

# Comfort and Hope

Fred R. Coulter—July 29, 2006

In our lifetime, in the next few years, we're going to see God doing a work that we only will understand. God is going to be merciful and kind because of the terrible calamities that are going to happen at the end. I think they're going to be so horrendous that it's going to be hard to comprehend.

Isa. 57—here's a promise that God gives, and we will see this. I thought about just here in this area the number of long time members that have died in Christ. It truly shows that God is doing a harvest. *It really does!* It also shows what He's doing here. I mentioned this some years ago, that as we get closer to the end, we are going to see a lot of the seniors being put in their place of safety, which is the grave. That's what these verses here talk about:

Isaiah 57:1: “**The righteous perish, and no one lays it to heart, and merciful men are taken away; none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.**”

We've gone through many of the prophecies and see how that is going to be. We're living in a time today with news 24/7. We see hatred, evil, war, killing, murdering, accidents, fires, tornados, hurricanes; all of those things coming upon us. In some years they're more intense than they are in other years.

In 2005 we had many hurricanes. I don't which is worse: heat at 110 degrees and humidity that just lays you low and wipes you out, or a storm. What is this evil going to be like? *It is going to be inescapable!*

Amos 5:16: “Therefore, the LORD, the God of hosts, the Master, says this, ‘Wailing *shall be* in all streets, and they shall say in all the highways, ‘Alas! Alas!’ And they shall call the tiller to mourning... [because crops are going to be destroyed and flock and herds are going to be destroyed] ...and those who are skillful in mourning to wailing. And there *shall be* wailing in all vineyards; for I will pass through you,’ says the LORD. **Woe to those desiring the Day of the LORD!....**” (vs 16-18).

Every minister, teacher and preacher ought to read that when he gives a resounding sermon saying that “...the Day of the LORD...” is at hand! It is nothing like we have thought. It's going to be more disastrous and destructive than we have ever considered. But too many people—especially teachers—want to rush God to bring the end so they can have the glory of predicting it rightly. All of that is in ***God's hands! Not theirs!***

“...What *is* this for you? The Day of the LORD *is* darkness and not light... [here's what it's going to be]: ...as *if* a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a snake bit him. **Shall not the Day of the LORD be darkness and not light? Even very dark, and no brightness in it?**” (vs 18-20).

Amos 5:1: “Hear this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel. The virgin of Israel has fallen... [the ten tribes especially] ...she shall rise no more... [of her own sake; God will raise her back up] ...she lies forsaken on her land. There is none to raise her up, for thus says the Lord GOD, ‘The city that went out *by* a thousand shall leave a hundred, and that which went out *by* a hundred shall have ten left in the house of Israel’” (vs 1-3).

This is why it's important that we understand what's going on. We need not be like the world that when someone dies, because God is working His work to do this. While there is grief and sorrow, there also needs to be relief and joy, ***because God is performing His wondrous work!***

Isaiah 57:2: “He shall **enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds**, each one who walked in his uprightness.” *That is symbolic way of talking about death! Death in the Bible is sleeping!*

“...each one who walked in his uprightness”—*because of the rightness of God that He does this!*

Let's think about God, human beings, what we are and what God is doing. I think it is really tremendous that today—since we have all the Word of God, and it keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days of God—He gives us understanding of what He is doing in a general overall way.

Just think what it's like with a lot of people in the world. There was an interview on PBS where they interviewing a Jewish family in New York City. They said, ‘We're Jewish and we belong to a synagogue, but we don't believe in God.’

Isn't that amazing? With minds closed like that, regardless of who they are—that's just an example—they're not going to understand God's ways. Today we're going to understand a little bit more about God's ways.

Verse 15: “For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name *is* Holy... [this the Jesus Christ and God the Father] ...‘I dwell in the High and Holy place...’”

We've seen that with the vision that John was give in Rev. 4 & 5 about the throne of God, as well as Isa. & Ezek. and so forth. But here is what God delights in most of all, and this needs to be our attitude toward God:

"...I dwell in the High and Holy place even with the one who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (v 15). *That's also projecting forward to the resurrection!* He compares this with what the wicked are:

Verse 20: "But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. 'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked'" (vs 20-21).

