

The Living Dead

Fred R. Coulter—February 20, 1993

Are we the *living alive*?
or
Are we the *living dead*?

I had an experience when writing the book *The Christian Passover*, and I wanted to give the book to one of my friends who was still in WCG at the giving of this sermon, and I recommended that he be ordained as a local elder years and years ago. I went to see him and we had nice conversation and were talking about the Church and things that had been happening in the Church.

It was almost as if I were talking a man who was nearly dead, because when we were talking about the problems in the Church his eyes just sort of glazed over and he said that Christ would take care of it and Christ would take care of the leadership.

I said, 'How do you know that He's going to? Maybe there's something that we need to do.' He got very remote and very distant, and it's almost as if he had no life or energy left in him. Here was a man who used to be full of vitality, enthusiasm and was zealous for God's Word and work.

It was very apparent, just in talking to him, that they had a social religion. They would go to church on Sabbath, much like people go to church on Sunday, *because they've always done it!* They sit there in the congregation and all the truths are just gradually eroded away, *eroded away, eroded away!* Because of making of the decision to follow *the idol of leadership*, they have decided to stay *and to die!*

Luke 18:8—Jesus said: "...Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes... [when Jesus Christ returns] ...shall He find the true faith on the earth?"

Quite a question! Why would He ask that question unless He understood how it was going to be with people in the end-time? Yes, there are a lot of *living dead!*

The faith that He's talking about is not only just the doctrines, which is true, but people who are alive and zealous enough that they have Christ's very own faith in them. *That is what God gives us as a gift, His faith, the very faith of Jesus Christ!* It literally means in the Greek: *Jesus' own faith!*

It's not something that we generate from within ourselves. It's something that God gives us with His Spirit, and it is a spiritual gift.

Revelation 14:12: "Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who **keep the**

commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

The very own faith that Jesus has. Yet, there are so many people just out there who are letting themselves die as they fall down before the idol of church leadership; they are trusting in a man! What does God say about trusting in a man? *Trust no man!* That's why every minister must, should and always point the brethren to God the Father and to Jesus Christ, because that is the only living faith that can be derived. You can't derive it by following a man!

It is, as the Apostle Paul said, 'Follow me as I follow Christ.' Now, here's something very important, and I think it's clear that we are living in these days; we're going to talk about the parable of the ten virgins, and we're going to see that every Christian, according to this parable, has their time of slumbering and sleeping. In other words, we all have our little problems, but do we let those so overwhelm us that we sleep the sleep of death?

The Parable of the Ten Virgins:

Matthew 25:1: "Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be compared *to* ten virgins, who took their lamps *and* went out to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, **but they did not take oil with them**" (vs 1-3).

We know that oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. They weren't keeping up in prayer, study, fasting and in yielding to God so that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit. They didn't take the oil with them. *They allowed themselves to be in a situation where they become just a religious social club!* You go to Sabbath services and you're comfortable and you know the people and you hear the sermons.

You're threatened that if you leave you're going to be going into the Lake of Fire and all that sort of thing. And while they are there, it is being eroded. But there's going to come a call. There's going to come a time, because Jesus said that 'everyone is going to have to appear before the judgment seat of God and render an account of himself.'

Verse 4: "But the wise took oil in their vessels along with their lamps." The lamp is like the light of God's Word, and Jesus said that He's the Light of the world. All of those things all fit in here.

Verse 5: "Now, when the bridegroom was gone a long time..."—longer than anybody supposed. I tell you what, we're living in a time

when we're closer to the end than we have ever been. But it's been a lot longer than any of have supposed. So, we all get into the situation of slumbering and sleeping.

"...they all became drowsy and slept. But in *the middle of the night...*" (vs 5-6). Midnight symbolizes the darkest part of the night. So, this is symbolizing right at the darkest time in the history of the world, which then he shall be thought of as great light.

"...there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, because **our lamps are going out**'" (vs 6-8)—*the living dead!*

We're experiencing some of that right now as we'll see from some of the letters that I'm going to read. People are able now to rouse themselves up out of this slumber and sleep, and to be zealous and recapture themselves in the faith that they ought to have if they are doing the things that they need to do. So, the foolish said to the wise, give us of your oil, our lamps are going out:

Verse 9: "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'" What He's saying here is that this responsibility is for each and every one of us—every minister, every member—that God has called.

