

How Are We True Christians to Live in a Compromised World Today?

Norbert Bohnert—September 14, 2019

Greetings, everybody! I'm going to talk about the compromised world that we live in today.

We know and fully understand that we are living in a compromised world. It has been compromised totally by evil. Of course, that was all brought about by Satan. We know that it was not created to be evil, but it has become that way.

In Gen. 1 it mentions six times that God's creation was very good.

Genesis 1:31—God summarizes it all and says, "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, *it was exceedingly good*. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

What does compromised mean? It's an interesting word, actually. It's composed of two parts: com + promise = with promise or mutual promise. Compromise is basically *an agreement or settlement of a dispute reached by two sides having to make concessions!* Each party surrendering something that they feel strongly about or really wanted badly.

An analogy of that would be if we took two people who are working in the same office space and one individual wanted the temperature in the room to be 68°, whereas the other individual wanted the room to be at 72°.

Because both individuals felt very strongly about that, for their comforts, they agreed to compromise and split the difference, putting temperature at 70°. That's one definition of compromise. It's a mutual promised made between themselves. I've notice this many times in our lives, and even sometimes within our marital relationship between husband and wife. There has to be compromising done many times.

What it means is that both parties accept standards that are less than what are desirable in their eyes, or what they would like to see. But in this way compromise is used in a positive sense.

But compromise can also be used in a very negative way. When it means to lose or surrender one's principles and values. For instance, if a thief breaks into someone's home, the owners security has been compromised.

Compromise has one more meaning worthy of note, and that is of having a fault exposed. An analogy of that would be when a young boy gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar. That was a

compromising situation for him to be found in. The child was caught 'red-handed' stealing a cookie. He hung his head low in shame because he had compromised his integrity when he actually got caught.

It's not until he says that he is sorry, that he won't do it again, and is forgiven and hugged, that his uprightness in the family is fully restored to where it was.

One of the first Scriptures that we find in the Bible regarding compromising situations is when Adam and Eve found themselves in a very compromising circumstance. ***Adam and Eve compromised their relationship with God!***

Genesis 3:10: "And he said, 'I heard You *walking* in the garden, and I was afraid because I *am* naked, and so I hid myself.'"

Adam and Eve had sinned, and now they found themselves exposed in a very compromising revelation. Of course, that was the sin that they had performed. When Satan entered the scene, Adam and Eve were compromised.

Romans 5:12: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned." *The serious breach of compromising God's perfect Law results in death for all mankind!*

Verse 14: "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the *One* Who was to come."

Because Adam and Eve were the parents of all mankind, they had compromised the entire world with their sin. That's where we find ourselves today, in a very compromised world, which is becoming more compromised each day.

We find ourselves citizens of this present evil world, residing in carnal fleshly bodies. We're all fully capable of sin.

Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*."

Fortunately, we are privileged to know the outcome and the resolution of the situation that is facing us. We know, for example, that God is not going to wink at this evil world that is out there, and

just overlook it.

Isaiah 13:11: “And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the tyrants.”

God is not going to wink at this evil world and just overlook it. He has a plan, but there’s also good news for the earth, and we are well aware of that as the called out ones.

Romans 8:21: “In order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

That is the awesome good news, that we as the called out ones are aware of, and that is where we are headed, *if we do our part!*

As much as we in God’s Church would like to deny our sinful past, we have all sinned by compromising ourselves. Paul calls us children of disobedience (Eph. 2). Like everyone else we were as good as dead in our trespasses and sins. That’s why we were part and parcel with the compromised world.

Ephesians 2:3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of the world.”

Like everyone else we all trespass and have sins. Sometimes we in God’s Church have trouble remembering and admitting that we all were “...*the* children of wrath...” when were called initially by God.

Man’s compromised relationship with God began at the very beginning with Adam and Eve, and has continue in all of mankind over time. The big question becomes: **How can we become uncompromised, forgiven, reconciled to God and able to partake of the grace afforded to us?**

We must make sure that we are living a very uncompromising life in the midst of a very compromised world. We must rule over our own thoughts, desires, body, mind, words, actions and self, *our entire self!*

We as God’s people are not anything like everybody else. We might look the same, but we are not. Paul says that we must reign in life and rule over our own lives.

