



2026 Q3 First and Second Corinthians

Lesson 1: Paul's Ministry in Corinth

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

1 Corinthians 1:1 states,

- Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. 1 Corinthians 1:1 NIV84.

Paul is confident that he was called to be an apostle of Jesus by God's will.

Paul's calling is a very useful object lesson for how God calls and how we fulfill that calling.

When was Paul called to be an apostle? Damascus Road? Perhaps, or perhaps Damascus Road was a specific opportunity for Paul to make a new choice, but God had been calling him throughout his entire life it was then the working of God throughout his life came to a decision point.

Is it possible God was calling him when he was studying the Torah as a child? Would the Holy Spirit have been working to bring heaven's truth to his mind despite the false framework of the legal religious system he was raised in? Would the Holy Spirit have been working to bring him heavenly light when he participated in the sanctuary service and annual feasts? And what about in nature and life experiences, would the Holy Spirit have been there seeking to enlighten his mind with truth?

Is it possible God was working, preparing, calling to Saul for a long time and the Holy Spirit was calling when Stephen was stoned?

In fact, Paul wrote,

- "God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace" Galatians 1:15 NIV84.

Called from birth, what does that mean?

Does that mean Saul didn't have a choice, he was preprogrammed or predestined by God to be the apostle and suffer all he did? Or does reality work like this: God called Saul, in all the various ways God does, but Saul still had to make his own choices for truth, love, trust in God? God worked, God intervened, Saul chose.

Then what was going on at the Damascus Road? Was God leaving Saul free to make up his own mind, or was God bullying Saul, threatening him, intimidating him, do it or else?

What we see in the life of Saul is a powerful example of how God's power works for our salvation; what God can do and what He cannot do (not because He doesn't have the power, but because of how reality as He built it works); and how individual salvation requires our individual choice on how we respond to life experiences and how we encode those experiences. And God works with each person where they are bringing to them the experiences they need to be able to differentiate and choose truth, love, and trust—and Saul's life demonstrates this beautifully.

We are told that Saul was,

- “Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.” Philippians 3:5, 6 NIV84.

Saul was raised in a legalistic religion, a system that had corrupted God's saving truths with imposed law and rules—the lie that God's law functions like human law, that righteousness is found in law-keeping, and that justice is found in law enforcement through inflictions of punishments. It was a religion that was harsh, punitive, and unjust, as evidenced by the many examples recorded in Scripture of discrimination, exploitation, cruelty, and greed, all under the guise of religious law-keeping.

While Saul was studying the Scriptures as a child and young adult, the Holy Spirit would have been there to enlighten, however, his culture, family, friends, teachers, church leaders collectively were indoctrinated into a false system of belief and interpreted the truths of Scripture through a false lens and thus the stories of Scripture were internalized, encoded, into a framework of understanding that promoted the belief in a god that kept the spirit of fear alive in the sinner.

In other words, the imposed law system of teaching the Bible teaches people to form beliefs about God and self that make them fearful and therefore more needful of clinging to beliefs that cut them off from God. These beliefs get encoded into the brain and become predictive filters through which new experiences, facts, and truths are processed, and thus the false encoding becomes a barrier to salvation.

It is a self reinforcing mental/spiritual enslavement. This fallen corrupt penal legal system of theology is rightly symbolized in Scripture as Babylon, the kingdom of imposed law that enslaved the Israelites and held them captive. And God calls His people to leave that captivity and restore the waste places, rebuild the temple and the protective wall, just like Ezra and Nehemiah did. The temple is an object lesson for both the individual person, spirit temple, which must be cleansed of these lies, trust restored, so God can dwell within with His Spirit of truth and love, but also the corporate temple the Bride of Christ, the church invisible being cleansed and prepared for His return. And the protective wall around the temple of your heart and mind represents God's law, meaning returning to reality, that God's laws are design laws and as we settle our hearts and minds upon this reality we are protected from the imposed law lies about God.

This is why Jesus said,

- “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.” Matthew 23:15 NIV84.

The unconverted don't know the truth and have their own distortions about life encoded, but the Pharisees and legalistic religionist, by converting them to a false system about God encode a new layer of distortion into the minds of the new converts making their minds less receptive to truth.

Saul was raised in such a system with many distortions, falsehoods, and errors and yet his conscience was not seared. While he misunderstood the meaning of most of the Bible facts, symbols, and lessons, he wanted to follow God, and the Holy Spirit was working to break through the layers of distortion. When Jesus came and exposed the falsity of that legal system, the Holy Spirit was there to bring greater conviction to Saul.