There is still time to go buy, but I'll tell you one thing, the time is coming—just as this parable is—when it's going to be too late. ***Instead of being the living dead, you may be the twice dead!***

Verse 10: "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, **and the door was shut.**" Remember that as time ticks on—which it always does—*there always comes a time when it's the end and it's too late!* That's what happened to five of these virgins.

Verse 11: "And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But He answered *and* said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you'" (vs 11-12). Why would he say that? *Because:*

- they've had so little communication with God
- they are so involved in their own little worlds
- so involved in the cares and the living of this world (Luke 21)

that the day came upon them unawares! Each of us should ask ourselves"

- Does Christ know me?
 - Do you know Him?
- or*
- Are you the living dead?

Here is a lesson that people are learning. Seems like this is a really up to date basic Scripture: Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven..." Do you think you're going to enter into the Kingdom of God because you go to church?

- because you sit there?
- because you're a nice person and accept all of these half-lies and the watering down of the Truth?
- because you're comfortable with your friends?
- because your children have friends?

After all it's really nice and you don't want to take the plunge to follow God! What if the leadership is going to lead your right away from God? It won't be the first time that's ever happened?

Verse 21: "Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but the one who is doing... [practicing and performing] ...the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not perform many works* of power through Your name?'" (vs 21-22).

- we build houses for the poor
- we help the helpless
- we cast out demons

'In your name, Lord. We did it and we used Your name, and we did many wonderful works!

Verse 23: "And then I will confess to them, **I never knew you.** Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness."

- Does God know you? *Yes, He does!*
- Do you know God?
- Are you alive?

or

- Are you ***the living dead?***

"...Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness." To the one who knows to do good and does it not, it is sin! Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!

So, it covers more than just the outside veneer of keeping the Sabbath and going to the Feast days and understanding that those are the Truths of God. ***You must have a living spiritual relationship between you and God,*** and here's why:

Verse 24: “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock” (vs 24-25).

Everyone is going to have a test and trial. Everyone is going to go through the same thing. There comes a time when it’s too late, a time of reckoning, and God is going to see whether you are alive or the living dead! Then Jesus gives the parable of the foolish one.

Parable of the Foolish One:

Verse 26: “And everyone who hears these words of Mine and **does not practice them shall be compared to a foolish man**, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it” (vs 26-27). So, we can compare it to a house, after all aren’t we supposed to be:

- the temple of the living God?
- with God’s Holy Spirit?
- with the faith of Jesus Christ in us?

Absolutely, yes!

There are a lot of people preaching about the Laodiceans nowadays. I suppose it’s a good thing, because, frankly, there are so many of them around that it is incredible. It’s sad to see that when some of them get so bad that they are just like *the living dead!*

Revelation 3:14: “And to the angel of the Church of *the* Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen... [Christ; the Beginning and the End] ...the faithful and true Witness...” He had the faith of God the Father and He gave a true witness. The problem is, you need to ask:

- How can you give a true witness with false doctrine?
- How can you give a true witness when you don’t even understand the Word of God?
- How can you give a true witness when you are the living dead?
- Is that a witness?

Verse 15: “I know your works... [God knows every one of our works] ...that you are **neither cold nor hot...**—*you’re room temperature!* What is the temperature of a corpse? *Cold! Here’s the living dead!* You’re still alive, the living dead; you’re *lukewarm!*

“...I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot. So

then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth” (vs 15-16). The problem is *they don’t know it!* Isn’t it something that you get so mesmerized that you don’t even know.

Verse 17: “For you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy...’” We live in this age where we have all these nice things, but you know, that’s going to be cutoff! When it’s cutoff, what are you going to do then? You’re going to be just like those five foolish virgins running around seeing what you can scurry to dig things up and do what you need to do.

If you’re planning on doing that, somewhere down the road in the future so that you can be right with God, how are you going to be sure that it isn’t too late? How are you going to be sure that your timing is still sufficient to recover yourself? *You don’t know!*

I call your attention the parable of the man who received a lot of goods and said, ‘What am I going to do with all of these goods? I know what I’m going to do, I’m going to tell myself, soul, sit back and relax and enjoy it all and build bigger barns and better things, and I’ll store it.’ God said, ‘You fool! Your soul is going to be required of you tonight.’ So, you never know!

- *IF* you’ve been planning to study the Word of God
- *IF* you’ve been planning to fast and pray and get back to God
- *IF* you’ve been planning and thinking about the fact that you really need to get right with God

Are you going to do it and recover yourself from being the living dead? OR Are you going to wait so long that you become the twice dead?

