

Persecution God is *Exclusive*, the World is *Inclusive*

Fred R. Coulter—October 14, 2003

What does the future hold? I'm not going to tell you how long we have left, because I don't know! But I can tell you exactly how long we have left: *whatever God has determined that He hasn't told us!* We have *to walk by faith, believe in hope and live in love!* Therefore, that is all kept in the authority of God the Father. But you can be guaranteed one thing: *we are closer to the end than we have ever been before.* Let's see some of the things that we're going to be facing.

We've read it and we say that, yes, Jesus said that, that's so. But we haven't understood how it's going to come about.

Matthew 24:4: "Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, '**Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.**'" How many people have fallen for deception?

Verse 7: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different* places. Now, all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows. **Then shall they deliver you up to affliction...** [that hasn't happened, yet; but it is going to happen] ...and shall kill you... [that will happen] ...and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake" (vs 7-9).

Let's back up and understand something: while these things have not happened to us, yet, they have happened to people who have professed the name of the Jesus, and I want you to know that it is happening today.

Verse 10: "And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." We see that in the world today!

I was going on a trip and was in the airport very early and I went into the book section and I saw this book: *Persecution* by David Limbaugh, brother of Rush Limbaugh. I looked through and bought it.

from: *Persecution* by David Limbaugh
(from the book jacket)

Tolerance may be the highest virtue of our popular culture....

Remember years ago the book *I'm Okay, You're Okay* by Thomas Harris. It helped set the stage for what we have today. 'I'll except your sins if you accept my sins.' That's what it's really saying.

...But that doesn't often extend to Christians these days.

The Sunday-keeping 'Christians' are going to be confronted with a problem: In addition to the doctrines, which they ought to change and repent, they're going to be confronted with a problem and many of them are going to die. Even though they keep Sunday, they're going to hold onto the name of Jesus Christ.

For years we have read over Rev. 17, and yet, it is telling us something very important. Let's read about Babylon the Great:

Revelation 17:5 "And across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunk with ¹the blood of the saints..." (vs 5-6).

Who are the saints? *They are the ones who have the Holy Spirit of God!* They are called saints because they are sanctified, the Holy Spirit sanctifies them. That's why they're called saints.

"...and ²with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus..." (v 6). What's the difference between the two?

- Will there be people who will die for the name of Jesus though they may not be converted? *Yes!*
- Will that qualify them for the first resurrection?
- Or the second resurrection?

Those who don't have the Holy Spirit and died for the name of Christ will qualify them for the second resurrection. So, there is a difference, and there it has been all the time.

Today, right now, over two million people in the Sudan, who are what we would call professing Christians—that is they stand for the name of Jesus, but they don't have the Holy Spirit *in* them. They keep Sunday, Easter and all this sort of thing—nevertheless, they died for the name of Jesus. Would they not be martyrs of Jesus, though not converted? Who have they been killed by? *By the 'peace-loving' Muslims!* It's happening today in different ways right in the United States of America.

That's what this book—*Persecution*—is about. That's what Limbaugh wrote of, what is happening.

Christians are continually begin driven from public life, denied the first

amendment rights, and even actively discriminated against in their beliefs.

In this relentless expose` of political correctness run amuck, best selling author David Limbaugh rips apart the liberal hypocrisy that condones selective mistreatment of Christians in the mainstream media: Hollywood, our schools and universities, and throughout our public life.

In *Persecution*, you will enter the hotly contested battle for the soul of our public schools.

If you've got young children, let me admonish you, if you can home-school them, *do so!* If you don't believe me, go to the public schools and find out what they are teaching!

Here are appalling but true stories of how anti-Christian social engineers not only prohibit school prayer and forbid students from wearing 'Christian; symbols like a simple cross, but even expunge the real story of Christianity in America from history textbooks.

Still worse, in the name of tolerance, multiculturalism and sex education, the social engineers actively inculcate hatred of Christianity as ignorant, repressive and offensive. Not exactly the agenda of most parents, whose tax dollars support the public schools.

