

Ordination of a Minister: Guard the Truth

Admonitions and charges for elders!

Fred R. Coulter—August 28, 2021

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services! This week we're going to have special services in Hollister. We're going to have three men ordained as elders. Two of them are with The First Century Fellowship Ministry, a Biblical Church of God. The ordination certificate will read that, in Naples, Florida; signed by elders in Christian Biblical Church of God.

Everyone will know that they were ordained properly and they didn't ordain themselves just because they're an independent group. You can't lay your hands on yourself and.... *That won't work!*

They've been associated with us for five years and have been a great asset, especially with Pam Bruneing in doing Kidz Korner and the study thing for kids for all the messages that we have.

Wicked Men, Imposters and Winners

Chauncey Normandin

Romans 1:18 "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the Truth in unrighteousness."

In the days, weeks and months following the attacks on 9/11, it seemed that the people of this country were actually taking the warning signs of God seriously. Actually, without out any doubt or knew, or even entertained the thought that they were signs from God, but as true believers *we knew!*

It didn't take long for things to fall back into that old and comfortable numb feeling again. Things started going better, people relaxed and returned to their old habits. We did notice some things were beginning to change for the worse. The New York legislature passed a law that allowed partial birth abortions. The governor signed it before a group cheering and clapping people, mostly women who claimed it was a victory for women's rights and women's health.

Someone needs to explain that to me! I don't get it! Murdering babies for women's health is something that just deludes me; I can't figure that part out. When this appeared on the news, many of us were speechless! Cheering and clapping for the right to murder a fully formed full-term child?

The Commonwealth of Virginia stated they were heading in that same direction, also, trying to protect a woman's rights.

Then the controversy over 'gender identity'! Your gender is what *you feel* it is; anatomy and physiology be damned!

Then the onset of the 'Alphabet Pervert'! Seems like there's identity for every letter of the alphabet. I kind of lifted that from Fred, because he's used that a number of times.

All this led up to the companies telling states that unless they pass legislation to enhance and protect these people, they would move their companies out to a more diverse and tolerant state.

With the election of Donald Trump as President, it seemed that evil had just about fully surfaced. This man and his family have been subjected to some of the vilest attacks any public official has ever had to endure. Why? *Because he dared to mention an Almighty God and Creator!* He talked about founding principles of this country and their believe in God and His written Word. All traits the unholy progressive left hates.

We move forward into the grips of a pandemic, Covid 19, the Wuhan virus: lockdowns, shutdowns, face masks and on and on. There are so many conflicting reports from 'experts' it's pathetic. It's showing itself as more of a *plandemic* than anything else.

Then the presidential election cycle started up again and really lit a fire under these people: riots, looting, shootings in many major cities seemingly with the backing of the mayors and governors of the states concerned. They were run by progressives, Marxists, godless left wing politicians. All of this leading up to a completely corrupt presidential election wrought with fraud at many levels.

We've heard people questioning how can God let this evil happen? They think or say:

We're good people in a good country; we want to include everyone so that we all may live and let live. I can't believe that God is doing this, or allowing this to happen.

Too many of them make the incorrect assumption that this is God's world. He created it and all things in it, right? *Partly right!*

Genesis 1:1: "In *the* beginning God created the heavens and the earth." *Then on the sixth day God created man:*

Genesis 1:26: And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them

have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth'" (vs 26-28).

So, God created the heavens and the earth, and He created man in His image and likeness. It seems that too many stop here and make the assumption that this is God's world. As we see, the physical entity was created by God, but then things changed.

Adam and Eve were taken in by the serpent—Satan—who convinced them to go against God's commands and eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. ***They were deceived and sinned against God! They chose to do it!***

God drove them out of the Garden of Eden and cursed them and Satan (Gen. 3:1-24). From that time forward, the one responsible for the plight of this world is Satan. Unfortunately, too many who claim to be Christians have a worldly view instead of Biblical view.

They assume that God—Who created the world—is responsible for everything happening in it. He did not create this human society or its institutions. This man-made humanistic society is not of God's making; *it's Satan's! Satan is the 'god of this world!'* Satan has control of the educational institutions and governments and has set the standards for the way our society runs and all the false religions. Satan is the architect of this culture. *Too many have made the decision to follow him!*

Matthew 24:3: "And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, 'Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of Your coming, and of the completion of the age?' Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, '**Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.** For many shall come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ"; and they shall deceive many'" (vs 3-5).

The first thing that Jesus tells us is to be on guard so that no one deceives you. They want to know what the sign of His coming is, and He's telling them to pay attention and beware because of the false gods and people that are going to be out there trying to deceive them. Satan was already set to attack in the first century church, and Jesus was warning them, ***and us!***

Later, John expands on this; 1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world" (vs 1-3).

In Revelation Jesus revealed that it is Satan who is deceiving the whole world.

Revelation 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, **who is deceiving the whole world;** he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him."