“...and have need of nothing’... [you can’t tell them anything] ...and you do not understand... [comprehend] ...that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” (v 17).

We are to be covered with the garments that come from Christ, which is the righteousness of the saints. We have to have our eyes open so we can see, and then understanding comes from the Holy Spirit of God.

If you’re blind, are you not nearly dead? *Yes, indeed!* Where is this blindness coming from? *Let’s see, because it can be very profound!* It is happening to too many brethren, to too many ministers. We will see the one who is doing the blinding.

2-Corinthians 4:1: “Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we

are not fainthearted.” Too many are stopping alongside the road just to relax and wait for things. ‘God will straighten it out.’

I told this friend of mine when I left, ‘Listen, Christ is in you, and Christ expects you to do something. Don’t ever forget that.’

Verse 2: “For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully...” That’s exactly what happened in the Worldwide Church of God. Every minister who went along with all of the doctrinal changes is ‘*handling the Word of God deceitfully!*’ And in many cases, ***they knew better!***

“...but by manifestation of the Truth, we are commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom **the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe...**” (vs 2-4).

They say they believe. What is it that you believe? If you’re blinded, who is doing the blinding? *Satan the devil!* Why is he doing it? How is he doing it? *He’s doing it because there are other doctrines being preached!* Which then, when you put these false doctrines in your mind, you give up the Truth!

Many thought that they could sit there in the church and hear these sermons and know that that these things are not right, and figure that somehow down the road they’re going to get out of it, and they will avoid the trial because they’re sitting there and it’s all nice and comfortable. After all, who likes a trial? Little do they realize that the trial of the blinders is already coming! Many of them may end up being the living dead!

“...lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them” (v 4). That’s quite a predicament to be in!

Let’s see how these things develop. John had some things to say about this. 1-John 2:8: “Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away...” We have no excuse for being in the darkness. We are not the children of darkness. We are the children of light, but our light is going out! Why? *Because the darkness of midnight is closing in and it’s getting darker and darker and colder and colder until there is the living dead!*

“...and the true Light is already shining. Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and

there is no cause of offense in him. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, **and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes**” (vs 8-11).

Not only does this apply just to hating the brethren, but it also applies to **are you loving the Truth?** If you are loving the Truth, then you’re not going to let everything be eroded and eroded, and all of a sudden the storm comes upon you, just like it says in Matt. 7: the storm comes upon you, the rains came, the floods came, the wind blew and BAMMO! *your house on the sand is gone!* And ‘great is the fall thereof.’

So, it’s not only just hating your brother, but if you really don’t believe Christ, who are you hating? Who is really our brother? ***The*** Brother? *Jesus Christ!* We are the brethren of God!

Is your conduct ending up hating and despising Christ? These are some pretty serious questions? Let’s see a parable that Jesus gave concerning blindness. Let’s see the account of the man who was born blind. Let’s learn the lesson here. When we have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God, and have grown in grace and knowledge over the years, ***we are no longer blind!***

But we can become blind, and we’ll see the lesson here that Jesus gave concerning the man who was born blind.

John 9:1: “Now, *as Jesus was* passing by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, **this blindness came so that the works of God might be manifested in him.** I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is still day. When ***the night comes, no one is able to work***” (vs 1-4).

We really need to learn that lesson! The night is coming when it’s going to be too late. The night is coming and at midnight when it’s going to be too late.

Verse 5: “As long as I am in the world, I am *the* Light of the world.” As long as Christ is in you, He is the Light that is in you.

He said, ‘If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?’ (Matt. 6). Now, after the Pharisees were questioning the man how it was that he could see:

Verse 31: “Now, we know that God does not hear sinners. But if anyone is God-fearing and is doing His will, He hears him. From the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that anyone has

opened *the eyes of one* who was born blind” (vs 31-32). *An absolute miracle!*

Verse 33: “If this *man* were not from God, He could do nothing”—the leadership’s answer. Once the leadership is captive in their own set bureaucratic regimented way, and once you set the leadership as a idol between you and God, ***you are as good as dead!*** The leadership has set itself up between you and God. Here’s what they did:

Verse 34: “They answered and said to him, ‘You were born wholly in sin, and you are teaching us?’ And they cast him out”—kicked him out! Happened many times!

