

How to Use God's Holy Spirit I

Fred R. Coulter—November 20, 1993

It's most important that we understand how to use God's Holy Spirit, and realize it, brethren, as we go forward, because today we are confronted with a great, great number of problems and difficulties. Life today is much more difficult and stressful to live than it was 20, 30, 40 years ago.

That's all marked by what we see in the educational system where years ago the main problems in school were chewing gum, talking in class and getting out of line when they were supposed to be in the lunch line. Today the greatest problems are murder, guns, drugs, fornication and illegitimacy. In the world there are a lot of pressing problems and difficulties that are coming in on everyone.

How many here, in what you are doing in your life, in your work or at home find an inordinate amount of the stress that you've never had before? I talked to a woman on the phone the other night and the problems for her were so overwhelming that she just needed to know where God was. It was really something! I tried to comfort her the best I could and I read some out of an article trying to help her.

Let's go to Psalm 73^[transcriber's correction] and see what we are confronted with. This is a Psalm that we have gone to in the past. Nevertheless,

- the Word of God is living
- the Word of God is true
- the Word of God is Holy and righteous
- the Word of God applies to all people at all times

When we have all these problems and stress and trial and everything, we're not using the Spirit of God, we're not praying and studying, and we get transfixed by the problem. In getting transfixed by the problem we only look at the problem.

Example: Down through the years I wonder how many people said, 'I wonder why God let someone like Michael Jackson do what he does?' There he is making millions, if not hundreds of millions, of dollars. Everyone had a sense in their mind that this guy's got to be perverted sexually somehow, because of what he's doing: the songs that he sings, his lifestyle and everything.

Well, wait long enough and Michael Jackson fits exactly Psa. 73—his day has just arrived, hasn't it? I never watch ET—Entertainment Tonight—because it is so phony. But I was watching this special report on Michael Jackson because it caught my attention that if you wait long enough God is going to take care of the situation. It's a good lesson for us when we get transfixed on the immediate

problem and we don't really take it to God in prayer, and we don't use the Holy Spirit and we don't use the mind of God.

I never will forget the rousing sermon that this one bombastic minister gave as a guest speaker down in Torrence, CA, when I was pastoring there. He came down and he gave us an attacking, scathing sermon on 14 reasons why your prayers are not answered. Every one of those 14 were true! The whole church, by the time he got done shouting, yelling, screaming and attacking everything and everyone, we were all just kind of quivering in our chairs.

As I was driving home after that I thought to myself, all of those are true, but why didn't you just tell us one way on how to get our prayer answered. That would have been nice. This is not going to be a diatribe about how you are not using the Holy Spirit, but *it's going to be how the Bible teaches us to use the Holy Spirit!*

Here's the trap and it happens to all of us, Psalm 73: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to those who are pure of heart.... [He's just making a general statement here to kind of get his bearings.] ...But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped, for I was envious at the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (vs 1-3).

When it applies to preachers and so forth, how many times have you seen these prosperous preachers—Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Baker, whomever you want to name—and you go along and all of those, the Trinity Broadcasting and you look at some of these ministers the way they're dressed up and the gall of asking for money. The things that they have, the houses that they have, everything that they have and you know they're preaching false doctrine.

Look at all these people in the world who have got millions and lie, cheat and steal, and you look at the prosperity of the wicked and then you look at your circumstances—which are not too good—and we think...

Verse 4: "For there are no pangs in their death, and their strength is firm.... [nothing is going to get them out] ...They are not in trouble like other men... [he's saying about himself; or the poor or whatever it may be] ...neither are they plagued like *other men*. Therefore, pride is as a chain about their neck. Violence covers them like a garment" (vs 4-6). They seem to get away with everything!

Verse 7: Their eyes stand out with fatness;

they have more than the heart could wish for. They scoff and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth. Therefore, his people return here: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, 'How does God know? And is there knowledge in the most High?' Behold, these are the wicked, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches" (vs 7-12). If that doesn't fit today and all the troubles and difficulties and circumstances that we go through!

Verse 13: "Surely I have made my heart pure in vain and washed my hands in innocence" I've been trying to follow God and do His way my whole life and all I have is trouble, pain, difficulty, anguish and problems that go along with it. My kids didn't turn out like I wanted. My job is not what I wanted. I get all these terrible things that come along. Maybe health is failing, facing death, whatever the case may be. It piles up and it really gets to be a lot—doesn't it? *Yes!* Well, this when you need to use the Spirit of God.