This is why God is doing His harvesting. Let's look at this a little bit more and go back to Isa. 66, because it brings in much the same thing. What is it that God wants from us? *He wants to give us eternal life!*

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus says the LORD, 'The heaven *is* My throne... [this expands and amplifies Isa. 57] ...and the earth *is* My footstool. Where then *is* the house that you build for Me? And where *is* the place of My rest?'"

As we think about all of the great religious buildings of this world: the great cathedrals of times past, the current ones that we have today. You look at some these, like the Buddhists, they like to have the big pointed dome on top of their temples overlaid with gold. Somehow gold is mesmerizing to human beings. It's beautiful! It has sort of a special thing in the way that it does in color and decoration and things like this, as well as wealth. What could you put in a house that you would build for God?

Verse 2:2: "'For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD."

So, if you build something for God, what are you doing? *You're taking from what He has created to build a building!* Even though God had them build the tabernacle and the temple, that was a temporary thing. God is interested in dwelling in us to carryout His plan and His purpose!

"...But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word" (v 2).

That's the whole key to begin to understand the plan of God and His Word. Psa. 8 gives understanding as to why God made us in His image. God is going to have the desire of the work of His hands in each one of us.

Psalms 8:1: "O LORD our Lord, how

excellent is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have ordained strength because of Your adversaries..." (vs 1-2).

God does things entirely differently! Let's just stop and think about the wars that go on between the Jews and Hezbollah. Both of them think that by weapons, war, destruction and killing that they're going to win. But how could the Jews win? *By repentance and turning to God with all their heart, mind, soul and being!* Then God would take care of the enemy.

All you have to do is go back and read how God intervened for them over and over again. He would send His weapons of pestilence and cause them to have arguments and fights among themselves to kill themselves. Then God would intervene and rescue them. Eventually, He's going to do it (Zech 12). God does it because of the enemies in a way that the enemy doesn't think.

"...to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained" (vs 2-3).

This is why on the earth we have such a unique view of the universe. No place in all the solar system is there a view of the universe like it is on the earth. It's caused David to think:

Verse 4: "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him? For You have made him **a little lower than God**... [the Hebrew there is Elohim, and the word for angels (KJV) is 'malak'] ...**and have crowned him with glory and honor**" (vs 4-5)—*and He did!*

What a glorious thing it is to be created in the image of God, to be given the earth to rule. Even in God's plan—by giving free choice—man can turn against his own Creator, and yet, there comes a time when God intervenes in a person's life to change that to a 'humble spirit and contrite heart.'

Verse 6: "You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and all that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!" (vs 6-9).

Let's see where this is picked up and how this ties in with the work that God is doing in each one of us. Let's see how this fulfills and works into God's purpose. What God wants us to do is that every time we see a completion of the work of God, when we see those who have been the Church 20 years, 30 years, 40 years. 50 years... I talked to a man who has been in the Church 55 years and being

faithful that long.

When you look out at the world and consider all the evil, all of the self-serving and wretchedness that is going on, what a precious thing it is that a man or a woman can be faithful to God to the very end. As Jesus said, ‘The one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.’ To love God in all circumstance, regardless of what we go through.

Hebrews 2:6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than *the* angels...” (vs 6-7).

Here is angels and we are made a little lower than angels. So, we are made a little lower than God and the angels.

“...You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet.’...” (vs 7-8).

We’re going to see that that is yet a future thing! Yes, on the earth He put everything subject to us that we could do and so forth.

“...For in subjecting all things to him [mankind], He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him...” (v 8).

That’s why when you read about the rebellion back in Gen. 11 where God said, ‘Behold, they’re of one language and one speech, and this they begin to do, and now nothing that they imagine to do will be withheld from them.’ *That’s why God confounded the languages!* That just verifies the tremendous purpose in the creation of mankind. The key thing is that ***God is not going to allow Satan or sin thwart His purpose in creating mankind!***

“...But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (v 8)—*we’re limited!* This also opens up the vast plan of God, of our eternal inheritance with Jesus Christ.

Verse 9: “But we see Jesus...”—*and this is what we’re to look to!*

Heb. 12 shows us the focus and purpose that we are to have in lives at all times. Once God starts a good work, as long as we have a ‘humble spirit and a contrite heart,’ ***God will finish the work! He will perform it!*** Now, here’s the thing that we should always be doing:

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses...” *Not only those it talks about in Heb. 11, but also the witnesses of:*

- the creation of God
- prophecy

- everything around us today

“...let us lay aside every weight...” (v 1).