Romans 5:17 “For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the One Jesus Christ.”

For us to reign in life with Jesus Christ in the Millennium, we must learn how to rule ourselves now, in our lifetime now. How do we go about that? ***To walk in His way of life there can be no compromise!***

It goes without saying that we should never compromise our ***standards, core values, ethics, principles or beliefs!*** We must never compromise ***the way and Truth of God, His statutes, judgments or commandments!***

As we consider that sin is compromise, it means the watering down of God’s Truth in one form or another, the breaking of God’s Laws. When we sin, we lower our standards by yielding to that which is wrong for our personal gain or advantage. Because we are all sinners, it is through repentance and faith, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our forgiveness, that we can become uncompromised in God’s sight.

It becomes clear that our compromised nature in this evil world can only be restored to righteousness by Christ’s sacrifice in which He personally gave Himself for our sins.

Galatians 1:4: “Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us **from the present evil world**, according to the will of our God and Father.”

It is only through repentance, faith and sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our forgiveness that we can become uncompromised!

Jesus willingly sacrificed Himself in our stead to pay for our sins. We have forgiveness for those times that we have many times failed to take an uncompromising stand for God’s way of life.

With that said, we need to examine ourselves on a regular basis, because of the tendency of our human carnal nature, which drags us back into our former compromised condition. It’s an ongoing state that we constantly have to battle ourselves. We must recognize that this occurs to us all, and it will always occur to us as long as we have human nature dwelling within us.

Many times we in God’s Church get an attitude of being right, and what we do is always right, and beyond that we actually make the comment or think that we never compromise God’s Word. That is totally false.

Wouldn’t it be better to not say that ‘I’m on track’ but rather say that ‘I need to get on track’? Would that not be more realistic in our lives today? If we get into that frame of mind of self-righteousness and thinking that we do everything right, ***we have a problem to overcome.***

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- What is our motivation?
- What are the things that drive us to the choices that we make?
- What determines how we act?

These are all questions we must constantly ask ourselves!

- Is it so that we will be accepted by others?
- Is it to be better than other people?
- Is it to be seen of others?
- Is that what motivates us?

or

- Is rather to have the humble, contrite heart that Christ had?

Humility is admitting that we do not know everything, and far from it! Do we generally see God in all the people around us today? The image of the Divine in everyone? *If we wish to measure ourselves to be on track, we must constantly think and ask ourselves:*

- How did we treat people yesterday?
- How did we treat them today?
- Did we treat them with respect and dignity?
- Did we also see possibly the potential of God in them?

All question that we can ask ourselves!

1-Timothy 3:7: “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*.”

This admonishment is not strictly meant for the ministers or elders, ***but it refers to all of us!*** It refers to each one of us.

The world, unfortunately, rubs off on us, sometimes more than we actually realize. We know that God is good, wise, generous, forgiving, loving, caring and sacrificing. But the question we need to ask ourselves, as we examine ourselves: Am I also maintaining those same traits of God? ***or*** Do I come short of God’s goodness? ***There is none good, but God!*** We know that! To think that anyone in the flesh is good is starting at the wrong place. It’s a wrong premise to begin with.

How are we even able to get started in obtaining a spiritually objective view of ourselves with that type of an attitude? It’s a huge problem and has been in the past in God’s Church. Today people seem to cloak themselves sometimes in their own righteousness. Those who do it, won’t even take the time to examine themselves! People ride their righteousness at times like a mighty, mighty beast!

It’s a wrong idea to think and believe that since we are doing everything correctly to the Scriptures:

- keeping the Sabbath Day
- keeping the Holy Days
- keeping the food laws

that we have become good!

It’s a dangerous, dangerous state that we can get ourselves into; a dangerous attitude to get into. We cannot let ourselves get into that mentality of thinking that we are too good.

Paul often mentions that it was possible to revert to a compromised status, that of being unapproved by God. Paul constantly himself had to fight this.

1-Corinthians 9:27: “But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected.”

We have to be of that same mentality and take that to heart! Yes, brethren, we in God’s Church could lose out on everything if we are not careful.

