

Gospel of John V Light vs Darkness

(John 3)

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What we're going to cover is probably is the most famous/most known, but the least understood verse in the Bible. Many people quote it.

Yet, people do not understand about John 3:16, and in reading about it they don't understand about God's plan and pattern and how He's going to take care of it, so many people are out here frantically—in God's name—trying to save the world, trying to get everybody to 'believe on His name!'

I heard this priest on KGO: he knows about the name of Jesus Christ, and he knows that you have to believe in Jesus to be saved. But I tell you one thing: *they are preaching a false Jesus, and they are preaching a false understanding about it!* They have no more salvation than anybody else, because it can only come through Christ.

Here is the key event that the world seems to understand more than anything else, and all churches will quote John 3:16.

John 3:14 is a prophecy of Jesus being crucified: "And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness..." Remember that brazened serpent that Moses put on a pole after the fiery serpents came in and the plague was killing thousands of people. Whomever looked upon the pole—they had to have something physical to look at; they couldn't believe God. God was right there with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

- Do you think they could believe that?
- Do you think they could trust God?
- *NO!*

That's why He had Moses do it. As it was lifted up and the people looked at the serpent they were saved.

"...in the same way it is ordained that the Son of man be lifted up" (v 14). This is also a prophecy of His crucifixion where He would be crucified on that stake. There are some people who say it's a stake. There are some people who say it was a cross. It is called a 'stauros' and it could be a stake, a cross. It don't think that is really relevant one way or the other. If you have a cross or stake it still has to come from a tree.

The relevant thing is that Jesus died, and He died the way He was prophesied to die. This is what

it's referring to.

Verse 15: "So that **everyone who believes in Him...**" In the Greek, the word *that* is 'ho'—the one who is. We're going to find all the way through *is believing*—an active thing. That's why a person cannot just come along and say, 'I believe now' and expect salvation when they go ahead with their life and *deny belief in God by what they're doing!*

"...may not perish, but may have everlasting life" (v 15). What is *perish*? There are two things:

1. as we view *perish*: as you die, disintegrate, gone
2. God looks at the dead as though they are sleeping

In God's view they have not perished. This *perish* is talking about the *second death* in the Lake of Fire. We all die in Adam, because the *law of sin an death* is in us; but the death we are to be *saved from*—that we may have eternal life—is the *second death!* That takes an awful lot of love on God's part.

You look down here at this world and you see all the evil things that are going on: all the sickness, disease, war, crime, hatred, bitterness—everything—yet, God says He still loves the world. God says that He's going to *forgive every sin except the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit in the coming age.*

This is why the world really doesn't understand v 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." It is a conditional thing. It's not sure; it is conditional.

"For God so loved the world that...His only begotten Son..."—that's quite an event where God caused Jesus Christ to be begotten and born into this world, and there was only one: Jesus Christ.

All the pagan religions have their counterfeits of it; every one of them! {Note the book: *The Golden Bough*} The reason it's called *The Golden Bough* is because it shows *tree-worship* through all societies. Every society had *tree-worship* or *grain-worship*. What was it that Cain brought with his sacrifice? *Grain!* There are many interesting things that come out of this.

They also have where the gods came down and caused to be born the 'son of god.' This is why

it's saying here: *the God*—'ho theos'—not *a God*. He's clarifying it for all the pagan, false religions that were there. But every one of these religions have some kind of *tree*-worship. We still have it today, called 'Christmas.' They bring in the tree and all that sort of thing. They don't bow down and worship it as such, but I understand that even Catholics, if they have a big enough tree, hollow out the inside of bottom of it and put some kind of 'saint' in there. Some of these Catholic ways are really weird, *weird things!*

This is saying *the God*—the One Who made heaven and earth and created it—gave, *freely gave*... God the Father did not have to do it. But He did, because He wanted to, and He gave Him freely!

- What do you have to pay to come to Christ? *Nothing! You repent of your sins!*
- Could you come with a whole wheelbarrow of money? *No!*
- What did Christ tell the 'rich man'? *If you want to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven then sell all you have and follow Me!*
 - ✓ You can't come with your status!
 - ✓ You can't come with your money!
 - ✓ You can't come to Jesus Christ and expect to have eternal life by doing some good thing!

You have to come to Christ because you love Him, because you want Him. It was *the God Who gave His Son*, the only Begotten. What is the requirement?

"...everyone who believes **in** Him..."—'eis'—*into*, which signifies an active ongoing inner belief *in* God. You can get many pagans who say 'Oh yes, I believe Jesus was a Savior or a Prophet.' Even the Mohammedans would tell you that. You have to believe **in** Him. "...**may** not perish... [it's conditional] ...but **may** have everlasting life."

Verse 17: "For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him"—at His first coming. Christ is coming to *judge* the world. How? *In righteousness!* In all of these things you have to have the first coming and the second coming. When Christ returns He is going to *judge* this world.

Revelation 19:11: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it is called Faithful and True, **and in righteousness He does judge** and make war."

