

The Seven Churches

Watch yourself! For there shall come in wolves who will devour the flock; men will rise up to speak things that will lead people astray!

Fred R. Coulter—July 12, 2025

The seven Churches in Rev. 2 & 3. But first let's come to Matt. 13 and look at something here, because in this tells us about the circumstances that we will always be faced at the present time. It's like Jesus said, many are called but few are chosen. Few are chosen because:

1. they won't repent
2. they are blinded

Let's understand about the blinding and if God blinds them, but the first thing of ***blinding takes place when we do not believe God! When we reject the Word of God, that gives a blinding to the mind!*** You have eyes to see, you have ears to hear, but you don't understand.

So, Jesus was speaking in parables to them and the disciples wanted to know: Why do you speak to them in parables? Matt. 13 is an ongoing thing from the time of Christ right down to His return. And we will see some important things concerning this and then apply them as we look in Rev. 2 & 3.

Matthew 13:11: "And He answered *and* said to them, '**Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven...**'" I want you to think about that.

- What is it that we understand?
- How do we understand it?

I think you will find ***that the more that you study the Bible***—the more that you live by it and believe it and know it's true—***the more you learn from it!*** As you study and reread, however long you live, and daily prayer, because prayer is a very important thing, ***and repentance is necessary so that we don't blind ourselves first!*** We'll see the blinding here in just a bit.

Verse 12: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given..."—*If you apply yourself!*

If you don't apply yourself and you slack off and you just kind of coast, then you have two things working against you:

1. your own carnal mind with the temptations of sin within
2. Satan the devil from the outside

We have that today as I've mentioned many, many times, we've got television and as soon as we turn it on the world is in our living room and everything that is there.

Sidebar on television: I want you to watch the television ads *muted*. I want you to see the image. I want you to see if you can understand how much subliminal, *which is you see it but you don't recognize what's going into your mind!* I want you to see if you can recognize how many sexual overtures are right on the advertisements in:

- the way they're dressed
- the way that they look
- the things that are presented

I think you will be amazed! Some of them are so blatant that I won't even bring it up in a message. I'll let you see if you can do a little detective work and see if you can find it

Because when these things come into our minds and they become part of our thought process whether we know it or not ***then this takes us away from God! This takes us away from His Spirit!***

Verse 13: "For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand."

They can hear it! Now you go to all of the fake religious channels and they are getting so bad. I can't even describe it. ***It's it is childish lunacy!***

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, **and their eyes they have closed...**'" (vs 14-15).

We will see that this is important when we get to Rev. 2 & 3. ***Problems come into the Church because they fail to understand the first responsibility of understanding the Word of God as He gives His Holy Spirit begins with us:***

- being able to study
- being able to see

To see means to learn and apply!

"...**their eyes they have closed...**"—*and Satan's done a good job with the Christianity of this world.* Anybody who follows that has got to be very deficient.

"...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand

with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (v 15). *That’s why there’s the second resurrection!*

What Jesus is describing here means *they weren’t called!* When the call goes out and we find that in Matt. 20 *‘many are called but few are chosen.’* But Why? *Because few are willing to believe, obey or love God!*

Everything they want in their carnality is that it comes to them in the way of the love of God. All they have to do is ‘just believe’ and everything just fine. I got an email just the other day: ‘Well I don’t have to keep the Law because I believe in Jesus and the Law was made for the unconverted.’ Ever hear of the Spirit of the Law?

That’s what we are to do because *the Spirit of the Law is the power behind the letter of the Law!* But you have to *believe and obey* and receive God’s Spirit through repentance and baptism *so that with the Spirit of God you can truly, truly understand!*

Verse 16: “But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.”

We are today, with everything that we’re living through, with everything that we’re seeing, having the Word of God, every bit of it!

Verse 17: “For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard.”

Think about that. Think of how important all of these things that God has given to us really are. Let’s see what it’s like with Satan the devil, ‘Johnny on the Spot,’ and all of his servants that he sows in the world. *There are many!*

What happens when people believe a lie and when they believe it, they believe it with the same intensity that they would the Truth. You can see that when you watch all the riots against the ICE agents—Immigration and Customs Enforcement—*that they believe the lie!* They have no room for Truth in their minds, and they are fervent. Fervent to the point of rioting and even killing.