Verse 14: "For all the day long I have been plagued and chastened every morning.... [Doesn't seem like anything I do is going to turn out right. Some people wonder, where is God in all of this?] ...If I say, 'I will speak thus'... [that really exists and is true] ...behold, I would have betrayed the generation of Your children. When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me" (vs 14-16). Sometimes it is!

I explained to this one person: My life got so low that the only thing I could do is just walk up on this hill on the back of Hollister and get on my knees and cry out to God: 'Heal my soul!' There is a psalm in which David said, 'Heal my soul, Lord, for I have sinned against You.' That gave her some encouragement. Here's what it is for this man. He said:

Verse 16: When I thought to understand this, it was too painful for me... [In other words, to find out all this thing and here you are struggling along, beating along, just anguishing along] ...**until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end**" (vs 16-17). A lot of these things come because we don't view it from God's perspective! We don't get close enough to God—like in this case into the sanctuary of God—to really understand it.

It's going to all work out in the long run! But because there are choices that other people have to make, they have to run their course as well. We cannot make the choices for other people, or live the lives of other people, but unfortunately, their choices scrunch in on our life. And in some cases, *they know* that they shouldn't be doing these things. In some cases—I've seen it—where these things happen to

you because it is deliberate spite, however you want to call it, on the part of other people who want to put you through the rigors of these problems. That makes even more difficult to take it to God—doesn't it? It tell you, yes, it does!

Then we're living in a time on top of it that those who are out there blinding themselves and knowing the Truth, just seem to be going along and nothing is bothering them.

Verse 18: Surely You set them in slippery places... [Is not Michael Jackson in slippery places? All of his millions from Pepsi are gone!] ...You cast them down into destruction. How have they been brought into desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors" (vs 18-19). Plug in there any person, any name, any acquaintance, any difficulty.

One minister back east has been to six funerals in the last three weeks! In one case it was most tragic, because they went to the funeral home of the one man who died of cancer—which you know that if you have cancer and God doesn't heal you you're going to die. With the change of daylight savings time to regular time it was dark and two widows in the Church who came to pay their last respects were driving home and there was a big, wide Big-Boy truck trying to make a U-turn and was stuck on the center piece in the highway, blocked off the highway, and they didn't see it—dead! So, he went to those funerals.

God is trying to get a message to those people. Sometimes God will take the innocent to preserve them from further damage. I'm sure those two widows are going to make into the Kingdom of God. They suffered no pain, but it makes all the rest—the living—*think* about what's going on.

Verse 20: "Like a dream when one awakens; so, O LORD, when You awake, You shall despise their image." A lot of people in the Church of God today are in a dream! If not a dream, a fog! If not a fog, semi-sleepwalking! We're going to see that they're semi-blinded.

Verse 21: "For thus my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was like a beast before You" (vs 21-22). Whatever your problems are, don't end up being like this man who did this Psalm—the Psalm of Asaph. I don't know whether that was a Psalm of David or not, I doubt it, but whoever the high priest of Asaph was.

Let's not make ourselves as beasts before God by accusing God, because God has not done what we think He ought to do. Therefore, that becomes an excuse for me not to do what I know I should do. That's what he's saying in this Psalm. He

was going along with all this anger toward the ungodly who were prospering. It's tough when you don't know where your next meal is coming from. It's tough when you don't have the clothes you need, or the transportation you need, or whatever to look out there and see all these people that God has nothing to do with prospering and blowing money away right and left. Don't then become foolish and ignorant or like a beast!

Verse 23: "Nevertheless, I am always with You..." Think about what God will do and can do and really put yourself to God the way that it should be. I know that it is bearing in on my mind more and more: **there is nothing that you didn't receive! Nothing!** Life, physical goods, whatever; God created everything!

Then, "...You have held me by my right hand. You shall guide me with Your counsel, and **afterward** receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You I desire none upon earth. My flesh and my heart fail..." (vs 23-26). There are a lot of us in this particular situation, we're all getting older; our flesh is failing. But emotionally our hearts fail us from time-to-time because we don't include God in on the difficulties that we're going through.

Sometimes the difficulties are so overwhelming that we don't see God in it at all. It's true! God is not in those difficulties! That's why you have to take it to God and get God's perspective from His Spirit and *use God's Spirit!*

"...but God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever, for lo, those who are far from You shall perish..." (vs 26-27). Don't worry, God's Word is not being mocked! Don't worry because if you're having trouble it doesn't mean that God has left you. Maybe God is trying you to give you a greater blessing later. We don't know.

"...You have destroyed all who go a whoring from You" (v 27). Maybe those who are going whoring from God now God is not destroying because *He wants to give them a space of repentance*. Think on that! Even God doesn't delight in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked would repent and turn.