Jesus said that 'all judgment was given to Him'; but that was not His first coming. That will have to do with His second coming. The first time He came was not to judge the world, but that He

might 'save the world.' Of course, there is no salvation where there is no sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin, and there's no salvation unless Jesus were resurrected. He had to die! It was necessary that He die.

John 3:18: "**The one who believes in Him is not judged...**" That's a very interesting statement. Why? *Because the death penalty for the second death has been lifted from us!* The judgment has been lifted from us provided that we continue. Jesus said:

- if you love Me keep My commandments
- remain in My love as I remain in My Father's love

We're not judged. Let's understand something about judging. Why did Jesus say:

Matthew 7:1: "Do not condemn [judge] others, so that you yourself will not be condemned [judged]." What is the biggest difficult that we have seen within the Church of God all the time we've been in the Church of God? *This problem of judging each other!* When you judge each other, you *condemn* each other! You have little group over here and a little group over there, and you all start fighting. Then human nature pours into it and all the rest takes place.

This is why Jesus said, v 2: "For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you." That's why in our situation, we just took the posture that the Scriptures are true and God will take care of it; He knows. What will happen will happen and we'll just step aside and see if we can get our bearings.

Verse 3: "Now, why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye..." Isn't that true? Doesn't that always happen? When you start looking at other people to judge them and different things take place, what happens? *You begin looking at the small thing that the other person does!* Then you become super-sensitive to looking, judging and *waiting* for something to happen! Then you're *waiting* to reconfirm what your judgment is. You're *waiting* for every little thing to happen. I've done it, and you've done it.

- How do you feel when you do it? *Miserable!*
- How does the other person feel when they do it? *Miserable!*
- Aren't we thankful that Christ didn't come to do that?

If that were so we'd all be inkblots right now, and be gone!

“...but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye? Or how will you say to your brother, ‘Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye’; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye?” (vs 3-4). Then it becomes hypocritical.

Verse 5: “*You* hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother’s eye.” So, the whole posture of how we need to be treating each other is entirely different than the greater experience we’ve had for many, many years in the Church of God.

This kind of judging becomes a terrible evil. Imagine how evil it is when it’s done in the name of Christ. That brings it out in a clear light—doesn’t it? Christ is there to forgive our sins! That’s why we need to be helping each other, not condemning each other.

If someone does something that isn’t exactly right, pray about it like it says in 1-John 5, ‘If you see a brother sin a sin not unto death, pray for him.’ Don’t run around talking about it and beat them over the head. Obviously, if the sin is so bad that it’s going to cause a lot of problems, well, it will soon be exposed for what it is.

I’m convinced that God allows sin to stay a lot longer because people don’t pray about it, they gossip about it. I think that helps breed it and make it worse. What happens when that sort of thing takes place and people talk? *You can feel it in the atmosphere!* You don’t know what’s going on, but you can feel it in the atmosphere. Then one of these days that’s going to be turned on you and you’re going to feel miserable.

Out of all this, let’s see if we can learn this lesson that we’re not to be judging each other (John 3:17). Christ is not judging us; God is not judging us **IF** we are **believing** on Christ, on an ongoing basis.

John 3:18: “...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. And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be exposed; but the one who practices the Truth comes to the light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*” (vs 18-22).

Let’s analyze the verse about God loving the world. Let’s see certain things that are very important, concerning what God has done, why He’s

done it, how He’s going to continue to do it, and what we need to do about it.

Let’s understand about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; that He willingly came and He willingly went through it for whatever God the Father had designed and commanded that it be. Philip. 2 shows the very attitude that Jesus had in going through what He went through.

Philippians 2:5 “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant; and being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* **became obedient unto death, even *the* death of the cross**” (vs 5-8).

Why did He have to go through that? *So that we could have our sins forgiven!*

2-Corinthians 5:18: “And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.” That’s what we need to be doing, helping people be reconciled to God.

Verse 19: “Which *is*, that God was in Christ, reconciling *the* world to Himself...” This ties right in; ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son’; we’re talking about the whole world; we’re talking about *all* human beings. But, as we know through the plan of the Holy Days, *in God’s time!* There are people, as we will see when we tie in about the light and the darkness, who are under the power of darkness who cannot comprehend this. God, through this one act of Christ—because Christ only dies once—therefore, He’s reconciling the whole world, but not in this time, but in the time that God has set forth.

“...not imputing their trespasses to them...” (v 19). That’s quite a thing! It’s hard to do that; as parents, when our children say they’re sorry, is it possible to totally forgive and forget everything that they’ve done? *No, not quite, because we say, ‘we forgive you, but next time...’*

It is not in the human mind to have this kind of forgiveness that God is talking about, and to not impute the trespasses to them; not imputing sin to them.

“...and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ... [those who were doing the preaching there] ...*and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us. We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’” (vs 19-20). In other words this is another way of saying ‘**be believing**’ in Christ; ‘**be**

believing' in Him!

Verse 21: "For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him." That's a pretty powerful verse in itself. You can take this verse and go over the series in *Romans* where we talk about the righteousness of God. To where we might be made *the righteousness of God in Christ!* That's a pretty heavy statement.

