

To Dwell with God (Feast of Tabernacles—Day 1)

Fred R. Coulter—October 17, 2024

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to the first day Feast of Tabernacles! Every year as we come to the Feast, we learn more, more and more!

We know that with the Holy Days we always start with Lev. 23, and I think over the years that we do this, the more that we begin to realize that ***this chapter right here is the key to understanding the whole Bible!*** That's quite a statement, because when you read it, and you know nothing about the rest of the Bible, it just looks like there are ritual days for the Jews to keep.

Of course, they want to keep it that way. They don't want anyone observing what they think are ***their days!*** But these are actually ***God's days!***

Without this chapter, no one can understand the framework for the Plan of God, because the Plan of God hinges on the framework of all the Sabbath and the Holy Days. So, here we have the only chapter in the entire Bible that has the Sabbath beginning at the top. The Sabbath sanctifies all the rest of the Holy Days.

Remember, the Sabbath was made Holy by God as we find in Gen. 2. We also find in Gen. 1 that God set the sun, moon and stars for times and seasons. Here we are at the Feast time, the season time for the Feast of Tabernacles.

We've gone through Passover, Unleavened Bread—1st day and last day—the count to Pentecost and the Day of Pentecost, Trumpet and Atonement. Here we are with the Feast of Tabernacles!

- What does this teach us?
- What are we going to learn from it?

Lev. 23:33—this one little verse is throughout the whole Old Testament concerning all of the Prophets. None of the Prophets spoke their own words. They spoke the words that God wanted them to speak.

Leviticus 23:33: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel...’” (vs 33-34).

The Church today is ***spiritual Israel***, and not only do we have the understanding of the Holy Days ***physically***, but we have the understanding of the Holy Days ***spiritually!*** Not because we're better than anyone else, or know more than anyone else, but because God—with His Spirit—has opened our eyes to understand these things within the Scriptures.

So He says, “... ‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month *shall be* the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD.... [that's why we are here] ...On the first day *shall be* a Holy convocation. You shall do no servile work *therein.*’” (vs 34-35).

You can do any work that is necessary for the preparation of the Feast: preparing the food and getting it setup! Also for a whole lot of fellowship, as well.

Verse 36: “Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.... [Num. 28 & 29 lists all of the offerings that were to be given on these days] ...On the eighth day shall be a Holy convocation to you. And you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It *is* a solemn assembly. And you shall do no servile work *therein.*”

Sometimes we don't grasp the real importance of what God is telling us. When we begin to come to the knowledge of the Truth, then we begin to understand things ‘step-by-step-by-step, and a little here and a little there.’

We do this year after year after year. Many of out there many decades, many well over 50 years. I myself since baptism is 64 years. So, we are to keep learning every year. This increases our knowledge and understanding of what God is doing.

Verse 37: “These *are* the Feasts of the

LORD, which **you shall**... [not *you may*, or *perhaps you could*] ...proclaim to be Holy convocations... [and also in their seasons according to the Calculated Hebrew Calendar] ...to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything on its day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD” (vs 37-38). *Then He repeats it again:*

Verse 39: “Also, in the fifteenth day of the seventh month when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall **keep a Feast to the LORD seven days. On the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath.**”

Isn't that interesting? The first day is Holy Day—that's today—then we have the other six days, **and then we come to the eighth day!** That simple phrase we will see when we get to the eighth day that that is one of the most greatly underestimated, understated, understood what God is going to do in the meaning of that day!

But here we are on the first day, and we are to take up an offering as we find in Deut. 16. Let's go there and see what God tells us to do. A lot of people who are giving tithes and offerings expect an immediate return. ***Sometimes it doesn't work that way!***

Sometimes the blessings come a little at a time! The greatest blessings to come will be ***understanding the Word of God!*** That you cannot put a monetary value on, because it is ***spiritual!***

Deuteronomy 16:16: “Three times in a year shall all your males appear before the LORD your God in the place which He shall choose: in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in the Feast of Weeks, and in the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before the LORD empty.”

- we are to prepare for the Feast
- we are to save for the Feast
- we are to come to the Feast
- we are to understand what they represent
- we are to understand what God is teaching

us and how that fills in with the Plan of God

Concerning the offering:

Verse 17: “**Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you.**”

(pause for the offering)

Thank you brethren for the offering that you have given, and we will put it to work to help preach the Gospel, serve the brethren, and take care of the needs of the Church.

Now let's come to Heb. 11. This side of the Flood everything begins with Abraham. It's very interesting here. Before the Flood we have Abel, Enoch, and Noah. We're not told very much about Abel or Enoch. We know quite a bit about Noah because of the Flood and building the ark and getting through to this side of the Flood.

But from the this side of the Flood everything in the Bible comes from Abraham. We've covered that before and that starts in Gen. 12 and then the key focal point for the covenant that God made.

A covenant is different than a testimony. We need to understand that ***a covenant requires a pledge and a sacrifice*** to prove that pledge. The sacrifice is a maledictory oath, which is stating that ***IF you***—making this pledge for the covenant—***do not fulfill it, you will die*** just like the sacrifices that Abraham gave.

So, likewise with us, we are in the New Covenant. The New Testament is a testament could be a witness. ***Covenant is entirely different!***

Then we have the covenant baptism. As we know, this picture is the death of the old self. That is ***we are signifying to God that:***

- we will love Him
- we will keep His commandments
- we will obey Him unto death

That's why we have baptism with full immersion in water!