Maybe some of these things we are viewing in our own impatience and our own problems and difficulties that we are having, God is actually trying to give them a space of repentance that they will repent. Let's not be like the second son of the father of the prodigal son: when there is repentance we get mad and he was all upset.

Verse 28: "And me, it is good for me to **draw near to God...**" That's what we need to do. If your problems and difficulties are so bad you

just go to God and say, 'God, I'm here. I'm totally overwhelmed with all of this. God, the stress is too much, I can't bear it. God, I know it looks like it's the most miserable thing in the world, and I'm even sorry that I've wondered where on earth You were. Help me and strengthen me!' That's how to do it, just like he did here—*draw near to God!*

"...I have made the LORD God my refuge, that I may declare all Your works" (v 28).

Let's go to Revelation 3 and let's see that this is one of the big difficulties that we're going to have in the end-time. What if we were all Laodiceans from the beginning? That may prove to be right!

Revelation 3:15: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot." Isn't that true of so many of us? How many times have we run from hot to cold? Think about that! Don't we also do that when we find problems so overwhelming us that we don't pray when we ought to, we don't study when we need to, we don't use God's Spirit, but we sort of kind of let these things get to us.

Verse 16: "So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (vs 16-17). Maybe in our wretchedness, poorness, blindness and nakedness we need to go to God and say, 'God, that's my life! Please help me!'

Verse 18: "I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire..." We have to go out and do a little buying—don't we? I remember someone asked: Where do you think we are in Church history? I said, 'I think we are at the spiritual bazaar. Go buy! You got to go try. You got to go shopping. You got to go looking.'

"...buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich... [and the thought which comes in the Greek]: ...and **white garments** so that you may be clothed... [the righteousness of the saints] ...and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed..." (v 18). Have we ever really understood what it means to be fully clothed in God? Since we've never really understood that, maybe we don't understand when nakedness is *nakedness*. I don't bring this up to condemn anybody, I'm also asking myself.

"...and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see." (v 18). And, of course, you're to go buy the eye salve—right? *Yes!* All of this has to do with *the use of God's Holy Spirit*, every bit of it! We're in a situation today *spiritually* where a

great number of people in the Churches of God are in varying degrees of blindness—right? For various reasons—correct? *Yes!* Wasn't the psalmist in Psa. 73 blind to a certain degree? *He was looking at the wrong thing.*

- Maybe there's blindness from looking at the wrong thing.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of prayer.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of study.
- Maybe there's blindness because of lack of using God's Holy Spirit.

All of those are different forms of blindness for different reasons. But surely the psalmist there in Psa. 73 was blind—wasn't he? He couldn't understand until *he drew near to God and went to the sanctuary of God so he could understand!*

I would have to say that is probably a psalm of David, because of drawing near to the sanctuary of God, because the Ark was there in the tent in the house of David.

Likewise, we have direct access to God! We have not taken these problems to God. Then you have the blindness because of sin; you're guilty of sin and you don't want to repent. You figure that you're going to work it out and then you'll get back with God as soon as you work it out instead of repenting the way you know you need to repent. *All of these things are varying degrees of lack of clothing, lack of seeing—or blindness.*

Verse 19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (vs 19-20). We have two categories of people:

1. those already in the Body of Christ that become complacent and lukewarm; about ready to be vomited out
2. those whom the Spirit is with them, but not in them

In either case it's the same thing! The result is the same.

Let's see how we have nearly the same thing and the counsel is identical. *Go buy!* I tell you, if there's anytime you can go shopping in the history of the Church of God in our day, it is today! What do I mean by that? *You have that Church of God and that Church of God and the other Church of God!* I mean, you've got Worldwide, you've got Global/Living, you've got Philadelphia—just get the whole directory of Sabbath-Keeping Churches of God, and you're going to find there are over 400 Churches of God that have been organized. So, you

can go shopping and you can find whatever niche you want. But, you're going to have to understand that if you really want the gold—the fine gold—you're going to have to make sure that it is right. You're going to have to make sure it's from God!

Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared to ten virgins..." Here again we have another 50% ratio—don't we? That's also interesting. We've also said that this is five tribes of Israel that repent and the five that don't. I don't know about that, could be. We won't throw it out and leave it as a possibility.

This is a parable, but nevertheless, these are the ones that were betrothed to Christ—right? Are we not all betrothed to Christ as virgins? *Yes!* (2-Cor. 4). And these are virgins that follows Christ wherever He goes (Rev. 14).