Part of Satan's plan is to keep us busy and occupied. We suffer constant pressure from worldly sources. Some examples would be:

- the news
 - political corruption
 - abortion
 - Covid
 - war
 - immorality
- and let's not forget*
- the latest reality TV shows
 - the newest iPhones
 - latest tech devices
 - new vehicles

All kinds of new toys that we just have to have! We have to keep busy, right? All of this wears us down, and by the end of the day we're so exhausted.

Satan wants us busy and occupied so that we get away from God's Word. He wants us to fall away a little at a time ***until there's no time left in our busy life for the true God!*** When we understand that all of this is part of Satan's plan, we can make the necessary changes.

We know that we have to pray, study and renew our faith on a daily basis. This will keep us grounded. We have our foundation in God's Word, and it will sustain us. Satan wants to destroy that foundation.

Look at the talk of changing the Constitution of the United States. They want to make it 'more tolerant, more inclusive.' This is the foundational document of this country. It's based on the principles of the Christian Bible, contrary to what others would have you believe.

Ultimately, that's what they want to destroy!

Psalm 11:3: "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

We rely on God; we pray, study and obey His Word and He will protect and sustain us.

Verse 5: "The LORD tries the righteous, but His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone; and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup, for the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness; the upright will behold His face" (vs 5-7).

Remember that we are *spiritual Israel*, and this country is the recipient of the birthright of Manasseh. It's a mighty and prosperous nation! We need the foundation set forth in God's Word. As a nation we have forgotten the Lord in just about every aspect of life.

Isaiah 1:2: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the LORD has spoken, 'I have reared and brought up children, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows his owner, and the donkey his master's crib; *but* Israel... [including *spiritual Israel*] ...does not know *Me*; My people do not understand'" (vs 2-3).

As we see these evils unfold each day, we cannot lose our way. We need to stay focused. Our God is consistent in His ways, and great is His mercy toward us. We need to take personal inventory.

- What are our values?
- Are they consistent with God's Word?
- Where is our heart?
- Is it fully set on God

or

- Is there something else, or someone else we hold closer?
- Are we focused on the gods of this world?
 - ✓ money
 - ✓ houses
 - ✓ toys
 - ✓ etc.

or

- To our Creator God to Whom we owe everything?

We can all recite Mal. 3:6, but this is only one of number of verses that detail God's Truth and mercy.

Numbers 23:19 "God *is* not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and shall He not do it? Or has He spoken, and shall He not fulfill it?"

Lamentations 3:22: "*It is* by the LORD'S mercies that we are not destroyed, because His

compassions never fail. *They are* new every morning; great *is* Your faithfulness" (vs 22-23).

James 1:17: "Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning."

We see in the Old and New Testaments that God does not change. He wants us also to be consistent, keep our foundational teachings and not to associate with those prone to change. He tells us who to fear and what to be weary of.

Proverbs 24:19: "Do not fret yourself because of evil men, nor be envious of the wicked; for there shall not be a reward to the evil man; the lamp of the wicked shall be put out. My son, fear the LORD and the king; *and* do not fellowship with those who are given to change; for their trouble shall rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin of them both?" (vs 19-22).

IF we stay true to God's Word, show Him we love Him by:

- keeping His laws and commandments
- pray
- study His Word
- fellowship together
- fast and renew our faith

We can stay ahead of Satan's world! Scripture has already shown us what is ahead.

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, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; having an outward appearance of Godliness, but denying the power of *true* Godliness. ***But as for you, turn away from all these***" (vs 1-5).

Almost 2,000 years ago, Paul detailed these times for Timothy. We know the outcome. God has called us to Him to be with Him and our Lord Jesus Christ throughout eternity. As we see all of these things unfold, all of this evil and corruption continue, ***we can rest in the Lord. Hold fast and stay the course!***

1-Thessalonians 5:22: "Abstain from every form of wickedness. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your entire spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is He* Who calls you, Who will also perform *it*" (vs 22-24).

Let's commit ourselves to our Lord and God. We're heading into bad times! With the level

of evil that has already been displayed these past couple of years and the falling away from God that we can see, the immediate future does not look too promising.

We may have been blessed with a four-year reprieve, but that's probably it unless there's a large scale repentance.

1-Peter 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us, who *are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time. In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials, in order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ; whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—*even the* salvation of *your* lives" (vs 3-9).

If we stay true, the outcome is not contested.
We win!

Demoted!

Bob Lewis

Thank you all, it's an honor and privilege to be here with or Family of God and fellowship on the Sabbath.

After several hours last night of reading, re-reading and writing, I completed an essay entitled *Demoted!* That was I have been feeling all week about being ordained an elder in God's Church. I know that from 30 years in law enforcement that the higher rank you go the greater the responsibilities to others you have and more of a servant you become.

In meeting with Fred yesterday morning, he gave Chauncey and I an elder's manual and right there on page one, in the Introduction, was a statement that is actually a demotion followed by Matt. 25:25-28. My thoughts of being demoted were confirmed!