That puts us as Paul says in Rom. 6. It's almost like laying our bodies on the body of Christ

and His sacrifice, *because we're conjoined to His crucifixion!* That's how important that the covenant is.

We are in the New Covenant for a very special thing that is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles:

- why we are here
- what we are doing
- why we are to remain faithful
- what's going to happen at the resurrection

Let's see what that means.

Hebrews 11:8—*concerning Abraham*: “**By faith...**”

Abraham had to believe; there was no temple, there was nobody else but he and his wife, and all of those that were in his entourage.

Verse 8: “By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place, which he would later receive for an inheritance...” *He never received it!*

The inheritance for Abraham is greater than just the land of Canaan that came to the children of Israel. That expands out to the whole world. So, when we come to the New Testament and all the promises given there, that tells us that Abraham has a very high place in the Kingdom of God.

[He] “...obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going” (v 8). *Let's look at that for us today.*

- Would you ever have thought when you began to hear about the Truth that you would end up where you are today?
- Or in the circumstances that you were in today? *No!*
- How did we get from baptism to here? *By faith, just exactly like Abraham!*

Verse 9: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, like a foreigner, dwelling in tabernacles... [the Feast of Tabernacles has to do with *dwelling*, and we will see: *dwelling with God*] ...with Isaac and Jacob, the joint heirs of the same promise.”

Now then, it says here's another real distinct thing that we need to follow:

Verse 10: “For he was waiting for the city...”—*New Jerusalem!*

This ties in from Gen. 12 to Rev. 22, and everything is in one way or another related to Abraham and his faith. That's something!

“...the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder” (v 10).

Then you know the story of faith about Sarah being able to conceive when she was 90-years-old and have Isaac. That also proves that God keeps His Word, and that which is impossible for a man, He does! ***Nothing is impossible to God!***

Now we come down to the time of the children of Israel who were brought out of Egypt by the power of God, and the plagues that He brought upon all the Egyptians and killing the firstborn, and bringing the children of Israel down to Mount Sinai.

Exo. 25—let's see something here that's very important for us in understanding what God wants to do. You can read all the things there about Moses and the children of Israel and coming to Mount Sinai and God speaking the Ten Commandments.

Sidebar: Remember that every single thing that there is operates by law. When those laws are broken, there's a penalty to pay

- whether in the physical realm
- whether in the spiritual realm
- whether in our body or in our mind

We must be in accordance with God and His Word, which is His Law! When we are, there are blessings! God wanted the children of Israel to understand what He was doing.

- Why did He bring them out of Egypt?
- Why did He take them clear down to Mount Sinai, a very desolate place indeed?
- Why did He speak the Ten Commandments so that all could hear the voice of God?
- What was it that God had in mind?

In Exo. 25 we find out.

Exodus 25:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel that they bring Me an offering...’” (vs 1-2)—*and I want you to make a sanctuary for Me!*

Verse 8 tells *us the very key of the Feast of Tabernacles*, that is ***dwelling with God, or God dwelling with us!***

Verse 8: “And let them make Me a sanctuary ***so that I may dwell among them***”—that is ***be the people of God!***

We find in Exo. 19, they were to take the Word of God to the whole world, *but they didn’t do it!*

Verse 8: “And let them make Me a sanctuary ***so that I may dwell among them.***” *The dwelling is what we want to focus on right here!*

Verse 9: “According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments of it, even so you shall make *it.*”

Then He talks about the Ark of the Covenant and so forth, and all of the rest of it all the way down through there. That’s quite a thing!

Now when it was all done, even after the time that Aaron built the golden calf and all of the fiasco with that and everything, we come clear down here to Exo. 40, and here we find the dedication of the tabernacle.

Exodus 40:17: “And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first of the month... [the first of Nisan or Abib] ...the tabernacle was set up.”

Then it shows how Moses set up everything, put it there, and then after it was all set up, he dedicated Aaron and the Levites.

Let’s see what happened after everything was all ready, and all the children of Israel gathered around the tabernacle and the whole setup as that was, and they were there for this dedication. They heard the prayers. They heard the anointings. They heard all of the things that were done with it as we find in different places in the book of Numbers.

Verse 33: “And he set up the court all

around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the court gate. And Moses finished the work. And the cloud covered the tabernacle of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (vs 33-34).

He would dwell with them with a special presence from Himself that was to be always kept right there at the Ark of the Covenant. Notice how spectacular this was, and here all the children of Israel saw that.

Verse 35: “And Moses was not able to enter into the tabernacle of the congregation because the cloud stayed on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel journeyed on in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey until the day that it was taken up; for the cloud of the LORD *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel in all their journeys” (vs 35-38).

God wanted them to know that He was close to them, that He put a special presence of Himself in the Holy of Holies in the Ark of the Covenant between the two cherubim to show that He was with them.

1-Sam. 7—let’s learn a lesson here because this is very important for us in understanding what God wants us to do and what God has done.

This was after the Ark of the Covenant was taken by the Philistines, and then finally they took it and they left it in it. They sent it to Kirjath Jearim. We covered that recently in the message: *Where is the Ark of the Covenant.*

1-Samuel 7:1: “And the men of Kirjath Jearim came and brought up the Ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill....”

Now Abinadab was a Levite, so he could take care of it. The tabernacle that was at Shiloh was moved to Gibeon, and God destroyed everything in Shiloh.