Verse 35: “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He found him, He said to him, ‘Do you believe in the Son of God?’ He answered and said, ‘Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen Him, and He is the One Who is even now speaking to you.’ Then he said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped Him. And Jesus said... [here’s the whole lesson out of this thing]: **‘For judgment I have come into this world so that those who do not see might see...’**” (vs 35-39).

God has called us out of this world, out of the darkness of Satan the devil that we might see, that we might understand the Truth! But how many get into a position where they begin turning down the Light? *It begins getting dim, and almost hypnotized; almost like someone just put a shade right over a person’s eyes!*

“...and **those who see might become blind**” (v 39). In other words, ***those who are in positions of authority and no better!*** That is also those who follow them, because if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch!

Verse 40: “And those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things; and they said to Him, **‘Are we also blind?’**” There might be some people saying:

- Who are you to say that we are blind?
- Who are you to say that we are the living dead?
- *I tell you, judge yourself!*

Verse 41: “Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, your sin remains.’” It’s exactly the same thing today. The leadership says to ‘trust us, we know.’ But:

- What if they are walking in darkness and blindness?
- What if you blindly follow along?
- *You’re both going to fall into the ditch!*

At midnight you’re going to banging around and you’re going to be asking how you can get out of this. Someone is going to say:

- you should have studied
- you should have prayed
- you should have drawn close to God
- you should have let God’s Word be in your heart, mind and your inward parts
- you should have loved God with all your heart, mind, soul and being

instead of having this religious social club that you attend. Oh yes, you do it on the Sabbath, but that’s as meaningless as anything! Letters from former WCG members:

Letter # 1:

I ceased to attend Worldwide seven weeks ago. During the sixth week...

Notice that it took six weeks for the minister to come and visit him!

I was visited by the minister and a deacon. It was an interesting visit. When asked why I no longer attended services, I told them I did not believe the doctrinal changes, and to attend a church whose doctrines I did not accept made me a hypocrite.

The minister’s response amazed me. He stated that I should not worry about that, but just focus on the central theme and forget the peripheral issues.

We then discussed Exo. 12 and the Passover changes. I told him that Mr. Tkach had not sited one Scripture to substantiate what he was teaching, but was basing his interpretation solely on Jewish traditions.

Thanks to you, I was able to explain the Hebrew words ‘ba erev’ and ‘ben ha arbayim’ and that their meaning could be proven from the Scriptures. That they were the key to understanding Exo. 12.

The minister’s response: You should leave the scholarly issues and studies to the scholars. Keep your eyes on the central theme, and forget the peripheral.

I said, ‘You mean that since I’m sitting in a nice comfortable chair, even though the foundation is crumbling and the floor is riddled with dry rot and termites, and the roof leaks like a sieve, that I should ignore all of this and just keep my eyes on my nice comfortable chair?’

Can you believe, his response was: ‘Just

keep your eyes on the central theme, and the peripheral will take care of itself.’

Because they put the leadership as the idol! Rather than following Christ, they are following the leadership, and little do they know that Satan has made his inroads in there, and they are not following Christ. So, just as this man said: The house is falling apart with dry rot and termites, and the roof is leaking like a sieve. His final statement was:

You know, John said that ‘those who went out from us were not of us’; they were not converted.

You read 3-John; the arrogant ministers were kicking out even the Apostle John!

From this unconverted student, thank you for being an excellent teacher. Thank you for taking the time to explain the Greek to us in the Holy Spirit tapes. I really enjoyed that; I found it thrilling. I guess we will have to paraphrase an old saying: ‘Words don’t lie, but liars translate.’

Here’s a man who has recovered himself out of the difficulties and problems of WCG. Let’s see how this sort of thing develops within a church, and can overtake a church, just completely consume a church. It’s happened before in the past. It’s going to happen again!

1-Timothy 3:15: “But if I should delay, *you have these things in writing, so that you may know how one is obligated to conduct oneself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the Truth.*” That’s where the Truth has to be found, *in the Church of God.*

You’re not going to find Truth out there in the world. It has to be found in the Church of God. If we don’t defend the Truth in the Church of God, will there be faith on the earth when Christ returns?

Verse 16: “And undeniably, great is the mystery of Godliness... [what God is doing in us, and what God did to come here on the earth as Jesus Christ] ...God was manifested in *the flesh*, was justified in *the Spirit*, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among *the Gentiles*, was believed on in *the world*, was received up in glory.”