Hebrews 4:1: “Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into His rest, any of you might seem to come short.” ***We must be building our spiritual house without compromise!***

- What direction is our life leading us?
- What path are we going down?

God called us and opened our mind to hear and understand the Truth. But we seriously cautioned not to trust our own evaluation of ourselves. Our own self-evaluation is not to be trusted.

Jeremiah 17:9: “**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?**”

We might think from the bottom of our heart that we are right, absolutely right. But God says, ‘No, you are not good.’ ***We are all sold under sin!*** We dare not trust in our own wisdom to gain us entrance into God’s Kingdom. We must be very careful not to do that.

Compromise is a serious, serious threat, especially in today’s world, the world that we are living in and citizens of today. We have a proclivity to overlook our comfortable shortcomings, which can lead to compromising God’s perfect way.

How can we be sure that we trusting in the sovereignty of God and not in our own schemes and penchants? How can we be sure of that?

When we look back at our lives, the times that we have fallen into sin, and we retrace our steps,

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we will find in most cases that it all started with a bit of compromise. If there is a breakdown in our relationship with God, it's only a matter of time until compromise starts to take over making it's way into our life.

We carefully need to look at ourselves, to make doubly sure that we are not conning ourselves or playing church, or falling into a trap of compromising the Christian calling that we have received.

Look at the history of the Church of God over many years. A lot of mistakes have been made by those who have been in charge. I believe that it would be a truism to admit that no Church Era has been or will be perfect until Jesus Christ returns and establishes His Father's Kingdom on this earth.

Looking back: Was not the approach taken that there was not much room for individualism? People were not allowed to think outside the box without getting into trouble, as though they were trying to form a revolution. People were not thinking for themselves, or proving things for themselves, but rather taking someone's understanding without really checking it out and proving it for themselves to see if it was truly based on the true Word of God.

Ministers felt threatened whenever a member would approach them with questions. They basically took away the mindset of each individual, because everyone had vastly different backgrounds, emotions, education, experiences and expectations.

We are all individuals not made in the same mold. None of us are made in the same mold:

- some have more needs than others
- some have more to give than others
- some are more qualified than others in certain aspects

God likes variety and diversity. Just look at the myriad of different life forms that He has created. That would indicate that the variety and diversity is there. We are all different and we know that. The concept of a 'one size fits all' does not work in God's plan for us.

God deals with each individual, and He has dealt with each individual in history, in the Bible, differently. It's just like a doctor not giving everyone the same prescription without first diagnosing their condition.

Parents learn in raising their children that each child reacts to the same situation differently, and correction comes accordingly. God had Abraham take a walk, Elijah took a nap and Adam took the rap. God never grows two people the same

way. God is handcrafter and not a mass producer. We all, each one of us, has our own unique identity.

We in God's Church have not completed the work. We still have our greatest work ahead of us. It is true, God is not finished with His work, yet. If He were, everything would be over. The greatest work ahead is still to be done. We know that the time is shorter now than we have ever imagined before. Our work is not in building an organization. I would hope that we have gotten that false idea of Christianity out of our systems by now.

God is not building large congregations, as we know, but is working with the few faithful out there just like Jesus and the apostles dealt with.

Each one of us as a unique individual—we know that we are not exactly the same—came to understand at different times. We came out one by one and are still doing so, one by one!

The true Church still exists and will continue to survive until the return of Christ. The true Church will not be buried or forgotten.

Matthew 16:18: "And I say also to you that you are Peter; but upon this Rock I will build My Church, and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it."

What is the work and responsibility of that little surviving flock that God is working with? *It is always to preach the Gospel and to feed the flock!* That has certainly taken on a new face in the light of the apostasy that has engulfed us from our past in our former affiliation.

Luke 12:32: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father delights in giving you the Kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make for yourselves purses *that* do not grow old, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief can come near, and no moth can destroy. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about and *your* lamps burning, and you yourselves be like men who are waiting for their lord, whenever he shall return from the wedding feast; so that when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open to him. **Blessed are those servants whom the lord, when he comes, shall find watching.** Truly I say to you, he will gird himself, and will make them sit down, and will come *and* serve them" (vs 32-37).