"...ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish" (vs 1-2). One of the big problems that we have in our spiritual relationship with God is that we end up being foolish. I've done that; I've done foolish things. Have you done foolish things? *Sure you have!* We don't have to remain doing foolish things. We can ask God for wisdom, because *God is instant to forgive!*

Remember Ahab, you can go back and study him—that's one of my favorites. People have said, 'Well, God can't possibly forgive me.' Have you done as bad as Ahab? *As soon as he repented, he sent Elijah back to say, 'Behold, my servant Ahab.'* Before he was one who sold his soul to do evil.

The whole purpose in all of this is not condemnation, the whole purpose in all of this is repentance. The whole purpose in all of this is to come back to God. The whole purpose in all of this is because God wants you and me and as many as will repent. That's the whole purpose of this.

Verse 3: "The ones who were foolish took their lamps... [God's Word is like a lamp: 'Your Law is like a lamp unto my feet' David said.] ...but they did not take oil with them." Oil is like God's Holy Spirit. We're going to see that this is the *use of the Holy Spirit of God!* or *the lack thereof!* They took no oil with them.

These were little lamps you could liken to an olive oil lamp with a wick hanging out the spout. The oil you carry in another container with you. In other words, your relationship with God is that God counts you as having spiritual reserve with His Holy Spirit being able to know how to use the Holy Spirit of God. Obviously, this is a crisis. Is this not a crisis here? *Yes!* Was it not a crisis that we read of in Rev. 3? *Yes!* So, here's the crisis: It's down toward the

end of the age; it's talking about the return of Christ.

So, the foolish took no oil with them, v 4: "But the wise took oil in their vessels **along with** their lamps.... [They had the vessel of oil plus the lamps.] ...Now when the bridegroom [tarried] was gone a long time... [In other words, Christ is not going to return when expected. He didn't delay.] ...they all became drowsy and slept" (vs 4-5). Everyone has their problems. Everyone has their difficulties. Everyone sleeps at the switch.

And just like a man waking out of sleep, v 6: "But in *the middle of the night*..."—midnight; the darkest time. I don't think we're quite there yet at midnight, but we're getting close. We may be somewhere around 9:30-9:45 and rapidly getting darker. But *midnight pictures the darkest hour of the whole history of man*. When is that going to be? That darkness is going to blind them completely.

- Who is the master of darkness? *Satan the devil!*
- Who is building and formulating his whole system right now? *Satan!*

That's why when someone asked me sometime ago: Boy, I sure hope NAFTA doesn't pass. *I said that it's going to pass. You can be guaranteed it's going to pass, because it's going to lead to the ten economic regions of the world*. I think that helps us understand Rev. 17 even a little more—doesn't it? It's happening!

Now is the time for God to *let* wickedness and evil prosper! That's why it's going to happen. When the beast comes into power and the false prophet is there, that, brethren, is the midnight hour. How long is the Tribulation, and the midnight hour is halfway between the night? How long is the whole Tribulation altogether? *Seven years!* Three and half years of prosperity and plenty, and three and half years of tribulation and anguish leading to the return of Christ.

Could it be when it switches from peace and prosperity to the Tribulation that is the midnight hour, right then? *I don't know!* But I'm just saying that it's interesting. Think about it!

"...there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.' (v 6). There are a lot of things here we can look to. This is also drawn on the parable of what was a custom in Israel and in Judah, which was that the bridegroom and the bride were betrothed, and they drank a cup of wine of the betrothal.

Generally the bridegroom came back within a year. The bride, who stayed at her father's house—you can connect this with Mary and Joseph. Mary was betrothed to Joseph and in the third month found that she was pregnant, and he was going to

undo the betrothal to divorce her.

When the bridegroom came they again drank the wine, which sealed the covenant of marriage. Just think on this: What did Jesus say at the last Passover? *I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink anew with you in the Kingdom of God!* What is one of the first things that's going to happen for us in the Kingdom of God? *The marriage of the bride and the Lamb!* We're to renew it every year because we're still waiting to show that we are faithfully waiting.

So the cry goes out, the bridegroom is coming, v 7: "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.... [they got all ready; they were doing everything they needed to do at that point] ...And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, '*No, lest there not be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'" (vs 7-9). When I first read that, I thought: Aren't Christians supposed to be giving? Aren't they supposed to be sharing? That's not the point of this parable. The point of the parable is that

- no one can make choices for anyone else
- no one can draw close to God for you
- no one can give you God's Holy Spirit except God

I can't run to you and say, 'give me of your Spirit' so I can make it into the Kingdom of God. You can't come to me and say, 'give me of your Spirit' so I can be in the Kingdom of God. What does that do with the physical presence within a corporate structure for people who think their attendance will automatically get them there? *Surprise! Sale day is coming!*

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, '*No, lest there not be* enough for us and *for* you....'" Can anyone—any of us here who have been together for years and years—possibly convey to people who are just coming in contact with us exactly what we have learned down through the years? *No!* But we can send them a 'Care Package' because they are 'spiritually buying.' We can say, 'Here's a Care Package, there's still time, we'll be glad to help you. But you're going to have to get up on your own two feet.'