Looking honestly at the dominate influence of Christianity in American's colonial culture and schools, where the Bible was routinely used as a textbook, Limbaugh makes a compelling cause that the education students receive today is not what the founders would have endorsed.

Indeed, they would have been outraged as to what is taught and what the courts say, in their name, under the pretext of the non-constitutional woefully misunderstood phrase: *separation of church and state*.

Limbaugh zeros in on how activist judges misinterpret and misapply the Constitution to eliminate Christianity from American government and public life. He reveals a society-wide disinformation campaign that has successfully obscured for many people what the Constitution actually says about religious freedom.

While allegedly promoting religious liberty, liberals actually suppress it. Proving details of case after case, shocking as it may be, Limbaugh demonstrates that

the anti-Christian forces now controlling significant portions of our society aggressively target the slightest hint of public Christianity for discrimination, yet, ardently encouraging the spread of secular values, including alternative sexuality and promiscuity.

Quite a book! I will read a little more and then we will examine *why* people in the world say that Christians are intolerant, biased, bigoted and hateful, **when we're not!** To them, we are! How did such a thing happen?

(pgs. 186-7) In the current climate of intolerance toward Christian expression there is growing sentiment among many in our culture that religion is a private matter.

This is a modern misperception. As author Steve Farrell stated, "Christianity is by nature—public....

We are to 'let our light shine' and we are to be 'the salt of the earth.' That means that we are to let our lives, what we say and what we do, reflect Christ! That's the 'Light of the world.' We are to be the 'salt of the earth'; that is to stand for the Truth and not let it be corrupted. *Salt works against corruption; salt preserves!*

...Prohibiting public religious speech under the guise of 'protecting one's private religion—especially of Christianity. It is oxymoronic to tell a Christian, 'You're free, but shut up.'" Of course, Farrell is correct. Jesus commanded his disciples to "to into all the world and preach the good news to all creation," and the apostle Peter wrote, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

We have been delinquent in not letting our light shine; going back home and being quiet. When we do that, we are expressing a certain degree of shame for Christ.

Nevertheless, societal forces pressure Christians, especially public officials, to keep their religious views to themselves, a practice that is utterly inconsistent with American history, the attitude of the colonists, the framers of the Constitution, and government officials into the modern era. While some strict "separationists" are surely sincere in their belief that the Constitution forbids overt religious expression by public officials, they are simply wrong. Others are doubtlessly motivated by hostility toward Christianity in the public arena. Regardless, their efforts

create a chilling effect on Christian expression.

What is out there is a ‘religious’ totalitarianism that is dangerous. They can express their hatred of Christ, their religion, they can shove Mohammadism down our throats, Hinduism, Buddhism and bring it into the society and glorify. All they do is go against Christ and everything He stood for, and everything the Scriptures stand for! We are going to get caught up in this one way or the other. It is going to happen.

The real enemy is any belief system that claims exclusive truth. Today, they have successfully even in schools—you can see it everywhere—I’m okay, you’re okay. Everyone’s opinion is truth. So therefore, since *everybody’s* opinion is true—which is a lie—you *cannot have any exclusive truth*, which is a lie!

True Christianity is based upon exclusive Truth! And it excludes all others! God said that He will not give His glory and honor to any other:

- He’s not going to give it to Allah!
- He’s not going to give it to Buddha!

Who, by the way, left his wife the day that she gave birth to his son.

- He’s not going to embrace Deepak Chopra’s Hinduism!

They come after us! They don’t like exclusive Truth, so they’ll come after us, even if it is in a Holy non-violent way toward other faiths. They seem to be arguing that there is moral equivalence between murderous terrorists *and* any group claiming *their religion* is the true religion. That’s why they killed Christ! It would be interesting to ask a Muslim: Since you think if you go out and murder and kill all these people you immediately go to heaven, how are you going to get along with everybody in heaven when there are more Christians there than there are Muslims? **IF you go to heaven!** No one has asked them that question. Are you going to go and blow them up in heaven, too?