“...And they sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the Ark of the LORD. And it came to pass

from the day the Ark *began* to dwell in Kirjath Jearim, the days became many; yea, they were twenty years. And all the house of Israel yearned after the LORD” (vs 1-2).

So, they wanted God to dwell with them, but how is God going to dwell with them? *He’s got to dwell in the tabernacle, and the tabernacle was in Gibeon!* The Ark of the Covenant was in Kirjath Jearim, and this separation stayed until the dedication of the temple by Solomon, and that was a good many years!

In between, we find in 1-Sam. and 1-Chron. that David eventually brought the Ark of the Covenant to his house. In his house, he had a special room—a small tabernacle—for the Ark of the Covenant to be kept there. He had priests in charge of doing that, and they offered offerings, and when David would pray, he would go there before the Ark of the Covenant in the house, and he would be able to see a similitude of God in there where the Ark was.

Psa. 63—let’s see in one of his prayers what David said when he prayed. There were times that he could actually see an outline of God. It wasn’t God personally there, but God’s outline of Himself was there to make sure that David understood that it was God. This is really a helpful verse on how you can pray to God:

Psalms 63:1: “O God, You are my God...”

What is the first commandment? *You shall have no other gods before Me!* That’s the same way with us. ***We can have nothing between us and God!***

“...earnestly I will seek You!...” (v 1). *That’s what we are to do!* Notice David’s attitude toward God:

“...My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You, as in a dry and thirsty land where no water is” (v 1).

The Feast of Tabernacles answers that question: ***When will I dwell with God and see God?***

Verse 2: “To see Your power and Your glory as I have seen You in the sanctuary.”

Isn’t that interesting? He could see God in that little sanctuary where he had the Ark of the Covenant when he brought it up from Kirjath Jearim. ‘It stayed there all the rest of the reign of David, and then Solomon took over. It took 20 years for Solomon—we’re probably looking at 40 years altogether—before the temple was finished.

Now, let’s see what happened when the temple was finished. Everything was made according to the plans that David gave to Solomon.

1-Chron. 28—let’s see the charge that David gave to Solomon. He gathered all the important people of Israel, the elders, the priests, the captains, the soldiers, and there was a great assembly there.

This becomes important because this is also a lesson for us, and we’re going to see a little bit later what happened to Solomon. He started out so well, but why did he finish up so badly?

1-Chronicles 28:2: “And David the king stood up on his feet and said, ‘Hear me, my brethren and my people.... [he wanted all of them to know what was going to take place] ...I *had* in my heart to build a house of rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations for the building.”

He stored up the gold, the silver, the iron, and then he had a contract with those to get cedars from Lebanon. You can read all of that.

Verse 4: “However, the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever.... [looking clear on down into the time of the resurrection] ...For He has chosen Judah to be the ruler, and of the house of Judah the house of my father. And among the sons of my father’s house He was pleased to make me king over all Israel.”

That’s over all the twelve tribes. Originally started out up there in Shiloh, and that was in Ephraim. A very interesting story on that, too, historically.

Verse 5: “And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons), He has chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the

kingdom of the LORD over Israel. And He said to me, ‘Solomon your son...’ (vs 5-6).

Solomon was young. Solomon had a right heart toward God, a tender heart. So much so, God was so pleased that He spoke to him twice in a dream or vision. That’s quite an amazing thing, indeed! We’ll cover a little bit of that later.

Verse 6: “And He said to me, ‘Solomon your son shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. And I will establish his kingdom forever... [notice what is always there for everything that we do]: ...¹**If**, he continues resolute in keeping My commandments and My ordinances, **as he is today.**’ And now in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God, so that you may possess this good land and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you forever” (vs 6-8).

That was the charge of David directly to Solomon! Quite a charge!

Here Solomon is sitting there, looking up at his father [David], and his father looking down at him, looking out at all the people. Let’s take this as a lesson for each one of us, what we need to do, ***because God wants to dwell with us***, not just in a temple on the earth that is physical, ***but with a temple***—as we will see on the eighth day—***that that is in New Jerusalem!*** Actually, there’s no temple there, because God the Father and Jesus Christ will be there Themselves personally.

Verse 9: “And you, Solomon my son, acknowledge the God of your father and serve Him with a perfect heart...”

What is a perfect heart? ***One dedicated to God!*** You don’t have any secondary things in the back of your mind that you do or that you think, because you understand what Christ has said, ***‘There’s nothing hidden which shall not be revealed. There is nothing in darkness that shall not be brought to the Light!’***

Perfect heart! Our hearts are perfected every day:

- as we pray

- as we study
- as we live God’s way

“...and with **a willing mind**...” (v 9).

So you’ve got the heart and you’ve got the mind; both of those work together.

“...for the LORD searches all hearts and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts...” (v 9).

Here’s the key. ***IF*** you are this way and God is searching:

- our heart
- our mind
- our motivations
- our attitudes

THEN He will bless us! But notice what David says here:

“...²**If** you seek Him, He will be found by you... [and we need to seek him with all our heart] ...But ³**if** you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever” (v 9).

An amazing thing, isn’t it? ***The key to Eternal Life***—once we receive the Holy Spirit—***is dependent upon our works of faith!*** ***IF*** you have faith, you will have works, and are seeking and loving God. ***Everything will be based on that!*** We will see how that fits into dwelling with God.

Then David says, v 10: “Take heed now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and do it.”