- don’t be depressed
- don’t be discouraged
- don’t let things overwhelm you

“...and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance... [here’s how we do it]: ...***having our minds fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of our faith...***” (vs 1-2)—*so that we will have hope in times of tragedy and comfort when difficult things comes along!*

“...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross...” (v 2). *We can, intellectually, visualize this, but we cannot empathetically understand it!*

Of course, He did this because of His own judgment upon men when Adam and Eve sinned. The first thing He provided for was a Savior with the prophecy of His death! He saw beyond the pain, the suffering, the fight with Satan, the difficulties and so forth. *He looked to the resurrection and the Kingdom of God!*

“...*although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God” (v 2). *He says that because Christ is there to intercede for us!*

Verse 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds”—*because there is no trial or difficulty that has come upon us that other people have not gone through!*

There was on the news a 6-8-year-old girl in a car wreck who tried to save her little brother. She couldn’t do it, but she lost her right arm. It’s amazing that the attitude that this little girl had! ‘I did it to save my brother.’ That’s just one little example.

***Let’s think about what Jesus did to pay for our sins and bring us eternal life,*** because this is all part of it.

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.”

When the times come, when the times hit, it’s going to be startling, indeed! ***We’re going to need God’s Spirit to endure!***

Hebrews 2:9: “But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death... [that God would do such a fantastic thing to save His creation] ...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were*

created, and by Whom all things exist, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (vs 9-10).

That’s quite a thing! God went through this Himself, everything that we go through. So, whenever you’re down or discouraged, or you have a problem or trial, you go to Christ and you **ask for the help, strength and comfort that comes from God, because He is there to do so!** We can have full confidence in God.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and powerful... [not only the words in the Bible, which are true, but also Jesus Christ] ...and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, and of both the joints and the marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

What pleases Him more than anything else?  
*Contrite spirit and humble heart!*

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight...”

God knowing all... When God views the earth and sees the things that are there, and has the angels carrying out His work to get the things done that God wants according to the choices of men, and the prophecies that He has given according to His plan, **God knows everything!**

“...but all things are naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account” (v 13). *He doesn’t want us to be fearful, because this is a great and marvelous thing to understand!* In the hands of human beings this would be frightening!

Verse 14: “Having, therefore, a great High Priest, Who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of our faith. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to the likeness of our own temptations; yet, **He was without sin.** Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy... [and comfort] ...and find grace to help in time of need” (vs 14-16).

Whenever there is a husband or wife who has passed, there is a time of need. Because of what God is doing in carrying out His work and bringing many of the saints to their end and putting them in the grave, I’d like to ask that you remember in your prayers every day to comfort those who have lost a loved one: husband/wife, brother/sister, father/mother and so forth.

Pray that they will understand the greatness of what God is doing, and that in the comfort they

will be able to find the joy that they need. This is quite a thing that God is doing.

Let’s see what Christ went through, and again, it says that *He was perfected!*

Hebrews 5:7—speaking of Jesus: “Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death... [He confronted the same thing that we do] ...and was heard because *He feared God.*”

- He wrestled with human nature
- He had to overcome human nature

Verse 8: “Although He was a Son, yet, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; **and having been perfected...** [tie in with Heb. 2] **...He became the Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him**” (vs 8-9).

That’s what we need to keep in mind continuously with this, **that God is going to give us eternal life!** Here is the overarching plan defined in a couple of verses in John 3 that God is carrying out. As you know the world quotes these all the time, but doesn’t understand it.

John 3:13: “(And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)”

That’s a statement written by John, edited in just as the New Testament was being canonized, to make a very important point: **no one goes to heaven!** Everyone is going to be resurrected, and this includes Mary as well as everyone else; “...except He Who came down from heaven, even the Son of man, Who is in heaven.”

Verse 14: “And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in the same way it is ordained that the Son of man be lifted up.”

Isn’t that interesting how that is brought out? He put that bronze serpent and raised it up, and when the children of Israel looked upon it they were healed from the plague of the fiery serpents that were killing them. It’s interesting that a serpent was put on there, because that’s not symbolic of Jesus, but it symbolic of the cause of sin by Satan the devil for which Jesus had to die.

