at all. Here's what happens, and look what happened to the temple that God had Solomon build; God gave the plans to David for Solomon to build it. It was all magnificent, and God appeared to Solomon and said:

IF you will seek Me and **IF** you will keep My Word, this house will dwell here forever, **IF** you will love Me and keep My commandments. (summarized)

Same way with the children of Israel! Now, here's what happens when they kick God out:

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; he who offers a grain offering *is as if* he offered swine's blood; he who burns incense *is as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, **they have chosen their own ways...**"

That is the key! When we come to God, we're telling God, 'Lord, we don't know how to live our lives. We just messed them all up.' *Then you come to repentance!*

"...and their soul delights in their

abominations. I also will choose their delusions...” (vs 3-4) *God gives back to those who disregard Him!*

But God also gives back to those who love Him and fear His name and keep His commandments. What’s the ultimate that He’s going to give us? ***Eternal life!*** So, you can see that the stakes are really high!

“...and I will bring their fears upon them because **when I called...**” (v 4).

The call is going out, and has been going out since the time of Christ!

“...**no one answered...** [that’s what it has to be for us, we have to answer the call of God] ...**when I spoke, they did not hear...**” (v 4).

How do we know when God speaks? *We’re to live by every Word of God that proceeds out of His mouth!* It’s written down! So, in this age, at this time that we are living in, ***no one has any excuse!*** Instead of humbling themselves to seek God, ***they blame God!*** He’s not responsible!

“...But they did evil before My eyes and chose that in which I did not delight” (v 4).

- What does God delight in?
- What is it that God really wants?

He can provide everything for us:

- He’s made the heavens
- He’s made the earth
- He’s put everything on the earth

Right now we see that God is being merciful, even to the wicked. Here in California we’re getting a lot of rain. We were getting to the point that if we didn’t get any rain we were really going to be in dire troubles. God is even merciful to the unjust, and a lot of that has to do with:

1. God’s Plan and the timing that He has with that
2. those people who are the begotten children of God destined for the first resurrection

Since He is going to give us eternal life, God expects us to become the way He wants us to be!

In dealing with the Church at Corinth, Paul was dealing with kind of a wild congregation when you read 1st & 2nd Corinthians. They had every evil under the sun coming there, and no doubt, because Corinth was one of the debauched cities of Greece with all kinds of sexual perversion and idolatry and things like that.

When they came into the Church, all they could see was that there was a change. But then sin came in (1-Cor. 5) and they had to put the man out. Paul had to correct them, and then he had to correct

them even more, because so many of the things that they were doing was incorporating things from the philosophies of the world, and from the religions of the world. They had plenty of that in Greece.

The major apostasies within the Churches of God came from the Greek philosophers. So, Paul had a lot of difficulties. Here they all were talking about who was important.

1-Corinthians 12:27: “Now you are *the* Body of Christ...”

Today the Body of Christ is scattered everywhere, but thankfully we have live streaming services and having websites, etc. we can still reach all the brethren and still put out a warning message to the world. How God will open the doors to make those things become more evident, we’ll just have to wait and see.

Verse 28: “And God Himself has placed certain *ones* in the Church: first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers... [this is the order of how God put them] ...then miracles; then gifts of healings; helps; governments; various languages” (vs 27-28). *Then Paul asks:*

Verse 29: “*Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Do* all *perform* miracles? *Do* all have gifts of healing? *Do* all speak in *different* languages? *Do* all interpret?... [no, it goes to different ones as God desires] ...But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts; and yet, I show you a way far surpassing *all these*” (vs 29-31).

Think about what we covered in Isa. 66, and look at how ‘great’ men have thought that other men were when they did ‘great’ works and built great buildings. In our age they build dams and great tall buildings.

Sidebar on tall buildings: Read Rev. 16 and part of the seven last plagues is: *All the cities of the earth fell!* I want you to think about how powerful that’s going to be. Whenever you see pictures where it shows cities at night with their tall buildings, you’re be amazed how many tall buildings they have in the Arab states in the Middle East; some of the tallest buildings in the world. ***God says that they’re all going fall!*** So, what does that tell us about the importance of men?

The importance of men and women is that they receive the Holy Spirit of God and use the Holy Spirit of God so that God can work in them to develop the character that He desires so that we can have eternal life. We’re going to see that the most important one is love.

- How does that work in our lives?
- How does that work toward others?