There is a warning there not to adopt the lazy, slumbering attitude of the Laodiceans. What manner of people are we to be? Our work has not change, but is exactly the same work that Jesus' work was. ***That was to cry aloud, spare not with the Gospel that is out there, the good news of the coming Kingdom of God!***

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The unfortunate part today, in this world that we live in, is that the true God is unknown to the vast compromised world that we live in. We must be a shining light. We have the responsibility to be a shining light on a hill. That is what God has called each one of us here to be, *a shining light!* We must continually seek to eradicate the darkness that is within us personally, and become uncompromised. *That is our responsibility, each one of us!*

Luke 11:33: “Now, no one who lights a lamp sets it in a secret *place* or under a bushel basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who are entering may see the light. The light of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is without guile, your whole body is light; but when *your eye* is evil, your body also *is* dark” (vs 33-34).

Most ‘Christians’ today live in a vacuous environment of secular society that is enmity against God. We here in the Church of God today—whatever affiliated organization that we are in—have become the *isolated* Church of God. With being isolated we can still fulfill our duties, each one of us as best as we can. God has chosen us and has called us to do this, how few a flock we may be.

With the entire world around us in dire straits, what are we do? We may be few in number, but part of the answer is:

Isaiah 58:1: “**Cry aloud, do not spare, lift up your voice like a ram’s horn, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.**”

That’s what we need to be doing! Brethren, let’s not sell ourselves short in asking:

- What can we do? *It continues to be about the Church!*
- Who is the Church? *Us! That is us! Continues to be about you and me!*

Today God has made it impossible for the world to hear the Gospel message of self-sacrifice and laying one’s life down that leads to the Kingdom of God. It’s out there, whether it be our work within CBCG or other true Churches of God practicing God’s Word in utmost truth and sincerity.

- we have a job to do
- we have a responsibility

Mark 1:14: “Now, after the imprisonment of John, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, “The time has been fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is near at hand; **repent and believe in the Gospel**” (vs 14-15). *That’s what it all amounts to; that is the purpose of what we are to be doing!*

John 17—this is what we read at Passover time. This is Jesus heartfelt talk with His Father. Interestingly, we were on Christ’s mind at that very moment.

John 17:14: “I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your Truth*” (vs 14-19).

This shows us that Jesus had us, the Church of God today, in mind as He was praying to His Father.

Verse 20: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me **through their word.**” *What is the word that is being referred to here?*

Acts 2:41: “Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day. And they steadfastly continued **in the teachings of the apostles** and in fellowship, and *in* the breaking of bread and *in* prayers” (vs 41-42).

The apostles teachings are a great part of our foundation in the Faith and the Truth! That is what Jesus was referring to in John 17:20, when He said that He was praying for us who believed as a result of the apostles’ teachings.

The world does not know the Father, and they do not know that the Father sent Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world. Jesus could have made a big impact by being born in a large city, for instance: London, New York, Los Angeles, but He chose Bethlehem of Palestine under Roman rule where there was no electricity, phones or televisions.

Jesus chose a humble and obscure beginning. He continues to use an obscure a little know small flock. That is us! I want to ask you: **How is possible that the world could possibly wake up and believe in Jesus and His Gospel?**

No matter how small, no matter how insignificant you may think that you personally are, God says that ***His flock is significant!***

John 17:21: “That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me.” *There’s our answer!*

We are to be instrumental in the world truly

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believing, not just lip-service, as all of those in the world do today. Jesus was pleading with His Father on the night before He died, that all of us who are led by the Holy Spirit will have a special place in the heart for one another.

Our response to this deep desire for unity expressed by Jesus to do everything humanly possible to bring about the unity and oneness of the Church of God. It is not to belong in one corporate organization led by self-important men. Nothing could have been further from Christ's mind. Jesus was picturing us loving and caring for each other as He loved and cared for us. That's the crux of it. It has always been God's will that His Church, His children, be unified, made one by His Spirit.

As God's children we should be laying down our lives as Jesus did. To help bring about unification in the attitude and direction and fellowship of the brethren, especially as we find ourselves separated by imaginary walls of church administrations.