Well, that’s quite an admonishment for all of us today!

2-Chron. 5—let’s see what happened when the temple was dedicated. They brought the Ark; they brought everything from Gibeon. So now, after decades and decades and decades, the Ark and all of the things concerning the workings of the tabernacle and the sacrifices and the altars and everything are all brought together.

There’s the new altar. There’s the new tabernacle, which is the temple, but the same Ark had to be put there.

2-Chronicles 5:4: “And all the elders of

Israel came. And the Levites took up the Ark. And they brought up the Ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the Holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle. The priests *and* the Levites brought these up” (vs 4-5). *So, they had everything all ready to go!*

Verse 6: “And King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were gathered to him before the Ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be counted nor numbered for multitude.”

It was such a great affair. Now, the way this took place was that on the 1st day of the 7th month, and there was a dedication for 7 days, then they had a pause a few days, and then the Day of Atonement, and then it comes down to the 15th and that’s the Feast of Tabernacles. But we’re going to concentrate just on the dedication of the temple.

Verse 7: “And the priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place, to the Holy of Holies in the house, into the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim, For the cherubim spread out *their* wings over the Ark...” (vs 7-8).

It was engraven in the wall of the temple and overlaid with gold. Everything inside the Holy of Holies was overlaid with gold or pure gold, one or the two!

“...and the cherubim covered the Ark above its staves. And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves of the Ark were seen from the Holy Place... [that’s the place just before the Holy of Holies] ...looking toward the Holy of Holies, but they were not seen outside. And they are there to this day” (vs 8-9)—*that is at the day of the writing of 2-Chron.* Who wrote that? *Probably Hezekiah!*

Verse 10: “Nothing *was* in the Ark except the two tables, which Moses put *in it* at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt.”

Notice what happened, and how similar this is when we compare it to Exo. 40, when God made His presence known by consuming all the sacrifices and by putting the cloud which covered

the whole tabernacle—everything there—so much so that Moses couldn’t even come near it. Let’s see what happened, very similar here:

Verse 11: “And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the Holy *place* (for all the priests present were sanctified, and did not wait by course), and the Levitical singers—all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* clothed in white linen, and having cymbals and with harps and lyres—stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with silver trumpets” (vs 11-12).

Think about what a great and marvelous dedication this was, something that they would always remember. But as generations come and go, even Solomon, as we will see, didn’t remember it like he should. *So, it’s a good lesson for us today!*

- How excited were you when you were baptized?
- How much are you excited today?
- How much are you dedicated to God?
- How faithful have you been down through the years?

All of those things are there, but notice what happened, this was a great crescendo:

Verse 13: “it came to pass, as the trumpeters and the singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up *their* voice with the silver trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying, ‘For He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever,’* that the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD... [just exactly like Exo. 40] ...so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God!” (vs 13-14).

Then comes a great prayer of Solomon. So fantastic, so great that after the temple was dedicated, after this long prayer in which he prayed for all the people of Israel wherever they may be. How they need to turn to Jerusalem and the temple and these things.

God appeared to Solomon the second time right after that, and God told him; let's look at what God said to him.

2-Chron. 7—this is interesting. Now you read all the prayer in 2-Chron. 6

2-Chronicles 7:1: “And when Solomon had made an end of praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices. And the glory of the LORD filled the house.” *Identical to Exo. 40!*

Verse 2: “And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed *their* faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying, ‘For *He is* good, for His mercy *endures* forever.’ And the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD” (vs 2-4).

Then it tells everything that Solomon did here. If this is so great, which it was, what do you think it's going to be after the resurrection on the Sea of Glass for all the resurrected saints and all the patriarchs? It's going to be a magnificent thing indeed.

Verse 11: “Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's house, and he prospered *exceedingly* in all that came into Solomon's heart to accomplish in the house of the LORD and in his own house. And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night and said to him...” (vs 11-12).

God was so pleased with Solomon that He appeared the second time. And He said

“...‘I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place to Myself for a house of sacrifice. **If** I shut up the heavens... (vs 12-13).

Verse 14: “**If** My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways...” (vs 12-14).

Now v 17 is a direct message to Solomon personally. We can remember this when we cover a little later here.

Verse 17: “And you, **if** you will walk before me, as David your father walked, and will do according to all that I have commanded you, and shall observe My statutes and My ordinances.”

What did Jesus say that we are to do? *We're to live by every Word of God!* That's what He's saying right here to Solomon. So, there's no such thing as a difference between the Old Testament and New Testament in what God requires. But that in the New Testament, it is spiritual and is of greater value and of higher reward.

Verse 18: “Then I will make the throne of your kingdom sure, as I have covenanted with David your father...”

Verse 19—we can take this as a warning. What did Jesus say in the New Testament? ***If you are faithful to the end!*** The end is your physical life and then the resurrection.

Verse 19: “But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and **if** you shall go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will pluck them up by the roots out of My land which I have given them. And this house, which I have sanctified for My name, I will cast out of My sight...” (vs 19-20).

Did He do that? *Yes, he did! Twice!*

“...and I will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations. And this house, which is exalted, shall be an astonishment to everyone who passes by it, so that *they* shall be appalled and say, ‘Why has the LORD done this to this land and to this house?’ And it shall be answered, ‘Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold upon other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore, He has brought all this evil upon them’” (vs 20-22).

Let's think about all of this that we just covered here, up to this point, and let's see how it applies to us in the New Testament.