Paul explains in this very first chapter of 1-Cor. 13:

1-Corinthians 13:1: “**If** I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...”

Think about how important people would look upon someone who is talking in ‘angel language’? *Oh, did you meet this man, he can talk in ‘angel language’ and talk to angels!* He must be special!

“...but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal” (v 1).

Or you could put it this way: One of the worst things that is annoying and taking chalk and going backward on a chalkboard, and you get that screeching noise! You all know what that is. That might be equal to a clanging cymbal.

Verse 2: “**If** I have *the gift of prophecy*...”

Everyone wants to know what’s going to happen in prophecy: when it’s going to happen, what’s going to be done. Every time we think we’re right at cusp of things taking place, suddenly things change and there’s more time. Think about all of the false prophecies even within the Churches of God down through time that have never taken place.

One of the most famous booklets that was sent out, more than any other booklet was *1975 in Prophecy!* Remember that one? That’s when Jesus was to return, and based on that the Church was going to flee to a place of safety in 1972. But it never happened! Another one said it was going be 188, 89, 97, 98, 2007—some were in the teens of the 2000’s—here we are 2023! We don’t know how much time we have, and we need to be busy about developing the character of God, rather than trying to watch the prophecies and know every little detail.

God has given us understanding to a certain point. That’s fine! But that doesn’t mean we know everything!

“...and understand all mysteries and all knowledge... [be the smartest person in the world] ...and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, **but do not have love, I am nothing**” (v 2).

That’s what the Spirit of God helps us understand, so that we can have replaced in our behavioral actions and thinking and in our relationship with each other the following things:

Verse 3: “And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, **I have gained nothing**. Love is patient...” (vs 3-4).

Here are all the characteristics that are things that come from the Spirit of God.

Verse 4: “Love is **patient** and is **kind**; love **envies not**...” *As I read these things:*

- think about yourself
- think about what you think
- think about how you act
- think about how you are toward brethren
- think about how you are toward people in the world

“...**does not brag** about itself...” (v 4)—*and how many times?*

Look at all the sports figures, they brag on themselves, ‘**I** this, that and the other thing. Well, I think that player on Monday Night Football almost died, people could that *life is temporary!*

“...is **not puffed up**” (v 4).

We don’t say, ‘Oh, that person, the other person, that person, the other one’ and build them up. Remember, whatever we have comes from God.

Verse 5: “Love **does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things**...” *No plans to work out what you want! This happens all the time in the world!*

“...is **not easily provoked**... [that’s a good one to work on] ...**thinks no evil**” (v 6).

There’s one we all have to continually work on, especially in this world when it pours through our homes via the television or smart phones.

Verse 6: “**Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the Truth.**”

Sidebar on Truth: Truth must be verified with Truth! Compare Truth with Truth and let the Scriptures interpret themselves. That’s how keep from coming up with false doctrines.

Verse 7: “Love **bears all things**...”

That means whatever you’re going through, the love of God to you and your love to God will see you through it.

“...**believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**” (v 7).

Likewise with brethren, we need to believe each other, and none of us have any agendas of anything that represents what we think, or our ‘pet doctrines’ that we think are greater than what God reveals to us. That’s what gets people in trouble.

There are still people out there who are following that elder in one of the Churches of God that says that he and his wife are the two witnesses.

You need to have the Truth!

Verse 8: “**Love never fails**...”—*it will*

always work!

One caveat: sometimes it takes quite a while, **but it always works!**

“...But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall cease; whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part” (vs 8-9). *That’s true today!*

Look at the events that are taking place. Here in the last couple of years everybody has been excited and thinking we’re getting closer and closer to the end. Let’s see how all of that works out, because there may be a whole lot more to happen before we get to the real end.

Remember that the one who represents the Beast Power—the man—the whole world is going to worship him; he’s going to be like the messiah in the flesh. Do we see anyone on earth that has that capacity today? *No!* Well, that tells us that we have more time than we’ve been thinking. Whatever time God gives us, we need to use that time to grow in grace and knowledge, and overcome.

Verse 10: “But when that which is Perfect has come... [that is Christ, and the fulfillment of all the prophecies] ...then that which is in part shall be set aside. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child...” (vs 10-11)

Sometimes adults haven’t gotten out of that, yet! That may be a good thing to work on.

“...but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child. For now we see through a glass darkly...” (vs 11-12).