That's why when we go through and read, 'If God be for us, who can be against us.' *Nothing! Nothing can!* But in the flesh, as weak human beings, it's really difficult to have that kind of real faith and belief unless you go through experiences where you must exercise that faith and belief, so that:

- we grow in grace and knowledge
- we're coming to the Light
- we can do the things that God wants

then we can

- begin to believe that
- begin to act in faith

Then we don't have to take things into our hands such as judging each other or doing things against each other. We can put it into God's hands and let Him take care of it. How much better that the person be reconciled to God? How much better? *Far better!* We're made "...the righteousness of God in Him."

Galatians 2:20—the absolute graciousness of God, the goodness of God in giving His Son. Would you take one of your children and say, 'Here's my child, I will give him in sacrifice for your child'? *None of us!* We don't have that kind of understanding that God has.

Galatians 2:20—Paul says: "I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

We have to understand that it is God the Father Who loves us, and also Christ Who loves us. Just think how much love that Christ had to have not only for the Father, but for all humankind, to go through what He went through, and at the hands of His own creation.

I can't think of anything that is more humbling, or more humiliating, than to be God—which Christ was; to become a human being—which He did; to be killed by His own creation! Even under the inspiration of Satan the devil, that these people

were used of Satan to crucify Him, He was still killed of His own creation. Who created Lucifer who became Satan? *All things were created by Him* (John 1). *He was killed by His own creation!* That is a tremendous example of humility!

In one of these space movies there was a space probe that had gathered so much intelligence and was able to do certain things, but it had to come back to its own creator; back to the earth. It was kind of a perverse takeoff the Bible, where this one human being had to give himself into this apparatus to save the world from being destroyed. We see these things in many different things that people have done, but to see that in a movie and try to comprehend that and say, 'that's weird.'

We need to say, 'How fantastic it is that God has done this with His own Son.' How tremendous that Christ was willing to do it! Absolutely tremendous! Rom. 5 tells us *when* Jesus did this. He didn't do it because we were all good. He did it because we were all evil!

Romans 5:6: "For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man. But God commends His own love to us..." (vs 6-8)—talking about the sacrifice of Christ, and how much love God had to have toward us to even do this.

"...because, when we were still sinners... [for us even before we were born] ...Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (vs 8-10).

I imagine that only God the Father and Jesus Christ will forever, throughout all eternity, really understand what went on between the two of them while Christ was a human being:

- the love that God had
- the love that Christ had
- the understanding that Jesus had

remember, He didn't commit Himself to any man!

Romans 8:31: "What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him?" (vs 31-32).

Here God is offering everything! It's tremendous what God is offering to give us. That's the kind of salvation that He's going to give. Think

about it! If God—Who lives forever—is going to offer salvation, it's going to be so fantastic and tremendous! We can only grasp just a little bit of it.

John was the apostle whom Jesus loved. He was the longest lived apostle. Isn't it interesting, profound, whatever you want to say, how that the one who loved Jesus the most, and the one whom Jesus loved—the Apostle John—wrote the Gospel of John, and in it, all the way through, it shows about the love of the Father.

- no other Scriptures tells it exactly like John 3:16
- no other epistle is like the Epistle of First John
- no other Gospel is like the Gospel of John
- no other book is like the book of Revelation

John was the one!

John 14:30—Jesus said: “I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me. Yet, *he comes* so that the world may know that **I love the Father...**” (vs 30-31)—present active tense meaning that He is loving the Father because of what He is doing.

“...and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me....” (v 31).

We're going to see how the whole sacrifice of Christ is not just what we could selfishly say is ours alone. Until there is repentance, and until God opens the mind of the individual, there is no forgiveness. But when the time comes that God is going to grant them repentance... What is it that grants us repentance? *God grants us repentance!* ‘What? Know you not that it is the goodness of God that leads you to repentance.’ (Rom 2). **God is the One Who grants us repentance!**

Remember when Peter was forced to baptize Cornelius and his household, he came back and reported it and said, ‘God has granted repentance unto the Gentiles.’ **That repentance has got to be granted from God!** When it talks about the forgiveness of sin, and the sins of the whole world, then it's obviously in the timeframe that God is talking about.

1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin....” Remember it was that we are to ‘walk in the light and not in the darkness.’ We're to confess our sins and so forth and God will forgive them.

“...And yet, if anyone does sin...” (v 1). We are to be *on the attitude and course* that we are not going to be sinning, living in sin, but then it says...

When I first read the Bible this seemed like just a terrible amount of double-talk to me. I could not understand it, because John says, ‘I write this to you that you sin not’ and then he says, ‘If any man sin.’ I thought this is crazy, but I can understand it now. We are not living our lives living in sin, but do we sin? *Yes!* That's precisely what he's talking about here.

“...we have an Advocate...” (v 1). Sometimes if you're really discouraged because you've sinned, you really didn't want to, but yet, you did. You feel down and out; you feel God is against you. *Don't!* This is where it is turning the grace of God into license if a person says, ‘Oh well, you know, no problem, God will forgive me.’ He might find God is the adversary rather than the advocate. Christ is the **Advocate!** What is an advocate?