(break@47:58)

Now let's continue on with the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and let's see what it is ***to dwell with God***, and also that ***God dwelt with us in the person of Christ!*** Now He was, as we know, God manifested in the flesh, and He came at the appointed time.

John 1 tells us about Christ and Who He was. Right in the beginning, in this one verse, this first verse, is one of the most misunderstood, but simple to understand—really, when you come down to it—***because people want to take their own interpretation and their own doctrines upon it to make it what they want it to say!***

But that's not how to treat the Word of God. We have to take the Word of God and read it and understand what it says and believe it, ***not to rearrange it so it conveniently fits our own ideas!***

That's quite a different thing, because that's what the Orthodox Christianity of the world does to about everything that they preach concerning Christ.

- How many times have we covered John 1:1?
- Do you know this by heart?
- Do you understand what it means?

John 1:1: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In the Greek it says, '*and God was the Word.*' Why is that different than *with* God? The reason is that there's a definite article, *the*, with where it says the phrase, *with the God*—the Father. But it also tells us that the Word was God, or God was the Word, showing that there are two Who are God in the God Family, yet to be fulfilled through the Plan of God.

Not that Jesus was a lesser God, or a thought of God, or the wisdom of God, ***but that He was God!*** That's what it says in the Greek. And the word order of the Greek does not follow the same rules that you find in English. So, you can't take the rules that apply to English and apply them to the Greek. You have to take each word in the Greek for what it says.

"...and God was the Word." That is literal in the Greek. But to understand it in the English it is, and "...the Word... [because that's the subject] ...was God"—*the antecedent!* In the case with the Greek, it'll put the antecedent first and the primary second.

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God... [showing a separate personage] ...All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men" (vs 2-4)—*all human beings!*

Verse 14 is what's what we're talking about: "**And the Word became flesh...**"—*and that differentiates it from the God*—up there in v 1—*Who was the Father!*

"...**and tabernacled...**" (v 14).

That's what the Greek means, temporarily dwelt among us. Quite a thing, isn't it? *Yes!* He was born of the flesh through the virgin Mary. He lived 30 years and was crucified on the Passover Day as a sacrifice for the sin of the world.

Verse 14: "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of Grace and Truth."

Amazing, isn't it? ***WHEN*** you read these things and you have the Spirit of God, ***THEN*** you comprehend them properly.

IF you come with a carnal mind, and you read these words and you don't understand what it says, and you interpret it according to your own thought, ***THEN*** guess what happens? *You are interpreting it carnally!*

Rom. 8—this applies to us, all of us who have the Holy Spirit of God. This is important, and we'll talk about that in just a little bit.

Romans 8:3: "For what *was* impossible for the Law to do..."

We're to keep the Law, no doubt about it. But how? *In the spirit, not in the letter!* ***The Law cannot convert!*** The Law can give you guidance in what you need to do, but ***it takes the Spirit of God to convert the mind and convert the heart!***

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God having sent His own Son... [that agrees with John 1 exactly] ...in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh... [for the sins of all the world—past, present and future] ...in order that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us...” (vs 3-4)—***the true righteousness of God, the true love of God!***

How is that going to be? We will see it is because ***God with His Spirit is dwelling***—not in a building, not in a book—***in our heart and mind!*** That’s the key.

“...and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; in order that **the righteousness**... [true spiritual righteousness, not just in the letter, but comprehending everything concerning the laws of God] ...**might be fulfilled in us**...” (vs 3-4).

Now think about that when Jesus said that He ‘came not to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill’—complete—and that extends down to each one of us, with God dwelling in us with His Holy Spirit to fulfill the righteousness of the Law in us.

“...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit” (v 4).

We need the Spirit of God in order to do that; that’s something that we need to understand.

John 1:14^[transcriber’s correction]—we’ll look at it right here because this is what Jesus is talking about, and this is what He told His disciples.

John 1:14^[transcriber’s correction]: “And the Word became flesh and **tabernacled** among us...”

Look at the word tabernacle; that means a *temporary dwelling place*. Jesus came and He tabernacled with us on the earth. Now then, there’s another tabernacle fulfillment, which is *within us*, and also a greater tabernacle fulfillment when it comes to New Jerusalem and the conclusion of the Plan of God.

So, you see how everything that God has is layered and layered with many different meanings from the same thing.

John 14:1: “Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house...” (vs 1-2).

That’s the *permanent* dwelling! The tabernacle was a *temporary* dwelling. The temple that was built by Solomon was permanent ***as long as he obeyed, and his descendants obeyed!***

Verse 2: “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.”

Now think about that for just a minute. Each one of us individually look around the room. Look at every one of us. ***God is preparing a place for each one, special and in particular***, and that is the great meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the end result. The meaning between now and then is that with His Spirit, He’s dwelling in us.

“...if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also” (vs 2-3).

Isn’t that interesting? What is that? ***Second coming of Christ and the first resurrection, and then coming back to the earth!***

Now, let’s see how that’s accomplished. Let’s see what it’s done. It is a spiritual thing that is accomplished by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God is received *upon repentance, baptism and laying on of hands!* But:

- that repentance has to be sure
- that repentance has to be true

Later, as you grow in grace and knowledge, you will see that, yes, there are a lot of other things you need to repent of, too, but you take care of those as you come to understand them. That is taken care of by repentance and drawing close to God. ***Verse 15 is the key, because:***

- God is Love
- God is True
- God is Righteous
- God is Holy

All of those things that God encompasses with what he’s going to tell us here now!