We understand certain thing; maybe quite a lot more than Paul did. Oh yes, I’m sure that it is. We understand a lot in the book of Revelation more than we did when we first came into the Church. But, how long is that going to take place until it’s really fulfilled to the full? *We don’t know!*

“...but then... [at the resurrection] ...we shall see face-to-face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known” (v 12).

That agrees with what John wrote in 1-John 3, that when we are raised from the dead we will see Jesus exactly as He is, **because we will be like Him!**

Verse 13: “And now, these three remain: **faith, hope and love...**” *That’s what true Christianity is based upon through Christ:*

Faith:

- in Christ
- in the Father
- in Their Plan

- in using the Holy Spirit of God

Hope:

- we have our sins forgiven
- we are able to hope in the promise of eternal life
- in the fulfillment of God’s prophecies
- in being faithful to the end

Love:

All of those things are part of the hope that comes from God

“...**but the greatest of these is love**” (v 13).

Why? *Because the love of God gives us understanding, and shows us what we need to do!*

Everything we just read about in 1-Cor. 13, in John 14 with the Spirit of God it tells us the power that comes from God that gives us the ability to do those things. The ultimate of everything that there is with God, **and the ultimate of everything comes from God is the love of God to us and our love back to God!** Now, here’s the key important thing:

John 14:23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**If** anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him... [because love comes from God] ...and We... [both of Them] ...will come to him and make Our abode with him.’”

This is the greatest thing that God can do is give us of His Spirit and then give us of His love. But love comes because:

- we live by every Word of God
- we study every Word of God
- we think that way

because God puts those laws and commandment sin our heart and mind! We will see that everything that God does for us—even correction—is all in love.

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.”

What He’s going to show is that through the Spirit of God—with the Father and Christ dwelling in us—we have direct connection with God the Father. As we will see in Eph. 2 in a little bit **we have direct access to God the Father in heaven above!** That’s something! Think about that for a minute! Think about the model prayer that Jesus gave. He said:

When you pray, pray after this manner: Our Father Who is in heaven. Your name is Holy. **Your will be done** on earth as it is in heaven.

That means in our lives! There we have it! Notice that God is active in taking care of His vineyard. God has to do this, in v 2, every once in a while so that there will not be the increase of false doctrine.

Verse 2: “He takes away every branch in Me that does not bear fruit...”

What is the fruit to be born: love, joy, peace (Gal. 5:22). All of the fruits of the Holy Spirit are motivated by the Holy Spirit and are supported by all the Laws of God and the Spirit of God.

“...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit...” (v 2).

Remember the parable about the tree and the vineyard. *The master of vineyard came and said:*

Look at that tree. I’ve been here three years and it hasn’t born any fruit. Cut it off!

The keeper of the vineyard said:

No, my lord, let me hoe it and dung it. Let me give it some nourishment and we’ll try it out next year.

So, if you have been negligent, sloughing off, do a little hoeing and dunging so that you can bear the fruit. That’s how He cleanses each one that bears fruit:

“...**in order that it may bear more fruit.** You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you” (vs 2-3).

How powerful is that, and what do we do and how does that happen?

1. through prayer
2. through Bible study
3. through the corrective service of the Passover

That’s the renewal of the New Covenant! To keep us in contact with God! Our part is to do it:

- God’s way
- on His time
- on His day
- in the way that Jesus said

That’s what’s important in the whole thing! That’s how we are cleansed with the ‘washing of the water by the Word.’

Verse 4: “**Dwell in Me...**”

Christ is in us, so we dwell in Him. How do we dwell in Him? *By living by every Word of God!*

“...and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine... [you have remain attached to Christ] ...neither can you bear fruit unless you are dwelling in Me” (v 4).

I just did a Church at Home this week going

through the 12 minute Jonathan Cahn *call to the President!* It’s amazing, here’s a man who is a great speaker and can convince a lot of people, but he is not producing the fruit that he could. Why? *Because he’s not obeying God!* He can sound like he is, but he’s not!

How can he go to the Jews on Friday night and partake of Judaism, and then come Sunday to the Protestants and partake of Protestantism? *Neither one of these are what God says to do!*

If you followed him you would know that the rally he had in July 2020, before the election, that call to repentance and restoration brought nothing! Then he had a number of other repentance and restoration calls that came to nothing.

Why? *Because he never told them to repent and be baptized!* And that your repentance must be *repenting of the sins of breaking the Ten Commandments!* He never taught that. He used the simple little prayer that Franklin Graham puts on television all the time.