Verse 15: “So that everyone who believes in Him **may not perish**, but may have everlasting life.”

There’s one thing we need to understand, Hebrews 9:27: “And inasmuch as **it is appointed unto men once to die**, and after this, *the judgment.*” And ‘as in Adam we all die (1-Cor. 15).

“...may not perish...” means to *perish eternally, as if you never existed!* We know that has

to do with the Lake of Fire.

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but **may have everlasting life.** *This is what we are going to look at today, and look at the promise that God has given! This is how we retain hope, and how we keep our focus when these things come upon us.*

Verse 17: For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world...—at that time! He’s going to judge the world when He returns. Although, it says in other places that ‘He had many things to say in judgment of them,’ which is true.

Verse 18: “The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Now let’s see some other things concerning eternal life. Everyone wants to live forever! No one wants to die, yet, everyone knows that they’re going to die. Everyone wants to live forever *their way!* Remember that **the only One Who has been resurrected to eternal life is Jesus Christ!** What did He tell John? *That He had the keys of death and the grave (Rev. 1)!* Only through Him is there going to be life.

Every time I watch one of these things on the History Channel about the Egyptian mummies, or the Chinese mummies that they have found—thousand of them—buried with the king that died. Some of them say that it’s ‘remarkable that they have been so preserved.’ *Yeah! And they’re still dead!*

We know that the *spirit of man* that is in us, coupled with the *Spirit of God*, goes back to God at death awaiting to be put into a spiritual body. Everyone wants to be blessed and to receive eternal life.

Mark 10:17: “And as He went out to *the* road, one came running up and knelt down before Him, *and* asked Him, ‘Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?’”

Everyone wants that, and everyone wants to know what he or she can do, as if it can be by our own efforts.

Verse 18: “But Jesus answered him, ‘Why do you call Me good?....’”

- Why would Jesus say that if He were God in the flesh?
- If He were God in the flesh, would He not be good?

This is referring to **the goodness of God!** In divesting Himself to become a human being, He only retained enough of His Godship so that He could be the Son of God. But compared to God the Father in heaven above, because He was in the flesh carrying within Him *the law of sin and death* (Rom. 8), is why He said, “...Why do you call Me good....” *Notice the humility!*

“...No one *is* good except one; *that is* God. You know the commandments: “You shall not commit adultery”; “You shall not commit murder”; “You shall not steal”; “You shall not bear false witness”; “You shall not defraud”; “Honor your father and mother.”” (vs 18-19).

In the twisting of the carnal mind of ‘religious’ people in the pagan Christianity of this world, they read that and say that He didn’t say the Sabbath, therefore ‘we don’t have to keep the Sabbath.’ *Failing to realize that that was a Sabbath-keeping society!*

Verse 20: “And he answered and said to Him, ‘Master, I have kept all these from my youth.’” *The account in Matthew says, ‘What more do I have to do?’* He probably figured in his mind that he was ‘almost home.’

Verse 21: “And Jesus, *as He* was looking upon him, loved him, and said to him, ‘*There is one thing that you are lacking....*’” *Tie this in with Luke 14* that you have love God more than your father, mother, brother, sister, your own life and lands, and so forth. Mark is saying it a little different way.

“...Go and sell everything that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross and follow Me.’ But he was *very* sad upon *hearing* these words, *and* he went away grieving, because he had many possessions” (vs 21-22).

This is the whole problem in the world today, especially in America! It’s the only place in the world that people drive a car to the welfare office to pick up their check.

(go to the next track)

We need to understand if we are going to have to give up everything that we have. It says, ‘What good is it if we have gained the whole world but loses his life?’ What good does it do? God has something so much greater for us, that all the possessions, all the things that we could have in this life *are nothing!* If you give them up, you’re giving up those things that human beings count as great—considering eternal life and God’s power to give it to us—are nothing!

Verse 23: “And after looking around, Jesus said to His disciples, ‘How difficult it is for those

who have riches to enter into the Kingdom of God!'. . . . [this comes as a shock] . . . But the disciples were astonished at His words. And again Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Children, how difficult it is *for* those who **trust in riches. . .**' (vs 223-24). *That's what Jesus was seeing!* If you:

- trust in riches
- trust in yourself
- trust in your abilities

*Put anything else that you want there!*

“...how difficult it is *for* those who trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier *for* a camel to pass through the eye of a needle... [God could make that happen, very easily] ...than *for* a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God” (vs 24-25).