Jesus set the various teaching tools, symbols, ceremonies, and rituals into their proper perspective—back under the truth of design law, love, and trust.

Jesus' life demonstrated in action that God is the source of life, healing, forgiveness, and grace and that God is not the source of inflicted pain, suffering, and death. At His crucifixion, Jesus revealed, in the most unjust and abusive of circumstances, that God will not use power to inflict external punishment upon evildoers, but that He leaves all beings free to choose their own course and to reap what they have chosen in their own lives.

Saul had heard the reports of Christ's life—and it didn't fit with his understanding of law and religion. Then Stephen gave his sermon to the Jewish leaders (Acts 7), and the Bible says,

- When they heard this, **they were furious** and gnashed their teeth at him. But **Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God**, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” At this **they covered their ears** and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to **stone him**. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a **young man named Saul**. While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, **do not hold this sin against them**.” When he had said this, he fell asleep. **And Saul was there, giving approval to his death**” Acts 7:54–8:1 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Those who did not have hearts that wanted to grow in truth become furious, agitated, hostile, and abusive when they heard the truth. They covered their ears and made noise to drown out the truth, and they sought to destroy the truth-bearer. (We see this in society today).

Saul heard Stephen's testimony; he knew his Bible, and he saw the evidence of the two contrasting characters and methods (imposed law, legalism, rules, and rule-enforcement, and truth, love, and

freedom). Just like Jesus, Stephen presented the truth in love and left his persecutors free. He prayed for their salvation, heaven opened, and his face radiated light like an angel!

And Saul was standing right there watching and the Holy Spirit was there working.

Saul could not ignore these real events. They caused him, cognitive dissonance, the events, the facts, the evidence, the outcome, what he witnessed, did not fit with his biases, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, and worldview—his previous encoding.

The events were presented with enough salience, relevance, significance to Paul that he couldn't simply ignore it. His previous encoding was agitated by the events with enough energy that he had opportunity for new encoding.

The Spirit of Truth was working to bring the truth to Saul, and he came under conviction. His spirit was not at peace. He was struggling with guilt. He knew something was wrong—but he could not explain why he was not at peace. Why couldn't Saul figure out his difficulty? Because in his false understanding, from his corrupt Bible school training, he believed he was following the law, obeying rules, doing what he understood to be right but his indoctrination, old encoded beliefs, old predictive model was out of harmony with reality. The truth was confronting error in the mind and heart of Saul, and he still had a system that was receptive to truth.

And what did he do with this inner turmoil that truth was bringing, the turmoil that comes when our self-comforting errors are exposed?

He tried to remedy his feeling of guilt, of being wrong with God, by doing what his legal theology (previous encoding and predictive filter) told him—he sought to work harder for the cause.

Rather than seeking truth, rather than wrestling out his guilt and anxiety with God, Saul invested himself in even more legalistic religious activity. He sought more external power in order to employ imposed law and external enforcement to hunt down and punish “heretics,” those who were sources of the light/truth that was exposing his errors and fueling his discomfort.

In other words, Saul was under conviction because of the truth he had heard and seen, but rather than repenting, his previous encoding led him to seek to deny the truth and seek to resolve his own guilt by embracing the “law,” using “legal” actions of “law enforcement” to destroy the sources of the same truth that was causing him to be distraught—thereby seeking to sooth himself through further application of lies and errors.

We see this same dynamic throughout all human history. Jesus said,

- “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God **did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world**, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe stands condemned already** because he has not

believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: **Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light** because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God" John 3:16–21 NIV84, emphasis mine.

God sent Jesus as the light, the truth, not to condemn but to save, to be the remedy to sin. We are all born in sin, conceived in iniquity (Psalm 51:50), dying of the terminal sin condition that none of us chose to have (Colossians 2:13). God does not need to condemn us because our condition is terminal. God needs to heal and save, which is why He sent His Son!

It is the truth that destroys the lies and wins us to trust, enabling us to open our hearts to receive from Jesus, His victory, a new spirit of love and trust from the indwelling Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20; Hebrews 8:10). But if people refuse the light, refuse the truth, refuse the healing presence of God and prefer the darkness, prefer the sickness to the cure, they stand condemned already because their natural state is "dead in trespass and sin" (Ephesians 2:1), terminal, and they are refusing the only cure.