Unless we are connected to God and Christ, we cannot bear or produce the fruit *spiritually* that God wants. Notice how this ties in with 1-Cor. 13 about not exalting the self.

Verse 5: “I am the vine, and you are the branches.... [the branches never tell the vine what to do] ...The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit...”

- What kind of fruit do you have?
- Do you have personal fruit? *Your love, obedience and faith toward God!*
 - then your love that extends out to other people and to the brethren—*love the brethren*
 - then you have the fruit of being an example to people even in the world
 - the ministry has to have the fruit of preaching the Truth—and nothing but the Truth—and verifying all of that with the Word of God

The ministry has to teach all the brethren how to grow in grace and knowledge and use the Spirit of God to grow in grace and knowledge.

What good does it do to have mass rallies? Look at the things like Joel Osteen, supposedly thousands out there. But are they really connected to God and Christ? *No!*

“...because apart from Me you can do nothing” (v 5).

You might be able to do a lot of things, but ***IF*** what you do comes to nothing ***THEN*** you have done nothing!

Verse 6: “**If** anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them* into a fire, and they are burned.”

Notice this word **IF** all the way through John 14-16, and the other things that we cover. Wherever there is the word **IF**! Remember what God told Solomon: **IF**, but they didn’t do it! So, God removed it.

Verse 7: “**If** you dwell in Me, and **My words dwell in you**...

Does that not express to us the importance of study. Think about Heb. 10:16, that God is writing in our heart and inscribing in our mind His laws and commandments, and *we use these as the basis of our thinking!*

“...you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you” (v 7).

That is answered prayer! It doesn’t come instantly except in a few cases. It takes time! You ask God to help you grow in grace and knowledge, and God answers that prayer:

- **IF** you study and pray
- **IF** you get off your knees you are living God’s way
- **IF** you are thinking with the Word of God

See how all of that ties together! All of that works together!

Verse 8: “In this is My Father glorified, **that you bear much fruit**; so shall you be My disciples.... [now, here’s the key to the whole thing]: ...**As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love**” (vs 8-9).

Remember that Jesus, to become the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world—all of mankind: past, present and future—gave up, emptied Himself to become a pinpoint of life, to begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary and be born and live a perfect life, and die as that sacrifice through crucifixion! *That’s what He did!*

Verse 10: “**If you keep My commandments**... [there He defines it and exactly and John wrote (1-John)] ...**you shall live in My love** just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.”

That’s what it has to be for us! As we saw in 1-Cor. 13, love is the greatest of all. Faith and hope come from God, as well; *the three come together!* With the Spirit of God and the Word of God this is how we are to live, especially in these dangerous days that we’re experiencing today.

(break@45:02)

Notice what this really tells us, and here again we have the word **IF** so it’s conditional.

Verse 10: “If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love... [I wonder how the Protestants completely ignore that? How can that be?] ...just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.”

- Did Jesus break any of the Ten Commandments? *No!*
- Did He say that they were done away? *No!*

He said, ‘*Until heaven earth pass away, not one jot or tittle will be removed from the Law or the Prophets.*’

Now we have God’s Spirit to be able to do this. That’s the important thing!

Verse 11: “These things I have spoken to you in order that My joy may dwell in you and that your joy may be full.... [this is something the world cannot understand] ...This is My commandment: that you love one another... [How?] ...as I have loved you” (vs 11-12).

We need to do that! Brethren to each other, love them, be kind and talk to them the way that you want to be talked to. Encourage them, help inspire them. Don’t run down and belittle different ones and things like this, *because that’s not love!* We are to *love in our actions and in our words!* Not just in our words alone, but in our actions, what we actually do.

Verse 13: “No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.”

Think about this! You’re alone; sometimes you’re alone and no one cares for you, no one loves you, no one wants you. Sometimes we get into those positions; isn’t that true? What did Jesus say?

Verse 14: “**You are My friends**... [that’s quite a statement] ...**if you do whatever I command you**.”

These are all such important verses, so remember this if you’re talking to any Protestant friends. You want to be Jesus’ friend and know that you’re His friend? *He says how to do it right here!*

Verse 15: “No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father.”

- everything we have in the New Testament
- every word of God from the Old Testament

All comes from God the Father!