I further wrote of how our responsibilities, including feeding God's sheep, and seven pages later, to include John 21:15-17, I had finished what I believed to be what I was to share today, *and Satan showed up!*

In attempting to save the document, there was an error in the C-drive on my laptop. It's gets better from here. The document would not save. In my lack of knowledge of computers, you thought I was going to say 'patience.' The file vanished completely into the black hole where such things as socks in the dryer and contact lenses go. *Wait! It's get better!*

As soon as it was time for the rooster to crow was drawing near, it was getting quite late, the computer was telling me that the error was that I didn't have enough space on the hard drive to save it. I had been putting stuff on a thumb drive. I had taken all my photographs off the laptop to clear space.

So, I thought it might be fitting to share a previous essay offering I had on file from my folder called *My Essays*.

Well, somehow the error had caused a major issue with the hard drive, so as my resident 'computer expert' was sleeping I tried to fix it myself. Well, my expertise with computers launched *My Essays* file into cyber space and that file is now floating out there somewhere enjoying the view of the scenery.

So, six years worth of essays are gone! Lost in space! Thankfully, when my 'computer expert' woke up, she reminded me that Chauncey usually saves everything we share in fellowship on the Sabbath—I love you, Chauncey—and also they will be in my *send file* of e-mails.

So, God's awesome! Recovery is possible!
And I actually found some in the trash file, wherever it goes, in the *recycle bin*. It did pull up some, so God gave me the backup. Everybody else puts them on a thumb drive, right?

But like we talked about last night, God may have something totally in mind from what I was working on last night. Well, He definitely showed me last night that this is the direction He wanted to go.

Nearly 20 years ago I had a similar experience when I was attending a leadership course in Tallahassee. It was a year long, actually it was one week month for 13 months. We were tasked with choosing a topic and writing a lengthy paper on the subject and then giving an oral presentation to the group at the end of the year. Before the project was due, I completed the nearly 50 page written portion and I was attempting to print out a copy. *Satan showed up!*

Actually, I had the dreaded blue screen crash on my desktop. So, at that time I was still dragging around a lot of the 'old Bob'—and if you guys knew me years ago, I reckon I had a lot in common as far

as being an overt. If computers wouldn't have been so expensive, it would have met an explosive fate at demolition's training with a block of C-4s and {inaudible}!

Romans 5:3: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope (vs 3-4).

A lengthy lesson had begun at that time, 2005. a follow up test was given this morning to me in the wee hours. Patience is a high hurdle to get over.

Romans 8:25: "But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience."

God is a God of patience (Rom. 15:5), and I put the verses in parentheses when we do our Bible studies. We crack the books, and everybody reads and shares; that's how we interact with each other.

I know this to be true, which God has been dealing with the likes of me for 65 years. Patience is one of the fruits of His Spirit, and there a numerous references to it in His Word. I have a whole pile of references here from 2-Corinthians all the way through Revelation. It's replete; ***patience is a virtue!*** My reaction to last night's attack was not the nuclear response of the old Bob.

Ephesians 4:24: "And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth."

As you can see, my laptop is still in one piece. As time was now a factor I couldn't recover the old essays, what next? *We all know that God is the God of creation!* He doesn't want reruns, he wants something new. Wherever They lead you and the way ***'They deliver you up, but whatever shall be given to you in that hour, that speak; for you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Holy Spirit.'***

Byron and I were discussing this very Scripture last night. *So, lesson right here!* It's quite evident to me that all the attacks that beset us are two sided:

1. Satan does not want us to be where were at *He wants to derail any plan God has for us.*
2. God permits these tests to mold us into who He wants us to be

Job 1:8: "And the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him in the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil?*'"

With every test comes a testimony! The more we study God's Word the more we learn to grow in the likeness of His Son Jesus Christ. So, after decades of trials, the purpose is becoming quite

clear.

Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ."

I know that He's not going to leave me at the bus stop; He's going to finish what He started!

I certainly don't want to taunt the enemy in any way, but the more the enemy attacks, the more evident it is to me that I must be in the right place. Doing something right; on the right path. If we weren't, it wouldn't matter to Satan. You see these people floating around a lot that they seemingly just float through life with no cares or no trials. But Satan is not going to waste resources on that, he's about stopping the plan of God.

Romans 16:20: "But the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen." *And I thank you, that's all!*

He had to get Chauncey, too; he's not going to let you get away with anything he's not slapping me around for. I hope this made sense to everybody, as I was typing this morning it was just like water pouring into a dry sponge. It's the way God does things with me. I thank Him for it. God bless you all!

Fred: The third man to speak is Steven Greene, author of the booklet: *The Ordinances of Offenses*. He's an excellent writer, good speaker. He's done some Church at Home and did very well. Especially watch the one on the *Monarch Butterfly*, that's one of his best.

Salvational Works

Steven Greene

In Rev. 3, Christ is talking about the Laodiceans and he says: Revelation 3:15: "...I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot."

- What was He talking about?
- What was He wishing they would do that was cold or hot?

It wasn't about their spiritual condition, it was about their *works!* He said, v 15: "I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot..."

