



## 2026 1Q Christ in Philipians and Colossians Lesson 13 Standing in All the Will of God

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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The third paragraph in the lesson highlights the point of unity, noting that Paul “recognized that the success of the gospel mission depended upon everyone working together” regardless of prior background, education, nationality, sex, career etc.

There is a general principle for success that applies to all endeavors, whether godly or ungodly, and that is the principle of cohesion, team unity, a shared vision, goal, purpose, value. If rowing a boat it is more successful if all the rowers are rowing in the same direction and in unison. Sports teams will acknowledge that team cohesion, when the team members are all focused on the success of the team and not being self-centered glory hounds, that the teams are more successful.

Military commanders are evaluated specifically on deployment readiness, and the most important factors are not the state of the equipment—even though that is evaluated—but the morale and cohesion of the troops, the bond of brotherhood, caring for each other, ability to work together effectively, because they not only know each other but have the same and values, mission, purpose, principles of conduct. If unity morale and cohesion is low then great equipment will not save the day. If unit morale and cohesion is high, then, as has been demonstrated through history, various obstacles in equipment are overcome.

So, this principle of working together for success is necessary for success but is not unique to the gospel mission.

But it is a point of vulnerability where enemies try to undermine each other. If an enemy can get a group to fight against itself, get members of a unity to distrust each other, suspect each other is not trying to help the unit, or get member who are trying to help work toward opposite purposes, and then lead to conflict, argument, disunity—the organization becomes less effective.

Have you ever seen this dynamic—whether in history, families, ball teams, schools, churches, communities, or businesses?

Okay, so we recognize the importance for success to work together? What is the goal of our working together for the gospel? What are we trying to achieve?

Do we measure our unity, the effectiveness of our working together by how many people join with us—the number of baptisms, churches, hospitals, schools, members? If so, wouldn't the Roman church be the most successful as they are the largest organized church with the most members, churches, money, schools, hospitals?

I point this out not to disparage organizational success, not to devalue our members, church properties, schools, hospitals—but to point out that one cannot tell by these measures if their working together is in harmony with the gospel.

Do you think the reason we have so many different denominations and groups all claiming to be Christian is evidence of the enemy's warfare infecting the church and causing division?

Can you think of anything that would reverse this? What has been the primary reason for most organizational splits—not individuals leaving but organizational splits? Hasn't it been a disagreement over some doctrine?

Is there an idea in Christianity that if we could get everyone to know the right gospel, the right set of beliefs then we would have Christianity unity, or at least we would promote the shaking into final two camps and the end would come. But is that true—is the root cause of the divisions in Christianity driven by doctrines, or could focusing on doctrinal correctness actually drive the divisions?

When Jesus preached what was His primary focus—correcting the doctrines of the Sanhedrin, or teaching people the truth about His Father so they could return to love and trust and experience rebirth, renewal of heart and mind?

Saul of Tarsus was focused on doctrines but what about Paul? After his conversion is Paul primarily writing to correct doctrines or is he writing to lead people back to a love trust relationship with God for the transformation of their hearts?

Of course, leading people to know and trust God will necessarily have to confront lies about God and replace those lies with truth, so if someone has those lies embedded into doctrinal statements of their church then it could seem like the focus of God's messengers is upon doctrinal correctness, but it is not—all saving truths are directly linked to God, all saving truths directly lead back to God, all saving truths are direct attachment points to God—if we present factual truths, say the seventh-day is the Sabbath as a stand-alone doctrine and disconnect that fact truth from what it reveals about God—that God rested, that God refused to use power to punish His enemies, that God left Lucifer and 1/3 of the angels free, because love only exists in freedom and God will never take away our freedom, if instead we present the right doctrine, the Sabbath but as a made up rule that if you don't obey it by stopping all work, then you are committing sin against God and God is legally required to kill you for it, then you have taken a true fact, the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and turned it into a lie about and obstructed the gospel. And division and splits happen.

When the true gospel reaches people what happens is that their fear-driven self-centered hearts are surrendered and they are reborn with the Spirit of Christ and have new motives and love and trust that seek to grow in truth, in the reality of God's kingdom of truth and love. Such people are not threatened when their ideas are challenged, they are open to have their belief explored because their sense of personal security, safety, peace is not built upon them being right, but upon their love/trust relationship with Jesus in which they are known and know God is healing them fully. As such they are open to new ideas and when new truth is presented they rejoice and embrace it, when misunderstanding or

falsehood is presented, they recognize it, differentiate and reject it, and love people leaving them free to follow the false if they want. The righteous know that others following the false is not a threat to them, it is destructive to those who follow it. They grieve for those who go that direction, but they themselves don't get afraid, angry, insecure, and feel compelled to hurt those in error.