That's an amazing thing, to live in a time when we have the whole Bible and we're living in a time where we can see many of the things that are in the book of Revelation transpiring or building up toward the fulfilling of the Scriptures that are in the book of Revelation.

Verse 16—*this has to do with the calling of God*: “**You yourselves...** [of yourself] ...**did not choose Me...** [think about that] ...but **I have personally chosen you...**”

The Greek verb there is a middle voice verb, which means that Christ is the subject and the object at the same time. So, when choosing us Himself, *personally*, personally involved in our lives. This is what we need to understand.

Don't let any man, any trouble, any difficulty, anything in life separate you from that! God the Father and Christ dwell in us. God the Father works in us to produce the fruit. Christ in us helps us to keep His commandments and love Him and love God the Father and each other. That's how it's altogether in a whole package!

Verse 16: “You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you.”

Lot's of times we need to go over these things in-depth so that we understand how we are to love each other, love the brethren and love God.

Verse 17: “These things I command you, that you love one another.

How many times did He say that here? *All the way through, over and over again!* We will see when get to 1-John that John carries that through even more. There will be things we have to endure, and that will come from the world.

- the world doesn't know God
- the world doesn't understand God
- the establishment Christianity of this world is like a glass that's 25% full

They're missing the things that connect them to God!

Verse 18: “**IF** the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. **IF** you were of the world, the world would love its own. However, **because you are not of the world...**” (vs 18-19).

That's what Jesus said again in John 17, ***we are not of the world the way that the world does!***

- with the Spirit of God
- with the Word of God

- with the love of God
- with the hope of God
- with the faith of God

All of these things together amount to how we are:

- converted
- grow
- change
- overcome
- develop the Godly character that we need

so that when Christ returns we will rule the world! We will have full power to do whatever is necessary. But ***we need to teach all the people to come to God and repent of their sins!***

All of us will be involved in that, and Christ will be here and the full power of the Kingdom of God will be here on earth. That's going to be quite a time, so keep that in mind. That's the whole purpose of why Christ came.

Verse 19: “However, **because you are not of the world**, but **I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this.**”

We will find that come up from time-to-time. You can meet some people in the world who are so nice, but they find out that you keep the commandments and the Sabbath, and you live by every word of God and you see that you're an enemy of theirs.

1-John—our true fellowship is with God the Father and Jesus Christ. That's why and how we maintain it with prayer and study.

1-John 1:3: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship...”

That is the main fellowship! We have fellowship with each other when the brethren get together. That's great and marvelous! But that fellowship is only as good as our personal fellowship with God, before we get together with the brethren.

“...indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ” (v 3).

Remember that if we love Christ, we love God and keep His commandments. Then *They* will dwell in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. That power of the Holy Spirit ***will reveal to us what we need to overcome in a progressive way continually!***

The ultimate of all of that, everything that we go through:

- with the Word of God
- with the things that we read and study
- with loving God

- with loving each other

is summed up like this: *we are to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ!* That the ultimate goal! That goal has to be worked at all the time. That comes through :

- *prayer*, fellowship with God
- *study*, fellowship with God
- *living God's way*, fellowship with God and with each other

Verse 4: "These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full." *Who are we in this world that:*

- Jesus would call us?
- the Father would be with us?
- we would be given the Spirit of the Father and the Son?

So we can have fellowship with Them? *With that, you're never alone*, though physically you may be separated from people and brethren.

Verse 5: "And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that **God is Light**, and there is no darkness at all in Him. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness..." (vs 5-6).

- What does walking in darkness mean? *Living in the way of the world!*
- Who is the 'prince of darkness'? *Satan!*
- Who is the deceiving the whole world? *Satan!*
- How does Satan do it? *With very alluring things and practices!*

Once he has you, he doesn't bring you into deep sin all at once. That takes time! Just like when God calls us, He doesn't give us the full measure of His Spirit instantly!

- we grow in grace
- we grow in knowledge
- we grow in understanding
- we grow in understanding God's Word

That's why in studying and restudying God's Word we learn more and more. Brethren, I learn all the time!

When I cover John 3 (next week), there is so much in that chapter that is so profound. Because of this, we cannot understand the deep things of God unless we study, pray, learn and apply. All of that amounts to the fellowship of God that we're talking about here.

Verse 6: "If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the

darkness we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth."

That's the worst kind of lying, you lie yourself and you believe your own lies. That's the worst kind of lying. When you get into that full bore, that's hard to overcome! How do you get out of this?