- someone who takes your side
- someone who pleads your case

Christ is able to make intercession. We're able to come to **Christ Who is a faithful High Priest because He was in all manner tempted like we were, yet, without sin! He is our Advocate!** He's going to say, ‘Father, we do have *the law of sin and death* in each one these people. My sacrifice covers that.’

“...with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is **the propitiation...**” (vs 1-2)—mercy seat; a continuing ongoing *source of mercy*.

“...and not for our sins only...” (v 2). What would happen to a person's attitude when they say, ‘God has forgiven me my sins’—*lottie da*—but not yours'? That's why Christ says, “...not just yours only...”

“...but also for **the sins of the whole world**” (v 2). Not yet forgiven, but will be; *shall be!* That is fantastic to contemplate. I want to be there to help get all of this going together.

Ephesians 2:4—grace and God's love and mercy are all tied in together: “But God, Who is rich in mercy because of His **great love** with which He loved us.” God has loved the whole world, but it is His *great* love. The Greek is ‘megala.’ We have the word ‘mega,’ which means *many, many fold, multitudeness*. We have the megaton—multi-ton—hydrogen weapons. This word means *manifold, many faceted, the tremendous love of God; the great love that He has loved us with*. That's a tremendous love to give His only Son.

Let's see how that can apply to our lives in God's loving kindness. Psalm 36:7: “How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! Therefore, the

children of men take refuge under the shadow of Your wings.” That’s a tremendous picture! This is why God has done it, so we can come to God in humility and repentance and love, and trust in His loving kindness and mercy to us.

Verse 8: “They shall be abundantly satisfied with the richness of Your house...” Fatness in the Old Testament is a source of power, plenty, goodness, abundance and everything.

“...and You shall make them drink of the river of Your pleasures” (v 8). That’s coming! I don’t know exactly what that’s going to be, but the closest thing I can understand is back in Rev. 22 that out from underneath the Throne of God will come pure crystal water. That would have to be the *river of His pleasure*.

Verse 9: “For with You is the fountain of life... [that ties in with what I just mentioned] ...in Your light we shall see light.” We’re going to talk about light and darkness and how absolutely important that is. I think that if there’s any one theme that we sort of struck on is how we need to be coming to the Light, and Christ is that Light. See how these all just inner twine so well.

Verse 10: “O continue Your loving kindness to those who know You, and Your righteousness to the upright in heart. Do not let the foot of pride come against me, and do not let the hand of the wicked move me. There the evildoers have fallen; they are cast down, and cannot rise” (vs 10-11). That’s showing the difference between the righteous and the good.

It is God’s goodness that leads us to repentance. Let’s see what David said concerning his repentance:

Psalms 51:1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions.” That’s really a tremendous thing, that we can come before God with that attitude. What are we? *We are the righteousness of God!*

- because of this blotting out of the sins
- because of God’s loving kindness

Verse 2: “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me” (vs 2-3). When you repent of it, He puts it aside; puts it away.

This tells us about God’s loving kindness, His benefits, His goodness toward us, Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me...” I think that if there’s any one thing about the

love of God that we need to keep in mind—our love toward God and God’s love toward us—it is wholeheartedness and needs to be our wholehearted love toward God, and God certainly has His wholehearted love toward us. He’s demonstrated that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“...bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits” (vs 1-2). It’s so easy to forget— isn’t it? I tell you what, if there wasn’t the Sabbath *every week*, how long would it be before we would forget about God. We would be just like the rest of the world. We sure would! That’s why God has it every week. It is a good, good thing! For some people it’s a burden, because they don’t want God’s way. They surely can’t keep Sunday Holy. There’s isn’t any way! They don’t do it anyway!

I tell you what, some Sunday you go to the shopping center at 10 a.m. and you stay there until about 11:30, and the people are going to come out of those churches just like gangbusters and charge on over to the stores. They aren’t keeping Sunday Holy, they aren’t studying God’s Word, they don’t know anything about it.

It’s tremendous to have the Sabbath! We know that is Holy time. We know that is God’s time. Therefore, what do we do in loving God and following Him? *We keep the Sabbath!* That’s one of His benefits. Don’t forget His benefits.

Verse 3: “Who forgives **all** your iniquities...”—not part of them. What is the only one He won’t forgive? *The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit!* We wouldn’t be here if we blasphemed the Holy Spirit. I know people get concerned that they’ve committed the *unpardonable sin*. I’ll tell you how that comes up. It always came up with students at Ambassador College, because they would see that they were sinners, they’d repent, be baptized, and they’d find out that they still have sin.

‘Have I sinned because I sinned after I was baptized? I’m headed for the Lake of Fire.’ *NO!* God forgives all of our sins! We can have that confidence. 1-John 1:5-10 talks about the forgiveness of sin, confessing your sins and so forth.