So, working together effectively requires first hearts and minds that long for truth, willing to following, it ultimately to a rebirth experience with Christ where we are no longer animated by fear and selfishness as our primary motivator, but by love and trust. Then when disagreements occur we can love our brothers and sisters even when we don't all agree on certain doctrines. Just like the Adventist pioneers did not agree on various doctrines but still worked together effectively. EGW was a full Trinitarian who believed in the full divinity of Jesus with Him having His own life original, unborrowed, underived. Waggoner, whom she recognized as bringing a special message to our church, the roots of design law understanding about God's law which leads back to genuine trust, away from the legal lies and ultimately to real righteousness by faith, not the legal adjustment fraud, believed the Jesus was an offspring of the Father. They did not agree on this doctrine, but they agreed on God's character of love, His methods to heal and save, that salvation is not penal/legal but actual transformational within the believer, that the 10 commandments were added after sin and were not always in existence.

So, effective working together for the eternal gospel is not built on the foundation of demanding doctrinal agreement, it is built on the foundation of spiritual agreement, hearts and minds that have been reborn with the Spirit of love and trust and who love each other and are advancing in unfolding truth.

Satan exploits and divides by getting people to focus instead on right doctrines as a means of proving their spiritual purity, which is based on the unconverted heart of fear, fear of breaking a rule, of sinning, of not knowing something important in order to be saved, which keeps the spirit of fear alive and leads to Pharisaism.

And as you look through history, notice the people who are on Satan's side of this warfare are the ones who purge from their membership the bearers of light.

- In Old Testament times prophet after prophet was sent to God's Old Testament church, the Jews, and those prophets were driven away, rejected, and many killed
- Jesus went to His own and His own rejected Him and He was killed by church leadership
- The apostles sought to win the Jews to the gospel and the Sanhedrin, church leadership drove them out and forced a split—recognize the apostles were not seeking to start a new separate group, they recognized Jesus as the fulfillment of all the Jewish prophecies, the Messiah they had been waiting for. They were working to win the Jews to the eternal gospel and purify that group, they were Reformers. But the Jews rejected the truth, closed their hearts, shut the doors to their synagogues and drove out from their membership any who would uplift Christ.
- The apostolic church did not drive anyone out for a difference of doctrine, they drove one man out for publicly flaunted sin that corrupted him and the purpose was to let him reap the pain his decision was causing and hopefully wake up and come back in repentance.
- The Dark Ages church drove out the Reformers instead of changing their views.

- And every subsequent Protestant group when new light has been brought has driven out those bearing the light
- Do we see that has and is happening with in Adventism? 1888 the precious message was given and endorsed by EGW who the leadership officially claims has the prophetic gift, but the leadership rejected the message, shipped her to Australia, and has worked diligently since then to purge as far as possible this message and its messengers from the organization. This has created a selection bias, meaning the church organization, through hiring pastors, teachers, administrators, appointing elders, deacons, and SS teachers that accept the penal/legal view and rejecting and purging those who hold the trust healing view of God's design law, have functioned in the same way every other organization that resists truth does.

Those who advance truth are never the cause of division, it is those who resist truth that cause the division—when people with the truth present it effectively, it draws people to it because it is reality, it changes and heals lives, and the crowds come like they did to Jesus—and that is threatening to those without the truth. And then those with the truth may be at events sharing their message and suddenly without warning, without reason, they are purged from the event, told to pack up and leave. It is the same dynamic—the those presenting the truth of God's character of love which wins heart to love and trust and transforms lives freeing people from fear and selfishness are a threat to those still governed by fear and selfishness and thus will be purged.

So true working together for the gospel only happens when hearts and minds are won to love and trust in Jesus and we unite around His methods, principles, and design law realities—and then we grow in love and appreciation for others even while we may see certain doctrines differently.

## **SUNDAY**

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The lesson focuses on sharing with others the real-life circumstances in each other's life.

Why is this necessary for cohesion and teamwork? When we get to know other people individually, we discover that while their specific stories are unique, their struggles are not—meaning that every human being struggles with fear, insecurity, disappointments, rejections, hurt feelings, longing to be loved, sin, repentance, and forgiving those who have wronged us etc. While we all have different stories, we all suffer from the same root sin-condition, which leads to similar dynamics of human experience.

Thus, when we get to know people in truth and love, we realize they are not the enemy, fear diminishes, prejudices resolve, biases are eliminated, and we come to connect, care about, and love people. We may not agree with them, but we can understand and value them, and we grieve for those who reject all truth and love and continue to harden their hearts and destroy their souls.

But as our stories are heard, as people get to know our struggles, our fears, our failings, our successes and victories, and they accept and love us, our inner fears, self-condemnation, shame resolve and we grow and advance in eternal truth and love.

But, if we don't spend time getting to know others, then our fears magnify, our suspicions grow, our shame and self-loathing intensifies, and we become more critical of others and vulnerable to form a belief system in which we are victims, and some other group or people are abusers and exploiters and society or churches divide.

Does this mean we are to publicly disclose our stories for everyone to hear? Does it mean that we are able to do this with every person we meet?

## **MONDAY**

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Read second paragraph,

- With these greetings, Paul creates and fosters connectivity among fellow believers. We learn here that Mark was Barnabas's cousin. Paul thus paves the way for Mark's probable visit to Colossae. Aristarchus is described literally as a "fellow prisoner-of-war"; that is, he was imprisoned with Paul. They were both soldiers with "the armour of God" (Eph. 6:10, 11), fighting to set Satan's captives free for service in the kingdom of God (see 2 Tim. 2:1–4). Jesus/Justus (Jewish and Roman names that sound very similar in Greek, like Saul/Paul) is also commended to them as a trustworthy fellow laborer in the gospel. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 102.