"...But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut" (vs 9-10). When I first read that I didn't think it was possible that there would be those who would have the door slammed in their face. But now I can see that the time is going to come when it is possible to have the door slammed in the face.

Verse 11. “And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But He answered *and* said, Truly I say to you, **I do not know you**” (vs 11-12). Why? *Because you didn't have enough of God's Spirit that He could identify you as one of His!* Isn't that something? That's something to ponder on!

I don't want to give a rousing, browbeating, knock-down kill the sinner sermon. Look, it's going to be tough enough! Let's hope that those who are in this condition—anybody can get in that condition—that they can recover themselves before the time happens.

So, He gives a warning, v 13: “Watch, therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.” Quite a thing!

Now we come to the next part of Matt. 25 which is very interesting—isn't it? Verse 14: “For the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man leaving the country, who called his own servants and delivered to them his property.” Remember: ***You have nothing that you didn't receive!***

- God's Spirit
- God's calling
- The understanding of God's Word

The whole gift of God's Word is what it is and everything we have. This shows that we better be about *doing* things. God's Spirit will

- lead us
- help us
- guide us

but ***it won't do for us!*** We must be doing the *doing* as led by God's Spirit. We'll see this clearly.

Verse 15: “Now to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; he *gave* to each one according to his own ability, and immediately left the country. Then the one who had received five talents went and traded with them, and made an additional five talents” (vs 15-16). How did he do it? *By buying and selling*—right?

What is the one thing about trading and buying and selling that we can relate to. Sometimes some of these parables we really don't get because we haven't really understood the motivation behind it.

What is one of the things with buying and selling that people have? That people go through? What about those who professionally buy and sell? *You can either get something of more value or less value!* What is it with someone who is obsessed with buying and selling? *They are never satisfied!* That's the whole point here, brethren. Whatever we have today, ***we should never be satisfied that that's going***

to carry us tomorrow.

Far different from one minister who was quoted as saying, ‘I don't have to study my Bible anymore, I know it.’ He's going to end up being like the one who had the one talent who thought God was going to do it all.

We have the *doing!* We need to *do* with God's Holy Spirit.

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Sometimes people overdo it, yes, that's true from the point of view that they're trying to do things *their* way, instead of God's way, and they end up doing too many carnal things rather than doing the spiritual things. Or, they substitute carnal things for spiritual things. But nevertheless, this shows that we need to be *doing*.

Verse 17: “In the same way also, the one who had *received* two talents also gained two others. But the one who had received the single talent went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money” (vs 17-18). This is likened to the one who doesn't want to do, because God is going to magically do it for them.

If there's any one thing that we ought to learn, brethren, God is not going to magically do anything for us. He will do for us as we respond in

- loving Him
- serving Him
- coming hungering and thirsting
 - ✓ after God's Spirit
 - ✓ after God's way
 - ✓ after God's whole being

Then He will lead us and so forth.

Verse 19: “Now after a long time, the lord of those servants came to take account with them.... [There's going to be an accounting, Everyone's going to give an accounting to God of himself (Rom. 14).] ...Then the one who had received five talents came to *him and* brought an additional five talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered five talents to me; see, I have gained five other talents besides them.’ And his lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ And the one who had received two talents also came to him *and* said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; see, I have gained two other talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (vs 19-23).

Verse 24: “Then the one who had received the single talent also came to *him and* said, ‘Lord, I

knew that you are a hard man...” In other words, in everything that he did he hid it away and said, ‘Lord, where are You. Lord, why don’t you straighten this out? Lord, why don’t You do that? Lord, why don’t You make me do this or that?’ ***God isn’t going to make anybody do anything.*** So, he hid it.

“...you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter. And *because* I was afraid, I went and hid your talent in the earth. *Now* look, you have your own.’ His lord answered *and* said to him, ‘*You* wicked and lazy servant! You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather what I did not scatter” (vs 24-26).

Why? *Because God wants you to grow in grace and knowledge with His Spirit*, so that there are going to be things created in you that are not there.