How many times when we repent, we ask: ‘I wonder if God forgave that?’ Well yes, He forgave it, but maybe there’s some correction coming because we’ll see that the Bible says ‘whom God loves He chastens.’ So, there may be some correction coming. But because there’s some correction coming does not mean that He hasn’t forgiven it. It means that *He has* forgiven it. Too many times our own human nature will trick us! We

will accuse God of things that He's not doing, or hasn't done.

"...Who heals all your diseases" (v 3). I know that part of this fulfillment is that some of those are not going to be healed until the resurrection, because some of them have caused death. Did God break His promise then? *No! He will heal them at the resurrection!*

Verse 4: "Who redeems your life from destruction..." That's tremendous to think about, that we're not going to be cast into the Lake of Fire. Every once in a while when I see one of these volcanoes blowing, and it shows all this lava, and you look and think how would you like to go into that lava? *Oh no!*

Next time you see that, think that God has redeemed us from that destruction. Just being continually in a state of sin, if God doesn't call us, and if we commit the unpardonable sin, just picture yourself being thrown right in there. That's exactly what would happen. But it's as if you were being thrown in and God just reaches out and catches you and brings you back. That would be something! ***He has redeemed your life from destruction!***

"...Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies" (v 4). This is all the love of God!

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The goodness of God or the severity of God isn't it going to be a tremendous act of God that through all eternity there will be no sin. *It's going to be tremendous!* How would you like to live eternally in a world of turmoil and sin like we do now? Stop and think! How would you like to live forever and ever and have the crime problem, the sin problem, neighbor against neighbor? *It wouldn't work!*

That's why Satan has to be bound, and he's going to be bound in utter darkness. And that's why God has to completely forgive our sins, so that we don't have to live in this kind of atmosphere.

Psalm 103:8: "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy." Sometimes when you're really down in the dumps, go to God and just read some of these Psalms and realize that it's true! If nothing else just say, 'God, I'm claiming this promise.'

Verse 9: "He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities" (vs 9-10). Why? *Because He gave His Son Jesus Christ to forgive them!*

Verse 11: "For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more" (vs 11-16).

That's sure true! Just look at how the deserts come, the sand just keeps moving in. If you look at the Sahara Desert today would you ever believe that that used to be pasture land? *There is evidence that it was pasture land!* Now it's just a pile of sand; hot/cold, miserable place; one of the worst places in the world!

Verse 17: "But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children's children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them" (vs 17-18). *That's a tremendously encouraging Psalm, showing God's mercy and His goodness to us!*

Psalm 11:7: "For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness..." If we are the righteousness of Christ—which we are—how much does God love us? *A tremendous amount!*

"...the upright will behold His face" (v 7). It says that His 'ears are open to our prayers' and He 'delights in the prayer of the righteous.' *Those are just very encouraging Psalms for us!*

2-Thessalonians 3:3: "But the Lord is faithful, Who will establish you and keep you from the evil one." Think about that for a minute; hasn't God kept us from evil? *Yes, He has! He sure has! He's kept us from evil!*

Verse 4: "Now concerning you, we trust in the Lord that you both practice and will be practicing the things that we command you. And may the Lord direct your hearts... [God is the One Who has to do it] ...into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ" (vs 4-5).

God is the going to direct us into this love. What kind of love is it going to be? What did Jesus say? *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself!* {Note sermon series on *The Love of God*} Everything in the book of John is going to be based on ***love*** and ***belief***.

Let's me just tell you something that is very

important: The Greek word for:

- belief or believing—‘pisto’
- faith—‘pistos’

The word *belief* is used all the way through the Gospel of John, and he uses it combined with the Epistles of John 116 times. It says, ‘he that believes in Him, believes on His name.’ Remember, one of the first verses in the book of John that we read was:

John 20:31: “But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God...” The word *belief* is used more by John than any other epistle in the whole New Testament.

Contrast Between LIGHTNES & DARKNESS:

John 3:19: “And this is the judgment...” There was one judgment that came with the first coming of Christ, and that was the judgment against Satan the devil. That judgment came because Christ overcame him.

“...that the Light has come into the world...” (v 19).

John 8:12: “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, **‘I am the Light of the world...’**”

“...but men loved darkness rather than the light because **their works** were evil” (v 19). The *King James* says ‘deeds.’ The Greek is ‘ta erga’—which is *works*; “...their works were evil.”

Verse 20: “For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed.” That is so true of human nature.

I think for the first time I have a good perspective on why Christmas sounds so good to people, even though in the Bible it tells us directly that Christmas is condemned. Yet, people have to do a certain amount of good *to feel good*. So, if they do something for kids who don’t have toys, they *feel good* about it. This is the time that’s provided: let’s have a family reunion, let’s do good things for our children, then you tie in all this counterfeit, and yet, it just is not true! That’s how Satan is able to do it.

I’ve done this and so have you: If you tell someone who is absolutely enthralled with Christmas, that it’s of Satan the devil, they’ll libel to take you out and shoot you, because they’re doing so many ‘good’ things. They can do ‘good’ things other times of the year, but it’s that way.