1-Timothy 4:1: “Now, the Spirit tells us explicitly that in *the latter times* some... [who are in the Church] ...**shall apostatize from the faith, and shall follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.**”

The whole church is being tested. I mean, by that, *the Body of Jesus Christ!* Whether that Body is part of this church corporation or another church corporation, these things are happening. *The*

doctrines of demons came into the Church and that’s why God scattered the Church. That’s how He preserves it. God is looking for the *faithful* brethren and the *faithful* ministers, who really love God with all their heart, mind, soul and being. *Who are not going to be overcome by these doctrines of demons!*

Verse 6: “If you are teaching these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, being nourished by the words of the faith and of **the good doctrines** that you have closely followed.”

(go to the next track)

Verse 7: “But refuse profane and old wives’ fables; rather, exercise yourself unto Godliness.” *Great is the mystery of Godliness!* That’s what we have to exercise ourselves to.

Verse 8: “For physical exercise is profitable for a short time; but Godliness is profitable for everything, having *the* promise of life—of the *life* that now *is*, and of the *life* that *is* coming. This saying *is* faithful and worthy of full acceptance. Now, it is for this *reason that* we are laboring, and we are personally suffering reproach because we have hope in *the* living God, Who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who are believers. **These things command and teach**” (vs 8-11).

So, the books of 1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus tell a minister how he should run his ministry and how he should teach the brethren. What is it all the through: ***Always point them to Christ!***

Verse 13: “Until I come, devote *yourself* to reading, to encouragement, *and* to doctrine. Do not neglect the *spiritual* gift *that is* in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood” (vs 13-14). How many ministers are neglecting the gift of being a minister that is in them:

- the gift to teach
- the gift to know God’s Word
- the gift to be able to inspire the brethren

They have turned that into an idol of leadership, ‘and we follow whatever the leadership says, whatever the doctrine says. We leave it all to the scholars.’

Well, that’s how I got myself in trouble, because I didn’t believe the lying scholars! When I found them to be liars, I left!

Verse 15: “Meditate on these things; give yourself wholly to them so that your growth *in the faith* may be apparent to all. Be diligent... [take heed] ...with yourself and with the doctrines; continue in them. **For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you**” (vs 15-16).

Letter #2:

Just a short note to say that those of us who have come out of WCG appreciate what you are doing for us. You are restoring hope and showing us the condemnation that we received—while in Worldwide—is not of God.

I will add: *but of men!*

- Should not the brethren of God have hope?
- Should we not live by faith?
- Should we not have hope?
- Should we not be able to have confidence and faith in Jesus Christ and God the Father?

What good is to have a ministry:

- that ‘beats’ you over the head?
- that condemns you for everything under the sun

And they themselves are doing the same things! I recommend that they read Rom. 2, which is ‘you who teach, do you not also teach yourself?’

Letter #3:

Once upon a time there were ten men whom Jesus did a tremendous favor, but only one of the ten came back to thank Him.

He had healed ten blind men!

God forbid that I should be one of the unthankful! So, thank you, *thank you, thank you* for the tremendous favor that you did for us. I’m speaking, of course, the generous care package, which you sent last month. You were quite right when you stated that the package might be a bit overwhelming at first. It was, but it’s like finding a spiritual gold mine. And the more we listen the more gold we find.

I am, at this time, listening to *Assaults Against the Church #2*; it is simply fantastic! I’m taking notes like crazy. We have not had meat like this in the WCG for years, and they probably will never hear again.

I talked to this man on the phone, and he mentioned that he was in WCG for 26 years.

For the last three or four years we sat there squirming as they re-defined doctrine after doctrine. Finally, we could compromise no longer, and quit that organization.

Of course, we were disfellowshipped, and my younger son was told by the ministerial

assistant that we were sinning, and if we did not repent and come back into the WCG we would probably end up in the Lake of Fire, or at best come up in the second resurrection.

He said this, of course, to divide our family and keep him in the organization. We have our first love back again, and now realize what Christ meant when He said, ‘I AM the Vine, and you are the branches.’

It is a matter of a direct relationship between you and Christ; there is no one or no organization between you and God. The organization we came out of insists that they are the go-between and without them you will not be in the Kingdom of God.

Although publicly they say they don’t teach this. This ‘psycho-babble double-talk’ is nothing more than a padded lie! I would like to hear a Bible study on the one and only true church.

You’ll have it!

I think it would give a lot of people who came out of that organization a lot of peace of mind, who may still have a lingering doubt. It would also provide some Biblical ammunition to those confronted with this same argument.