When you get up in a plane you can look down and see all the countryside and that really makes you feel really little. I was thinking about this: Why do we have—only in the last parts of the writings of the apostles—anything to do with love. I mean, look at John. He wrote late. It dawned on me that even John and his brother James were called the ‘sons of thunder’ because the Samaritans didn’t receive Jesus one time and they said, ‘Lord, do You want us to call fire down from heaven, we’ll straighten these folks up right now’? Jesus said, ‘You don’t know what manner of spirit you are of.’

I think I understand that love does not come unless you have suffered so that you understand the value of love. All the circumstances that we are going through now in our lives is to *teach us the value of love*. The only problem is—it’s sort of an inverse thing—that somehow we don’t want to go to God to get that love from Him. We kind of want God to work it out instead of us going to God so He can help us work it out. We ought to know that God is going to expect things that we cannot do of ourselves. It’s going to be that way. God has called us to eternal life. We can’t do that ourselves.

“...I reap where I did not sow and gather what I did not scatter. Because *you knew* this, you were duty-bound to take my talent to the money exchangers, *so that* when I came, I could have received my own with interest” (vs 26-27). He’s saying, you didn’t even do the bear minimum. You didn’t even go out and do the slightest little thing so there would be something. But I’m not going to let you have anymore.

Verse 28: “Therefore, take the talent from him, and give *it* to the one who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him” (vs 28-29). Isn’t that what’s

going on with the buying and selling *doctrinally* today in the Churches of God? *Yes!*

Those who are going more and more into the blindness of accepting the doctrines of this world are having less and less—isn’t that true? Those who are really striving to serve God; those who are really going to God in the attitude of prayer and understanding, God is granting more and more. Not that we go to the stupidity then of comparing ourselves among ourselves and become unwise and stupid. It’s up to God what He’s going to do.

Verse 29: “For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (vs 29-30). Because they didn’t use the Spirit of God correctly.

While there’s time to buy, let’s buy. There are a lot of people out there in this spiritual bazaar and they are buying. How are they buying? *They’re checking this church out and what it teaches; and they’re checking that church out and what it teaches!* They are learning to examine the doctrines and the teachings whether they be of God or not. They are exercising God’s Spirit to discern good from evil. That’s where we need to be! So, we need to go buy!

Isaiah 55:1: “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who *has* no money, come, buy and eat. Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” ***Those are the true riches of God!*** The true spiritual meat! The true spiritual drink! That’s coming to Christ, because He alone can provide.

Verse 2: “Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread?...” All the foolish false doctrines that are coming along. They’re spending money on that which is not truly bread—*spiritual bread*. They’re spending their resources, energy, money and everything that they have, and they’re now being all wrapped up in that which is not from God.

“...And your labor for *what* never satisfies? Hearken diligently to Me, and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.... [What is good? *The words of God! The words of Christ!*] ...Bow down your ear, and **come to Me...**” (vs 1-3). That’s what Christ says. If there’s anything we need to do it’s *return to God!*

Have you ever found yourself in this attitude? You’re sort of perplexed as to what to do! You know you aren’t doing what you ought to, and you know you ought to do what you need to, but you really haven’t come to the point that you want to do what you need to and you know you ought to do

what you ought to do, but you haven't quite made up your mind to do it.

We could all raise our hand to that one—couldn't we? *Yes, indeed!* What do you do? *First of all, you have to admit that you better quit procrastinating!* Go to God and tell God, 'I'm stuck in this mess! I am on this treadmill and my own mind is deceiving me because I'm not doing what I ought to do. I know what I ought to do, but I just don't have the gumption to do it.'

You have to start where you are and admit that to God. In admitting it to God you may even have to ask God, 'God, help me to really overcome this, because I can't. Grant me Your Spirit that I can get out of this mess. Grant me the understanding because I just don't know what to do.' God will do that! God will hear! But you got to come to Him!

Verse 3: "Bow down your ear, and **come to Me...** [What is it that Christ wants you to do? *Obey My voice!* all the way through—right? *Yes!*] ...hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

Verse 6: "Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (vs 6-7). That's where we need to be, brethren. That's the whole thing!

Verse 8: "'For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (vs 8-9). Let God's Word work in you. Let it produce in you. You go buy, you develop, you trade, you work, and all these things will be.