So you see, *to believe God in the way that He wants needs to be more powerful in our lives* than what they believe in Satan’s deceptions.

Now then, as we will see when we get to Rev. 2 & 3, that there is always a battle going on in:

- holding on to the Truth
- using the Spirit of God
- understanding the Word of God
- growing in grace and knowledge
- preparing for the first resurrection

Verse 24: “And He put another parable before them, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field.’”

- the field is the world
- the world is the world
- the good seed is the Word of God
- the One Who is sowing is Christ

Verse 25: “But while men were sleeping... [not paying attention to what was going on] ...his enemy came...”

Who is the chief enemy? *Satan the devil and the demons and those that follow him!*

“...and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. Now, when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared” (vs 25-26).

- Why does he say *fruit*? *Because you will know them by their fruit!*

In other words:

- What are they producing in their lives? *That will be visible; you will know them!*

“...then the tares also appeared” (v 26).

But the thing with tares is that they have *no spiritual* fruit. They may speak of the Word of God. They may think they’re worshiping God. What we’re getting into is we will see is something that has happened all the way back to Adam and Eve. When they ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, *it opened their minds to evil and closed their eyes to God’s way!*

That’s a simple thing. We need to understand what’s going on.

Verse 27: “And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?’ And he said to them, ‘A man *who is* an enemy has done this.’ Then the servants said to him, ‘Do you want us to go out and gather them?’ [gather the tares, take them out] ...But he said, ‘No...’” (vs 27-29)

That’s interesting, isn’t it? Why did Jesus say no? The main thing is this:

Do those who believe use the Spirit and Word of God to maintain the Truth and live by every Word of God:

- in spite of the circumstances that come along?
- in spite of someone bringing false doctrine?

Now, we will see that’s important.

Verse 29: “But He said, ‘No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with

them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest..." (vs 29-30).

In other words, ***the harvest is the first resurrection!*** So all the way down through time, there's been this:

- fight against evil
- fight against encroachers
- fight against subversion

God expects us to judge everything by his Word and believe the Truth, and not get taken down by the false doctrines of the world!

"...and at the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, 'Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary'" (v 30). ***That's into the Kingdom of God.***

Now let's look at another thing as to how this occurs. Let's come to 2-Tim. 3 and let's see how he wrote this and how important that this is in what we do and what we understand.

The first part applies to us today, but also the first part, or you might say the first type of this happening was the last days of the apostles, because after John died, Satan's avalanche came in unbelievable in changing doctrine. It took 300 years, but it did happen.

2-Timothy 3:1: "Know this also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy... [Sound like the nightly news? *Yes indeed!*] ...without natural affection... [perverted sex habits; and do we have that today!?] ...implacable... [immovable, can't convince them with anything] ...slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good" (vs 1-3)—*or trying to do good, even in the nations!*

Always remember this, God deals with different people at different levels. God deals with the Church:

- with His Spirit
- with His ministers
- with the brethren
 - ✓ through Christ
 - ✓ through the Holy Spirit that we have upon repentance and baptism

Then we have the world, and the world is required to do what is right in what we are saying today, common sense and goodwill. And like Bruce brought up in his message—*Is There a Second Resurrection?*—that the people of Nineveh repented, but they weren't called to salvation. So, God deals with people on a national level. Then you can take that down to a community level.

Then He deals with the wicked. And the wicked, suffer from their own sins and the penalties of it. All you have to do is look at the problems with:

- drugs
- illicit sex
- abortion

God judges entire nations based upon those.

Verse 4: "Betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

The next time you watch any sports in a stadium, and I think about this every once in a while when I see it: here's a stadium full of people, full house, whatever the sport may be. And there are dozens of sports today. You have all of those who are cheering for the home team. All of those who are cheering that the enemy be defeated. Then the enemy team is working to defeat the home team. Is anyone thinking on God? *No!*

- they have their idols
- they have their heroes
- they have their statistics
- their minds are on it
- that's all they talk about

That's what it is today!

