***Jesus is the Amen, the Faithful Witness, and the Martyr

Colossians 2:18-19

COL-463***

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This morning, we continue in our study of the book of Colossians. Let me direct your attention to "The Error of the Angelic Worship," segment number 20, in Colossians 2:18-19.

Please remember that we have a Bible table now by the side aisle there, in case you forgot your Bible, and don't have one available. It's always a good idea to pick one of those up as you go by; use it during the service; and, put it back after the meeting.

The apostle Paul, during his lifespan, had a great experience of having the Lord Jesus Christ speaking to his mind in guiding his life. Please remember that that's how God speaks to us today. There are a lot of Christians who are very ready to say, "God said to me." And what they mean is: "I said to myself," or "My sin nature said to me," or "My inspiration at the moment said to me." But it is true that, for the Christian who is in temporal fellowship in time (in fellowship with the Heavenly Father), He will speak to your mind. Those thoughts will come.

Yesterday, I had the panicky experience. I am going to do this one more time. I said, "I'm not going to tell you this," but I do, because I think it illustrates that God does give us mental guidance. When we understand the Word of God, and we live by the grace principles, this is what happens. And it is very real. But the devil is always there in the background to distort it into human effort. I lost my whole pack of keys. I have a key to everything in this campus. It's a big pack, and to my great horror, I thought I'd laid them down on a desk, and when I reached for them, they were gone. And retracing my steps, where could I have had them? I remember after band practice yesterday, walking out that door, and locking it up. So, I must have had them then. But now, I couldn't find him.

So, in the middle of studying last night, I said, "Lord, those keys are really important. I cannot imagine how they slipped away from me. It's not an easy thing to do." And the thought came to me: "Go back to the desk where the keys were put, and there's a chair right there, and it has a little Afghan cover over it (it happened to be on it)." I thought to myself, "I wonder if it could have just been there." I said, "Nah. I looked at it earlier, and I didn't see anything." But I've learned that when God speaks, and brings a thought, don't ignore it. So, I stopped; got up; and, went back. Do I need to tell you what I found? It just dumbfounded me. Just a little movement of that Afghan, and there were the keys. And I had moved it before. That is the reality of spiritual leading. But it's the devil's business to pervert that, so that it is not Christ leading? It is Satan's deception.

Now, the apostle Paul spend a whole lifetime of God speaking to his mind. In fact, in New Testament times, before the Bible was completely written for our guidance, the apostles actually did hear the voice of God. That ceased when God's voice was now recorded in Scripture. All the guidance we receive now is on the basis of knowing the doctrines of the Word of God pertaining to the church-age, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit as he guides our thinking. The result was that, for Paul, there was a life led by the Spirit of God, and Christ living out His holy life through Paul's daily experiences. Paul thus enjoyed a godly lifestyle as a faithful steward of the Lord Jesus Christ, using his time; his talents; and, his treasures, in fulfilling his divinely assigned mission of good works, as spoken of Ephesians 2:10.

Therefore, Paul could say, in Philippians 1:21, "For me to live is Christ."

Colossians 2:18, we pointed out, says, "Don't let anybody rob you of your prize:" your prize of church-age living; your prize of Holy Spirit guidance; your prize of the power system that only belongs in the church-age believer. And part of that prize was Christ guiding our minds and living our lives for us. And that's great. It's the greatest experience. It's the prime of your spiritual life. But it is a dangerous ground, because it is so distorted by religion instead of reality.

The prize for Paul also included experiencing great gain, he said, at his death at the end of his lifetime, so that he could say: "For me to die is gain." Now, that was more than going to heaven. That was quite a gain. But when Paul said, "My life is Christ guiding, directing, living, and I am fulfilling my mission. And when I die, I've made an investment with my life. And boy, will there be a great gain for me as a result of that? I will have a profitable return at the Judgment Seat of Christ, which every Christian will face, where he will receive rewards or loss of rewards for the life of service that he has invested in the Father's work.