When the light of truth shines in, it brings conviction; it inflames our inadequacies, guilt, and shame until we either surrender to Jesus and are reborn or destroy within ourselves the ability to respond to truth and love—as the Bible says, sear the conscience. This happens through repeated rejections of truth and love. When we are brought to points that we understand the truth and reject it, we encode error, distortion, and corruption more deeply each time into the substructures of our brains and so damage ourselves, the very faculties that are sensitive to truth and love, that at some point we are no longer receptive to truth or love. This means, for anyone who has gone that far, that there are no presentations of truth and love, no life experiences left in reality that contain enough value to such a person to create opportunities for change. Such a mind experiences every new presentation of truth and love through is solidified false encoding as an attack, a threat, a torment, an evidence that the truth is harmful, love is weakness, and they see the very events of reality in a false light and accuse Jesus of working with demonic power. When an individual being reaches such a point, there nothing more God can do for them and that will be the state of the lost at the end of time. They are not lost because God ever loses patience, or ever turns against them, but because they have literally destroyed within themselves the capacity to respond to truth and love and would themselves rather not exist than be healed.

As the light of truth is brought to hearts and minds, some run from the truth, deny the truth, and seek to make the natural state of fear, insecurity, guilt, and shame go away through their own actions in some way—denial that anything is wrong; mind-altering substances to numb their guilt and shame; by associating with others who also refuse the truth and who will tell them that they are righteous; or, like Saul, through various religious activities performed with zeal and hard work to make oneself feel better and give self a "proof" that they are doing right and therefore are right.

So, Saul was struggling with his conscience. Rather than repenting and being reborn, he sought the solution that his false theology of legalism and rule enforcement had taught him; he sought to do good

works and inflict punishment on those he believed were heretics in order to stamp out what he considered evil and make himself feel better.

And it was in this state of internal turmoil, while on a mission against God (that he falsely believes is for God) that Jesus met him on the road to Damascus, with an intervention perfectly suited to break through his denial, provide evidence Saul needed to clarify what confused him, and provide enough significance, energy, within Saul's brain to create the opportunity for new encoding, for Saul to have his mind freed from the lies of his upbringing.

He was hit with a display of might and power and blinded—this was not coercion, for God doesn't coerce, this was the evidence Saul needed.

Saul was confronted with the truth that he had been warring against Jesus, and Jesus is the Messiah. Saul's previous view was that anyone crucified was under God's curse was refuted by this evidence. Saul's previous view that Jesus was weak and powerless was refuted by this evidence. The truth revealed by Jesus confronted his biases and false assumptions that the Messiah would rule with power to punish His enemies—and since Jesus didn't use such power, specifically on Saul himself, when Saul was using physical power to persecute Christians—this added a deeper conviction and opportunity for change. Saul falsely thought that Jesus was weak and, therefore, a false Messiah this encounter provided evidence refuting that.

Saul now realized that Jesus has power, which triggered many more questions—why didn't Jesus use power to stop the abuse? Why didn't Jesus use power to put down rebellion? Why didn't Jesus use power to punish evil? Why isn't Jesus using power to punish me, I have been using power to punish others? But Jesus, rather than telling Saul the answers, left Saul blind for a few days to diminish the distractions and give Saul time to really think (cut him off from social media), and He sent him to another human to discuss what happened.

Why didn't Jesus, after the mighty display of power, after Saul fell down in acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord, say something like, "Obey me! Worship me! Do what I command"?

Because what Jesus wants is our love, trust, loyalty, devotion, and friendship. And none of that can be achieved by the use of might, power, intimidation, force, and command. The only way to achieve love, trust, and friendship is by winning people with truth, love, and freedom!

So Jesus gave Saul evidence, with enough energy sufficient to create the opportunity for Saul to reencode what he believed. The display of power broke through Saul's false assumptions (previous false encoding of the events of Jesus' death) that Jesus was a false Messiah who couldn't stop the abuse that happened to Him, and provided him the opportunity to rethink why Jesus would allow it. And in order to be fully persuaded, Saul needed time, quiet time, time to reflect, time to ask questions, time to check the evidence in atmosphere free of intimidation to come to his own conclusion—so Jesus sent him to Ananias.

And Saul of Tarsus becomes Paul the Apostle, a transformed man who no longer practiced the methods of imposed law and law enforcement but wrote that “every person must be fully persuaded in their own mind” (Romans 14:5).

Does God only call some or does God call all?