Verse 13: "But wicked men and imposters..." ***Who are the imposters?***

- the false ministers
- every Sunday-keeper
- every holiday-keeper

They may read some Scripture, but they are imposters. Now, one of the best speakers today that they have is David Jeremiah. He does a pretty good job, but he goes off with the 'rapture' all the time. Now, they did have one that was better than him and that was Charles Stanley, but he died and his son was so incompetent, they couldn't even have him on the program. They tried it a few times, but it didn't work. But even Charles Stanley, as good as he was:

- come to the Sabbath, whoop! high hurdle
- come to the Holy Days, whoop! a high hurdle

Impostors! Like Jesus said, as we read in Matt. 13, 'you know them by their fruits.'

"...shall become worse and worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves" (v 13).

Now, what is the greatest deception of all? ***That you believe your lies unto death!*** Now then, here's instruction for Timothy, but also for all of us.

Verse 14: "But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that

from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation..." (vs 14-15).

That's the whole of the Old Testament and what the apostles were writing. You go to Acts 6 and the apostles said, 'We're not going to wait on tables any longer. We have to give ourselves to the ministry of the Word.' What does that mean? *That means they were writing it down.* They needed to have those things to teach all that were converted, because there were great conversions right at first among the Jews. Was amazing!

"...wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus" (v 15).

Then he says one of the most important Scriptures for us to know.

- Why do we have the Bible?
- Why is it containing the Truth of God?
- Why don't those who are intelligent and wise really understand it?

Well, we saw:

- they blind their eyes
- then God blinds them
- they believe their own philosophies
- they don't know

Verse 16: "**All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine...**"

The word 'breathed' comes from the word 'penuma,' which means spirit, and it means **God-spirited** those words. In other words, God put it into the mind of the one who was writing what He wanted written, the way that that person would write it under the inspiration of God.

God-breathed, which also tells us if you had an opportunity to sit down and talk to God, what would He tell you? ***What's in the Bible! That's what he would tell you!*** That's why we have it; ***it's God spirited!***

Jesus said, 'The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit, and they are Life.'

- this becomes a great blessing
- this becomes a great tool
- this becomes a great education for us
- this is why we have it

Now living in the end-times, and if you don't believe we're living in the end times, I don't know what the end-times are going to be like. .

"...for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness so that the man of God..." (v 16-17)—*the one who is the teacher, but applies to every person!*

Remember that the word 'woman' means that woman came from man. So, when it says 'man' it also includes women. Then specifically when it mentions women directly.

Verse 17: "**So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.**"

Before we get back to the Scriptures, I want to cover a couple of things. Right now, we are having printed this book. It's a brand new Transcript Book: *The Love of God: Surpassing Human Knowledge.* Now, it will be done on the 23rd of July, and we will mail it shortly after that. So, if you do everything online, then we need you to write in and give us your name and address so we can send the book to you. Because we'll have it delivered from the printer right to a mailing house called Unit Packaging, about two or three miles down the road from the printer. It will be mailed directly from there.

Now, we're also reprinting because we're running out. We need to have *America and Britain: Their Biblical Origin and Their Prophetic Destiny.*

Then we have 8,500. I said 6,500 earlier, but we increased that to 8,500 because of the demand for the Bible. They are being printed in China. They're just beginning to print them. The paper came from Spain because we get the best Bible paper from Spain. This is going to be really a great Bible because all the little improvements that we have made since we first published it, and there are probably at least a dozen or maybe more important things that help understand the Scriptures even more that are now incorporated into this printing of the Bible.

So, those will be shipped sometime the end of August, the first part of September. If you need a new Bible, let us know.

Now, we're also working up a supplemental for those who have received Bibles in the past, where you will be able to see the things that we have improved upon to make it even more readable and understandable.

Gal. 5—I want to point out one thing. What is the greatest, greatest defense against false teaching, false doctrine, not in just blatant stubbornness, but in convicted truth and knowledge?