What interferes with believers connecting with believers?

We have people who follow us from all over the world and we frequently get emails asking if anyone who shares this message is in their area. So one difficulty is sometimes there are few people who share this view of God in one's area.

What are ideas or suggestions for believers to connect in that circumstance?

- Online connections and online meetings with people
- How many like-minded people do you think the Apostles had in the first century? What did they do about it?
- This is what we have done—25 years ago or so, my wife and I visited a number of different churches searching for one that had anyone teaching these truths about God. And while we met many lovely people, we didn't find one that was teaching these truths and therefore we started our own class, Come and Reason Bible Study Class, which eventually became Come and Reason Ministries.

We didn't set out to form this ministry, and we didn't have a lot of people to connect with on this message—we had many people to connect with on a different message, on various religious ceremonies, practices, and doctrines, but few on the message about God as Creator whose laws are

design laws upon which life is built and the plan of salvation being the plan of healing rather than legal adjustment. But as we have shared this message we have connected with people all over the world who love our Creator God and want to be part of sharing this message with others.

So I encourage you if you are in an isolated community, start inviting people to join with you locally to study this message and lead out and teach this truth and the Holy Spirit will bless and people will come.

Other things that interfere with connection? The core factor is fear which leads to self-protection and isolation from those who bring truth. When one stands on a belief system that cannot stand up to inquiry, that isn't consistently built upon truth and love, then as truth begins to expose the places where errors are held, fear inflames, one feels threatened, and responds with shutting down, rejecting, evicting, and silencing the voices of truth. In other words, purging from membership those who have the truth.

This causes a selection bias in which truth is purged and those who remain become a reinforcing loop of misunderstanding and false assumptions, like the Pharisees in Christ's day.

What does it mean to take up the armor of God?

- Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his **mighty power**. [When you think of God's mighty power—what comes to mind? What does it mean to be strong in his mighty power? Paul wrote to the Romans "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" Romans 1:16. What is gospel power? It is good news, what power does good news have? What is Satan's power? Lies and fear that lead to selfishness. What power destroys lies and purges fear? Truth and love. And what is the gospel? The truth about God that He is love and that He is not like Satan has alleges. The truth of who God is, is the power that sets our **hearts and minds** free from lies and distrust and restores trust and in that trust we open our hearts and receive the indwelling Holy Spirit that brings us the life and love of Christ. We are empowered by a new motive, a new energy, the love for God and others. **What kind of power is this?** Is this the power of physical might, the power of the world? Can this power be accessed and wielded by imposed claw and law enforcement? Where is this power being applied, what kind of impact is it having? In other words, is this power doing something physical, legal, or is this power doing something recreative, cleansing, healing, restorative within a living being? Notice what comes next] Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [We do not war against flesh and blood, which means we are not in a physical war. It is not over might and power, law and law enforcement, but against fallen angels on a plane of operation that is not physical. Revelation 12:7 states that there was war in heaven...the word for war is *polemo* from which we get polemic, and it means an argument. It was a war of words, of ideas, concepts, with Satan being the father, originator, of lies. And when lies are believed they break the circle of love and trust and cause fear and selfishness and thus corrupt God's perfect design and

creation. Just as entering malicious code into a computer's perfect operating system causes it to degrade, malfunction, break down, just as entering mutations into the DNA causes sickness, disease, infirmity and death, so too lies entering into our hearts and minds corrupts our spirit with fear and selfishness severing our connection with the source of life and causes death. And lies cannot be defeated by imposed law and law enforcement, by bullets and tanks—in fact teaching those methods perpetuates the lies and keeps hearts and minds enslaved to fear and selfishness. Trust cannot be established by any means other than truth and love presented in an atmosphere of genuine freedom—why? Because that is how reality, love, works. Let's take note now of the armor and what it does, what kind of function does it have, what plane of reality it operates upon.] Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the **belt of truth** buckled around your waist, [What kind of weapon or armor is truth? Is it physical? Can you force people to do what you want by truth? We can force people with guns and knives to sit, or stand, or get behind bars, but can we force people simply by speaking truth? Where does truth exert its power? In hearts and minds. What kind of power is it then? And why the symbol of a belt? What did a belt do in Paul's day—it was not used to hold up pants, but did function in a similar way; it was to “gird up the loins,” meaning pull the tunic up between the legs and tuck into the belt so one could move swiftly and without tripping.

How does this function represent truth? By pulling up the various ideas, theories, beliefs that have become part of our minds and thinking through life and tucking them into God's truth, reality, and thereby remove from our journey, our walk, are advancement through life, the multitude of lies, propaganda, distortions, traditions, and human philosophies and theories that have been tripping us up.