God calls all to salvation,

This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:3-4 NIV84.

God calls all to salvation, but he calls us individually to different missions.

He called,

- Abraham to be the father of the branch of the human family through Jesus would be born.
- Joseph to be a protector of his family and thereby protect the line of Messiah.
- Moses to be deliverer, leader, and writer of the first five books of the Bible.
- Jonah to warn Nineveh.
- David to be king and from whom Messiah would be descended.
- The entire cloud of witnesses in Hebrews called for different purposes.

And the lesson asks, what is your calling?

Do you know your calling? Is it important to know and following your calling?

Studies show that there are three types of workers in the workforce.

Those whose job is a job. They work for the paycheck, to make ends meet, they look forward to weekends and holidays—and generally are not fulfilled or happy.

Then there are those whose jobs are a career. They work for the promotion, advancement, bonus, corner office. And they are generally not happy because no matter the advancement there is always another that they haven’t yet reached.

And then there are those whose job is their calling, and they are the ones who find meaning, fulfillment and happiness in life.

And we find people across all levels of employment in all three, professionals whose job is a job or a career, janitors whose job is a calling. It isn’t the money, prestige, position, that ultimately matters on an individual level, but whether one experiences their life, their employment, as the fulfillment of what they have been called to do. That gives their life meaning and purpose that enriches life’s experiences.

Sometimes people are in jobs that are not their calling, but they find fulfillment because the job is the means to provide the means to fulfill their calling. For instance, a person whose calling is to create artwork and share it with others, may work a job to pay bills and allow them to afford the resources to create and share art and thus they are fulfilled in life and see their job as part of the landscape of their calling.

The lesson points out that Paul identified himself as God's servant (Romans 1:1)—what do you understand that to mean?

Have you ever read the amazing book *Servants or Friends?* by A. Graham Maxwell? If you haven't, I highly recommend it.

I remember reading it several decades ago, and it made a profound impact on my understanding of God, opening my mind to new ideas and concepts that have helped me to know God more fully and grow in understanding of His designs and methods.

Graham emphasized John 15:15 where Jesus said to his disciples,

- “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” John 15:15 NIV84.

Graham did a magnificent job of contrasting the servant mentality, which is the mentality of someone who follows rules, commands, directives without comprehension, without understanding, “the master said it, so I do it” from an understanding friend who goes beyond rule compliance to understanding cooperation with the master. The servant mindset of thoughtless obedience without discussion, without questioning, without seeking to comprehend, even doing things that don't make sense, which is not the method and motive of those who are faithful to God.

God calls us to reason with Him (Isaiah 1:18), to be fully persuaded in our own minds (Romans 14:5), to ask questions, and he invites inquiry. Abraham questioned God's plan to destroy Sodom, Moses questioned God numerous times, and both were called God's friend, why? Because they sought to understand, comprehend, and pursued a path of intelligent obedience, by humbly asking questions. Their questioning was not rebellion, but the desire to align with God, to be connected on a deeper level that behavior, to encode within their brains, minds, hearts the truth of God's kingdom, His methods, His purposes, His motives.

Those who follow our ministry know that I consistently contrast the difference between human imposed laws, made-up rules that require inflicted punishments—the legal way of seeing things, with God's design laws, the protocols the Creator built reality to operate upon, like the laws of health, physics, and the moral laws.

What struck me recently is that while Graham never used the specific language of imposed law versus design law, he did contrast the same two laws in his book and teachings when he spoke of the

difference between servants and friends. As an example, in a presentation entitled [Legal Problems Among Friends](#), Graham stated, “Servants are governed by the law on the wall. Friends are governed by the law in their hearts and in their minds” (minute 28:52).

Graham described the servant as the one who doesn’t understand the master’s business yet who does what the master says—he obeys merely to avoid legal trouble. The servant mindset is the one who not only doesn’t understand the master, he doesn’t even care to. He is driven by fear of getting into trouble, and just wants to be obedient, follow the dos and don’ts, and avoid getting into legal trouble. This is the imposed-law mindset. “What are the rules? What am I required to do? What does the master demand?”

Whereas the friend is the one who enters into understanding cooperation with the master. They may start out as children, in fact I think we all do, which means they may start out with a rules mindset, but the friend really wants to understand why the rules, and seeks to connect with the rule giver and grow up into a friend who no longer operates based on rule-keeping. These friends obey, but does so from a sense of agreement, loyalty, devotion, love, and trust for and in the master. This is design law—understanding how and why things work the way they do and intelligently cooperating because we agree and prefer the methods and ways of the master.