This obviously talking about a salvational condition that every single person called by God—begotten of God with His Spirit—is expected to do. We hear a lot about works. James talks about works. We know that we are saved by grace, but there is a

salvational work that every person that is truly a child of God must be doing. There are three parables in Matt. 25:

1. the Ten Virgins
2. the Talents
3. the Sheep and the Goats

When you read those, it's talking about the **salvational works** that we should be doing.

The Ten Virgins: five are wise, five are foolish. Forget about the numbers, there were wise ones and there were foolish ones. The difference of what they did with the Spirit of God in them. That was the difference.

The Sheep and the Goats: What was the difference in the sheep and the goats? The sheep did works, the goats did not! I'm talking about **salvational works!**

John talks about a condition of the Church. This is Jesus Christ's prayer for us, for His Bride, for God's children:

John 17:11: "And I [Jesus Christ] am no longer in the world, but these... [the saints of God] ...are in the world, and **I am coming to You**...."

This is an important statement. He is coming to us through the Spirit of Christ; we have the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God.

"...Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that **they**... [we] ...**may be one**, even as We ... [God the Father and Jesus Christ] ...are one" (v 11).

"...may be..." is a possibility, it's not a guarantee!

He is talking about the unity among the brethren, not the unity of Jesus Christ and God the Father. So, there is a oneness that He desires of the Body of Christ. It is a oneness that is separate from God and Jesus Christ, because we're flesh! We are different! We are not perfect or perfected, as God and Christ.

Verse 21: "That they all... [talking about the saints, the children of the Most High God] **may be** one, even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You..."

- that is a guaranteed oneness
- that is an unquestioned oneness
- that is a perfect oneness

God and Christ!

"...that they also **may be one in Us**..." (v 21).

There's an expectation of God and Christ, that **we**, the children of God, are becoming one with

each other. It's not a perfect oneness, but it is something that we must be doing as the Body of Christ **so that we may also be one with God and Christ!**

- Do you see the connection there?

Christ is basically saying here that

- **IF you're not one with each other**, how can you be one with Us?
- **IF we do not love our brother**, are we showing the love of God?

That's what He's saying here!

I want to show you what this salvational work is. This is not a work for an evangelist, a preacher or teacher. There is no specific title for this job, this is something that every single person who has been baptized and received the Holy Spirit must be doing in the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:15: "But holding the Truth in love, may in all things **grow up into Him**..."—into Christ! This is something that:

- we need to be *doing*
- we are to be *growing*

"...Who is the Head... [of the Body] ...even Christ. From Whom... [out of Christ] ...all the Body, fitly framed..." (vs 15-16).

You can't have a body that does not have the proper connections between the various parts. If a finger is not connected to the hand with bone, ligaments, muscle, blood vessels and nerves, it's not connected. It has to be *fitly framed!* Just because I'm a finger and I stitch myself onto a hand does not mean that I am functional with that hand. I have to be fitly framed in that, with that hand, to be useful. Otherwise, I'm just a flopping finger on the end of a hand.

"...and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies..." (v 16).

If we are all a joint, if we are all a part of the Body of Christ, we are supplying—present tense—something to the Body of Christ.

"...according to *its* inner working in **the measure of each individual part**..." (v 16).

Every single part of the Body of Christ has to be *participating and giving* something to the Body. Without that the Body cannot be fitly framed.

Christ "...is making the increase of the Body unto **the edifying**..." (v 16)

- building up
- lifting up
- raising up
- encouragement

- strengthening
- “...**of itself** in love” (v 16).

This is the salvational work! This is not a work that God and Christ are doing, ***this is the work that we are to be doing!***

What did they say about the Laodiceans? *I know your works, but they are neither cold nor hot!* They're not getting done. This is our work! Your work! Everybody's work! This work is something that we all have to give. So, how do we do that?

Remember that it says that *Christ is making the increase of the Body!* How does He do that? *By the Holy Spirit* He gives to each and every one of us; ***He*** supplies that! ***He*** gives us that Spirit. From that Spirit we produce fruits. It's *not our* fruits. ***It's the fruits of God's Spirit! So, it's not our fruits!***

What do we do with those? If we believe, growing in the fruits of the Spirit is sufficient for salvation, we don't really understand why we are growing in the fruits of the Spirit.

Look at Matt. 25; we have the Parable of the Talents. One was give five, another two, and another one. Listen to what He said when He came back to judge the one. He made an increase to all of them. Before He made that increase, they didn't have any talents.

He gave one five, He gave another two, and He gave another one. It's not about the quantity! It's not about the amount! It's not about the number of foolish virgins and wise virgins. ***It's about the fact that He gave everyone of us an increase by His Spirit!***

When we were baptized, and ***as we have opened our mind and heart to Him*** to grow in grace and knowledge, ***He supplies the increase!*** What do we do with it. That is our work! What did He say to the one to whom He had given the single talent to, who went off and hid it in ground? *He buried it!*

Matthew 25:24: “Then the one who had received the single talent also came to *him* and said, ‘Lord, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter.’”