Galatians 5:14: "For the whole Law is fulfilled in this *Commandment*: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" *That also shows you should be loving God!*

Verse 15: "But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another.... [Isn't that what we see going on today? *Yes, indeed!*] ...Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh

lusts against the Spirit...” (vs 15-17).

So, the first thing in overcoming the false doctrines and the false teachings is that *we direct our lives with the Spirit of God in the right way!*

“...and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do. But if you are led by *the Spirit*, you are not under *works of law*” (vs 17-18).

That is works of law of men or sacrifices that were offered at the temple before it was destroyed.

Verse 19: “Now, the works of the flesh are manifest...”—*then he lists all of them!*

Verse 22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, **self-control...**” (vs 22-23).

Now that’s what’s important. God wants us, individually, with the Spirit of God and the Word of God written in our heart and mind (Heb. 10) to have self-control. I want you to think about that! Let’s see how this self-control comes about.

2-Cor. 10—this talks about the same thing from a little different point of view, but giving us an understanding of: **How do we have that self-control?** That’s not from carnal motivations; *it has to be from the Spirit of God!*

Let’s see how that is done; remember as we’re reading this:

Hebrews 10:16: “‘This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,’ says *the Lord*, ‘I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.’”

2-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. On the one hand, when present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you. But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the flesh*” (vs 1-2).

That’s exactly the same argument that we have today with Protestantism and Catholicism or any other religion.

Verse 3: “For although we walk in *the flesh*, **we do not war according to the flesh.**”

We have the spiritual challenge of overcoming, as we’ve covered before in Rom. 7, the law of sin and death within us.

The self-control begins with *self-thought*, with:

- the Spirit of God

- the Word of God
- the laws of God

to do what is right!

Verse 4: “For the weapons of our warfare... [this is what Paul is talking about; the internal warfare that we have constantly going on] ...*are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds.”

Strongholds are things that are deeply set within us! So conversion is an ongoing process so that we can develop the character of Christ! Here’s what we do:

- this is what we need to pray about every single day
- this is why we have to study
- this is why we have prayer
- this is why we have Sabbath services
- this is why we have the Passover and all the Feasts

Verse 5: “**Casting down vain imaginations...**”—*all of these thoughts that twitter around in your brain!* And I’ve talked to other people who are advanced in age and it’s like this: We remember the things that we did when we were little. Now Jonathan’s got a good memory. He can remember back to when he was two years old. But I can’t do that.

“**Casting down vain imaginations...**”—*whatever your thoughts are!* It’s like this: You go along and all of a sudden DING! here this thought comes into your mind. How did that get there? *It got there by your thinking!* It got there from what came into your mind that maybe you didn’t even know got in there.

Verse 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations, **and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...**”

That’s step #1:

- you cast it down
- you repent of it
- you get rid of it

Then step #2:

- “...and **bringing into captivity...**” (v 5)—*under your thought control as led by the Holy Spirit of God!*
- “...and **bringing into captivity every thought...**” (v 5).

That’s the process of conversion!

And Franklin Graham’s little prayer isn’t even going to get the key to unlock the door.

“...every thought into the obedience of Christ” (v 5).

What was Christ’s obedience? *It was perfect! Perfect in the fruits of the Spirit:*

- love, joy, hope, peace and so forth
- perfect in faith
- perfect in belief
- perfect in thought
- perfect in control

What is the Hope of Glory for us? *Christ in us, the Hope of Glory* (Col. 1). This is what God wants. He wants the workmanship that He is doing within us. This is our part for Him to accomplish it.

“...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience...” (vs 5-6). *Everything that’s contrary to any part of what God has said.*

“...whenever your obedience has been fulfilled” (v 6).

*This is why Paul said in 2-Timothy 3:16: **“All Scripture is God-breathed** and is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”*

What is the warfare that we have against the carnal mind? We just read it in 2-Cor. 10.

Verse 17: “So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.”

Now, here’s a charge to every single minister. I don’t know if the Protestants or the Catholics have a clue as to what this really means, because they are entrenched *in their own ideas and their own traditions!*

God wants us spiritually converted using His Spirit to grow in grace and knowledge and have self-control, which is through the Spirit of God in our minds and in our actions.