I can’t think of anyone who has contrasted the role of a servant with that of a friend better than Graham. It is an excellent contrast between the human imposed-law way of seeing things and God’s design-law way of seeing things.

But what struck me recently is that the servant’s understanding is the way of the world, how fallen humanity thinks, the way of the imposed law, rule over by power methods of the kingdoms of this world—and it doesn’t represent God’s true servants—like Paul identifies himself to be, or like Moses was called both a friend and servant of God.

One cannot be a true and faithful servant of God, one cannot complete the mission for our heavenly master or fulfill His calling, unless they **are actually His friend!**

In other words, all of God’s trustworthy servants are trustworthy only because they have actually become His friends. These people actually know God (John 17:3) and, therefore, know His character, design-law methods, and principles and have been won into loyal friendship with Him and, thus, can say of Him what is right (Job 42:7). This is only possible when they have rejected the imposed-law lies and embraced the truth of God’s design laws such that they have stopped worshiping a creature and returned to worshiping the Creator.

In Scripture, God’s true servants are also called His prophets:

- “Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his **servants the prophets**” (Amos 3:7 NIV84, emphasis mine; see also 1 Kings 14:18; 2 Kings 9:7, 17:23, 21:10; Ezra 9:11; Jeremiah 7:25, 25:4, 26:5, 29:19, 35:15; Ezekiel 38:17; Daniel 9:10; Zechariah 1:6).

God's trustworthy prophets are not limited to those who foretell the future, as Daniel and John did. Rather, they are God's spokespersons, the ones who are God's friends, the ones who know God personally and can say of Him what is right; they are the ones who go to the people with a message from God, a message that only a friend could rightly deliver.

God is calling each of us to be His servants, His spokespersons, but we can only do this if we are won back to friendship with Him, actually know Him, and that means rejecting the penal legal lies and returning to worshipping Him as Creator.

MONDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on Paul's speech in Athens, which is found in Acts 17:

- Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man's design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." Acts 17:22-31 NIV84.

Thoughts about this speech?

- God is the Creator of the world and life.
- He is not something we make with our ingenuity.
- He isn't served by us, but is the source of all things and gives of Himself for us, including the breath of life.
- God created one human being, Adam, and all other humans are descended from that one human being.
- God's purpose was for human beings to inhabit and subdue the earth.

- Get set times and structures in history designed to motivate and move people to seek Him.
 - For instance, He set a time when Noah would preach, and when the preaching would come to an end, and when the Flood would come. He did this so that people would seek Him. Why?
- Because in Him we live and move and have our being—God is the source of life, the Creator and Sustainer, and disconnected from Him we decay and die. Thus God is actively seeking to purge the lies, fear, distrust, that cause us to sever our connection so that we will reunite with Him and be healed/saved.
- Therefore, we should not think of God as a creature, in any way or fashion, not a being originating in this plane of existence, not a being who uses the methods of this world.

What does it mean he will judge with justice? This is my paraphrase:

- “For he has set a time when all humanity will be accurately diagnosed, defects from his design will be permanently eliminated, and all creation will be set right by the Man whom he has selected to be the Remedy. He has proven it by raising this Man from the dead.” Acts 17:31 REM.

TUESDAY

The lesson points out that Corinth in Paul’s day was a center of commerce, had two large harbors, central on trade route, and that this made establishing a church, a gospel hub strategic as a distribution point to send the message out to the world.

Have you considered God oversaw the establishment of the USA for the same reason?

Corinth was not a city that was Christian, but was a city of commerce and trade and thus was a great place to establish Christianity so it could spread.

USA was established, to a great degree by Christians seeking to flee the persecution from false Christianity, the Inquisition etc. And the Founders were all God-fearing people who wrote the Declaration of Independence and Constitution to provide religious and civil liberty to people.

The Founders understood that imposed law and coercion did not produce mature Christlike people, but destroyed people, either literally killing them, or destroyed their individuality, making them fear-filled, mindless drones, who have surrendered individuality and live within the confines set by the ruling authorities.

The USA was established on principles designed to foster individual development, the restoration of the image of God in people, maximizing liberty, and promoting education, free exercise of speech, religion, commerce, movement, while structuring the government with safeguards to protect against the three historic forces who through all cultures exploited the masses for the benefit of the elites.