Jesus Christ is reaping something He didn't sow. It's not His work; it's our work! We are doing the sowing, we are doing the scattering, but He still expects to come and reap and gather from it.

Verse 25: “And *because* I was afraid, I went and hid your talent in the earth. *Now* look, you have your own”—*I'm giving back what You gave me!* Christ doesn't want it back! He wants more than that!

The spiritual gifts that we are given by God through His Holy Spirit are the increase that He gives us. The work that we are to use those for, we are to trade for. When it talks about the talents, it's a trading that goes on. It's an increase of something. It is a gaining of something. The gifts that we are given we are to use to edify the Body in love; that is our works.

What did He say—in the sheep and the goats—to the goats that did no works for others? *I never knew you!* What did He tell the five foolish virgins? *I don't know who you are!* It's those who are edifying the Body.

- How do we do that?
- What are the fruits of the Spirit?
 - ✓ love
 - ✓ joy
 - ✓ peace
 - ✓ longsuffering
 - ✓ gentleness
 - ✓ goodness
 - ✓ kindness

All those things!

Are we offering the fruits of the increase of Christ in us to others through prayer, through Bible study. How does Bible study work? *Always be ready to give an answer!*

Through service: Hey, I haven't heard from you in a while. How are you doing? Or I'm praying for this person because they're sick and I want them to be back in my fellowship group. I want them to be able to pick up the phone at home so I can talk to them again. *All of those things we must be doing!*

The widows two mites. They were all she had to give, but she gave it. Are we willing to give all of the increase that Christ has given to us? If you or I were given five talents, do we give somebody four? We are to give all those talents to recover more.

Do we give the one that we were given by Christ, ***not of our own***, but by Christ to somebody else to edify them?

Jesus Christ as the Head of the Body is going to make an appearance in the future, the near term. The next few years, I think—whatever few means—and He wants a Body that is fitly framed together so He can do the work of bringing more sons and daughters of God into the Kingdom! The spiritual Kingdom! ***But it starts with all of us making sure that the Body that Christ is trying to put together is fitly framed, is done in love, edifying itself in love!***

Brethren, that is a ***salvational work!*** We all have a responsibility, for it is something that we

must be on our knees daily, talking to God about, asking for opportunities. It must be something that we are looking into His Word so that we are inspired and zealous to do that work.

It is something that we must be interacting with all our brethren, *that we may be fitly framed with them* through our prayers, through or study, through our ‘Hello, how are you? I was thinking about you.’

Brethren, this is the work of the Body today. **Let’s get it done!**

(break@40:12)

Ordination Service Guard the Truth

Fred Coulter:

Since we’re going to ordain three men as elders, it’s fitting that we look at that Scriptures. ***This is a Scriptural and spiritual thing!*** Of course, being an elder, being very well spoken by all three of what we need to do. We’ll cover a little bit of that, as well!

I’m going to save all admonitions for them until after they’re ordained, because you can’t give admonitions to those who are not yet ordained if you’re speaking of elders. They all not that old compared to some people.

1-Timothy 3:1: “Faithful *is* the saying, ‘If any man aspires to *be* an overseer...’”

Not a bishop (*KJV*); that was to please the king and the Church of England that came out of the Catholics. You’ve got to keep that bishop there.

An overseer is different! And overseer is seeing how things are going, and making sure that they’re going well. A dictator tells everybody what to do.

“...he desires a good work.’ Now then, it is obligatory *that* the overseer be blameless, *the* husband of one wife...” (vs 1-2).

Back then they could have two or three wives, and in the Old Testament, because so many men were killed in the battles, the various kings and leaders of the armies ended up with harems. Since they killed the husbands, then it was their responsibility to take care of the women and the children. Not like today, go line up and get your welfare check.

“...**vigilant**... [of self; one of the most important things is self-discipline, self-control] ...serious-minded, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching” (v 2).

You can see that with all three of these men; they’re skilled in teaching. Now they may need a

little refinement here and there to improve, but they’re well aware of what they need to do, because they have wives to tell them. Like ‘Fred, did you say that?’

Verse 3: “Not given to much wine... [only two drops] ...not a bully, not greedy for selfish gain; but kind, not a quarreler, not a lover of money; one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in subjection with all respect” (vs 3-4).

I hope you three have that, but you know, a little past that. This is for those who are younger.

Verse 5: “For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household...”

- How does that start?
- What kind of rulership is it?

It starts with Christ and then God’s Spirit; then you ruling yourself and taking care of your family or whomever you are to take care of. Because if he doesn’t:

“...**how will he take care of the Church of God?** Not a novice, lest he become conceited... [that’s the way that it happens] ...*and* fall into *the same* condemnation as the devil. It is mandatory that he also have a good report from those *who are* outside *the Church*, lest he fall into reproach and *the* snare of the devil” (vs 5-7).