Perhaps you have done a study on this subject and I have just not heard the tape, yet. Do you have any literature on this subject?

It was really nice to get a letter like that; to see that people out there are being able to find themselves and find their way back to God.

Let’s realize that the same thing happened in the New Testament church just before the collapse of Jerusalem. The book of Hebrews was written by the Apostle Paul, and I think that Carl Franklin has really finally figured out how this was written. He thinks it was done this way:

James the brother of Jesus was the apostle in Jerusalem. He knew that Paul would not be accepted in Jerusalem, and anything Paul wrote would be burned; no one would listen to it. That’s why Paul’s name is not on the book of Hebrews. Remember what happened when Paul went there? *They almost killed him!* The Roman centurion had to rescue Paul and take him away from being stoned.

Carl Franklin’s theory is that James wrote the letter of James and that was the introduction to Hebrews, and that’s why the book of James has no Amen at the end of it. That’s only a theory, but it makes more sense than anything I’ve heard of.

Here's the account talking about Jesus Christ; Hebrews 5:11: "Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing." Not only are you dull of hearing, you are blind!

Verse 12: "For truly, **by this time you ought to be teachers...**" Wasn't that what it ought to have been in the WCG? People were in there so long, just think if would have been handled the right way and done the way that it should have been? What kind of witness would we have to this world? *We wouldn't have to be depending on leadership, because all would be teachers! Amazing, when you think of it! But they're not!*

"...but instead you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* Word of Righteousness because he is an infant" (vs 12-13).

- Hasn't that happened to so many people?
- How many people used to really know their Bibles?
- *They can barely find their way through them now!*
- How many people really understood the Word of God?
- *Now it's all fuzzy, clouded and they just don't know anymore!*

Verse 14: "But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained... [to be alert, to be mentally ready] ...to discern between good and evil."

They sat there in the congregations, and I just imagine that a lot of them don't even squirm while these lies and re-definitions of doctrine came out.

Hebrews 6:1: "Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ... " In other words, we've got to go beyond the foundation, beyond the basics.

"...we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of **repentance from dead works**, and of faith in God" (v 1).

- **IF** you are the living dead
 - ✓ What are your works?
 - ✓ Are they not dead works?
- **IF** you don't have the faith of Christ in you
- **IF** you are not zealous for God
- **IF** you are blind and nearly dead
 - ✓ Are your works not dead?

We're to repent of these dead works, and not go back and do them! Let's see that we were once dead,

but now we have been made alive. If you totally die *the spiritual death*, you may find yourself *twice dead!*

Ephesians 2:1: "Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience" (vs 1-2). And who wormed his way into the doctrinal decisions, and he's been there for long time.

{note book: *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies* by David Breese; what an eye-opener that is}

Verse 3: "Among whom also we all once had our conduct... [we gave that up] ...in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the* world. But God, Who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us" (vs 3-4).

I suggest that you really understand that love of God, that you really dig deep into the Word of God realize what it is that God has done for you and me, everyone that He has called, with a great love.

If you're not willing to give up anything, give up your comfortable surroundings and everything like this, **remember that God gave up being God to become a human being! He emptied Himself of being God to save you!** So, should we be the living dead? *Of course not!*

Verse 5: "Even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.)" **We are to be living stones** (1-Pet. 5), *not the living dead!*

Read the whole section of Jesus' resurrecting Lazarus. God can still give you life, but you've got to do some things.

Ephesians 5:14: "Therefore, He says, **You who are sleeping—wake up, and arise from the dead!** And Christ shall shine upon you."

Rather than have that light blinded by Satan, rather than have all of these things become fuzzy and out of focus, **awake from the dead and Christ will give you light!**

Verse 15: "So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise." Let's see how we are to respond to God as those who are alive from the dead.

Many people have gone through different things. Many people have experienced things, for they had nearly died (spiritually). And almost every one of them when they have gone through that experience, have resolved in their mind to make right a lot of things that they had left undone. You're

in much of the same situation if you are one of the living dead. You have a chance now to make it right. Here is how we are to calculate our lives.

Romans 6:11: “In the same way also... [that Christ was raised from the dead (v 9)] ...you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, **yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead**, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (vs 11-13).