Now when we do this, like Paul wrote. Then we are equipped to avenge any transgression. ***To understand anything that is wrong!*** That’s the key for the Churches in Rev. 2 & 3.

2-Timothy 4:1: **“I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God,** even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the living and the dead* at His appearing and His Kingdom: **Preach the Word!....”** (vs 1-2).

What is that? *That’s the Word of God!*

“...Be urgent in season and out of season...” (v 2).

That means that they were keeping the Feasts; didn’t God say keep the Feasts in season? *Yes!*

How are you going to preach it in season if you’re not keeping the Feasts? *You’re not!*

“...convict...” (v 2). *That’s what we’re trying to do today: **To have every one of you have the conviction of mind:***

- of Truth
- of love
- of hope
- of joy
- of faith
- of self-control
- of loving God
- of loving each other

“...rebuke... [get rid of the things that are wrong] ...encourage, with all patience and doctrine” (v 2).

Why did Paul say this? *Because he knew what was going to happen!* Go to Acts 20. Remember Paul called for all the elders to come down and meet him in Miletus. And he called them down there and said:

I’ve been preaching the Kingdom of God among you and the grace of God among you. And now I’m ready to depart and you will see me no more, and he said:

Watch yourself. For there shall come in wolves who will devour the flock, and of your own self men will rise up to speak things that will lead people astray!

That’s a paraphrase! This is why he wrote it.

Verse 3: “For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound **doctrine...** [teaching] ...but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of teachers,* having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings;* **and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth...**” (vs 3-4).

In other words, they will use their mind and self-control rather than the Spirit of God to do so. They will close their mind to the Truth.

Now we can see that happening with all this resistance and getting out all of the criminal immigrants and all the illegal immigrants. We have the *devil’s party* called the Democrats who have given themselves over to:

- living in sin
- indoctrinating in sin
- legalizing sin
- causing the whole society to disintegrate

That can happen in a Church! Right now, it’s happening in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. God is intervening to wake them up because the only thing they have left is the Sabbath!

The hierarchy of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church is moving to get rid of Sabbath-keeping just like what they did to Worldwide Church of God. So, I told Richard Gonzales, the minister I'm in touch with, that the Seventh-Day Adventists have got to repent of everything, ***beginning with Ellen G. White!*** They have made an idol out of her just like the Worldwide Church of God made an idol out of Herbert Armstrong.

The reason that has happened is ***because those who are in charge were not preaching the Word of God the way that it should be preached, to teach the brethren how they live their lives with the Holy Spirit and self-control!***

- you know what is right
- you know what is wrong
- you can detect the things that come along that are not good
 - ✓ you cast them away
 - ✓ you pray to God every day
 - ✓ you study every day
 - ✓ you grow and overcome

Now we'll look at that in a little bit here!

"...they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of teachers, having ears itching to hear what satisfies their cravings; and they shall turn away...*" (vs 3-4).

When Worldwide Church of God went to Sunday-keeping, they changed the name to Grace Community International. ***Half of the people went with that lie!***

It's coming to the SDAs! And you better understand this—if you're an SDA—*don't hold on to any one of the instructions that Ellen G. White gave you as Truth!* Now she did say keep the Feast, but everything else was a lie. None of her prophecies are worth anything because they're 150 to almost 200 years old. She could not have any understanding what's going to happen in the end days.

That's why the doctrine that 'Sunday-keeping was the mark of the beast' was preached back in the 1800s because they knew nothing about all the digital things that we have today. We are so digitized you can become a non-person with a flick of a switch:

- you can't buy
- you can't sell
- you can't live
- you can't do anything

Now those of us in the Church who live on a smartphone, you better think about what you're going to do when you don't have it. Those of you who think you don't need any books, ***you better get the books***

because they can cut them off from being distributed!

Right now we have this live streaming service. We're thankful for it. We're glad to do it. But all Jonathan has to do is just tap a button and it's done.

Now, Ellen G. White and even Herbert Armstrong couldn't figure that out, because that was before their day.

"...and they shall be turned aside unto myths.... [all the false doctrines] ...But as for you, be vigilant in all things, endure hardships, do the work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry" (vs 4-5).