I just want to say here: *That’s why when the Gospel was changed from the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gospel of give and get, and the apostle going to the leaders and saying, ‘I’m coming to you in the name of the God of the Egyptians, the God of the Indians, the God of Thailand, the God of the Japanese, it was a blasphemous changing of the Gospel, and that’s why it went down!’*

I mean we need to wake up and understand what went on. Wasn’t it slick? Everyone was in awe! So, they can’t stand anyone to say, ‘This is the way!’

(pgs. 203-4) Here again we see the post-modernist mindset that indicts those such as Christians who assert that they have a corner on the truth.

No! God has a corner on the Truth! We learn from Him! But they view it as—because we would be dogmatic about it—biases, hateful, mean and nasty. ‘You mean that you approve of a God that would kill babies and children?’ *They don’t know the Truth of the Last Great Day, that God is going to resurrect them all!* What a fantastic thing that it is that God is going to overcome the mistakes of men. Isn’t that something?

It’s underlying premise is not merely that we must show those of other faiths, or those of no faith at all, kindness and respect....

Which we do!

...we must also accept their belief systems as equally valid.

- that where the confrontation comes in
- that’s why we have to know our Bibles
- that’s why we have to understand the plan of God
- that’s why we have to have faith in power of God’s Spirit in us

These days are coming! Without a doubt!

Regardless of your faith, you are a religious totalitarian unless you are willing to dilute the fundamental principles of your faith to the point that it can accommodate all other faiths as equally true.

That’s where it’s coming from!

“The future of the world,” said Friedman, “may well be decided by how we fight this war. Can Islam, Christianity, and Judaism know that God speaks Arabic on Fridays, Hebrew on Saturdays, and Latin on Sundays, and that he welcomes different human beings approaching him through their own history, out of their language and cultural heritage?”

As we’ve seen, secular liberals grow nervous about Christians occupying positions of power in all branches and levels of our government.... They want to ban Christian members of the body politic from a seat at the table of our constitutional republic.... anti-Christian sentiment has made it’s way into the private sector in some of our major corporations.

They are the ones who are enforcing and bridling free expression!

Again, the common thread underlying these subjects is an aversion to Christianity, not an affinity for church/state separation.

You can see the battle that went on over the Ten Commandments monument some years ago. In think that no one in the United States doesn't know that that happened. They may not realize why it happened, but they know that there was a battle over the Ten Commandments.

What this is going to do, through this—and I hope the other Churches of God also wake up to it—is that God is laying the seeds for a new growth in the Church of God. Our part is through Church at Home (churchathome.org). Some have even suggested that we ought to get bumper stickers: Are you tired of your church? Try churchathome.org

How many of you, when you were a Sunday-keeper, were sitting there wondering why you read the Sabbath in your Bible and the preacher said Sunday? How many more millions are out there? Out of those millions, how many can God call? *We don't know!*

Let's see why they call us intolerant! The thing is, **God is exclusive! God is not inclusive!** That is to say, 'Ya'll come!' *He is exclusive to the point that He blinds their eyes and stops their ears and does not heal them and does not convert them, because they are not willing to submit to the rule of God!*

- they want the blessings of God, *but they don't want any troubles*
- they want the want the name of Jesus, *but the don't want to do as Jesus did*
- they want to have *their* churches
- they want to have *their* religion
- they want to put Christ's name on it

We're going to see that even some of the believer's of Jesus didn't believe Him. If you're talking to someone, ask them if they say they believe in Jesus:

- Do you believe what He said?
- Do you believe that when Jesus said that He is Lord of the Sabbath that that is not Sunday?

There comes a division! Though they claim to believe in Jesus, **they don't believe Him!** We're going to see the same thing in John 6, and let's see how exclusive God is. *Yes, He is exclusive!* So, if you have the Spirit of God and you're in the Church of God, you are included! **The world is excluded!**

Jesus said, 'They are not of the world even as I am not of the world.' There is a worldly Christianity. There is true Christianity, and it is totally exclusive; see how exclusive this is; counter this with what Jesus said, 'Seek and you'll find. Knock and it will be opened.' So, if someone is truly seeking God in sincerity and Truth, they will find God.