I’ve learned not to tell them that because they *hate the light!* Just like when I was working, I didn’t tell everybody that I keep the Sabbath. Some knew I keep the Sabbath, but I just say, ‘I do all my

church things on Saturday, so never on a Saturday.’ They remember that. But if I said, ‘You’re a dirty rat, I keep the Sabbath and you don’t, do you realize what an evil sinner you are? Do you realize how bad you are?’

Let’s talk about the Light and the darkness. This Catholic that I heard gave the sweetest presentation of darkness that I have ever heard in my whole life. I just couldn’t get over it.

Christ is the Light of the world! The Light that enlightens all men (John 1). All life comes from God! Here we have the contrast of whether you are *walking in the Light* or *in the darkness*. ***Those that are in the Light will be coming to the Light***, and will reveal that their works have been manifest in God.

1-John 1:5: “And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that **God is light**, and there is no darkness at all in Him.” One of the major things concerning all the religions of this world is that they have degrees of light and darkness. Those who supposedly have the greatest understanding are called *the enlightened ones*. But we’re going to see what light that is. Obviously, not of God! In God there is not any darkness! That’s why God is perfectly righteous.

Why doesn’t God sin? *Because He wills not to sin or it’s impossible for Him to sin! It’s impossible! He cannot sin!* There is no darkness in Him at all. How is New Jerusalem going to be lit? *There’s no need for the sun or moon because the Lamb and God are in it and are the Light thereof!*

Verse 6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness...” There are people who are good stable citizens of the society who do not know about God, but who are *walking in darkness* because they are *blinded!* They can do ‘good’ things one to another, but they have not been called, they have not been converted, and that goodness is the goodness of man, not the goodness of God. There’s a vast difference.

Verse 6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.” What does this tell us? ***If we’re walking in the Light and coming to the Light, we are practicing the Truth!***

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.” Even the forgiveness of sin is conditional on coming to the Light. ***If we are coming to the Light then God is going to be***

with us; His grace will be with us and so forth.

In v 6 where it says, “If **we** proclaim...” It is a generic *we* meaning anybody. He will show the difference in 1-John 2.

Verse 7: “However, if we walk in the Light...” That’s where the grace of God covers our sins, **if** we’re walking in the Light.

“...as He is in the Light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us” (vs 7-8).

1-John 2:3: “And by this *standard* we know...” We have to know whether we’re walking in the Light or are we walking in darkness? How are we going to know?

“...we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments.” We’re going to see some pretty profound verses concerning the commandments of God.

Verse 4: “The one who says...” At first John was saying ‘we’ in the greater sense of anybody, now he is saying a particular one who comes along and says, ‘I knew Jesus.’

- I saw Him in Judea
- I saw Him heal the sick, raise the dead and feed the thousands

That’s what it’s talking about

Verse 4: “The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.”

How is that you are walking in the Light?

1. Jesus said, ‘I am the Light of the world.’
2. If we are Christians and we have God’s Spirit in us, Christ is *in* us through the power of God’s Holy Spirit.
3. Has to do with the commandments of God, which is something tangible and visible that we can see.
4. Then we will see it has to do with our attitude.

Concerning the commandments of God:

Now we’re going to see why God emphasized the Light and the darkness, and the commandments of God.

Proverbs 6:23: “For the commandment *is* a lamp...”—a candle. Where were there seven candles? *In the temple!* That was to symbolize the light of God’s Word.

“...and **the Law is Light...**” (v 23). **If** we are keeping the commandments of God and walking in the Truth, *we are walking in the Light*.

Psalm 119:105: “Your Word is a Lamp to my feet and a Light to my path.”

- What does it say about the righteous?
- What are the righteous going to do?

Psalm 1:1 “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked... [walking in the way of darkness] ...nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law does he meditate day and night” (vs 1-2).

The New Covenant is to put the laws of God in our mind, in our heart and inward parts, so with the Spirit of Christ, with Christ in us, then the third ingredient of *walking in God’s Law*, using that for the Light, that’s how we keep *walking to Christ*. If we are keeping His commandments, we are coming to Christ. If we are coming to Christ, we are coming to the Light of the world; so ***we are walking toward that Light always!***

It’s just like many things we’ve talked about. Just like a sphere, where if you take one subject and you go around a globe, that’s like a circle, but the whole picture is the sphere—the whole Christian life—the whole thing of God. It covers many aspects.

Verse 3: “And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither, and all that he does shall prosper. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away” (vs 3-4). I think we’re going to see that in the action and behavior of those who have done it. It’s coming to nothing!

What happens *if* you stray from the commandment or stray from the Light? You’re not leaving the Light, but you may *stray* from it. Here’s what happens:

Psalm 18:28: “You will light my lamp... [the eye is the light of the body] ...the LORD my God will make my darkness light.” In other words, if we are going off into the darkness, then God is going to lighten the way so we can get out of it and get away from it. That’s the blessing of continually coming to the Light. If we are coming to the Light, God will show us. Isn’t that the promise that God will reveal even this to us? ***Sure He will!*** That’s how all these things work and operate together.