That’s how we are to do it! To have the zeal, to have the heat (Rev. 3)—as it says to the Laodiceans. If you are cold corpse you’d better get yourself up and going, and **you better retrieve yourself to God while there is time!**

Verse 16: “Don’t you realize... [understand] ...that to whom you yield yourselves as servants to obey, **you are servants of the one you obey**... [and you are following and trusting that leadership, you are not trusting in God; you’re to follow Christ] ...whether *it is* of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin...” (vs 16-17).

Too many have gone back to the trough of sin to lap up all the convenient and pleasant things of this world.

“...but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you” (v 17). That’s how we need to respond, how we need to yield ourselves to God.

Let’s see what we need to do, and this comes right after talking about what I already said about how God gave up Himself to become Jesus Christ to live as a man and be that perfect sacrifice. Do you think that God is going to apply that perfect sacrifice to you if you’re the *living dead*? If you’ve been enlightened once and you understand the Truth, and you go clear back into the world? *No! I tell you He is not going to apply that!*

God is gracious, merciful and kind, but while there is time, while it is today (Heb. 2), don’t wait until tomorrow, because tomorrow may never come! So, here’s what the Apostle Paul wrote here in the light of what Jesus did:

Philippians 2:12: “So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed...” Not given up, not slacked down! Compare the difference in the Church at Philippi with the one in Corinth, which was racked and ruined with every sin, problem and difficulty. That’s just the way that the Church of God is today. Too many of them are like the Church of Corinth. But the Church at Philippi always

obeyed!

“...not as in my presence only... [they didn’t do it for eye-service to please the minister or the deacons] ...but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (v 17).

- *You have to do that!*
- *You have to come to Christ!*
- *You have to come to God the Father!*
- *You have to stir yourself up from the living dead!*

Verse 13: “For it is God Who works **in** you...” *Let God work **in** you.*

- don’t grieve the Spirit
- don’t choke off the Spirit
- don’t yield to those things you ought not yield to

“...both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure. Do all things without complaints and disputes; so that you may be blameless and without offense...” (vs 13-15).

Isn’t that what Christ said? *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten; **be zealous, therefore, and repent so that we may be without rebuke!***

“...innocent children of God in *the* midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as lights in *the* world” (v 15)—if you are still alive enough and have enough light.

- How is your lamp?
- How is your life?
- How is your body?
- How is your corpse?
- Is there still enough life in it that God can still use it and give you life? *I hope so!*

Verse 16: “Holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor labored in vain.” That’s quite a thing!

Titus shows us how we are to act in this generation; Titus 2:13: “Looking for the blessed hope... [that is our hope, the return of Jesus Christ] ...and *the* appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ Who gave Himself for us...” (vs 13-14).

As we come up the Passover go through the book *The Christian Passover*. Read the section on foot-washing and the body and blood of Christ, and you let that just *revitalize you and bring you back from the living dead.*

“...so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique

people, **zealous of good works**" (v 14)—ready to do the work of God!

I got the following letter just a week before I took *The Christian Passover* book to that local elder. Compare what I described to you with this action, and this letter comes from Denmark:

Letter #4:

Dear Gentlemen and Ladies:

This is the first time I write to you. I know almost nothing about you, but heard about your existence through the Ambassador Report, because I'm losing faith in the Worldwide Church of God, but at the same time gaining faith in the Holy Bible every day. I am burning...

Notice his attitude; how he feels inside. Compare that to just the 'ho-hum Jesus will straighten it out, we just have to follow the leadership.'

...to know about your church and its teachings. I'm not a baptized member of the WCG or have any plans to be before all things have been proven to me.

He's just like the Bereans, proving all those things whether they are true or not, and is searching the Scriptures.

So, I was wondering in what way are you different from the WCG, since the WCG has doctrines in which I disagree. I'm very interested to know about your doctrine and teaching.

Needless to say, he got a giant, huge care package with about 50 sermons and the books *The Christian Passover* and *A Harmony of the Gospels*. Now, listen to what he says and *compare this to the living dead*:

I have this feeling that someplace, somewhere there must be somebody who understands 100%!....

Not all of us can say that we understand 100%, but we better be striving for it.

...That there must be some little group of people living and understanding the right values and teachings. Therefore, I am on the quest to find and get in contact with those people.

It has been very difficult to get your address. The WCG wouldn't help me. It took a year to get your address, so as you can understand, I am looking eagerly forward to your reply and to learn about your church and its teaching, and would

therefore, ask you: is it possible to receive some of your literature and a cassette tape, which you would consider the most powerful sermon recently given.