And those three historic ruling authorities, the elites who dominated and controlled throughout history, were:

- The nobility—the rulers, Pharaohs, Caesars, Kings and Queens and their families.
- The aristocracy—the rich landowners, shipping and business barons etc.
- The priestly class—shamans, wisemen, priests, pastors, popes etc.

All three classes when established apart from God's kingdom, apart from God's principles, apart from design laws of truth, love, and freedom, are motivated by fear and survival and use various means and methods to dominate and control, and exploit the masses for their own security and advancement. They purposely, intentionally, seek methods and modes that undermine individual development and work to inhibit the development of the image of God in people, to move people more toward well trained animals that do what the master says.

Some of these methods through history include:

- Imposed law and law enforcement—in which the laws **did not apply equally to the ruling classes**. The laws were used to dominate and control the people and ultimately worked to destroy their individuality as they submitted out of fear.
- Purposeful restriction on ownership of property and wealth, workers were indebted in some form or fashion to the elites, either as slaves, or indentured servants, or serfs, or with financial debts they struggled to repay.
- Intentional obstructions to education, either by denying it completely, or by providing indoctrinated into the dogma and false systems that kept the elites in power.
- By various forms of societal divisions that pitted the people against another group (other than the elites) to keep their focus off the system that keeps them enslaved.
- By various forms of distraction (entertainments) and intoxicants.

All of these activities the Founders tried to mitigate by the establishment of our form of government by creating a nation in which individual liberties are protected, because they understood that maturity, development, advancement in either healthy human love, or individual character formation requires genuine freedom of the individual to be fully persuaded in their own mind and choose what is true because it is true. Thus, the government was established with the intent of having the most limited form of imposed law restrictions on liberty, and to be governed by the people not the elites.

They did this because of how reality works, and that is imposed laws, even in this system, are merely guardrails, they do not define reality, determine outcomes, remove sin, purify character, instill love, or make people righteous; they do not make a better and more just society or world; they do not heal hearts and minds. They do not deliver from death, heal sickness, or resurrect loved ones; they do not heal relationships; they do not reveal the truth about God; and they do not represent God's kingdom or government!

This is why on October 11, 1798, John Adams, Founding Father of the United States and its second president, wrote to the Massachusetts Militia that:

- Because We have no Government armed with Power capable of contending with human Passions unbridled by morality and Religion. Avarice, Ambition, Revenge or Gallantry, would break the strongest Cords of our Constitution as a Whale goes through a Net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

Imposed laws do not change character, they only restrain behavior. Thus, John Adams recognized, if people do not have a foundation in God, a biblical upbringing, a Christian worldview, then the more liberty they have they more chaos and destructive behaviors, which leads to anarchy and need for greater external control, imposed laws, to try and restore order.

This is what Satan has been working to achieve. As the USA was being established as a nation founded upon the principles of religious and civil liberty, with a people who are educated in a biblical worldview, so that even the unconverted to Christ still are educated with a foundation of what right and wrong looks like and a sense of personal responsibility for oneself, Satan inspires the godless theories of evolution and the rise of godless forms of government, communisms, socialism in which governments replace God as the owner of all things and teach that people are not responsible for self, but victims of cosmic random events that are chaotic and destructive.

As God has been removed from our culture, as hearts have hardened against heaven, and as the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, the evil passions of the human heart have increased such that no imposed laws will result in a healthier society. For instance,

- Gun laws do not stop murderers;
 - they stop those who still have hearts to be law-abiding citizens from obtaining guns.
 - criminals still get guns.
 - and murderers will murder with means other than guns.
- Tax laws do not stop cheaters.
 - and in fact the complicated tax laws are often the means for the really sophisticated cheaters to cheat.

As God has been removed from society note the following results and practices, which are all intended to destroy the image of God in man, debase human character, destroy human reason, make people more animalistic (and this is seen in society today by people that identify as furies, as some form of animal and municipalities that support this).

- God is removed from education, belief in God falls, internal moral standards fall, church attendance falls, character corrodes, society becomes more debased, crime, drugs, and personal accountability declines.
- People seek escape from anxiety and stress because they do not have the Holy Spirit to bring them peace, they are being consumed by fear and insecurity—so they turn to entertainments, alcohol, drugs, and pharmaceuticals.
- The entertainments and intoxicants further destroy brain and mind causing further deterioration of the image of God, causing greater fear, guilt, shame, and sense of franticness.