Let's see how this is to be. Here is the bread; here is what we need to do, coming to Christ, John 6:35: "Jesus said to them, '**I am the bread of life...** [which ties right in with Isa. 55] ...the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.'" That's what we need to do: *All be restored to Christ! All be restored to God the Father!*

Does God know all the problems and difficulties in our lives? *Yes, He does!* *Take them to God!* Are they heavy to bear? *Sometimes they are!* What if you're in the middle of a problem? *You might not see the end of it yet!* Remember what Jesus said, 'Take of Me, because My yoke is light.' Take your burdens and put it on Christ, for He came to heal the brokenhearted. Sometimes you have to go to God and say, 'Hey, I'm brokenhearted, God,

terribly, heal my heart.' **He will!**

This is profound! We have to keep coming! "...the one who **comes to Me** shall never hunger; and the one who **believes in Me** shall never thirst at any time. But *as* I said to you, you also have seen Me, yet you do not believe. All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out" (vs 35-37). The ones who are cast out are the ones *not coming to Him*, because they are not going to Him to buy of what He freely gives—doesn't cost anything.

Verse 38: "For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me." I remember in *The Christian Passover* book I wrote there that Jesus was not taught of the Pharisees and didn't go to any of their schools. He was taught of God the Father.

I saw this on television on PBS: What did Jesus do in the missing years, the mysterious years of Christ's life? *He went to Tibet and Egypt and Babylon and Delhi and He learned all the wisdom of the masters.* That isn't right, but why are those mysterious years? *Because wherever Jesus was He was where the Father was teaching Him directly!* Had to have been when Jesus was being taught of God the Father more directly.

Verse 39: "And this is the will of the Father, Who sent Me... [that needs to be our attitude] ...that *of* all whom He has given Me, I should not lose any, but should raise them up in the last day." Then we go on and see that God the Father has to call us.

Here's what we are to buy and to eat—the Bread of Life; and to drink—God's Spirit; likened unto Christ's body and blood:

Verse 53: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood...' " (vs 53-54)—in a continuous way because you have to put in Christ. Remember where we read in Rev. 3 that He's standing at the door and knocking. If you open the door He will come in and sup with you; in other words you're going to eat together. That's what He's talking about.

"...has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him" (vs 54-56). So, it shows a constant ongoing process. Not like the one with the one talent who went and hid it. He buried it in such a way that God's Spirit couldn't help him.

Verse 57: "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me

shall live by Me.” Some of the disciples didn’t like that saying that was a little bit too tough and turned around and followed Him no more.

Here’s the important thing why study is so absolutely vitally important. As I was talking to a man the other day, in relationship to a sermon that I did recently where I said ‘now is the time for all of those with God’s Spirit to be correcting themselves’ He said, ‘What did you mean by that?’ *I meant that you must take the Word of God and study it and apply it to you and let God correct you directly with the conviction of His Word and the power of His Spirit and then the correction is the easiest to take.*

- Is that not a whole lot better than having to have outside circumstances that God has to send to correct you?
- Is that not a whole lot better than the stripes that Christ is going to have lay upon those who do not yield to God’s correction?
- Is that not a whole lot better than giving up your head in martyrdom as correction?
- *Yes!*

That’s why it’s very important! Studying is not just a matter of information. Studying is a matter of ***the use of God’s Spirit*** and the spiritual exercise that comes from studying.

Why? *The words that are in here are the same alphabet that prints pornography!* Is this not the same alphabet that has the books on the occult? *Yes!* But Jesus said:

Verse 63: **“It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing...”** So, all the trials and difficulties you are going through, unless it is wrought in the Spirit of God, it is going to profit nothing because it’s just a fleshly exercise in futility.

All of the carnal means of doing things is going to profit nothing—these fleshly letters that are here, these carnal letters that are on pages. Not here in the Bible; Jesus said something profound: ***‘The words that I am speaking are Spirit and they are Life!’*** Why? *Because the Spirit of God has inspired these words!* With the Spirit of God *in us*, God is going to bring us the understanding that is in there when it was written by those who wrote it by the Spirit of God! ***We have to let God’s Spirit be exercised in us by letting it lead us!***

Therefore, one of the first keys of using the Spirit of God is ***to use the Word of God***—it is Spirit and it is Life! You’re not going to find life by avoiding the problem. You’re not going find salvation by neglecting study and prayer and yielding to God. Won’t happen! It just won’t!

I remember when we were told to pray an hour a day. Well, I tell you what, brethren, you can

pray an hour a day, but if you don’t believe what you’re saying and if you don’t believe the One you are praying to, and if you don’t exercise the Spirit of God in your prayers by studying God’s Word and letting it correct you while you’re praying, you can pray 18 hours a day like the nuns in the cloistered nunneries; they don’t even speak to anyone in the outside world. They have taken a vow that the only thing they’re going to do is have a few words with each other while they eat, but their days are spent in 18 hours of prayer.