Verse 26: “And they were astonished beyond measure, saying among themselves, ‘Who then is able to be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them *and* said, ‘With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.’ Then Peter began to say to Him, ‘Behold, we have left everything and have followed You.’ And Jesus answered *and* said, ‘Truly I say to you... [here's the promise]: ...there is not one who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and for the Gospel's, **who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time: houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the age that is coming, eternal life**” (vs 26-30).

God is able to take the things that we look at as difficult and turn them completely around the other way.

- Why would Jesus emphasize this so much?  
*If you have the Holy Spirit, you need to understand it this way!*
- How does God view you once He has called you and led you to repentance?

You've been baptized and made the covenant with God in the watery grave and received the Holy Spirit of God!

- How does God look at you?
- What is your standing before God?
- Compared to your standing before God called you?

John 5:19: “Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...’”

He's saying that though He is the Son of God, though He had human nature, *He's not going*

*to rely upon human nature and Hi physical self to do anything!*

“...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder.... [here's the wonder]: ...For even as the Father raises the dead and gives life...” (vs 19-21).

Death is a big problem to human beings, but it's not a problem to God; it presents no problem at all. This is why when we read the account of Abraham when he was told to go and offer his only beloved son Isaac as a burnt offering; we find the answer in Heb. 11 that he was willing to do this because if he did it God would bring Isaac back to life. Abraham understood that God looked at life and death differently than human beings do. This is what Jesus is saying here to us.

“...in the same way also, **the Son gives life to whom He will**” (v 21)—*to whom He desires!* As much as this world is going to hate it, ***there's no life without Christ!***

Verse 22: “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him. Truly, truly I say to you, **the one who hears My Word, and believes...**” (vs 22-24).

Believing must transform into *repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit!* Otherwise, that belief is really not faith in God, but it's a profession of the mouth alone, ***with no inner conviction of belief to the very heart of your being!***

“...and believes Him Who sent Me, has everlasting life...” (v 24). *You must receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit to receive everlasting life!*

That's how God looks at you. We get up and look in the mirror and we're a day older. After ten years we're ten years older and right on down the line. *All of this in the aging process is also a humbling thing!* ‘We ain't what we thought we were!’ Notice how God views you:

“...and does not come into judgment... [we come into judgment for eternal life] ...**for he has passed from death into life**” (v 24).

You status with God is that you have the seed of eternal life. Because of that, you have passed from death to life. Of course, we know that you have to faithful unto the end and so forth.

Verse 25: “Truly, truly I say to you, *the* hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the

voice of the Son of God; and those who hear *shall live*—when that first resurrection takes place!

My perception of it expanding a little more every year. I think that the world is going to witness all of those who are being resurrected. It's going to be an astonishing to them! The angels carrying us up to the Sea of Glass, I tell you, is going to be something!

Verse 27: “And has also given Him authority to execute judgment because He is *the* Son of man. Do not wonder at this, for *the* hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth: those who have practiced good unto a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced evil unto a resurrection of judgment” (vs 27-29).

Read chapter 12—[A Survey of God's Fall Feasts and Holy Days in the New Testament](#)—in the book: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* and that will help expand that for you. {[truthofGod.org](http://truthofGod.org)}

Let's understand that this exclusively comes through Jesus Christ. There is no such thing as parity of religions, though men want to make it that way. I can't for the life of me understand why Israel, down through time, has always wanted to be like the other nations. It blows my mind! Look what happens when we try and be like the other nations; witness the United Nations.

Everyone thinks we have to submit to the UN. They're a lying bunch of thieves, robbers, politicians, dictators and bloodthirsty people. Why should those of Israel want to be like them? What happens when you want to be like them? *You accept their religions and their gods and you further remove yourself from the true God!*

When every blessing, every goodness, every kindness, every grace comes from God through Jesus Christ. ***So, eternal life is the same way!*** It's going to be the way that God the Father and Jesus Christ have said. This is what the world doesn't like, because men and women in their on pomposity want to improve upon God. Since God is perfect and God is Holy, how can you improve upon God? How can the thing that in inferior improve upon the One Who is superior? *Not possible!*

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

Notice every time what God does. Whenever there is a difficult that comes along, He always causes—in this case His disciples or Himself—to focus on the ultimate goal. This is what He's doing here to prepare them for what would

happen in just a short time when He was arrested and carried off to be judged and crucified.