Verse 7: "However, if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light..." **What is the Light?**

- the Word of God
- the Truth of God
- Christ in you

"...then we have fellowship with one another..." (v 7).

Fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ first, then fellowship with one another. That's how it works.

"...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin" (v 7).

We'll cover during some of this study, Rom. 7, which is one of the most difficult chapters in the Bible to understand. We'll answer the questions then. One clue: *the Protestants do not have a clue!*

Verse 8: "**If** we say that we do not have sin..."

That means a *sinful nature!* How do we start out carnally speaking?

Jeremiah. 17:9: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..." *You can see how true that is today when everybody is cut loose!*

1-John 1:8: "**If** we say that we do not have sin we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us."

God give the way out so that we have fellowship with Him:

Verse 9: "**If** we confess our own sins, **He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** **If** we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (vs 9-10)

Have you ever analyze how John wrote this in 1-John 1? *Think about it:*

- he said *we*, including himself
 - he said *us*, including Himself
 - not *you*, separated from *me*, the apostle
 - but ***we***
- because we all belong to God!*** In chapter 2 he says:
- *you*
 - *the one who*

1-John 2:1: "My little children, **I** am

writing... [not *we*] ...these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.... [the way we know it now with the Holy Days, that's *past, present and future*] ...And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: **if** we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (vs 1-4).

Tie that in with what we read in John 14 & 15 about loving God and commandment-keeping; they go hand-in-hand.

Verse 5: "On the other hand, **if** anyone is keeping His Word... [Isn't that what Jesus said? **IF you keep My Word!**] ...truly in this one the love of God is **being** perfected..."

It's not something that comes all at once. We have to learn and understand our own nature in dealing with other people. Learn and understand the nature of people in dealing with us. How that we need to yield to God so that we can truly love each other.

"...**if** anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.... [a process through our lifetime] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him" (v 5).

Notice how important that this is as a *way of life!*

Verse 6: "Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is **obligating himself**... [or **herself**] ...also **to walk**... [the way of living] ...**even as He Himself walked.**" *That's a high standard!*

Verse 7: "Brethren, I am not writing **a new commandment** to you but an old commandment..."

Verse 11: "But **the one who hates his brother** is in darkness, and is walking in darkness..."

Especially at this time when we're dealing with the world and all the things concerning Christmas and all the things that go along with that.

Each and everyone who has the Holy Spirit is **a begotten child** of God. Peter wrote that *you are begotten again!* We will see in 1-John 3 that **that begetting is the seed of eternal life through the power of the Holy Spirit!**

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that **we should be called the children of God!**.... [Paul wrote that we are the children of God because we have the Spirit of God] ...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, **now we are**

the children of God..." (vs 1-2). *Not yet born, but we are the children of God!*

- Christ was born of Mary, the firstborn
- Christ is called (Rev. 1) the Firstborn from the dead

*Remember that because that ties in with **born again!***

- Was Jesus born in the flesh? *Yes!*
- Was He born in the Spirit? *Yes!*
- Was that being born again? *Yes!*

"...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, **we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is**" (v 2). *That's quite a promise!*

Verse 3: "And everyone who has this hope... [remember that there are three: faith, hope and love] ...in him purifies himself, even as He is pure." **How do we purify ourselves?**

- repentance
- studying
- living God's way

Then John shows the contrast with the world! This is what the Christianity establishment of this world does not preach!

Verse 4: "**Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness...**

The *King James* says that *sin is the transgression of the Law!* Grace does not cover sin without repentance, because grace is not given so we can live in sin. **Grace is given so we can have our sins forgiven and have contact with God!** That's the true Grace of God, directly to God the Father in heaven above.

"...**for sin is lawlessness**" (v 4). *We're told in this day that lawlessness shall multiply!* There it is!

Verse 5: "And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin..." (vs 5-6).

That's what it means, because in v 4 the Greek for practicing comes down here to v 6—does not *practice* sin. **It doesn't say you won't sin!** You don't *live in* sin and **don't practice** sin.

"...anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him" (v 6).

That tells you very clearly! Every Protestant needs to read this, because you keep Sunday and God never authorized it. **You are practicing sin every Sunday** when you go to Church! **You are living in sin!** You *think* that your sins are forgiven, but they're not because you continually sin!

Verse 5: “And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who **practices** sin... [lives in sin, do it constantly, habitually] ...**is of the devil** because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil” (vs 5-8).