Now let's come to Rev. 2. We finished off with Pergamos. Remember, let's look at Pergamos again and then we'll get into Thyatira because that becomes a central pivotal point for the seven Churches, the middle church number four.

Revelation 2:12: "And to the angel of the ***Church in Pergamos***, write..." He didn't say just tell them; He said *write it!* Because, as we will see, all of the problems in all of the seven Churches carried on down through all history of the Churches of God.

At times there were when it was more after one Church than the others. Like with Pergamos, this is the time in about the 300_{SAD} when everything that was pagan was adopted into the Church, and everything that they said was Jewish was rejected. *The believed in the trinity!*

Now let me just tell you a little something about the trinity, which is very easy to understand. The Bible teaches there's one God, the Father, one Jesus Christ. *The Holy Spirit is the power of God!* And we've got a whole book on that: ***The Holy Spirit, the Power of God.*** So, if you don't have that book, you need to get it. You need to understand it.

The baptismal formula in Matt. 28 ***is not trinitarian!***

- you get the Spirit from God the Father
- you get the mind of Christ from Christ
- you get the power to do it from the Holy Spirit

That is not a trinitarian doctrine in justifying a trinity as those who believe in a Trinity would suppose! Here's what it is:

- What does 2-Cor. 4:4 say about a certain spirit being? *Satan the devil is 'the god of this world' or age!*
- What is the Trinity? *The Trinity is Satan's attempt to make himself on a level equal with God!*
- Is that not what he always wanted to do? Ezek. 28 and Isa. 14: *'I will ascend into the*

heavens and I will become like the Most High!

That is the real answer to the trinity!

But in Satan's churches, they defend it and say, 'If you don't believe in the Trinity, you can't be saved.' **Well, the truth is, if you believe in the Trinity, you're not going to be saved!**

Revelation 2:12: "And to the angel of the Church in Pergamos, write: 'These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword.'"

Remember, that's the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, 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."

It goes right into the inner part of the most being of all human beings of their content, *and also gives them the way to make contact with God!*

Revelation 2:13: "I know your works..."

Notice He didn't say *faith!* Everyone says 'salvation is by grace through faith and you need nothing else':

- Did you know that's a false doctrine from Martin Luther?
- Did you know that you're over 500 years late?

Verse 13: "I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is*... [it is like living in a neighborhood next to the Vatican today] ...but you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells."

In other words, they were faithful to a pretty good degree *until their leader was killed!* Then probably threatened: 'if you don't follow along *with our doctrines*, you're going to be killed, too.' What did they do? *They caved into it!*

Verse 14: "But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the teaching of Balaam.... [go back and read what Balaam was hired to do by Balak] ...who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication"—*a sexual orgy!*

What is it today? What is the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Orthodox Church and in the Protestant Church called? *For the Catholics, it's the sacrifice of the Mass!* They also claim, ***which is a lie of immense proportions***, that the wine becomes the blood of Jesus, really, and the bread

becomes the flesh of Jesus, actually.

Watch EWT and you watch one of those Masses, *and everything is a ritual; there is nothing from the heart.* There is nothing in what they're doing that is worth anything. They're all dressed up in these women's clothes and robes, ***pretending to be representatives of God***, and they chant and they mumble and they have this cup and they have the bread, **but those are the offerings to Balaam the sun-god!**

I watched that here a couple of Sundays ago. There was a church over, I think it was in Spain, and they had a 'high mass.' The priest had this great sun-disc all gold and jewels and everything, and he carried it, and it was so sacred. Then they went out into a certain place in a garden outside the chapel, and they had prayers there. He held up this sun-disc and everybody was doing what they do with the Father, Son, holy ghost, bow down and all of this.

All pagan crosses, crucifixes, when God says, ***don't make them!*** That's what was introduced here. The Sacrifice of the Mass, and that is one of the most blasphemous things possible! ***That destroys the Passover!***

Let me give you another clue here. When the enemy comes along, the first thing they want to do is get rid of the Passover. Why? ***Because that's the day that Jesus Christ laid down His life and was crucified and died for the sins of the world!*** They don't want people to know that. Oh, they'll bring in their 'fake savior': Tamaz or Horus.