Additionally, belts were used like we use pockets, they would attach tools or wallets to them. And the belt could also be used to support the back for work, and as a sign of power if ornamented. How does the metaphor of a belt help us understand how truth should function? Buckling truth around us means to gird our minds in reality, upon the truth of God's Word, character, creation, which means design law. And from truth, integrated truth, harmonized truth we are able to move through life more efficiently, solve problems more quickly, trip up less often, and can attach more and more effective coping tools to God's foundational truths and more riches of His kingdom to share with others.] with the **breastplate of righteousness in place**, [What is righteousness? Is this a physical tool? Does righteousness work upon molecules, upon physical matter? Can you advance righteousness by physical might—*be more righteous or I will kill you?* No, righteousness is a state of being; it is a heart restored to love and trust in God by being reborn through the indwelling Holy Spirit. It is a heart that loves God and trusts God in all things, thus righteousness is about motive, a pure heart and right spirit, and is manifested by people who live with a clear conscience in harmony with God's truth, as they comprehend it at that time, but always in harmony with God's principles of love, truth, freedom. Why the symbol a breastplate? Because a breastplate protects the heart and **godly righteousness is about the heart motivation not the physical behaviors!** Yes, people with righteous hearts will make righteous decisions is governance of their life, but people with

unrighteous hearts can also do behaviors that on the outside appear righteous. These are the people who Christ described as whitewashed sepulchers full of dead men's bones—looking good on the outside, the behavior, but their hearts are corrupt with fear and selfishness. So, the armor of the breastplate of righteousness is not physical armor, it is conceptual, attitudinal, motivational, truth and love in the heart. The physical brain is the platform from which consciousness emerges but the consciousness, mind, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes are not determined by the brain. As we think and choose our choices react back upon the brain causing the brain to reshape and rewire in harmony with what we have preferred, value, and belief. So the breastplate of righteousness is the internalization into the heart of the righteousness of Christ, His love, His truth, His methods and principles as foundational to our own identity; **It is holding inside of us a love for God and His kingdom that supersedes, eclipses, and replaces our love for self; it is no longer our old fear-based self living but Christ lives in us.** And that righteous love and desire in our hearts is a protection to our hearts! and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the **gospel of peace.** [What kind of weapon is the gospel of peace? Again, not physical, not penal legal, not enforceable through might and power—can a person or nation get genuine peace by physical war? We can get surrender, acquiescence, submission, but can we get the peace God offers and requires? Why not? Because God's kingdom is the kingdom of truth, love, and freedom and the peace He offers is eternal peace within the heart and mind in which we live in perfect trust with Him and each other, and this cannot be achieved with external might and power only with internal power of truth and love that wins people.

Understanding this, exposes the true evil of the penal legal theologies which teach God wins by using might and power to punish; these false theologies actually incite fear and distrust and promote a worldly sense of peace that comes from the belief in a powerful god that enforces good order through inflicted punishment. Consider the peace you have when you are traveling with family and friends and everyone with you loves you so much they would all die for you, versus the peace you have in a country, like China (we visited some years ago), where you have soldiers on every single corner to enforce the law and keep you safe. Which is the true peace that restored life, health, and wellness, the one where you live in a reality where everyone is trustworthy and there is never any danger? Can God get internal heart and mind peace by using power to destroy those who don't obey Him? The peace God offers is the peace that results from love and trust restored within and it is founded only by the good news about Him.

Why prepare the feet with this good news? Why shod the feet with the gospel of peace? What is the object lesson? Feet are what we stand upon, we will not stand in trials if we are not standing on the good news about God. If we have accepted the false imposed law view and our hearts remain fearful we will not be able to stand. Shodding or shoeing of the feet in Paul's day also provides studs that gave traction so one didn't slip. The good news about God's true character, His trustworthiness, His kingdom of truth and love and design laws, provides solid traction for the mind to stand upon and prevents one from slipping into all the fear-based errors that have overtaken the world and the church. The shoes also prevent one from being wounded when walking down the roads of life when the road is hard and sharp stones are on along the

way. Thus, the good news about God protects us from collapsing and stopping our mission for Him when the road of life gets hard. And having our feet in shoes allows us to move more quickly, thus when we are standing upon the true gospel, the good news of God's true character we are not afraid, stepping cautiously fearing a stone that might hurt us, but step boldly and can move more quickly through this world with the message of real power to share with others.] In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, [What kind of armor is this? Is it a piece of wood or metal? Is it something that has its impact upon physical things? Where is the power of faith exercised and effective, again in hearts and minds. I am contrasting this over and over again to really causes a break in our hearts and minds as we consider the warfare we are in. The enemy wants us to focus on the systems of the world and the way the world wins, through physical might and power, or imposed laws. The enemy wants us to use our minds and hearts to try and reform human governments, with better and more just laws, to stop the abuses of power and exploitations we see happening in society through wielding weapons of this world. But God calls us to stop using the weapons of this world and to use His divine weapons which do NOT have their effect on physical matter or human governments, but have their effect upon the hearts and minds of people.! Can you get more faith by using physical threats or physical weapons to threaten and punish people who don't have faith? Can God get more faith by threatening to kill people who don't have faith in Him?