Verse 15: “**If you love Me...**”

- How do we love Jesus?
- Just by profession? *No!*

We love Jesus as He commanded, because He was God in the flesh and now resurrected and is a spirit being—God—again.

- What’s the first and greatest commandment?
To love God!
- How? *With all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your being!*
- Isn’t that true?
- Isn’t that what we grow into?

We don’t have this come instantly, all of a sudden; this takes.

- time
- prayer
- study
- dedication
- repentance of sin

That we do as it comes along, because we have a nature that is carnal and we’re fighting against it. But we can overcome it with:

- the Spirit of God
- repentance
- the love of God

Now let’s see what God is going to do when we do that.

Verse 15: “**If you love Me**, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.”

Notice the promise; this is hinged upon baptism, because it was *repent and be baptized!*

Verse 16: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, **that it may be with you throughout the age: Even the Spirit of the Truth...**” (vs 16-17).

That’s something! The Spirit of the Truth is the begettal from God the Father that unites with the spirit of our minds so that we become the begotten children of God. When we’re begotten, we are not yet born, because ***we are only born when we are raised from the dead at the***

resurrection or changed, if we’re still alive, from flesh to spirit!

Those who think they’re born again when they’re baptized, they don’t have a clue!

Verse 17: “**Even the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive...**”

What does that mean? *You can’t come carnally to understand the Bible and say you have the Holy Spirit of God, because that’s of the world!*

- they don’t have the repentance
- they don’t have the baptism
- they don’t have the Truth

they have some of the Truth that they gloss over and

- speak about Jesus
- speak about love

but they really don’t tell you that loving God, as we will see, is keeping His commandments because:

- God is Lawgiver
- God is Love
- God is Truth
- God is all of those things

“...the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it, but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you” (v 17).

Now when God is calling you, before you’re baptized, His Spirit is *drawing* you. ***IF*** you yield to it and keep coming to God and then are baptized, have hands laid on and you’ll receive the Holy Spirit of God.

That is the power of God ***so that you can love Him and keep His commandments and live by every Word of God!***

Verse 18: “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”

He’s telling the disciples this night before He was arrested and taken off, He said:

Verse 19: “Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. **Because I live, you shall live, also.**”

They did see Him after He was resurrected, and He said they can’t take that joy

from you. But here it is. There's the promise: "**Because I live**... [and He was resurrected from the dead] ...**you shall live, also**"—*that's each and every one of us!*

Verse 20: "In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and **you are in Me, and I am in you.**"

Think of that! The Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit of God, *and that's one part of the Holy Spirit of God*, and that's to develop the mind of Christ (Philip. 2). It is the spirit of begetting unto sonship by the Father. So we have the two combined together as one whole of the Holy Spirit given to each one of us as a begetting.

Just like a child is begotten within the womb of its mother, it must grow and develop, grow and develop, and then it's finally born. Same thing with us. We must be begotten with the Holy Spirit of God, and with the Word of God, and growing and overcoming, and living by every Word of God throughout all of our lifetime. Then we die, and then a resurrection takes place, and there we are as a spirit being. Same parallel.

Now notice how He guarantees it. This is what the Christianity of the world cannot understand. They cannot understand keeping the commandments of God spiritually *as God wants!*

Verse 21: "The one who has My commandments and is keeping them..."—*present tense participle, always keeping them, 'My commandments'!*

- Was He the Lord God of the Old Testament? *Yes!*
- Did he say 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God'? *Yes!*
- Does He say in 1-John 5 'hereby we know the love of God because we keep His commandments'?

There we go!

Verse 21: "The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me, and **the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father...**"

Think about that personally to each one of us. *The great God of the universe loves each one*

of us! Think about that! ***There can't be anything greater that can happen in our lives than that!***

That's why growing and overcoming in the spirit and learning the way of God is so important, because God the Father Himself loves us. Christ Himself loves us.

"...and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him" (v 21). *This was hard to understand!*

- How is Christ going to manifest Himself to anyone?
- Is it going to be in a vision? *No!*
 - ✓ it will be a drawing
 - ✓ it will be a calling
 - ✓ it will be that your mind becomes set to want to really know about God
 - ✓ to understand your own human nature that it is evil and needs to be changed and converted by the Spirit of God

Because that dwelling of God within us with the Holy Spirit is temporarily there, ***but looking forward to the permanent fulfillment at the resurrection!***

Verse 22: "Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?'"

- How's that going to be?
- How's He going to go and come back again

Well, here's how Jesus answered that; this is the key, v 23, of:

- everything in the New Testament
- everything that we are to do
- everything with conversion
- everything with growing and overcoming
- everything with developing the character of God

Verse 23: "Jesus answered and said to him, **If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...** [*My whole message*] ...**And My Father will love him...**" *He said the Father would love us in v 21.*

"...and **We...**" (v 23)—*Both! That's why I've said that there are two aspects to the Holy Spirit.*

1. the begetting from the Father to become the son or daughter of God
2. the Spirit of Christ, which gives us the mind of Christ

“...and **We** will come to him **and make Our abode** with him” (v 23).

Notice a clear division, just exactly like we read concerning Solomon in the temple.

- ***IF*** you keep My commandments
- ***IF*** you do the things that I say

I will establish it forever! BUT:

- ***IF*** you do not
- ***IF*** you turn away from Me

I will scrape it off the face of the earth like one scrapes a dish! Same way with us!