Paul learned the doctrines of the church grace-age living, living by means of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He responded to these principles of truth with positive volition; that is, he said, "OK, that's the way I'll do it." And he responded to his opportunities of divine good service.

So, Paul could really say, as he did in the last part of Philippians 1:21: "To die is gain." That's part of his prize, and part of the prize of every church-age believer – in the rewards of Jesus Judgment Seat of Christ.

Now, every Christian will not find such great gain. If your life is not a life which is led of God, and you are not the serious Christian who spends as much time thinking about the things of this life as preparing for serving the Lord God, who has called you into his service – oh, you'll get heaven, but you're not going to be a rich Christian up there. You'll just be one of the Christians. There will be a difference. Many Christians, if not most, do not have Christ living out their lives for God's maximum blessings on earth, and for earning treasures in heaven for their Christian service works.

**The Gospel**

It is sad if we do not take the advantage, as we have on that table back there of the evangelism brochures. People in other parts of the world are constantly writing us letters on how, for the first time in their lives, many of them who have been in church all their lives, for the first time in their lives, they know what the gospel is. They know what the gospel really is. Christ died for our sins. And He rose again victorious, to prove that our sins have been forgiven. That's no longer an issue between us and God. The issue is believing that promise, and believing that gift. So, that's the gospel. Christ died for our sins. Believe it.

**Gospel Brochures**

How often do you take a stack of those, and have them handy, when you're going about your business. Put one in the envelope, or share one at checkout counters, or with people that you do business with. It's such an easy thing to do: "Here's something: *Hell or Heaven, Which Will it be for You?* You might find that very important to read, and find it very informative." Now, that's how we are witnesses. And there it is. Sometimes you have more time to talk to people, but at least that to do.

**The Church at Laodicea**

Now, the local church in the New Testament city of Laodicea, we are now looking at. And we're looking at it because it was a classic example of Christians who thought that they were rich, but they were, in fact, dirt poor in the true wealth of heaven. In looking at that, in Revelation 3:14-22, there are seven letters written and recorded in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, to churches that actually existed all at one time in Asia Minor in what is now today in western Turkey.

The church in the city of Laodicea was a very wealthy church. I want you to understand. Sometimes people read this letter, and they think these are not Christians. Yes, these are Christians. These are born-again people. It's a terrible picture of them, but they are born-again people. And they are a church which is poor in spiritual things, because they have not been feeding upon the instructions of the Word of God, because they haven't had a pastor-teacher who's been doing his job, instructing them on a regular basis.

Instead, they've been going to church, and they've been inspired. They've been entertained. That's one thing here in the Berean Church, we have no pulpit personality; nor, hardly any humor in the pulpit. It's just some guy standing up there talking. Mr. Hope brings a friend to church, and afterward, he says, "What did you think of the service?" He said, "He didn't do anything but talk about the Bible the whole time?" There are no pulpit personalities here, except Christ. And if you're smart, you'll pick up the difference.

Now, the result here, in Laodicea, was having their life focused mainly on temporal earthly things, and not on the eternal things of heaven. The result was an unrealistically thinking more highly of themselves than they really merited, by what God thought of them. The result was thinking that they were standing tall, and that they were impressive in life, because when you walked into the congregation of the churches in the area of Laodicea, they were well-dressed. They were people who knew their way around the best eating places. They were people who drove the greatest, latest-model chariots. They were people who knew their way around the good life. Because of that, as I once had my soul chilled by a very carnal, rich man who had a lot of money – he once said, "God knows whom to trust with His money." And obviously, he thought he was one of them. Well, he had a lot of money, but he was anything but a steward of God.

That's the people of Laodicea. They were not stewards of God at all. The result was that they thought they were standing tall, very impressive in life, but they were, in fact, flat on their faces in the dirt of the world system, because that's where they were living.