Again, do you see the corruption of the penal/legal theologies—pretending to advance faith in God while teaching ideas about God that actually undermine faith. Is faith believing something you know isn't so? No, biblical faith is an abiding trust in God, like Job demonstrated. We have our inner self, identity, security, built and centered upon a living trust in God, not in money, family, reputation, church organization, doctrinal beliefs, ceremonies or rituals, nor in mediators to plead in our behalf; we actually, in reality, trust God so that when attacks come, we, like Job, in the moment of crisis may not understand what is happening but we remain confident and certain that God is trustworthy and He has a plan. And that confidence, trust in God, extinguishes the **flaming arrows of fear** that the devil tries to embed into our hearts. And if the devil can reignite fear as our motivator, that fear leads us to deny our Lord, just as Peter did the night of the crucifixion.

Why the metaphor of a shield? What does a shield do? It prevents an attack from landing. When we have this abiding faith in God it prevents the arrows of fear, doubt, insecurity, desperation which the devil throws at us through various life events from landing in our hearts. We trust God with how it will turn out. We may not be able to see the conclusion of the trial, but we know God has a plan and He can be trusted. The just, those who choose in governance of self to do what they know is right, live by faith, by trusting God with how things turn out.] with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the **helmet of salvation** [What kind of weapon is this? Upon what plane does it operate? This is not a headpiece made out of Kevlar. It is not a legal declaration in a court system in heaven that declares things about us that are not in reality true. This is mind that is healed, that is set right with God again. The natural heart is enmity to God, in other words, we do not naturally trust God but fear Him. And that fear and distrust causes us to put up barriers between us and Him, like Adam who ran and hid and covered self with fig leaves. Our natural hearts want to hide

ourselves from God, therefore, the unconverted heart makes up theologies that function like that, to hide sinners from God, with various mediators to plead to God, or robes to cover us, or blood to wash us or erase our record—why do people cling to these things? Because they are afraid of God and their natural heart doesn't trust Him. They put their trust instead of in God into legal payments and other mechanics to protect them from Him.

The helmet of salvation is when we are reborn and the old life is surrendered and we receive the life of Christ, which is manifested in shifting the heart from distrust, to trust in God. And that is what Abraham did. He came to know God well enough that he finally trusted God. And when he trusted God, it was only then, after Abraham's heart changed from distrust to trust, that God recognized Abraham was now righteous—because Abraham was in reality right with God again! That is the helmet of salvation, a heart and mind that is restored to love and trust in God such that we no longer fear Him but can talk to Him directly without an intercessor and without fear just like Abraham did.

Why the metaphor of a helmet—because salvation happens in the mind, the mind must be won to love and trust based upon truth. Then we follow truth, think, reason, weigh evidence and mature by practice gaining ever more ability to discern right from wrong.

This is why the helmet of salvation is so important for ongoing victory, healing, and advancement. When the mind is restored by God's truth and love, lies have a much harder time entering and doing damage. False accusations, distorted views of God, and manipulative messages from others may still be encountered, but they no longer penetrate the mind, take root in the heart, and inflame fear, doubt, and insecurity. The helmet protects. Over time, a person who is being healed by God's truth becomes more steady, more clear, and more able to recognize deception before it takes hold. Salvation, then, is not merely rescue from danger—it is the restoration of a mind grounded in love and truth, able to walk through life without being controlled by fear or misled by lies.] and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**. [What kind of armor is this? Is this physical? No, this is the word of truth and truth destroys lies, but more than this, truth when internalized gets encoded into the substructure of our brains and that causes a resonance shift in our spirit and truth by truth our souls, individualities, are severed, cut away, from the spirit of fear and selfishness with which we were born and we are established and enlivened by the Spirit of Christ with which we are reborn.

“For the **word of God is living and active**. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to **dividing soul and spirit**, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” Hebrews 4:12 NIV, emphasis mine.

Why the metaphor of a sword? Because our souls, our identities, individualities, selves, are deeply infected with fear and selfishness that has corrupted our minds with all kinds of lies and falsehoods that reinforce and inflame the spirit of fear. To save us, our identities, selves, souls must be freed from the spirit of fear and this is accomplished by the application of truth that wins to trust to open the heart to receive a new spirit, the spirit of love and trust that comes from Christ. This process of the application of truth is cutting, often painful, when truth cuts

through our feelings, attachments, unhealthy coping and comforts, like cutting out a cancer. But it is the only way to heal. Thus, the primary purpose of the sword of the Spirit is in application to oneself. However, I have seen far too many Christians who spend their lives in Bible wars, going to war with other Christians using the Bible as the sword to tear down and disprove the other people. Have you ever seen TV programs that do this?] And **pray in the Spirit** on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. [What kind of weapon is prayer? On what plane does it operate? is it physical? Do you notice that this warfare is not physical, it cannot be carried out with physical weapons, it cannot be carried out with imposed law and law enforcement. By getting people to believe the lie about God's law, which works inside hearts and minds undermining trust, inflaming fear and causing people to seek security and safety, Satan is setting the world up for his grand deception when he comes back impersonating Christ. He will quote Scripture, apparently heal the sick, speak of love, loyalty, His desire to save, but also justice—but his justice will be the justice of imposed law, physical force, and law enforcement; and Christians who have believed the imposed law lie are going to embrace him and say this is our god we have waited for him. Only those who have internalized the living law of God into their hearts and minds, which is the design laws of truth and love that leads to trust and have been reborn with the Spirit of Christ will be able to stand.] Ephesians 6:10–18

## TUESDAY

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The lesson points our attention to Colossians 4:12, which calls us “to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

What do you think about this?