But unless God does, it says, John 6:44: **"No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..."** Is that exclusive or not? *Yes, it is!* It's not the minister or the church board; it's not born into Catholicism—'good enough for my parents, good enough for me.' The question is, is it good enough for God? *The other doesn't matter!* Is that not exclusive? *God the Father has to draw!*

"...and I will raise him up at the last day" (v 44). Did you know that there were two last days? That is not false doctrine.

- **the first resurrection** being on Pentecost, what is the last day? *The 50th day!* Isn't that the last day of the count? *Yes, indeed! That's the last day for the first resurrection!*
- **the second resurrection:** that's pictured by the Last Great Day, the 8th day of the Feast of Tabernacles!

How do you learn anything that you learn? We can read the words, hear the words, but how can some people read the same words and hear the same words, and not understand the same thing? *Because they're not hearing and seeing, there's another factor involved!*

Verse 45: "It is written in the prophets, 'And **they shall all be taught by God.**'..." Whatever you learn of God's way, He's teaching it to you, through the vehicle of His Word, His Spirit and teaching. As Paul said, 'How shall they learn unless a preacher is sent?'

"...Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me" (v 45). That's pretty exclusive!

After Jesus told them to eat this flesh and drink His blood, it was had for them to understand. Picture this in the kosher society of Judaism. They thought they had to eat human flesh and drink human blood, when the Scriptures says you shall not eat any unclean flesh nor drink the blood thereof. 'What is this guy saying?' the ostensibly said they believed Him, but:

Verse 60: "Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said, 'This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear it?'" So, they left Him.

Verse 61: “But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, ‘Does this offend you?’” If there were some ‘dyed in the wool’ Sunday-keepers here, what I have said so far would offend them greatly?

Verse 62: “What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before? It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are Spirit and *they* are Life. But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones that did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, ‘For this reason, I have said to you, **no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father**’ From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and **walked no more with Him**” (vs 62-66).

- Isn’t that absolutely amazing?
- Have we seen some ‘fair weather’ disciples turn and go? *Yes, indeed!*

This makes a lot of people angry! This is what makes them so angry and hostile. After all, if you live under the deception that all opinions are true, this is hard to take.

John 14:6: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am **the Way**... [not *a* way] ...and **the Truth**... [not *a* Truth] ...and **the Life**... [that is *total exclusivity*] ...**no one comes to the Father except through Me.**”

Therefore, the Muslims cannot know God, the Buddhists cannot know God. Those who do not keep the commandments of God, because we have a standard: ***He who says ‘I know Him’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in Him!*** and ***Hereby we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments!***

Again, there’s another separation. Furthermore, let’s see what Jesus said of some of the disciples who also believe on Him. Don’t look back and moan and groan because of all the things that have happened in the Church of God. They were destined to happen, just like it did here:

- to see whether you love God, *or no*
- to see whether you trust Him, *or no*
- to see whether in difficult circumstances you still believe, *or no*

John 8:23: “And He said to them, ‘You are from beneath, I am from above....’” Yet, there are ministers in the Church of God who teach that Jesus did not exist until He conceived in the virgin Mary’s womb.

“...You are of this world; I am not of this

world. That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for **if you do not believe that I AM...**” (vs 23-24). Ask yourself:

Do I ***really*** believe God? *There are degrees of belief!* It’s very interesting that the word *believe* is used in the Gospel of John more than any other book in the New Testament.

“...for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins” (v 24). They understood the meaning of I AM; they understood that He was God! They understood the phrase *I AM* and should have made the connection, but didn’t!

Verse 25: “Then they said to Him, ‘Who are You?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘The One that I said to you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world.’ *But* they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father. Then Jesus said to them, ‘When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM, and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him.’ As He spoke these things, many believed in Him” (vs 25-30).

We’re going to see that was a *shallow belief!* Because in order to believe in Him, there’s something else you have to give up and leave behind.

Verse 31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, **‘If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples.’**” What is the opposite of that? *If you don’t continue in His Word, though you profess that you believe Him, you are not His disciples.* Jesus said that ‘many will come in My name and deceive many.’