Proverbs 13:9: “The light of the righteous

rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” There is a lamp of the wicked, and Jesus talks about this. We will see that Satan is the power of darkness, yet, he appears as an angel of light.

Matthew 6—Jesus talks about the light, and it talks about the darkness that has to do with not only the way that we are walking or going, but it has to do with our mind and our heart and attitude. Then we will see who is the power of that. There are called in the Bible:

- the *ways* of darkness
- the *works* of darkness
- *the candle of the wicked will be put out*

Matthew 6:22: “The light of the body is the eye....” This is absolutely true *spiritually* and *physically!* They have what is called iridology, where they can look in the eye and different spots and things mean different things. It’s true, when you are sick and don’t feel good, your eyes get draggly and red, and if you’re really in bad shape, you even get looking real droopy-eyed. It’s a mirror of the body and mind.

“...Therefore, if your eye be sound...” (v 22)—single-purposed.

Verse 33: “But *as for* you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” That’s the single-purposedness that we have through Christ.

“...**if** your eye be sound your whole body shall be *full of* light. But **if** your eye be evil, your whole body shall be *full of* darkness. Therefore, if the light that *is* in you be darkness, **how great is that darkness!**” (v 22). Why? *Because Satan the devil is the one who has the power of darkness!*

Colossians 1:13: “Who has personally rescued us from the **power of darkness...**”—‘exousia’—the *authority* of darkness. Just stop and think about what happened in the case of Job. Satan came and he got authority—permission—to do what he did. Satan is the one who has the power and authority of darkness, and that is likened unto sin.

“...and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love” (v 13). In other words, we are brought out from underneath that *power of darkness*.

Acts 26:18—here’s the whole commission of the Gospel: “To open their eyes, that *they may turn from darkness to light*, and *from* the authority of Satan to God...” We saw the power of darkness; it shows that Satan is the power of darkness.

“...so that they may receive remission of

sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me” (v 18). Satan is the one who has the *power of darkness*. How does Satan appear?

God’s Gospel, and the Light of the Gospel, is to shine into our lives to expose sin so that we may repent and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That’s why Satan hates God’s way.

2-Corinthians 4:4: “In whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe... [if you’re blinded you’re in darkness] ...lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them.”

When a person is in the power of darkness they cannot recognize the Light. How is that they operate, because we can think of a very basic Scripture that says that Satan has *deceived the whole world!* He has the means that the blindness has covered their eyes and they can’t see *spiritually*. They can see a physical world, but if they look out and see a physical world they view it entirely differently. Everything gets turned upside down, when it’s allowed to run its course; when it’s allowed to go its evil way.

Isa. 5 is perfect description of our whole society today. Isaiah 5: “**Woe to those who call evil good and good evil...**” That’s what happens. Everything is totally backward. It’s the same way in a picture, when you have a picture taken and there’s a negative. You pick up the negative and all of the dark area looks white and all the white area looks dark.

So, we can liken what happens to a person who is under the power of darkness. If they’re in the total grips of darkness everything appears exactly backward, though they look at the same thing, but they look through different colored glasses. So, they would view life as if you would look at a negative and everything is just the opposite.

We have that today with our laws. We have evil laws that are called ‘good.’ We have the good laws of God, if they were introduced into this society, they would be called ‘evil.’

“...who put darkness for light...” (v 20). That’s exactly what happens; they put Satan’s way for God’s way.

“...and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! **Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink**” (vs 20-22). You could take that spiritually or physically—both.

I think that if there were any drunken person *spiritually* I've ever heard of, it was this Catholic priest on KGO explaining why the Catholics are so good, great and wonderful. It was just sugarcoated so sweet! He said that an atheist can be just as close to God as a good Catholic. I thought *incredible!* How can an atheist be close to God? *Stupid!* Why can an atheist never be close to God? *Because:*

Hebrews 11:6: "...for it is mandatory for the **one who comes to God to believe that He exists...**" If you don't believe Who He is, how can you be close to Him?

Isaiah 5:23: "Who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame burns up the chaff; their root shall be like rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up like dust because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of hosts... [we're right back to the Law is Light; the commandment is a lamp] ...and despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel."

They have! They have replaced it with a 'yearly missal for their prayers. I heard one of these good Catholics call up and say, 'How can these people be Christian, they don't even have prayers and a missal to read from.'

The Ways of Darkness:

Proverbs 2:10: "Wisdom shall enter into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul." Obviously God's way; being enlightened with God's Word.

Verse 11: "Discretion shall preserve you and, understanding shall keep you, to deliver you from the way of the evil *man*, from the man who speaks wicked things, those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in **the ways of darkness**" (vs 11-13). And the deeper they go into Satan's way—the depths of Satan—the darker it becomes, and the more they claim they have light—because they are getting closer to Satan who appears as an angel of light.

Proverbs 4:19: "The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble." I would have to say that's a perfect description of homosexuals and AIDS. They want the government to solve it. They want them to give them a vaccine and they're getting it and they don't know why they're getting it, yet, they're told why they're getting it. They're so blind they can't understand it. I'm sure that's the same with many, many other things, many other crimes and ways of human beings.