How has the Church of God become so separated and isolated that the brethren are being taught not to have anything to do with those true Christians in other congregations? Many ministers covet members so much that they disfellowship those who would fellowship with their old church friends. Those ministers should realize that they are warring against the will of God when they fight against the unity of the Spirit among the brethren.

Today we look at the Church of God and in many places we see compromising of their stand in faith. Why did Jesus so fervently desire that true Christians be unified? *It is because that God intends that the unity and oneness of His Church be an example to the entire world!* Jesus said, 'That the world many know.' Our unity with all the brethren of God's Church would be proof to the world that we are truly God's children.

John 13:35: "By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another."

Have we seen that to where it should be? *I would say not! We've compromised that terribly!* Jesus continues in His prayer to His Father:

John 17:22: "And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way that We are one,"

Unity and oneness within the Church of God would confirm the working of God's Holy Spirit in a way that we seldom witness in this world today. Our unity and oneness would demonstrate to the entire world that, as He promised, the Father sent Jesus and that salvation and hope are coming to all mankind.

Ephesians 4:13: "Until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ."

How bright is each one of our lights shining? All through history, God intended for His people to be a light to the rest of the world. Way back in the Old Testament God gave Israel the statutes and judgments is that the nations of the world would be jealous of Israel's blessings and would want to know Israel's God.

Deuteronomy 4:6: "And you shall keep and do *them*, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.' For what nation is so great whose God *is* so near to them, as the LORD our God *is*, whenever we call upon Him?" (vs 6-7).

Jesus repeats this for emphasis. He wants the world to know.

John 17:23: "I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am... [Who is He talking about there?] ...so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world. Righteous Father, the world has not known You, but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me" (vs 23-25).

By rights, brethren, we do not need a studio setting with lights and cameras and silver-tongued evangelists to reach anywhere in the world to the eyes and ears to whomever God may call. We don't need that! Jesus wants none of that! ***It only takes the Truth of God motivated by the Holy Spirit of God!***

We know that God will continue to call a few; He will rescue a few right up to until the return of Christ. We are given the Biblical example of how God calls some at the very last hour, and gives all the same reward that is available.

Matthew 20:9: "And when those who *were hired* about the eleventh hour came, they each received a silver coin."

So, right up to the last moment God will call people and make them aware and call them. God is still calling some at the late hour. Each one of us has a work cut out for us. If God is not finished, we can't be finished either.

Let's face reality! We do definitely know that we live in a compromised world. Let us consider

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ourselves to be so blessed that God has called us and we all have a responsibility to do our part.

Let the Holy Spirit within us guide us to grow and to become like God. He has given us that opportunity. Let us remember that God loves us all, and He has called us out of billions of people, ***a select few*** to be there with Him as firstfruits. It is a tremendous calling, and let us be strengthened by God's calling, and by the Truth and knowledge that we are and are still obtaining.

Let us not let our guard down. Let's be aware of what's going on around us. ***Let us not be compromised!*** It's an awesome calling that we have, and the destiny that we have in front of us in our Christian walk with God cannot be compared to anything. We can't let down! We must continue to pray, fast, meditate on God's Word and live our Christianity by genuinely loving, helping to communicate and care for each other.

That is what God requires of us Christians to deal with in a compromised world!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 1:31
- 2) Genesis 3:10
- 3) Romans 5:12, 14
- 4) Romans 8:7
- 5) Isaiah 13:11
- 6) Romans 8:21
- 7) Ephesians 2:3
- 8) Romans 5:17
- 9) Galatians 1:4
- 10) 1 Timothy 3:7
- 11) 1 Corinthians 9:27
- 12) Hebrews 4:1
- 13) Jeremiah 17:9
- 14) Matthew 16:18
- 15) Luke 12:32-37
- 16) Luke 11:33-34
- 17) Isaiah 58:1
- 18) Mark 1:14-15
- 19) John 17:14-20
- 20) Acts 2:41-42
- 21) John 17:21
- 22) John 13:35
- 23) John 17:22
- 24) Ephesians 4:13
- 25) Deuteronomy 4:6-7
- 26) John 17:23-25
- 27) Matthew 20:9