{Ordination Ceremony/Prayer for Chauncey Normandin, Bob Louis and Steven Green; hands laid on by Fred Coulter, Roger Kendall and Roger Tointon (about 6 minutes not transcribed)}

It’s nice to have everybody here for this occasion today. It’s a happy one, indeed and we’re thankful for it. Let’s look at some of the things that need to be done as elders.

- we’re *not on our own* to do our own pleasure
- *we’re not* on our own to do things as we see fit

We have to led by the Sprit of God and the Word of God and to rightly divide the Word of God, as we’ll see later.

This becomes extremely important, especially living in the days that we’re living in today, because so many are out there trying to do their own thing, or try and do something for Christ and He has nothing to do with them!

Now let’s see some of the other qualifications that are necessary here ***guard the Truth!*** Remember in the days of Eli, the high priest and his two sons: Phinehas and Hophni. The lamp of the Lord was going out!

Today, we’re living in a world of darkness, and we must have the Spirit of God as the Light of

God so we can serve the brethren. We don't know what's going to happen with new people coming along.

Because there's so much trouble going on, maybe there will be more people searching out where God is. If that's the case, we need to be ready to help them. It's not going to be a policeman's action as such; ***it's going to be recovering the spiritual wounded!***

Here's what Paul wrote; Titus 1:4: "To Titus, a true son according to *our* common faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ our Savior."

That's to all of us, but especially to the elders. We're relying on:

- the Spirit of God
- the Truth of God
- the Word of God

In everything!

Verse 5: "For this cause I left you in Crete, so that you might set in order the things that needed to be done, and might ordain elders in every city, as I commanded you."

Wouldn't that be something if we had enough people that we had them in every city? *That would be unusual!*

Verse 6: "If any man be blameless, *the* husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of debauchery or rebellion. For it is obligatory that as **God's steward**..." (vs 6-7).

This is interesting. What is a steward? *Steward is a word that's rarely used today, because there are too many crooks!* The reason is that a steward is to take someone else's money, goods, possessions or responsibilities, and use them for the benefit of the owner. Not for self! Who is the owner? ***God the Father and Jesus Christ!*** That's important to always remember.

"...an overseer be blameless, **not self-willed, not quick-tempered**... [that's a hard one for all of us] **...not given to wine, not a bully, not greedy for material gain**; but hospitable, a lover of good, sound-minded, just, Holy, self-controlled, **holding steadfastly to the faithful Word**... [you've got to guard the Truth] ...according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ*, so that he may be able both to encourage with sound doctrine and to convict those who are gainsayers" (vs 7-9).

Let's look at some specific things that are important along those lines.

A special study on Peter: he was the one that God the Father revealed—first to the apostles—that Jesus was the Christ. Then just a little bit later—

after he said the 'You're the Christ, the Son of the living God' and Jesus said, 'The Father has revealed that to you'—Jesus was telling him that we're all going up to Jerusalem and all of these evil things are going to happen to Me. Peter—because we're not without mistakes—was going to save Jesus.

What does Peter do? *He takes Jesus to the side and begins to rebuke him and said, 'Lord, this won't happen to You, because I'm here and I'll protect you.'* That was the implication!

- What did Jesus say? ***Get behind Me Satan!***
- What does this tell us? ***Satan never leaves us alone!***

Especially in this world!

1-Peter 5:1: "*The* elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an *eyewitness* of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed."

It was Peter, James and John who went with Jesus to Mount of Transfiguration, where Jesus was transfigured into what He looks like when He's in His full spiritual glory. For the three of them, that burned in their mind all their lives.

Verse 2: "**Feed the flock of God**..." *That's what it has to be:*

- not for show
- not for vanity
- not for praise

But to feed the flock for what? *That's they may grow in grace and knowledge and understanding!*

Verse 2: "**Feed the flock of God** *that is* among you, **exercising oversight** not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an eager attitude.*"

Verse 3 is very important, and this is the downfall of too many churches even today. The elders and ministers have been placed between the brethren and God! That's not the way it's to be! We'll see how it's to be in just a minute.

Everybody, through the grace of God, ***has equal access to God the Father and Jesus Christ through prayer, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*** Because we have the Spirit of God, which consists of the Father as begettal, and the Spirit of Christ for the mind of Christ. ***Direct access!***

So, we don't do it with lordship, but by being examples to the flock.

Verse 3: "**Not as exercising lordship over your possessions**..."—*because they all belong to God!*

You can look back, all of you have been in

the Church for decades, and see how that affected everything; that's what happened!

"...but by being examples to the flock of God" (v 3).

1-Tim.—here are some specific charges. We had an interesting conversation about that we have the Word of God, which God has inspired. And that many of the direct words of Christ are in the Gospels and some related in the epistles. But all of the epistles were written through the Spirit of God so that we know the instructions of God.

What it is, if Jesus said something, or inspired something, it's written down. We have it preserved for us, because Who preserved it though all 'hell and high water'? *Jesus Christ did!* It's as if Christ is talking to us personally, because it's the Word of God.