What does it mean to stand? To be firm, to be settled, to be confident such that nothing will shake you from it. What else is this called? Being sealed by the Holy Spirit—and what is the sealing of the Holy Spirit? Being so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that one cannot be moved—but what truth?

Intellectually refers to our comprehension, understanding, and corresponds to truth that we understand sufficiently enough that no lie can move us from it.

Spiritually refers to our heart motive, the spirit that animates us and moves us and that means we are spiritually reborn and settled upon love and trust in God, such that nothing can move us to embrace distrust, fear, and selfishness again.

As Paul wrote,

- Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is **not to the sinful nature**, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, **you will die**; but if by the Spirit you **put to death** the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the **Spirit of God**

are sons of God. For you **did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear**, but you received the Spirit of sonship. Romans 8:12-15 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Notice what Paul is saying, in 2 Timothy 1:7 Paul wrote:

- **For God has not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV, emphasis mine

God did not give us a spirit of fear, that we inherited from Adam, it is the animating motivating energy that leads us to all things selfish and away from both God and love. And if we embrace that spirit and live to gratify self we will die because that spirit separates us from the source of life and destroys us. But, when we accept truth, surrender in trust, we are reborn with a new spirit of power and love that purges the lies, removes the guilt, destroys the shame, restores trust, love, and peace and we experience a sound mind with ever growing critical reasoning skills in a deepening unity of love and trust with God. And that is being sealed, settled, so that we cannot be moved!

Could a person be sealed of God into the truth and still have wrong doctrinal beliefs, say believe something incorrect about the state of the dead, or the Sabbath, or baptism?

What is the truth we must be settled into that we cannot be moved in order to stand, to be sealed? It is the truth about God, His character, methods, and laws of truth, love, and liberty. We must be settled like Job was who was settled intellectually and spiritually upon the truth that God is completely trustworthy. He was not settled on all points of doctrine or what was transpiring, but he did stand firm in his trust of God. All the saved will have that same love and trust in God and will not be shaken from it.

What about being perfect, what is that about? The same thing, it is the maturing of one's heart and mind in love and trust that we will not be shaking from trusting God.

Functionally, what this means is that our core identity, our heart, the primary foundation of our inmost being is formed, fitted, founded, connected, established first upon love and trust in God, and every other thing we value and love is secondary, external, outside of that relationship with God. This means that our sense of self is solidly constructed in connection with God and we are not threatened with loss of self, destruction of identity, collapse of individuality by losing other things or people.

And the book of Job illustrates this. Many people love God, but between them and God they love something else and ultimately that causes their fall. Some have love for money (Judas), love for self (Satan), love for power (Caiaphas), love for doctrine and church authority (Saul of Tarsus), love for body image (finding security in their looks, strength, or physical abilities), love for family (Jesus said that those who love family more than Him are not worthy of Him).

Job lost his wealth—his identity was not attached to wealth

Job lost his reputation—his identity was not formed from reputation

Job lost his children—his identity was not dependent from his children

Job lost his health—his identity was not built upon his physical prowess  
Job lost respect of friends—his identity was not built upon what others thought

Job demonstrated that his identity, his core self, was established only upon God. That is what all the saved in the end will have. I don't think we will all have to face the trials Job did, but if we did, because our identities are built solely upon God, we would grieve, we would hurt, but we will not collapse, or betray God—we will still trust Him.

This is what it means to be perfect.

### WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY

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Read first paragraph,

- The apostle John tells us, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). Luke’s love for Jesus and His kingdom led him to stand by Paul to the end, come what may, whereas Demas loved this world more than the world to come. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 104.

Love not the world—what does this mean? Is it talking only about worldliness, the world’s system of survival of the fittest, power, might, force, or pleasure seeking and worldly entertainments?

Could this be taken literally, don’t love the world, in that don’t be a druid, don’t be an earth worshiper any more than a sun worshiper? And have we seen a resurgence in earth worshiping over the past decades in which the love of the earth is prioritized over the love for people? In fact, those who love the earth want to kill billions to save the planet.

Isn’t the issue of what we value most, not a specific thing, activity, or substance? For instance, could a person love their church organization more than Jesus and that would be a problem. This is primarily, as I read it describing attachments that we use to find meaning, identity, comfort and if anything from this world, including good things that God gave us for our blessing is prioritized before God Himself, then we have a problem. Is this how you read it?

Read the last paragraph,

- In the message to Laodicea, Jesus gives us a clear prescription. First, repent of our sins. Second, we are to open our hearts to Jesus and let Him be in control, which then (third) enables us to obtain the “gold” of faith and love tested by trial and victorious over temptation. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 104.