Verse 2: “In My Father's house are many dwelling places... [this projects forward to New Jerusalem] ...if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.”

Whenever you see anyone coming closer and closer to the end of his or her life, I want you to think about Christ preparing a place for that man or woman so when they are resurrected God is looking at that! That's what we need to focus on.

Verse 3: “And if I go... [which He did] ...and prepare a place for you... [which He is] ...I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also. And where I am going you know, and the way you know”—***if you have paid attention!***

Verse 5: “Thomas... [doubting Thomas] ...said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going... [How many times did Jesus say, ‘I have come from heaven?'] ...how then can we know the way?’ “Jesus said to him, ***I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life...*** [tie in John 11:25—*He's also the resurrection*] ...no one comes to the Father except through Me” (vs 5-6).

What is the ultimate coming to the Father? *Being resurrected and meet God the Father face-to-face!* It is exclusively and only through Christ. “... ***I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life;*** no one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Let's see how God—through Christ—gives eternal life. Jesus talks about how He is the Good Shepherd that goes out before them. Then He talks about the hireling who runs. Isn't it interesting that the hireling flees? We've seen that! We have even heard of those hirelings, who when they decided to change churches planned it in such a way that they didn't even miss a payday! Rather than standing for Truth when they saw that they needed to stand for Truth, they waited until it was convenient. Well, *Jesus didn't wait until it was convenient!*

John 10:14: “I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine.” *You know Christ! You know the true Christ!* How do you know Him? *By keeping His commandments and by the Spirit that He's given you!*

Verse 15: “Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd. On account of this, the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it

down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father.” (vs 15-18).

I think it’s really amazing that when you go through and study the Gospel of John and the Epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> John, Jesus talks more about eternal life that John records more of than anybody else. Every years we go through this at Passover time.

John 6:46: “No one has seen the Father except He Who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life” (vs 46-48). *That belief, as we covered, follows through!*

Verse 48: “I AM the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the Bread, which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die” (vs 48-50). *You pass from death to life!*

This does not refer to the first death, because in Adam we all die. This is from God’s point of view, because He’s going to resurrect you.

Verse 51: “I AM the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.... [Of course, you know the debate that went on concerning that.] ...Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, ‘How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?’” (vs 51-52).

If you know the technicalities of Jewish thinking, you will understand the debate that they were having. They couldn’t comprehend it.

- What is He going to do?
  - Slice off a little of His flesh and give it to us?
- God says that’s an unclean thing!*
- How is this going to happen?

***But Jesus was giving the meaning of the Passover!***

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.’”

We need to understand that though everybody loves the Gospel of John because it’s filled with spiritual things and the love of God, it is also very dogmatic in showing that the only way to eternal life is through Jesus Christ.

Verse 54: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.”

Just imagine those Jews who weren’t believing this. Every time He said to eat My flesh

and drink My blood, I can just see them out there gnashing their teeth; ‘How is this going to be, this is strange doctrine.’

Verse 55: “For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink.” *He’s talking about the symbols of the New Covenant: the bread and the wine.*

Verse 56: “The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me” (vs 56-57)—*and there is the lesson!*

2-Tim. 1—talking about our eternal life and our special calling. This is especially important for us to realize, because Paul suffered many more things than the other apostles, because he was such an enemy of the Church when he was Saul, the right hand gestapo general of the high priest. That’s what he was! When Paul brings these things out, you see the things that he has gone through and suffered.

Of course, in this epistle he admits that all of those in Asia left him. Just think about that for a minute, after all that he did! Let’s see how Paul encourages Timothy here:

2-Timothy 1:5: “When I remember the unfeigned faith *that is* in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that *it dwells* in you also. For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness” (vs 5-7).

So, we can understand the purpose of God, we can have the comfort of the Holy Spirit of God, and we go to God and let God stir that up in us.

Verse 8: “Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of* the Gospel, according to *the* power of God... [notice the reason why]: ...Who has saved us and called *us* with a Holy calling—not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which *was* given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time; but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has annulled death...” (vs 8-10).