The world says that 'these men wrote it decades and decades—in some cases, two or three centuries—after it happened, so how can we have any reliability on the Word of God?' *Well, they don't understand what God is doing.*

So, take these things as God speaking to us as elders. That doesn't mean that we're above the brethren, as we'll see in a little bit. That means that we follow the Word of God *always!* Now, remember what I said about *guarding the Truth!*

1-Timothy 1:1: "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ according to *the* commandment of God our Savior, and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, *Who is* our hope, to Timothy, *my* true son in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (vs 1-2).

That's what we want: *mercy, truth and love!* But *strength, giving no space to doubters, giving no space to people who have evil intentions!*

Verse 3: "When I was going to Macedonia, I exhorted you to remain in Ephesus, in order that you might *solemnly charge*... [*a direct command of the highest order*] ...some not to teach other doctrines."

In other words, *guard the Truth!* But how can you guard the Truth, *if you don't know it?* That's why study becomes important!

Verse 4: "Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which lead to empty speculations rather than to edification from God..."

The one in v 3 leads to edification from God. How is it that when we're speaking as elders, many times God will inspire us right while we're speaking? How is it that all the brethren can understand what we're saying? *Because the Spirit of God that they have!* So, between the two of us, ***God edifies!***

"...edification from God, which *is* in faith. Now, the purpose of the commandment... [of what Paul going to bring out in this epistle] ...is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and genuine faith... [notice what Paul was confronted with; the same thing we are today]: ...from which some, having missed the mark, have turned aside unto vain jangling" (vs 4-6).

You will see that all of Protestantism is defined right there. There are some few that preach a little bit of the Truth, but that's about it. Even among the Churches of God you have the same thing.

Verse 7: "Desiring to be teachers of *the* Law, neither understanding what they are saying, nor what they are strongly affirming. Now we know that the Law *is* good, if anyone uses it lawfully" (v 7-8).

Verse 16: "But for this reason I was shown mercy..."

Paul always remembered what he did to the Church. I imagine that—just like some of you, some have been in war, combat; it's always there. You might be able to push it away for a while, but every once in a while it will come back. So, he remembered the mercy that he was shown:

"...in order that in me first Jesus Christ might demonstrate all long-suffering, for an example to those who would afterwards believe on Him unto eternal life. Now to the King of eternity..." (vs 16-17).

Think about that! I want you to think about the greatness of our calling. **"...the King of eternity..."**!

In some quarters, if people were having a meeting and a senator would come in the room, they would all stand up and give him honor and all this sort of thing.

*We have greater than that! **We have the King of eternity, the Author of eternal life!*** That's why we're here!

"...the incorruptible, invisible, and only wise God, be honor and glory into the ages of eternity. Amen" (v 17). *That's quite a salutation!*

Verse 18: "This charge I am personally committing to you, *my* son Timothy, in accordance with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you; **in order that by them you yourself might wage a good war.**" *So, it's a charge!*

Verse 19: "Holding to *the* faith and a good conscience. For some, having cast aside *a good conscience*, have made shipwreck in regard to the faith." *Then Paul says who that is!*

There are a couple of other's there, but let's come to 2-Tim. 4, and this is after he says through 2-Tim. 3 that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Notice this charge; **this is a particular, specific one for elders**, and notice Who it comes from, even though Paul wrote it:

2-Timothy 4:1: "I charge you... [the highest form of command] ...therefore, in the sight of God..."

That's where we are today, in the sight of God even though we're in this building.

"...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).

That's what it's to be, not humanistic stories, not little poems, not nice little sayings, but the Word of God. That's why I'm glad to see all three of these men using the Scriptures to explain what they're saying. That's what it has to be. *Think of all the ideas out in the world!*

The reason that we're in the mess is because people have left God, and men have their own ideas and that's like a recipe of trying to find something in a cave and there's a gas can back there that's leaking fumes. You're coming along with your torch and you're getting closer and you get right up on it and BOOM! *That's what's happening in the world!* We're seeing it right before our eyes.

Verse 2: "**Preach the Word!** Be urgent in season and out of season..."—*which tells you that they're keeping the Holy Days!*

"...**convict**..." (v 2)—*the brethren, so they have stronger resoluteness:*

- to face the evil
- to overcome sin
- to look at their own lives and see where they can change and grow

Conviction that the Truth is the Truth and there's nothing else but the Truth!

"...**rebuke**..." (v 2)—*wherever there's correction necessary!*

The key to *rebuke* is that **you teach the brethren how to overcome their problem!** Why is that important? *Because the rebuke comes from the conviction of their heart that they want to change!*

I remember sitting in the gymnasium—before the auditorium was there—and Herbert Armstrong got up there... There was a lot of trouble going on in the Church, and he stood up there and looked down at all the brethren and he said: **Brethren! You're all a bunch of dumb sheep!** Everybody cowered and wondered *what's coming!* **If they're all a bunch of dumb sheep, whose fault**

is that? His!

"...**encourage, with all patience and doctrine.** For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts... [Haven't we seen this? *Yes!*] ...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; and they shall be turned aside unto myths**" (vs 2-4).