Then they have the thing with 'Mary the mother of God,' ***blasphemous!*** That is Ishtar! So, you see it was being introduced into the Church right here.

Verse 15: "Moreover, you also have *those* who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans..."

- What is that? *A hierarchy! Permission to commit fornication!*
- Wonder why there's so many pedophilia priests, so many homosexuals coming into the churches now?

The Methodist Church says you accept all homosexual female preachers. That's not a Methodist Church, a method to Christ. **That is a method to Satan the devil!**

Nicolaitans—Have people in the Churches of God suffered from a hierarchy? *That you better do what the minister says or you are sinning against God! **NO!***

What did Jesus say of all ministers? Remember this story? A little family conference with the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee? *She came with her two sons to Jesus and said, 'Lord,*

I have something to ask you.’ And Jesus said, ‘What is that?’ She said:

That these two, my sons James and John, sit one at your right hand and your left hand in the Kingdom.

Not asking for much. Just a little favor, Lord. Jesus said, ‘You don’t know what you’re asking.’ Then the other ten got all angry and He said:

Look, you’re not to be like the great leaders of the world who rule downward. You’re not to be like the great religious leaders of the world. You are to do as I have set the example. I did not come to be served, **but to serve**. And the one who is greatest among you, let him become **your servant**.

And the Greek there is ‘doulos,’ because the entire ministry of any, whether it is evangelist, pastor, teacher, elder, whatever. We are to:

- teach the brethren the Word of God
- teach them how they can live their lives with the Spirit of God
 - ✓ understanding the Truth of God
 - ✓ bringing every thought into captivity
 - ✓ self-control with the Holy Spirit

Not to rule over the brethren!

That came straight from the bowels of the Roman Catholic Church into the Church of God called Worldwide Church of God! Jesus said **He hates that!**

Verse 16: “**Repent!**...” *That’s what God wants all the time.*

- What’s the first thing that we say?
- What’s the model of the prayer that we are to pray?

Our Father who is in heaven, Holy are You. Your will be done in heaven and on earth.

And on earth means whatever God is doing! Whatever God is doing in each one of our lives!

Give us this day our daily bread.

You need to survive physically! Have you ever stopped to think:

- How much water do you drink every day?
- How much food do you eat every day?
- Where does it come from?
- What are you going to do when the stores run out of food?
- Do you know how to plant?
- Do you know how to plow?
- Do you know how to harvest?
- Do you know how to process?

NO!

We’re all like the little girl when someone asks her, where does milk come from? She looked up and said, ‘It comes from a carton.’ Too many of us are like that! I go to the store and I buy what I need. I have some things in storage at home. But how long is that going to last? And if those who are starving find out I have things that they don’t have, guess what they’re going to do? They’re going to come and say, give us some. And if I say no, it’s for me, well, then they’ll kill me and take it anyway!

Repent! That’s what it says.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive others who sin against us.

Every day we need to examine our lives and see what we are doing because we still have the law of sin and death in us that we need to repent of. What thought do you need to bring into captivity that you need to repent of?

This is what the Church is all about. It’s not about numbers:

- it’s about conversion
- it’s about the Truth of God
- it’s about the love of God

Verse 16: “Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” *Now, He says this to every one of the seven Churches:*

Verse 17: “**The one who has an ear...** [you open it up] ...**let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches....**”

- you need to listen to the Word of God
- you need to let God’s Spirit help you and lead you

When God’s Spirit indicates to you, no, *no*, **no**, don’t do this, ***don’t do it!***

“...**To the one who overcomes** I will give *the right* to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives it.”

The Churches of God are always there and these things come against us. And this is important for us to know. For what reason?

Let’s come back and we’ll finish by going to 1-Cor. 2; we’ll pick up on this next week when we continue with the seven Churches.