Verse 32: “And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free.... [they were a little insulted in this] ...They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone.... [the Romans were ruling right over them] ...What do You mean by saying, “You shall become free?”.... [they didn’t understand] ...Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin. And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore, **if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free**” (vs 32-36). ***Free of sin! It is only given to those who are under grace, which is exclusive!***

Now let me tell you something that Protestants don’t like. They don’t like to be told that *their grace* is a work of human endeavor and not the grace of God. How so? Have you ever heard the

Protestants say, 'Receive Christ, appropriate Christ.' What is an appropriation? *That is taking something to yourself!* You don't appropriate Christ! That is an absolutely false doctrine.

Anything that comes from God is imputed to you. He imputes the righteousness. He gives you His love. You don't appropriate it. You've got to repent first. But a lot of people believe that, so here it is.

Verse 37: "I know that you are Abraham's seed; but you are seeking to kill Me..." Who? *Those who professed belief in Him!* Can you imagine that? How exclusive is this? *It narrows the field down to those whom God has chosen!* Amazing!

Why? *Though they were disciples,* "...because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.' They answered and said to Him, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, **a Man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this**'" (vs 37-40).

Isn't that something? What offends people? *The Truth!* What offends them more than anything else? *The commandments of God!*

The commandments of God relating to God—the first four—are exclusive!

1. I am the Lord your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall have **no other gods before Me.**

Exclusive!

2. You shall not make unto yourselves any graven image of any likeness of anything that's in the heaven above, that's on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow yourselves down to them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God...

Exclusive!

...visiting the sons of the fathers unto the children until the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me. And blessings to thousands of generations of those that love me and keep My commandments.

New Testament doctrine right there in the second commandment!

3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Yet, they do it all the time on Sunday by saying that they ought to keep Sunday, because Christ said so; but God never said so! It's in vain! That's why they have to end up teaching family relations, husband/wife relations. Listen, the best

husband/wife relations you can have is that you both love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being. You love each other and 80% of your problems will be solved.

4. Then the one that really hate: Remember the Sabbath Day to keep **it** Holy.

Since the world doesn't do that. They believe in evolution. The Sabbath Day commemorates the creation of God, the rest of God and our fellowship with Him.

Let's see something else that shows more exclusivity. What is that men and women like to do? *They like to create their own exclusive clubs!* Masons, Elks, Odd Fellows, Knights of Columbus, Eastern Star, Skull and Bones, all of this sort of thing. They want something exclusive. *What God has is far more exclusive than what they have!*

Matthew 10: "Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." That does not mean run and hide in a corner. It means that you don't retaliate back.

Verse 17: "But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils... [under arrest, not buying your way in with Steuben Crystal] ...and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles. Now, when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak" (vs 17-19).

That's why you have to have it in your heart and in your mind! It goes like this:

If you need a job and you pray, 'O God, give me a job' and all you do is hide out in your house. Everyday you fervently pray, 'O God, give me a job.' You hide in your house and wait for a phone call.

At the resurrection you ask God, 'Why didn't you give me a job?' God says, 'I had a lot lined up for you, but you never left the house.'

I learned for God to inspire me to write. But unless I sit down and start writing, how can He inspire me? *Same with you; exactly the same thing!* Unless you have it in your heart and mind and you're putting it in there now, you're not going to have it when you need it when you're brought before them to give a witness to them. That's why we need to get it in there now! God will inspire you:

Verse 20: "For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.... [and here is where it's going to come to]: ... Then brother

will deliver up brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death.” Read the account in *Josephus* and the destruction of Jerusalem. This is how exclusive it is!

Verse 22: “And you shall be hated by all for My name’s sake...” That day is coming; read the book *Persecution* by David Limbaugh, and you will see that it is happening *now!*

Verse 23: “But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come.”

Then Jesus wants you to understand something, v 24: “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.” If Jesus went through it, the apostles went through it, we’re going to go through it.

Verse 25: “It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the servant as his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* those of his household?”