- The aristocracy, ruling elite, create systems to make accessing intoxicants easier—they oppose the drugs they can't control, tax and make profit from. But they promote the intoxicants they do control.
- As society fragments, fear rises, and more imposed laws and law enforcement occurs—in which the laws **do not apply equally to the ruling classes**. We see in our society that the elites generally are not accountable under the law as the average citizen is.
- Intentional corruption of education, first by denying reality, denying the Creator God and teaching evolution, but even more than this, is the purposeful and intentional schools systems that do not require actual learning, that turn out students who do not know basic math, reading, and are not taught to think and reason and evaluate evidence. The intent of these corrupt systems is not education, it is indoctrination into beliefs with minds conditioned to be incapable of thinking and reasoning but which operate upon believing what the authorities tell them.
- Societal division along race, sex, and wealth lines and other lines. Consider Bernie Sanders who railed for years against millionaires until he became a millionaire through his so-called advocacy against millionaires, now he rails against billionaires.

And what is happening in our country?

These same methods have been used by religious groups through history:

- Rather than removing God altogether, they replace the truth of God with a god that is a dictator, imposer of law and enforcer.
- They teach and practice a system of law and law enforcement that undermines thinking, The Bible said it...we take that on faith etc.
- They indoctrinate into dogmas and doctrines rather than teaching people what to think.
- They condition people to listen to the religious authorities and not question, but be obedient.
- They divide along doctrinal, dress, dietary, and cultural lines.

And what is the goal of God? The restoration of His image within, which means ever advancing, developing, maturing in love, insight, understanding, comprehension of reality as well as self governance, where we do what is right, healthy, and reasonable, because it is in reality that way, and we not only understanding it, we prefer it, not because a rule or ruler said so.

So the USA was established on principles that were intended to restrict the encroachment of the three abusive powers that destroy hearts and minds and exploit them for the benefit of the few, but what do we see happening today?

So godlessness leads to anarchy, chaos, which increases fear and insecurity, and if people do not convert and become restored to internal cohesion, governing self on God's principles and thereby bring order to their lives, families, and communities as each individual exercises control over themselves, then the increasing fear and chaos leads people to seek security through law and law enforcement and the ever increasing loss of liberties—this is exactly where we are heading and the Bible predicts as the rise of the beast power of Revelation.

In the third paragraph the lesson states,

- Corinth was marked by blatant religious pluralism (1 Cor. 8:5), as evident by its numerous shrines built in homage of such deities as Apollo, Athena, and Aphrodite, among others, and even the worship of such Egyptian gods as Serapis and Isis. *Adult SS Guide 3rd Q 2026, First and Second Corinthians*, p. 9.

The USA today is marked by this as well. When it was founded, it was not founded to primarily become a religiously pluralistic society, but to become a Christian society based upon freedom of conscience, to free people from the abuses of a fraudulent Christianity, but there was no other religious perspective being argued among the Founders of the USA other than a belief in the God of the Bible.

So while religious liberty is healthy, religious pluralism is not, why?

Freedom is a design law for life, we cannot love, grow, mature, develop, without genuine freedom. Thus, liberty is healthy.

But pluralism advances the idea that all diverse ideas are equally valuable, viable, and even required. This is a lie, and thus pluralism, the support and advancement of all ideas will lead to encoding errors, degradation, decay, decoherence, and collapse.

Jesus taught that the way to life is the narrow gate, but the way to destruction is the wide gate. The narrow gate is the gate of truth, of reality, and it is by definition restrictive—meaning precise and exacting—there is one specific wavelength of light that refracts of the atmosphere on a clear day; water is composed of precise atoms and has precise qualities; the speed of light in a vacuum is exact; there are only two genders; there is only one Creator God.

But we are free to reject truth and choose something else, but no matter what we choose, if it is not truth, it is error, false, fantasy, fiction—and there is no limit to the fictions, fantasies, falsehoods the wide gate.

So if a society is pluralistic because it promotes freedom of thought and allows individuals to worship and believe as they choose, that is not the same as saying that a pluralistic society with many contradictory gods and beliefs is healthy. When we get to heaven and the earth is made new, we will still have absolutely freedom, but we will not live in a pluralistic society, there will be one God and we will agree on worshipping Him. While we will have different experiences, write different songs, see insights and truths from different angels, all of those unique experiences are part of the same objective reality and all lead to the ultimate same conclusion—God is love, God is truth, God is trustworthy etc.