So, it is not the length of prayer that is going to do it. *It is the kind of prayer* as led by God’s Spirit with the belief of Christ *in you* that you *know* that God is going to work it out.

A strange thing happens when you do that, and I’ve observed it: At first the circumstances even get worse! Have you ever experienced that? *Yes!* Why? *I guess to see whether we’re going keep at it!* I think because we are looking at it through *our* eyes, for *our* solution, and it’s not yet God’s time to do it with *His* solution. Therefore, God is still working it out, but *His way!*

Sometimes when there are other people involved and we’re saying, ‘Oh, God, help this person’ and they go out and do worse. ‘God, didn’t I pray for You to help this person?’ And they go out and do worse. ‘I guess God isn’t answering my prayer.’ God will answer your prayer, but there’s also the choice of the individual involved that you are praying for. Maybe God is going to let them exercise their choices until they box themselves into a canyon where they can’t get out, and then God will answer that prayer.

“...The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (v 63). That, brethren, is why it’s so important that we eat of the Word of God, we drink of the Word of God, we put it in our mind and let the Spirit of God give us understanding. When you pray, then your prayers are going to be far more profound because they are led of the Holy Spirit. They’re not just *your words* but from the greater depths of your heart the words that are motivated by God’s Spirit.

As we know the Bible was canonized by Peter, Paul and John. The book of 2-Peter is a very interesting book. It is a last testimony, also a last warning, but he says something here that is profound:

2-Peter 1:10: “For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure... [again, we have to diligently be doing] ...because *if* you are doing these things... [the seven things over here which lead to profound Godly love] ...you will never fall at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the

eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things..." (vs 10-12). How is it always going to put them in remembrance of these things? *Think about that!*

"...although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me. But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves" (vs 12-15).

How is he going to do that? *By writing them!* He is literally saying here that remembrance means a *memorial*—same word used for the memorial of the tombs—a *written remembrance*. So, these words are written for us, that we can understand, that we can know.

Verse 16: "For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory."

Isn't it something that whenever they give up on the Truth of God, what do they go back to? *Cleverly devised fables!* Yes, they do! Showing how the Spirit of God is to work in us:

John 7:38: "The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Tie that in with Matt. 5: 'Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for he shall be filled.'

- Jesus Christ is our Righteousness
- the Word of Truth is the Spirit of God

All of these things you bring all together, brethren.

"The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (v 38). Brethren, may we come to that time; wouldn't that be something? Was that not true there in Acts 3, 4 & 5 in getting things done? *Yes!*

One man asked me why it was that we don't have too many healings in the Church. We've had healings here! But he means in the Church he was affiliated with. I said, 'Stop and think for a minute. What was it that they tampered with?' Good example of a little leaven. What was the first thing that led to the changing of the understanding of Passover and healing? Was very innocent, and very few people picked up on it. *The day does not really begin until dark.* Where it says of Atonement, 'ba

erev' to 'ba erev' showing that it is from sunset to sunset. They said that the Jews say that the day doesn't really begin until dark and you can see three stars. It just went over everybody's head—didn't it? But that was the little leaven of entrance that brought in all the rest.

Then it was when we are called and receive God's Spirit we are healed spiritually, so therefore, the stripes of Christ are not for our physical healing. Next was that the Old Testament Passover was not on the 14th but on the 15th.

And the man got the point. The reason was because it was not the faith and belief because they took upon themselves to tamper with the Truth of God. Therefore, God is not under any constraint to heal them. Why should He be? Think on that!

I know this: I don't have anything in me, brethren, that's special to heal. When we anoint and we ask God to heal, we are asking God's will because of the sacrifice of Christ. Whether that is a thing that we do—because there are some things that have to be done, which only doctors can do—we still put it in God's hands for that. Or whether someone is on the verge of death and we ask God to intervene if He would heal them. Either way, it is that *we are trusting completely in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

May it come to the point that we have it flowing out of our belly—the innermost part of our being. In other words, if we have God's Word in us, God's Spirit in us, and are yielding to God, then these things are going to flow out from us just like *rivers of living water* because it's motivated by the Spirit of God. Again, *we have nothing that we didn't receive!*

Verse 39: "But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the Holy Spirit* was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified."

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 73:1-28
- 2) Revelation 3:15-20
- 3) Matthew 25:1-30
- 4) Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-9
- 5) John 6:35-39, 53-57, 63
- 6) 2 Peter 1:10-16
- 7) John 7:38-39

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Corinthians 4
- Revelation 14; 17
- Romans 14
- Matthew 5
- Acts 3-5

Also referenced: Book:

The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

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