That’s why we’re called *intolerant, exclusivists, independent, judgmental and every other thing they want to call us*. The true is, everybody is judgmental all the time. Every man on earth is judging God one way or another every single day, whether he believes it or not.

- How do some people in the world judge God?
- *The commandment about adultery is out of date, we live in a modern era!*
- Is that not judging God? *Yes, indeed!*
- *That was for the Jews, we can have our saints, idols and veneration! The Catholics say, ‘We don’t worship the idols, we just venerate them!’ God said, ‘Don’t even make them!’*

Verse 26: “Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops” (vs 26-27).

That doesn’t sound like running into your home and closing yourself in like a caterpillar going into the phase before it becomes a butterfly.

Verse 28: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life; rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna.”

Then He wants us to understand some things; don’t worry about it, v 29: “Are not two sparrows sold for a coin? And *yet* not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father *taking account of it.*”

Think of that! If God knows when a bird goes down, what about the apex of His creation—men and women—and better still, what about those who have the Spirit of God? *He knows!* Not only does He know, He is walking in you! The very purpose of why He created human beings was so that each one of us could become a temple of God. ***That is the best temple of all!***

Verse 31: “Therefore, do not be afraid; you are better than many sparrows. Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven” (vs 31-32).

So, all the things that the Protestants do is not totally in vain. They’ll be in the second resurrection. They will think it’s the first, but it will be the second, and we will have to educate them.

Verse 33: “But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven.”

Then it gets down to cases, and it happened back then beginning right on the Day of Pentecost; v 34: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”

What is the sword that divides greater than a physical sword? *The Word of God, because it cuts asunder to the dividing of the soul and the spirit and the joints and the marrow! It’s a discerner and judge of the thoughts and intents of the heart!*

- No other book does that!
- No other word does that!
 - ✓ That’s why they can’t stand it!
 - ✓ That’s why they say you’re exclusivists and intolerant!

Verse 35: “For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s enemies *shall be those of his own household*” (vs 35-36).

Then you’re confronted with a choice: the very ones you love become your enemies. We’re still to love our enemies. Now we have a choice:

Verse 37: “The one who loves father or mother more than **Me is not worthy of Me**; and the one who loves son or daughter more than **Me is not**

worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me **is not worthy of Me.** The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it. **The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me**" (vs 37-40). *That's very exclusive!*

Verse 41: "The one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet..." Jesus doesn't say what the reward will be. Many of these will be in the second resurrection, of course!

"...and the one who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive the reward of a righteous man. And if anyone shall in the name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold water only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward" (vs 41-42).

Contrary to Mohammad and Islam, we don't go out with a sword, and in hate see how many we can kill. We have something more difficult to handle. Here's what we are to do, and this is the single-mindedness that the world cannot stand. Here is a requirement that the world hates.

Luke 14:25: "And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate... [in the sense of loving Gods more (Matt. 10)] ...his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he **cannot be My disciple**'" (vs 25-26).

That is very exclusive! Do you see how narrow the field becomes? The Greek here means *the impossibility of it!*

- that's why God the Father has to do the calling
- that's why God is personally involved in our lives
- that's why it's so important that we have a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ every day

God is going to, I believe, open the door so we can preach to brand new people. I'll tell you something else:

- we better get our houses in order
- we better get our priorities correct
- we better know the Word of God

All of the brethren everywhere are the ones who are going to teach them. We don't have time to start out with a little pamphlet here and mail in get another one, the way we used to do it. We're getting down to cases where we're going to say, 'Here's the whole lump.'

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me **cannot be My disciple**." Many of us have already crossed many of these roads, and understand the difficulties involved.

We understand the choices that God has set before us. We have made many of those choices, and God has bless us in it and will continue to bless us in it. God will continue to give us of His Spirit and strength to do so.