The ones who came into the Church of Corinth and repented came from a society that was the most pagan you could ever want. Just up the road from them was Athens with the Parthenon:

- all the gods
- all of human wisdom

1-Corinthians 2:6: “Now we speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature... [ones who know the Word of God and so forth] ...**however, it is not the wisdom of this world**...” *Great lesson!*

Regardless of how good it may look in the world, remember that ***it comes from The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil!*** You can’t take the good from the world and marry it to the standards of the Church, because it will backfire every time! It’s not the goodness of God. Remember that there are two ways of good and evil:

- God’s way to overcome
- Satan’s way to deceive you

Satan’s way of good is that *evil is good, and the righteousness of God is evil!*

“...however, *it is not the wisdom of this world nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing*” (v 6). *Think about that!*

Donald Trump, you better remember God saved you; so don’t get lifted up in vanity.

Verse 7: “Rather, we speak *the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory.*”

- that you might know it
- that you might understand it

So, don’t be impressed with all of these great leaders everywhere.

- **You know what God is going to do!** They don’t know!
- **You know that Christ is going to return!** They don’t know!
- **You know that the Kingdom of God is coming to save the world from total destruction!** They don’t know!

They are out there trying to do their best to hold it off, but all they are doing is arming more and more and more and more.

- For what? *So that when Christ does return:*
- What are they going to do? *They are going to fight Him!*

We will cover that for the Feast of Trumpets.

“...the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory, which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); but according as it is written...” (vs 7-9).

Here it is brethren. *This is why we do the*

things that we do! This is why what God’s way gives us is something greater than anything that there is in the world, notwithstanding anything!

Verse 9: “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen... [without the Spirit of God] ...nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*’”

Loving God. How? ***With all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul;*** that’s what God wants. *That’s an amazing thing, indeed!*

Verse 10: “**But God has revealed them to us** by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God. For who among men understands the things of man except *by the spirit of man, which is in him?* **In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except by the Spirit of God**” (vs 10-11). *That’s why you cannot attach to:*

- the Ways of God
- the Truth of God
- the Word of God

to the ways of man, which are the ways of Satan and think they’re going to work out!

This is what all of us need to learn. And this is going to be a brutal lesson for the Seventh-Day Adventists. God is dealing with them to tear the Church apart; *just like He did with Worldwide.*

They’re going to have to realize the only thing they have in their grasp is the Sabbath and ‘you barely are hanging on to that.’ We will see the message to the Seventh-Day Adventists in a Sabbath or two. But hold on!

Verse 12: “Now, we have not received **the spirit of the world**...”

Where does the spirit of the world come from? *Comes from Satan the devil!*

“...**but the Spirit that is of God**... [that’s what’s important] ...**so that we might know**...” (v 12).

God wants us to understand! And in this day and age we can understand more than any other time in the world.

“...so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the Holy Spirit in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means.* But *the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them...*” (vs 12-14).

God has something so great for us, that there

is virtually nothing on this earth, *or thoughts*—even with the Spirit of God—*within our minds to fully grasp*:

- what God is going to do
- what God is performing now in conversion
- what God will perform when the time of resurrection comes

To grant us:

- a spirit body
- a spirit mind
 - ✓ to see God directly
 - ✓ to see Christ directly
 - ✓ to see all of the saints resurrected

*That's what we need to keep in mind! **But we have to fight this battle, this war here on the earth right now!***

So we'll pick it up next time beginning with the Church of Thyatira.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 13:11-17, 24-30
- 2) 2-Timothy 3:1-4, 13-17
- 3) Galatians 5:14-19, 22-23
- 4) Hebrews 10:16
- 5) 2-Corinthians 10:1-6
- 6) 2-Timothy 3:16-17
- 7) 2-Timothy 4:1-5
- 8) Revelation 2:12
- 9) Hebrews 4:12
- 10) Revelation 2:13-17
- 11) 1-Corinthians 2:6-19

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 20
- Acts 6
- Romans 7
- Colossians 1
- Acts 20
- Matthew 28
- 2-Corinthians 4:4
- Ezekiel 28
- Isaiah 14

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- *America and Britain: Their Biblical Origin and Their Prophetic Destiny* by Philip Neal
- *The Holy Spirit, the Power of God*

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