The lesson identifies Jesus’ prescription as:

1. repent from our sins
2. open our hearts to Jesus and let Him be in control which then
3. enables us to obtain the “gold” of faith and love tested by trial

Do you agree with this?

Let’s read the message to the Laodicean church:

- To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and **true witness, the ruler of God’s creation**. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are **lukewarm**—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. **You say, “I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.” But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.** I counsel you to **buy from me** gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and **repent**. Here I am! **I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.** Revelation 3:14–20 NIV84, emphasis mine.

So there is a clear call to repentance—but does it say repent of our sins?

When one holds the false imposed law model one gets stuck in the loop of human thinking and misconstrues the sin problem as sins, bad deeds, the stuff we are doing wrong and thus they give the wrong advice or misread Jesus prescription as one to repent from our sins.

Jesus is telling the Laodiceans to repent, but from what? What did He just describe?

They need to repent of a state of being, not from sinful actions. They are lukewarm—how does one get lukewarm? By having behaviors that appear hot for the Lord with hearts that are stone cold—like the Pharisees in Christ’s day.

So Jesus tells them to repent of believing they are righteous—why do they think they are righteous? Because they have a list of correct Bible doctrines, they pay their tithe, they know which day of the week is the Bible Sabbath, and they have a long list of rules they follow to make sure they don’t break the Bible Sabbath, they know the right foods to eat and the right way to dress and they are very sure to do so. They know who to be baptized in the right way. They have confessed all their bad deeds, sins, and asked Jesus to forgive them and claimed His blood to pay their sin debt—they are faithful to do this regularly.

But they have never been reborn, they are still motivated, like the Pharisees in Christ’s day, by a spirit of fear and they find security in belonging to the remnant church, believing the right doctrines and having someone else be punished for their sins so they don’t have to be.

So Jesus tells them to repent of their miserable, corrupt, naked condition of being, of their corrupt and sick hearts and minds that feels so good about themselves and their membership in the right organization and to actually be converted. In other words, to repent of sinfulness, not sins.

And that requires they actually come to trust Jesus and in that they are to buy from Jesus the gold tried in the fire—and that means exchanging their sinful life for His sinful life, it is a barter exchange. You cannot receive the life of Christ as long as you hold onto your life of fear, selfishness, and sin.

And the gold is the gold of a Christlike character that forms within from the animation, motivation of the life of Christ via the oil, which is the indwelling Holy Spirit that enlightens, inspires and empowers.

Read the bottom section in Thursday's lesson,

- God will unite heaven and earth. But because of the great controversy, that must be done in stages:
  1. At Calvary, Satan lost any affection left toward him among the heavenly beings (John 12:31).
  2. Through the judgment ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, God's people are "complete in every good work to do His will" (Heb. 13:21, NKJV) and fitted for heaven.
  3. Through the millennial judgment and the final judgment after the millennium, all remaining questions are forever settled, and sin and unrepentant sinners are destroyed in the lake of eternal fire, which also cleanses the earth (Rev. 21:8).
  4. Only with the end of sin can heaven and earth finally be united (Rev. 21:3). *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philipians and Colossians*, p. 105.

What do you think if this progression? The lesson seems to emphasize three judgments, one on the sanctuary now, one during the millennium, and one at the end of the millennium—what do you think about this?

What kind of judgment do you think they are talking about?

If they are talking about a legal judgment, in which God and or Jesus function as a judge in which they examine evidence, legal books, payments, and their judgment decides who is lost and who is not—will that actually end the Great Controversy—or is that very line of reasoning, that very idea and the underlying premise it is built on delays the end because it perpetuates the lie that started the war?

What is the lie that started the war? God's laws are made up rules that God enforces through inflicted punishment and therefore God cannot be trusted. If we understanding judgment in the same then we perpetuate distrust of God and delay the second coming.

Interestingly, the lesson didn't use judgment in relationship to Calvary and Satan losing the affection of the heavenly beings—but they did quote John 12:31, let's read Jesus words about this. I find it quite shocking, and perhaps telling, that the lesson did not use the word judgment for this bullet. Here is what Jesus said:

- “Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to myself.” John 12:31-32 NIV84.

The one place Jesus uses the word judgment they do not—why might that be?

Do you think Jesus would use the word judgment correctly? And what is the judgment of this world? Was this judgment a judicial judgment? Was a court room, a ruling by a magistrate, was it a legal issue? No, and the lesson recognizes it as they correctly point out that it was the judgment of the heavenly beings about God, seeing the truth about God exposed Satan as a liar and that settled them in loyalty and exposed Satan as a fraud and all affection for him was lost.

This is the reality of the judgment that needs to happen to settle the war because this war is not physical and cannot be won by physical might and power. And it is not a legal war of laws and law enforcement. It is a reality-based war over truth, love, and trust that operates within the hearts and minds of intelligent beings. And the judgment that settles the war is when all humans capable of recognize truth and responding to it by exercising trust in God have done so and then they continue to examine the evidence until every single doubt, question, misunderstanding, confusion, distortion, wrong idea about God is settled. Then the war can end.