They walk in darkness and they don't know what they're stumbling at! The Jews are walking in

darkness and stumbled over Christ, and they didn't know.

John 12:31: "Now is *the* judgment of this world...." Jesus was saying this just before His last Passover. This would put it on the Sabbath before He was crucified.

"...Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to Myself.' But He said this to signify by what death He was about to die. The people answered Him, 'We have heard out of the law that the Christ lives forever, and why do You say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?' Then Jesus said to them, 'Yet, a little while the Light is with you. Walk while you have the Light, **so that *the* darkness will not overtake you...**'" (vs 31-35). We can use that for us. If we are not walking and coming to the Light then darkness is going to come upon us.

"...For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going" (v 35). How many people are out there and they don't know what life is about, where they're going or anything.

Verse 36: "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become *the* children of Light.'.... [rather than the children of darkness] ...Jesus spoke these things and *then* departed from them *and* was *in* hiding."

Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful **works of darkness**, but rather expose *them*." Let the Light expose them!

Let's see how a person, being a Christian and stopping his walk to the Light, can do it.

1-John 2:8: "Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the **true Light** is already shining. **Anyone who claims that he is in the Light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now**" (vs 8-9). That's the one thing Satan can use to get people off the path of light and get in an attitude of hatred.

Verse 10: "The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going **because the darkness has blinded his eyes**" (vs 10-11). That's why Jesus says, 'Judge not that you be not judged.'

That is the third thing of the attitude if you practice hatred. We are to love righteousness and hate sin, but we are not to hate brethren! Why are we to hate sin? *Because sin is what destroys!* We are not

to hate people, because that puts us in an attitude of hatred. Jesus said, 'You've heard in time past to love your neighbor and hate your enemy, but I say to you love your enemies.'

You may have to work at doing that so that your attitude will be right, because you understand why they are your enemies. Commend them into God's hands; whatever God wants to do, let Him take care of it and don't sit in the seat of God to execute judgment upon them. That's far better! It's a lot easier and you don't go around with mental hang-ups.

You can't go out to hate just to hate. You're to hate sin *so that we can turn to righteousness*. We're not to hate people, because that puts us in a despising attitude of what God has created, and who knows, *may call*. The biggest thing to really be aware of: *the author of darkness Satan the devil*, and also the religious leaders. They look so good and sound so good. I never heard anybody talk nicer than this Catholic priest who was talking about Catholicism.

2-Corinthians 11:13: For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (vs 13-14). Yet, he is the one who has the power of darkness! Isn't it interesting, every great new leap into sin is called *progress, enlightenment*.

Verse 15: "Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works." That's why God wants us to:

- walk in faith
- walk in the Light
- believe in Him

He will take care of us!

SATAN'S FATE:

Jude 13: "Raging waves of *the sea*, casting up like foam their own *ignominious* shame; wandering stars... [the third of the angels that fell with Satan] **...for whom has been reserved the blackest darkness forever!**"

That's going to be the ultimate of Satan's fate. While we are living in New Jerusalem, in the light of the Father and of Christ, Satan is going to be out here somewhere in the universe where he's going to be confined in utter, absolute darkness and blackness forever and ever!

{Note sermon series: *Grace of God*}

John 3:21: "But the one who practices the Truth..." That's us! Let's make sure we are practicing the Truth:

- God's Law
- God's commandments
- God's way

Jesus said:

- I am the Way, the Truth and the Life
- I am the Light of the World

"...comes to the Light, so that his works ['erga'] may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (v 21).

- Let's walk in the Light!
- Let's keep coming to the Light!

Let's have God be with us so that these things of darkness can be not overtaking us or overpowering us!

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

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- 5) John 3:18-22
- 6) Philippians 2:5-8
- 7) 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
- 8) Galatians 2:20
- 9) Romans 5:6-10
- 10) Romans 8:31-32
- 11) John 14:30-31
- 12) 1 John 2:1-2
- 13) Ephesians 2:4
- 14) Psalm 36:7-11
- 15) Psalm 51:1-3
- 16) Psalm 103:1-4, 8-18
- 17) Psalm 11:7
- 18) 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5
- 19) John 20:31
- 20) John 3:19
- 21) John 8:12, 19-20
- 22) 1 John 1:5-8
- 23) 1 John 2:3-4
- 24) Proverbs 6:23
- 25) Psalm 119:105
- 26) Psalm 1:1-4
- 27) Psalm 18:28
- 28) Proverbs 13:9
- 29) Mathew 6:22, 33, 22
- 30) Colossians 1:13
- 31) Acts 26:18
- 32) 2 Corinthians 4:4

- 33) Isaiah 5:20-22
- 34) Hebrews 11:6
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- 37) Proverbs 4:19
- 38) John 12:31-36
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- 1 John 5
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Book: *The Golden Bough* by James Frazer

Sermon Series:

- *Romans*
- *Love of God*
- *Grace of God*

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