***If you die in the faith, that death has already been pre-annulled, and only awaiting the resurrection!***

“...and has brought to light *eternal* life and incorruptibility through the Gospel” (v 10).

2-Timothy 2:7: “Give careful consideration to the things *that* I am telling you, and may the Lord



give you understanding in all things. Remember *that* Jesus Christ, of *the* seed of David, *was* raised from among *the* dead according to my Gospel; for which I am suffering hardship, *even* to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal; but the Word of God has not been chained. Because of this, I endure all things for the sake of the elect in order that they may obtain *the* salvation that *is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (vs 7-10).

What I want us to do is think upon the glory that shall be. I know that when I visit people who are close to the end, and I see the weakness that they are in and the helplessness, I always look to this realizing that this is an end and also at the resurrection be a new beginning: “...**may obtain the salvation...with eternal glory.**”

Verse 11: “This is a faithful saying... [in other words, this is the Truth of God] ...If we have died together with *Him*...”

1. in baptism by the covenant we make for eternal life
2. dying in the faith as Jesus died in the faith

“...**we shall also live together with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign together with Him...**” (vs 11-12). *Tremendous promises!* This is how we need to view the weakness of the flesh and body, and the things that we go through.

Look up *eternal life, life everlasting, life eternal*, and so forth.

1-John 1:1: “That which was from *the* beginning...” *This is to encourage us and inspire us* so that in the face of whatever opposition we may be confronted with, in the face of the personal circumstances that we go through in our physical lives or the physical lives of our husband or wife or other brethren within the Church, we are dealing with what God has determined from the beginning.

“...that which we have heard... [what is recorded in Matt., Mark, Luke and John, plus all the other words that weren’t recorded] ...that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you **the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us**)” (vs 1-2)—*that we can have eternal life!*

1-John 5:11—John begins to summarize everything: “And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life... [that’s how God views us] ...and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has *eternal* life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you

have eternal life...” (vs 11-13). *That’s what God wants us to understand in these circumstances, and always focus on!*

“...and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God” (v 13).

Let’s recall and remember that the Holy Spirit is called *the Comforter!* When we go through things like this:

- we cry out to God to comfort us
- we cry out to God to comfort others
- we cry out to God to give us an understanding of that hope

*and see beyond the physical things and weaknesses of this life and of our bodies!*

2-Corinthians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies...”

When you’re going through too much and it’s overwhelming and all you can do is just get on your knees and cry and ask God to help you, remember that He’s:

“...the Father of mercies and *the* God of all comfort” (v 3). *Let His mercies comfort you!* That is a spiritual thing that will be accomplished through prayer. That is something that you will know and understand, and you will feel and experience, *if you give yourself completely to God!*

Verse 4: “Who comforts us in **all**... [not some] ...our tribulation...”—*all our trials!*

- What are we to do with this when that happens?
- What was Paul to do with this after it happened to him?

“...in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (v 4). *That’s pretty profound!*

Verse 5: “For to the degree *that* the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. And if we are in distress, *it is* for your comfort and salvation...” (vs 5-6).

I pray and hope that more of us can come to the same mind and thinking that Paul had through the power of God’s Holy Spirit. So that when we are confronted with the things that are coming down in this world today we can still have the hope and the comfort and not be removed off the course that God has called us to be in.

“...*it is* for your comfort and salvation, which is being worked out by *your* enduring the

same sufferings that we also suffer; *and* if we are comforted, *it is* for your comfort and salvation (and our hope *is* steadfast for you); knowing that as you are partners in the sufferings, *you are* also partners in the comfort” (vs 6-7). *Regardless of the circumstances!* Notice what Paul says here, that he went through.

Verse 8: “For we do not want you to be ignorant of our tribulations, brethren, *even the trials* that befell us in Asia; we were exceedingly burdened beyond *our own* strength...”

So, there may come a time when you feel that! But don’t let it be overwhelming in hopelessness.

“...so much so that we even despaired of living. For we had the sentence of death within ourselves, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God, Who raises the dead” (vs 8-9). That’s the whole purpose of it all! ***Trust in God!***

Verse 10: “Who delivered us from so great a death, and continues to deliver; in Whom we have hope that He will even yet deliver.” *Of course, God is going to deliver from the grave!*

I can’t help but think about the prophecy that Jesus gave to Peter. What did Jesus say? *When you are old, someone is going to lead you where you don’t want to go!* God is still with you! Same way with anyone who suffers, because this body is going to decay and wear out. I want you, especially all of the younger people, to stop and think: everyone that you see who is advanced in age was also your age at one time.