That is in God’s Plan and He will work it out!

Verse 9: “Everyone who has been begotten by God **does not practice sin**, because **His seed of begettal is dwelling within him, and he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God.**”

How does that work? *When you sin the Holy Spirit in you convicts you and makes you conscious of your sin so you can repent! You can’t practice sin, it doesn’t say you don’t sin!* We find in 1-John 1 that ***IF we confess our sins He’s faithful and just to forgive us our sins!***

Verse 10: “By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother.”

Having the love of each other and loving God all go together! 1-John 4 tells us a lot about the love of God and what it’s based on. Now, after John says not to believe ever spirit:

1-John 4:4: “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world.... [Satan the devil and his agents] ...They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. We 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* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception” (vs 4-6). *That comes from Satan the devil!*

Eph. 2 shows how we are when God begins dealing with us. Remember that Jesus said, ***‘I have personally chosen you.’*** All of us who are elders, we need to understand that ***the brethren are property of God!*** We have the responsibility to teach them:

- the way of God
- the will of God
- the Truth of God
- to grow in grace and knowledge

That’s why God hates a hierarchy, because that

destroys all of that! Here’s how we were in the world:

Ephesians 2:1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience**” (vs 1-2)—*that is the spirit of deception!* What does it appeal to?

Verse 3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world.”

- ***Christ personally chose us!***
- ***God the Father Himself chose us!***

Verse 4: “But God, Who is rich in mercy **because of His great love** with which He loved us.”

Think about that! To apply the very sacrifice of Christ to you *personally!*

1-John 4:6: “...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception. Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God” (vs 6-7). *That is the most fantastic thing in the world:*

- to know God
- to pray to God
- to understand His Word
- to have His Spirit

Verse 8: “The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him” (vs 8-9).

Notice how all of this reflects back to what we’ve been covering.

Verse 10: “In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God...”

Not that we love God and come to Him and say, *‘O God, I love You so much that You have to choose me.’* Doesn’t work that way!

“...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins” (v 10). *He wants:*

- you to consider this
- you to understand this
- this to be part of the way that you think and act and walk in your life

Verse 11: “Beloved, if God so loved us, **we**

also are duty-bound to love one another.” Tie that in with:

1-John 2:6: “Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is **obligating** himself... [the same as duty-bound] ...also to walk even as He Himself walked.” *That’s quite a thing!*

1-John 4:11: “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. *Yet*, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us” (vs 11-12).

Love is being perfected; we don’t have perfect love, yet; but we will! ***It’s being perfected!***

Verse 13: “By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us. And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God” (vs 13-15). *That’s the way it needs to be!*

Verse 16: “And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. **God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him.**” *God wants that as a daily working relationship with His Spirit:*

- through prayer
- through study
- through understanding the Word of God
- realizing how we need to live
- understanding how the world is
- seeing how we need to help those people that God will call out of the world, because He will

We need to be prepared for when that time comes!

Verse 17: “By this *spiritual indwelling*, **the love of God is perfected within us...**—*is being perfected!*

- perfection takes time
- perfection takes repetition
- perfection takes the Spirit of God
- perfection takes the love of God
- perfection takes the commandments of God
- perfection takes everything about God that He has for us

“...so that we may have confidence in the Day of Judgment, because even as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in the love *of God*; rather, **perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment.** And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love *of God*. We love Him because He loved us first” (vs 17-19).

Then there’s a final warning: **IF** there’s a false profession of love and you hate the brothers and sisters of Christ, **THEN** we’re liars!

This is what we need in the world that we’re facing today, and how we need to handle it!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 66:1-4
- 2) 1 Corinthians 12:27-31
- 3) 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- 4) John 14:23
- 5) John 15:1-19
- 6) 1 John 1:3-8
- 7) Jeremiah 17:9
- 8) 1 John 1:8-10
- 9) 1 John 2:1-5, 7, 11
- 10) 1 John 3:1-10
- 11) 1 John 4:4-6
- 12) Ephesians 2:1-4
- 13) 1 John 4:6-11
- 14) 1 John 2:6
- 15) 1 John 4:11-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Romans 1; 5
- 1 Corinthians 5
- Revelation 16
- Galatians 5:22
- John 16
- Hebrews 10:16
- John 17
- Romans 7
- Rev. 1

Also referenced: Message: *Why is America Dying?*

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