We're going to talk a little bit about *judging*. John 5:22: "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears My Word, and believes Him Who sent Me, has everlasting life and does not come into judgment; for he has passed from death into life" (vs 22-24)—which means *you have not come into judgment for your sins!*

We all have to come before the judgment seat of God. What is going to judge us? Maybe you will understand a little bit more about what we cover during the Passover: If we would judge ourselves—which is what we are to do—then we wouldn't be judged of God. So, yes, we are to make judgments. We are to judge ourselves. How? *By the Word of God!*

Our judgment is unto eternal life and righteousness, so what we judge and do is so that we can see where we fall short and repent, grow and overcome, and so that can make the judgments to do what is right. So that we can make the judgments to follow the Word of God.

The New Testament is what God in the flesh spoke to man. Remember, the Israelites didn't want to hear the voice of God from the mountain, so they said, 'Moses, you speak to us.' Then later, God said, 'Okay, I'll take you up on that,' and He sent Christ. Here are His words; these are the things that are going to judge us.

John 12:42: But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him... [here's a shallow belief] ...but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; **for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God**. Then Jesus called out and said, 'The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come as a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the

world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the Word, which I have spoken, **that shall judge him in the last day**” (vs 42-48). That’s going to be some judgment, for sure!

Verse 49: “For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak.”

What did Peter say? *Judgment begins with the house of God!* If the righteous be saved with difficulty, where shall the sinner and the ungodly be? The truth is that when we are under the grace of God, we are under judgment to life, not unto death.

Romans 14:9: “*It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the* dead and *the* living. Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? **For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ**” (vs 9-10). All judgment was give to Him and there is going to be the final judgment.

- What is the judgment that we want to hear?
Well done, good and faithful servant!
- Isn’t that a judgment? *Yes!*
- Why? *Because:*
 - ✓ you believe Christ
 - ✓ you believed God the Father
 - ✓ you lived in His grace
 - ✓ you trusted in His mercy
 - ✓ you loved Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being

So, the judgment is *well done, good and faithful servant!* When we go before the judgment seat of Christ, that’s what we want to hear.

“...because it is written, ‘For *as* I live,’ says *the* Lord, ‘every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God’” (v 11).

That’s why we don’t have hate, even our enemies. God is going to take care of them. I think that God gave us a tremendous example of that in the life of the Apostle Paul. I know this for sure, if we were living back there at that time, none of us would have called the Apostle Paul—would we? *No!* Yet, when he repented and was converted, he was one of the most powerful servants of God. He not only wrote more than any of them, he worked harder than any of the other apostles, and he—counting the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts—was personally responsible for over 50% of the New Testament.

So, that’s why we don’t hate our enemies. We don’t know when God is going to convert one. To show you that, yes, God is exclusive! However, the door is always open to anyone who repents.

Here’s what Christ says:

Revelation 22:12: “Behold, I am coming quickly.... [that’s more true today than ever] ...and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. **Blessed are those who keep His commandments that they may have the right to eat of the Tree of Life**, and may enter by the gates into the city” (vs 12-14).

They have to change this verse; the *New International Version* (NIV): “Blessed are those who wash their robes...” that’s not what the Byzantine text says! I will give a sermon on What is the ‘curse’ of the Law? It’s not the Law that’s the curse, the curse is because *you don’t keep the Law!*

Verse 14: “**Blessed are those who keep His commandments that they may have the right to eat of the Tree of Life**, and may enter by the gates into the city. **But excluded** are dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and **everyone who loves and devises a lie**. I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.’ And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who thirsts come; and let the one who desires partake of the water of life freely. For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, *that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from *the* Book of Life, and from the Holy City, and from the things that are written in this book” (vs 14-19).

Yes, ***God is exclusive***, but *the door is always open to anyone who repents!* That’s why we are told to ***make our calling and election sure!***

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:4, 7-10
- 2) Revelation 17:5-6
- 3) John 6:44-45, 60-66
- 4) John 14:6
- 5) John 8:23-37
- 6) Matthew 10:16-29, 31-42
- 7) Luke 14:25-27
- 8) John 5:22-24
- 9) John 12:42-49
- 10) Romans 14:9-11
- 11) Revelation 22:12-19

Also referenced: Books:

- *Persecution* by David Limbaugh

- *I'm Okay, You're Okay* by Thomas Harris

FRC: bo
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