And the final message to go to the world is exactly that. It starts by proclaiming the eternal gospel, the good news about God that is eternally true, always has been always will be because God is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. The war started when Lucifer lied about God and trust in God was broken and the final message starts with the truth about God.

And that eternal truth, when presented, calls people to be in awe of God and give Him glory because the hour in history has come for people to finally judge God correctly, for people to finally do like the angels in heaven did at the cross, and see God as Creator of the heavens, earth, sea, and fountains of water, and to stop judging God to be like Satan alleges, to stop judging God to be like a sinful human a being who makes up rules and uses power to punish rule breakers. This requires we reject the penal legal lies told in Christianity and return to worshiping God in truth, understanding His laws are design laws, the very protocols life and all reality are built to operate upon.

Then the end will come, Jesus will return and during the 1000 years the saved through history, particularly those not alive for the second coming but resurrected at the second coming, will have many questions, many misunderstandings, many things to examine, and think about, and make judgments about ultimately being fully settled in their own mind.

And at the end of the 1000 years all the saved come to earth with Jesus, the angels and the NJ and the wicked from all time are raised and the gates of the NJ are open and a period of time goes by and none come it. Why? Because God leaves everyone free to live their lives and end their lives by their own choice.

And what happens not a single unsaved person comes into the city even though the gates are open, why? Because God is truth and love and the saints live in the fiery glory of His truth and love and we radiate it like Moses and Elijah on transfiguration and truth and love is hateful to the liars and perverts, they choose for themselves that they would rather die than live in a universe of perfect love and truth.

And God sets them free to make their choice and all see that there was nothing more God could do for them because life in God's universe operates only in harmony with truth and love and that requires freedom—thus the wicked are lost eternally lost because that is what they have freely chosen for themselves.

The rest of the three angels messages the second is a call for God's people to leave, or come out of Babylon, a system of religious imperialism that teaches the God of the Bible but teaches it with human law, imposed law, with God as the source of inflicted punishment for sin—this system is corrupt and fallen and God calls His people whose minds have been held captive in that system to leave it.

But if they do not, then God gives the most devastating warning of reality that will occur, the message of the third angel.

The law of worship, if you reject the first angel and refuse to worship God as Creator, and you reject the message of the second angel and refuse to leave the penal legal fraud and continue to worship a god who is the source of death inflicted as punishment for sin, they you will mark yourself as beastly for we become like the god we worship and admire.

And because they have chosen this, in harmony with law of liberty God sets them free to reap what they have chosen, and He ceases to use His divine protective power that has been restraining the forces of darkness and this is the wrath of God, the letting go to reap without any mixture of God's mercy or healing presence to protect, what unrestrained sin does.

And then they will experience the full weight of the laws of truth and love when God unveils His presence and they are bathed in the fiery glory of His presence, the same fiery glory that the saints thrive it, but because they have hardened in sin they become fully aware of their own corruption and the pain and suffering they have caused others because they carry all of that in themselves. And the memory, represented by smoke which is what is left after something is consumed, the memory will never be forgotten by the saved for all eternity.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**The God of Reality: Separating Truth from Fiction Seminar:** August 13-16 2026 Orlando, Florida—More information coming soon. First 500 get five free meals.

**Potluck in April will be the Third Sabbath: April 18**

**REMEDY APP:** Updated, many new features including the ability to listen to the audio right from the app!

**AFRICA: Healing a Broken Heart** is now available in South Africa in both English and Afrikaans. You can access the Afrikaans version on our website under the Languages tab, or if you are in South Africa and would like print copies, email Jacques Van de Heever at [southafrica@comeandreason.com](mailto:southafrica@comeandreason.com).

Our first shipment of resources has arrived in Kenya, *Could It Be This Simple?* Wycliffe has been passionately sharing this end-time message about God with great success and Jacques van den Heever, our Come and Reason Ministries Director in South Africa has been able to produce and get him these resources. It is through the support of you our friends that he has been able to do this. If you are in Kenya or know someone there who would like this book, email [kenya@comeandreason.com](mailto:kenya@comeandreason.com)

Our South Africa Distribution Director, Jacques Van de Heever, has been translating many of our materials into Afrikaans and now has added Swahili. Reach him at [southafrica@comeandreason.com](mailto:southafrica@comeandreason.com).

Thomas Wansara, in Ethiopia, has been translating blogs and some of our printed and online publications into Amharic and is creating a new Facebook group, Come And Reason Ministries - Ethiopia. Reach him at [ethiopia@comeandreason.com](mailto:ethiopia@comeandreason.com).

If you want to access these translated resources on our website, just click the Languages menu.

**AUSTRALIA:** Simon and Maani Harrison Direct Come and Reason in Australia and New Zealand and have a Facebook group in Australia and Come and Reason resources available there: You can email Simon at [australia@comeandreason.com](mailto:australia@comeandreason.com)

**ENGLAND:** If you are interested in connecting with our team in England you can contact Michael Dragoyvich and his wife Billie Jordan at [uk@comeandreason.com](mailto:uk@comeandreason.com)