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.’”

- inside of us
- right in our mind
- right in our heart

That is conversion!

Conversion is not an emotion because everyone’s happy, happy, clap, clap, like we see with this nonsensical presidential campaign [in America] today. Notice the opposite here:

- ***IF*** we love God, we’ll keep His commandments, and that means *keep on keeping them*
- ***IF*** we don’t love God, we won’t keep His commandments

Verse 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words, and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me.”

That’s quite a thing, isn’t it? ***Everything that Jesus taught came from God the Father!*** Let’s see how this works. Let’s see how living in the world:

- we’re to grow
- we’re to change
- we are to overcome

We have to live in this evil world! We have to overcome it in our own lives. What does all of this do for us?

2-Corinthians 6:14: “**Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers...**”—*to be put together, spiritually speaking!*

You can’t do that! It’s impossible! ***You can’t mix the religions of this world with the Truth of God!*** That’s what he’s saying.

“...For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?...” (v 14). *Think about that with the lawlessness of Orthodox Christianity.*

- they don’t keep the Laws
- they don’t keep the Commandments
- they just say, ‘repent,’ *but not what to repent of*
- they say, be good, *but how to be good, they don’t tell you what*
- they don’t tell you how to have the Holy Spirit of God the way that it should be

What do they have in common? ***There’s nothing in common!***

“...And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness?.... [look at the comparison] ...And what union *does* Christ *have* with **Belial?**...” (vs 14-15)—*the worthless ones who think there’s something!*

“...Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is* there between **a Temple of God** and idols?...” (vs 15-16).

- What is the Temple of God? *That’s very important to understand!* There’s no building we go to.
- What is the Temple of God? He says right here, and we’ll expound it:

“...For you are a Temple of the living God, exactly as God said...” (v 16).

When you have the Spirit of God, you become a miniature temple! That is, you’re going to be a part of the spiritual Temple of God at the resurrection.

“...exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell **in them** and walk **in them**; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore...” (v 16-17).

- because of this great promise
- because of how great this is

Verse 17: “‘Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and **I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters**,’ says *the* Lord Almighty” (vs 17-18). *That’s quite a promise!*

Let’s see how Paul also talks about it back here. When it says that Christ temporarily dwells on the earth, ***He is temporarily dwelling in us at this time so that we can permanently become the sons and daughters of God!***

But just like the child begotten and in the womb of the mother must grow and develop, and it has to come to a certain point of fulfillment before it’s born. Then when it’s born, that’s just like a resurrection. Let’s see what Paul says:

1-Corinthians 3:5: “Who then is Paul? And who *is* Apollos?...”—*because they were arguing back and forth, ‘Oh, he’s my favorite minister.’*

- I follow Christ
- I follow Peter
- I follow John
- I follow Paul

*No! We **all** have to follow Christ!*

“...*They are* but ministers through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each one. I planted *and* Apollos watered, but God gave the increase” (vs 5-6).

The spiritual growth that you have comes from God, because ***God is dwelling in you or tabernacling in you*** with His Spirit.

Verse 7: “Therefore, neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters; for *it is* God Who gives the increase.”

That’s why Jesus said that all of the elders are to be serving the brethren, *not lording over them!* ***God gives the increase!***

Verse 8: “Now, he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.”

- How is it that you are living?
- How are you keeping the commandments of God?
- What are you doing through prayer and study and learning the Word of God?

There it is right there!

Verse 9: “For we are God’s fellow workers; *and* you are God’s husbandry, *even* God’s building.”

That’s what we’re looking at and facing right now. That’s why all of the elders are to teach the brethren so that we all learn. As we teach the brethren and study and pray ourselves to bring you the Truth of God to teach every week so that we all grow in grace and knowledge. Every week a little more, every:

- Passover
- Unleavened Bread
- Pentecost
- Trumpets
- Atonement
- Tabernacles
 - ✓ we grow
 - ✓ we learn
 - ✓ we overcome

Verse 10: “As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*.”

The foundation is laid and you’re building upon it. Other elders come along and they help build upon it, as well.

That’s why we are to always be encouraging and teaching the brethren so that we build upon it. All of this is a temporary tabernacle, as a temporary Temple of God, as we will see. But *perfected* so that when we are born again at the resurrection, we will be spirit beings.

“...But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*” (v 10).

In other words, *each one of us are responsible to God directly for what we do and how we do it!*

- Do we do everything the way of God?
- Do we think about God when we do these things?
- Do we pray to God about it?
- Do we try and walk in His commandments and everything like that?
- Do we recognize the sin that is within us and repent of it and grow and overcome?

This is all part of the whole process of temporarily living in this physical body and having the Spirit of God living within us or tabernacling with us! See how it all goes together?

Verse 11: “For no one is able to lay any other foundation... [only one: Christ] ...besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if anyone builds upon this foundation...” (vs 11-12).

- you think about it
- you think about what you were doing
- you think about how you were living
- you think about your relationship to God
- you do this every day
 - What are you doing?
 - How are you doing it?
 - What is it that you are overcoming and changing and growing in?

Paul likens it this way, to the precious things of the temple and tabernacle:

“...gold...”

- gold never corrupts
- gold is pure
- gold is malleable; it can be formed

That means that to form the spiritual character within us!

“...silver...”