Again, **guard the Truth! You must always guard the Truth!** That means you must know the Truth. That's why study and re-study and re-study! What you're going to find when you do this, *you're going to learn things that you didn't know over Scriptures that you thought you knew!* Does that make any sense? *There's more to it than what just meets the printed word!*

Verse 5: "But as for you, **be vigilant in all things**..."—*always be on guard!* This is why

- prayer every day is important
- study every day is important

"...endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry" (v 5).

Then he says, 'Look, the jigs almost up with me! I'm about ready to be offered.

One final note on how we serve God's people, Matt. 20. This tells us that **there is no place for politics within the Church!** Politics will lead to trouble.

- Did that happen in Worldwide?
- Did they have trouble?

It's gone! It's no longer there! Byron lives about five miles away from there; **there's nothing there but condominiums!**

Matthew 20:20: "Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee..."—*James and John, 'sons of thunder'!*

Why does John preach so much on love? *Because the older he got, the more he looked back on his life and there was **too much 'thunder' and not enough love!***

"...came to Him with her sons, worshipping Him, and asking a certain thing from Him. And He said to her, 'What do you desire?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these **my two sons**... [I love them, Lord; they're really great sons] ...may sit one at Your right hand and one at *Your left hand* in Your Kingdom.'.... [Whoa! Nothing like asking for the universe!] ...But Jesus answered *and* said, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized

with the baptism that I am baptized with?'....(vs 20-22). **What was His baptism?** *His own blood!*

"...They said to Him, 'We are able'" (v 22). *Be careful what you answer!*

Remember what happened to James in Acts 14? *He lost his head!* Peter barely escaped with the help of angels.

Verse 23: "And He said to them, 'You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit at My right hand and at My left *hand* is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father.'"

Now then, rebellion among the ranks of the others because they wanted to be first, too! Remember that even at the last Passover they were arguing 'Who is going to be the greatest?' Right at the Passover; can you imagine that? Read that in the book of Luke.

Verse 24: "And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers. But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, 'You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship over them...'"

Lordship downward; rulership from the top down. You know what that's like, don't you? Don't we see that going on right here in America now? *You better get the shot or you're not going to have your job, travel, eat, buy, sell...!*

"...and the great ones..." (v 25). Who are the **great ones**? These are the religious leaders. Remember Simon Magus (Acts 8). What was he called? *The great power of God!* He ruled over the people.

"...exercise authority over them. However, **it shall not be this way among you**... [here's the lesson for elders, right here]: ...but whoever would become great among you, **let him be your servant**" (v 25-26).

Whatever happens, don't get exalted and think: *Oh look what God did with me!* You better go humbly and thank God and be grateful for what God has done.

Verse 27: "And whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave."

Think about this: He's using His own example: v 28: "Just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life *as a ransom for many*." *Think about this:*

- don't ever think you have a problem that God can't handle
- don't ever think you have a problem that is too great for you to deal with

It may be difficult, but you can deal with it!

You need to remember what Jesus did. As God, He gave up everything as God to become that pinpoint of life, to be born from the virgin Mary and take on human nature.

Now, you think you have a tough time in overcoming? **Jesus had the law of sin and death in Him in the flesh**, which He inherited from His mother. He had to have it because **His sacrifice condemns sin in the flesh!** The only flesh that could condemn sin in the flesh was *Christ's flesh!*

What does He say? *Come to Me all you who are heavy burdened and take up My yoke, for it is easy!* This is what we need to do and preach to help the brethren! Being ordained as elders is a wonderful thing for the Church and for you **IF** you are faithful!

References

Wicked Men, Imposters and Winners

Chauncey Normandin

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- 4) 1 John 4:1-3
- 5) Revelation 12:9
- 6) Psalm 11:3, 5-7
- 7) Isaiah 1:2-3
- 8) Numbers 23:19
- 9) Lamentations 3:22-23
- 10) James 1:17
- 11) Proverbs 24:19-22
- 12) 2 Timothy 3:1-5
- 13) 1 Thessalonians 5:22-24
- 14) 1 Peter 1:3-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 3:1-24
- Malachi 3:6

Demoted!

Bob Lewis

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 5:34
- 2) Romans 8:25
- 3) Ephesians 4:24
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- 5) Psalm 51:10
- 6) Philippians 1:6
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- Matthew 25:25-28
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Salvational Works

Steven Greene

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- 1) Revelation 3:15
- 2) John 17:11, 21
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Ordination Service: Guard the Truth

Fred Coulter

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- 1) 1 Timothy 3:1-7
- 2) Titus 1:4-9
- 3) 1 Peter 5:1-3
- 4) 1 Timothy 1:1-8, 16-19
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- 6) Matthew 20:20-28

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Acts 14; 8

Also referenced:

- Booklet: *The Ordinances of Offenses* by Steven Greene
- Church at Home: *Monarch Butterfly* (churchathome.org)

FRC:bo

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