And please, would you explain why you divided yourself from the WCG. I thank you very much beforehand for your kind cooperation and your willingness to help me, and taking the time to read this letter.

PS: I shall wait every day for your answer.

Needless to say, that went airmail.

When you compare the two, we can say that the former has lost his first love.

Revelation 2:4: "Nevertheless, I have *this* against you... [in spite of all the good things you have done] ...that **you have left your first love.**"

Isn't that quite a difference? Here's a man who has his first love, and the very next week I talked to a man who appeared to be *the living dead!*

Verse 5: "Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; **for if you do not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.**" *So, if you're the living dead, you have a chance to repent!*

Mark 12 tells us exactly what our first love is, and should always be and always remain. I don't think that we should let one minute go by that we do not understand what it's telling us here concerning our first love, and much more so since we are living in the days in which we are living.

Mark 12:29: "Then Jesus answered him, 'The first of all the commandments *is*, "Hear, O Israel. Our one God is *the* Lord, *the* Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God **with all your heart...** [no reservations at all] ...and **with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.**" *This is the first commandment.*"

That is the first love and that is how we are to love God. That is how every one of us need to ask God to just fill us with His Spirit, to resurrect us from the spiritual living dead, to serve the living God in this kind of attitude and this way.

Eph. 5 shows us what we need to be doing, how we need to be doing it; Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children." Not just blindly following along with the leadership that itself is being blinded and is also going to fall into the ditch. If the blind lead the blind, they're both going to fall into the ditch!

Verse 2: "And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us..." [How powerful was that love?

Tremendous!] ...and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” Then Paul lists all the sins that are current today in the Church of God.

Verse 3: “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints.” Yet, they are still ordaining men in some Churches of God that has been known and proved that they have committed adultery in the past.

Verse 4: “Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. **Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words...**” (vs 4-6).

- just relax
- trust us
- follow the leadership

Those are vain words to deceive you!

“...for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, **do not be joint partakers with them.** For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light... [your eyes wide open] ...(because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth) proving what is well pleasing to the Lord...” (vs 6-10).

Not what is acceptable unto a leadership. You will have to separate yourself from that kind of leadership, wherever it may be, whether in Worldwide, Church of God Seventh Day, or wherever.

Verse 11: “And **have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...**” That’s what all the darkness and blindness is going to be, and going to bring.

“...but rather expose *them*... [expose them; and that’s what I’m trying to do here now] ...for it is shameful even to mention the things being done by them in secret” (vs 11-12). Not to reprove them and put them to shame, but so that they will repent and come back to God and be in the Kingdom of God.

I don’t want to see the living dead die twice; no one does, not even God! But should we stand by and just let it go on? Just sit there ho-hum, that this is wonderful and nice? Should we practice our religion and have our nice social club, and have all of our niceties and goodies? *We are just so much vomit ready to go out of the much of Christ!*

Verse 13: “But all of these things being exposed by the light are openly revealed. Therefore,

He says, **‘You who are sleeping—wake up, and arise from the dead!’...**” (vs 13-14)—turn on the lights!

Have you ever been really sound asleep, really in deep sleep, and all of a sudden someone comes in and turns on all the lights and you wake up with a jolt! Let’s hope that spiritually it can happen that way for you, and you come to reality.

“...**And Christ shall shine upon you.** So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise, redeeming the time, **because the days are evil**” (vs 14-16).

You have a chance to be recovered from the *living dead!* You must awake and redeem the time “...**because the days are evil.**”

Recapture that first love that you can say that you love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and be zealous and repent!

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 18:8
- 2) Revelation 14:12
- 3) Matthew 25:1-12
- 4) Matthew 7:21-27
- 5) Revelation 3:14-17
- 6) 2 Corinthians 4:1-4
- 7) 1 John 2:8-11
- 8) John 9:1-5, 31-41
- 9) 1 Timothy 3:15-16
- 10) 1 Timothy 4:1, 6-11, 13-16
- 11) Hebrews 5:11-14
- 12) Hebrews 6:1
- 13) Ephesians 2:1-5
- 14) Ephesians 5:14-15
- 15) Romans 6:11-13, 16-17
- 16) Philippians 2:12-16
- 17) Titus 2:13-14
- 18) Revelation 2:4-5
- 19) Mark 12:29
- 20) Ephesians 5:1-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 21
- Matthew 6
- Romans 2
- 1 Peter 5
- Romans 6:9
- Hebrews 2

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

- *Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies* by David Breese
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

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