1-Corinthians 15:35: “Nevertheless, someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?’... [When you’re raised you’ll find out] ...Fool!... [just look at the physical things around] ...What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow *is* not the body that shall be... [thank God] ...rather, *it is* bare grain—it may be of wheat, or one of the other *grains*; and God gives it a body according to His will, and to each of the seeds its own body” (vs 35-38).

***Remember that we have the seed of God the Father for eternal life in us!***

Verse 39: “*Likewise*, not all flesh *is* the same flesh. Rather, *there is* one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds. And *there are* heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly *is* different, and the *glory* of the earthly *is* different. *There is* one glory of *the* sun, and another glory of *the* moon, and another glory of *the* stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory” (vs 39-41). {tie in Rom. 1}

God manifested Himself through the things

that He created. Here Paul is giving us another lesson in it.

Verse 42: “So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption... [and it is] ...it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor...” (vs 42-43).

I can’t help but think of that every time I see someone who bed-bound, unable to really function. Think about everything that has to go on for the care of that individual. It is *dishonor!*

“...it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; accordingly, it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.’ However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural—then the spiritual. The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are* all those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *One*, so also *are* all those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *One*” (vs 43-49).

***Tremendous promises!*** Tie in Rev.1:13-16 about how Jesus looks in His glorified form.

Verse 50: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God...”

That’s why we are not to grieve and be overly stressed when someone dies in Christ. Yes, it’s hard and it’s difficult. When you have been married many, many years—decades—and your husband or wife dies, it is difficult. But the way you overcome the difficulty is with the comfort of the Holy Spirit and looking toward the resurrection. We can’t inherit the Kingdom of God now.

“...nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed” (vs 50-51).

This is what we need to look to! Being in the flesh and wearing out and getting old and becoming rusty and decrepit and needing canes, walkers, glasses, false teeth and all of this sort of thing. ***Focus on what’s going to happen! We’ll all be changed!***

Verse 52: “In an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound... [guaranteed] ...and the dead shall be raised incorruptible... [guaranteed] ...and we shall be changed.” ***Take a phrase from Revelation: Hallelujah!***

Verse 53: “For this corruptible must put on

incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality.” *That’s why we’re made in the image and likeness of God!*

Verse 54: Now, when... [which is going to happen] ...this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: **‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’** O death, where is your sting?... [and your sorrow, your grief] ...O grave, where is your victory?” (vs 54-55). ***The grave is not going to hold those who are Christ’s!*** Just like the grave could not hold Jesus!

Verse 56: “Now the sting of death *is* sin... [because we still have sin of Adam in us] ...and the power of sin *is* the Law. But thanks *be* to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, **my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord... creating the mind and character of Christ in you] ...knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord**” (vs 56-58).

***Comfort each other with these words!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 57:1
- 2) Amos 5:16-20, 1-3
- 3) Isaiah 57:2, 15, 20-21
- 4) Isaiah 66:1-2
- 5) Psalm 8:1-9
- 6) Hebrews 2:6-9
- 7) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 8) Hebrews 2:9-10
- 9) Hebrews 4:12-16
- 10) Hebrews 5:7-9
- 11) John 3:13-15
- 12) Hebrews 9:27
- 13) John 3:16-18
- 14) Mark 10:17-30
- 15) John 5:19-25, 27-29
- 16) John 14:1-6
- 17) John 10:14-18
- 18) John 6:46-57
- 19) 2 Timothy 1:5-10
- 20) 2 Timothy 2:7-12
- 21) 1 John 1:1-2
- 22) 1 John 5:11-13
- 23) 2 Corinthians 1:3-10
- 24) 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 4; 5
- Zechariah 12

- Genesis 11
- Hebrews 11
- Revelation 1
- Romans 8
- Luke 14
- John 11:25
- Romans 1
- Revelation 1:13-16

Also referenced: Book:

*Occult Holidays or God’s Holy Days* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo

Transcribed: 4-26-19