Silver is a little harder, but it’s still very precious. It has to be heated and beaten and all of this sort of thing.

“...precious stones...”

There are a lot of different kinds of precious stones. You will read about that in Rev. 21 when we come to The Last Great Day.

“...wood...”

Here is the one who takes everything for granted and just kind of lets it go by the wayside. It burns! Sometimes the wood is able to last a little bit through heat.

“...hay...”

That burns real quickly

“...stubble” (v 12).

Stubble explodes and goes off with just a good deal of heat. BOOM! and it’s gone!

Go to Matt. 13 and compare about the Sower of the Seed and you will see the difference there, as well.

Verse 13: “The work...”

Each one of us has a work to do. A spiritual work, which is only done as we saw from Rom. 8—*with God’s Spirit within us!*

Verse 13: “The work of each one shall be manifested; for the day of trial will declare it...”
That’s why we have trials!

- Do you really believe?
- Do you really stick to the Truth?
- Do you really hold to it?
- Do you stand for it?
- Do you understand that your life and everything about you is depending upon:
 - ✓ God the Father?
 - ✓ Jesus Christ?
 - ✓ the Truth of God?
 - ✓ what you do in relationship to that?

“...for the day of trial will declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; **and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one’s is**” (v 13).

That’s why we have the trials; that’s why we have the difficulties that we do. It’s so we can grow and overcome.

Now, those who were wood, hay and stubble, Paul brings it out in another way:

1-Corinthians 4:18: “Now, some of you are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you.” *They were thinking.*

Oh yes, we can get along with this sin, it’ll be okay. All we have to do is just live under the grace of God and everything is fine.

Verse 19: “But I shall come to you shortly, if the Lord wills; and I will know not *merely* the words of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the Kingdom of God *is* not in words, but in power” (vs 19-20).

So that’s quite a thing! He said that’s why he brought up about the wood, hay and stubble. They had this great sin among them, and they were all uplifted because of it. No! That doesn’t work out too well.

2-Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore, if anyone *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creation...”

Being created after the likeness of God, and with His Truth and Spirit in us.

“...the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (v 17).

*That’s what it is! **All things are being made new!***

Verse 18: “And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us... [to Paul and the elders there] ...the ministry of reconciliation.”

Now let’s see what all of this is. Let’s see what Paul likens this whole thing to, as spiritually speaking, with all the members as little Temples of God growing, changing and overcoming.

Ephesians 2:16: “And *that* He might reconcile both... [Jews, Gentiles, male, female, free, or slave] ...to God in one body through the cross... [through the sacrifice of Christ] ...having slain the enmity by it”—*giving us the strength to overcome the human nature!*

Verse 17: “Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far

off and to those who *were* near. For through Him we both...” (vs 17-18).

Listen carefully, this is what is absolutely the most important thing on our day-to-day growing and overcoming.

Verse 18: “For through Him... [that is Christ] ...we both have **direct access by one Spirit...** [the Spirit of God] ...**to the Father.**”

Now, think of that! That’s what it means, **that God loves you!** That’s from the Father, as we read in John 14.

Christ in us is the temporary tabernacling with God’s Holy Spirit to produce in us the spiritual reality of what God wants us to be as spirit beings.

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints... [of Christ who are going to rule the world] ...and *are* of the household of God.”

Think of that! Remember He said, **I’m going to prepare a place for you, and if I go, I will come again and receive you to Myself.**

Verse 20: “You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building...” (vs 20-21)—*going clear back to:*

- Abel
- all of the patriarchs
- Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- the twelve fathers of the tribes of Israel
- all of those that attained salvation through the Old Testament
- all of those who come into the Church of God, beginning with:
 - ✓ the ministry of Christ
 - ✓ the sending of the Holy Spirit
 - ✓ the receiving of the Holy Spirit

on down through everything to today, to our time right now!

Verse 21: “In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing **into a Holy temple in the Lord**”—***that’s the permanent!***

You have the tabernacle, then you have the temple!

Verse 22: “In Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the Spirit*”—**because it is the Spirit that gives Life and the flesh profits nothing!**

This is a tremendous meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles.

This is a good way to start out the Feast. Let's be sure and

- fellowship with each other
- love each other
- use this time as a time of growing and overcoming
- use the time to serve God the way that He wants us to be

So we'll see you tomorrow on day two.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:33-39
- 2) Deuteronomy 16:16-17
- 3) Hebrews 11:8-10
- 4) Exodus 25:1-2, 8
- 5) Exodus 40:17, 33-38
- 6) 1 Samuel 7:1-2
- 7) Psalm 63:1
- 8) 1 Chronicles 28:2, 4-10
- 9) 2 Chronicles 5:4-14
- 10) 2 Chronicles 7:1-4, 11-14, 17-22
- 11) John 1:1-4, 14
- 12) Romans 8:3-4
- 13) John 1:14
- 14) John 14:1-3, 15-24
- 15) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 16) 1 Corinthians 3:5-13
- 17) 1 Corinthians 4:18-20
- 18) 2 Corinthians 5:17-18
- 19) Ephesians 2:16-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 2; 1
- Numbers 28; 29
- Romans 6

- Genesis 12
- Revelation 22
- Exodus 19
- 2 Chronicles 6
- Philippians 2
- 1 John 5
- Revelation 21
- Matthew 13

Also referenced: Message:

Where is the Ark of the Covenant

FRC:bo/po
Transcribed: 8/25/24

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