The lesson asks the question,

- “What challenges in today’s culture can make it hard to preach the gospel?” *Adult SS Guide 3rd Q 2026, First and Second Corinthians*, p. 9.

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph,

- The work of Paul among the Jews at Corinth was not as fruitful as he wanted it to be. He had to face some hostility and hatred. The Bible says that “they opposed him and blasphemed” (Acts 18:6, NKJV). When the object of the Greek verb *blasphemoeo* (“to blaspheme”) is a human being, it means “to revile” or “to defame.” In other words, they intended to stain Paul’s reputation and to prevent him from succeeding in his missionary endeavors. *Adult SS Guide 3rd Q 2026, First and Second Corinthians*, p. 10.

Have any of you ever experienced this? I know I have on many occasions. And the sad reality is, the most serious defamation I have faced has come from members of my own church, just like Paul faced the most serious defamation from the Jews.

Why do people resort to defamation? Typically, because the truth is not on their side.

When someone holds a position that is in error, and then someone begins to present the truth. And notice this carefully, I am speaking of promoting the truth itself, not attacking the person who holds to error. In other words, someone comes along with the gospel of Jesus, the truth of God’s design laws, and they present the beauty of it, those who prefer the lie, will often end up attacking the messenger, because they cannot refute the message with evidence.

So they try to taint the messenger as being a heretic, a blasphemer, a denier of the atonement, a Moral Influence promoter, a denier of church doctrine, etc. etc.

They won’t actually thoughtfully engage the subject matter for honest examination of evidence searching for truth, but seek to prevent the discussion at all because their position will collapse.

What is driving this? Fear, the spirit of fear with which they were born and their current belief system has been formulated and internalized by them to make them feel secure. If their beliefs are wrong, inside of them it means they are wrong, and if they are wrong, they are bad, guilty, shameful, deserving punishment, and thus they get very agitated and animated in fighting against the truth.

THURSDAY

Overview of many of the problems Paul was dealing with in the church—questions about any of those?

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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.

Regular registration ends on 6/21/26. Reserve your hotel room at a discounted rate of \$164 (includes resort fee but not taxes). We have a block of rooms available at this price—people should book now.

Seminar session topics:

1. Who Decides What's True?

How do we know what's actually true in a world full of competing voices? This session examines the foundation of truth—what authority can be trusted and how to discern reality from deception.

2. Did Life Happen by Chance ... or Design?

What does science really reveal about the origin of life? This session examines the evidence behind life's beginnings and what it suggests about our purpose, meaning, and design.

3. What Kind of Power Runs the Universe?

What kind of power sustains the universe at its foundational level? This session explores what reality reveals about worshipping a Creator whose power operates through truth and love rather than force—the quantum power upon which Newtonian power is built.

4. What If Sin Isn't What You've Been Told?

What if sin is something other than breaking rules? This session examines why God allowed sin to exist, how it began, and how being out of harmony with reality in our beliefs and actions reshapes the mind.

5. Genesis: History... and What It Reveals About Reality

What does the book of Genesis reveal about the operating design of our reality? This session explores how God and the human mind intersect in the physical world.

6. What Did God Really Do After Human Sin? (Part 1)

Were God's actions after sin acts of punishment—or something else? This session reexamines key moments after the fall to uncover what they reveal about God, salvation, and the nature of reality.

7. What Did God Really Do After Human Sin? (Part 2)

What does death reveal about God's response to sin? This session explores how death relates to God's mercy and what Christ's life and sacrifice accomplished in reality.

8. Spiritual Warfare: The Battle for Your Mind

How do truth and lies shape the direction of your life? This session examines how our thoughts get encoded within the substructure of brain changing the motivational energy that moves us to action and why truth and love are the powers that, in reality, bring healing.

9. Are We Misreading the Old Testament?

Why does God sometimes appear harsh or angry? This session examines how truth, love, and freedom help us better understand God's actions in the Old Testament.

10. The Bible: History... and How Reality Works

What kind of book is the Bible, really—and how should we relate to it? This session explores how Scripture records real events that reveal truth, conflict, and the principles that govern life.

11. The Opus of Jesus: The Opening Movement

The Sermon on the Mount: A Quantum Masterpiece

How Jesus revealed a kingdom built on truth, love, and transformation—not power and force

12. The Opus of Jesus: The Final Movement

Revelation and the 3 Angels—The Quantum Finale

How the final message of the Bible restores the truth about God and brings everything full circle

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. 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

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.

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.

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

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