Now, this particular church, as we said (as with all these churches) came on the scene in some very prominent way during church history, from New Testament times. These last four letters – we won't go into those in detail. They are on the series of "Revelation" tapes, if you want to get them. But the churches symbolized by Laodicea came into prominence as a lifestyle of local congregations about the year 1900. The whole twentieth century was an increasingly faster pick up of churches in the country club mode of Laodicea. This condition, unfortunately, increasingly characterizes churches in the United States today.

The church in Laodicea, in Revelation 3:14, is addressed to the angel of that church. The word "angel" means "messenger" or "communicator." In this case, it's the pastor-teacher. This church was an organization. It was made up of spiritually born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as one Savior. I want you to understand that. These are Christians. These are not professing Christians, but these are real Christians.

The city of Laodicea was located in what is today western Turkey on the banks of the Lycus River. The city was in a very important place geographically. It was a crossroads of three major Roman trade routes in Asia Minor. Therefore, it was an extremely prosperous city. It was a city that had a major military outpost of the Roman Empire, It was the center of banking and industry. It had a flourishing medical school. And it was the manufacturer of a very special, highly desirable black woolen cloth from black wool sheep.

**The Message to the City of Laodicea**

Revelation 3:14 is the message to city of Laodicea. The Christians here were characterized by this city. It was a city of no extremes. They were all kind of lukewarm. It was filled with an attitude of compromise, and that contributed to their financial increase, because that was the main thing that they were interested in: do what it takes to do to prosper. So, people were very broad-minded. And the result was that they lost their way spiritually.

The word "Laodicea" is actually made up of two words, interestingly enough. The word "laos" in the Greek means "people," and the second part of the word means "judgment" or "thoughts." So, it's made up of people judgment – human viewpoint. Even the name of the city reflected the quality of the people there. This congregation was more interested in the opinions of fallen man than of the Holy God and His church spiritual power system.

**Jesus is "The Amen"**

This, to the apostle John, the Lord Jesus Christ says, in verse 14: "Write." This is the word for "recording on paper." John is to get started right now. He is to take the pen in hand on the parchment. And it is a command. He is to take the dictation, which is now going to be given to him. And he is now to record, first of all, who is the author of this letter. That's what's important. That's what makes it important. He says, "The author is 'The Amen.'" This is the Greek word for "Amen." And you can see that we do get our English word "Amen" from this. This is actually a transliteration from the Hebrew word "Amen." It sounds the same way. They just put these in Greek letters. The Hebrew goes right to left. The Greek goes left to right. And they just made it letter-for-letter.

For an example of what it means, please notice Deuteronomy 7:9: "Know, therefore, that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God Who keeps His covenant, and is lovingkindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Him and keep His commandments." Notice: "Know, therefore, that the Lord your God, He is God, 'The Amen,' the faithful God.

So, the word "Amen" means a declaration of certainty. We're talking about truth, because that's what Jesus Christ is. And it's important. And the Lord stresses that, because there are a lot of people who like to say, "You can't know what the Bible teaches." You can't know what God knows or thinks, because you can't know what the Bible teaches. That is not true. Anything that the Bible says, that you read in the words in their normal meaning, is very clear.

Isaiah 65:16 – Please notice that verse, which says, "Because he who is blessed in the earth shall be blessed by the God of truth." What's the word? The God of "Amen. Isn't that interesting? "Because he who is blessed in the earth shall be blessed by the God of "Amen" – the God of truth.

So, the one who swears in the earth shill swear by the God of truth, "Amen," because the former troubles are forgotten, and so on. So, that God, when He used this word "Amen," it means "trustworthy."

So, this letter, is going to really put this church through the shredder, and this letter comes from the one who is completely trustworthy. And it shows the foolishness of not finding out what God thinks. Anytime you go to a church service, and the preacher is entertaining you, and giving you a lot of little illustrations, and you're jumping off of a Scripture, and he's not explaining what those words mean to you, say, "Adios," and never come back. I guarantee you that you'll regret it at the Judgment Seat of Christ when you realize how much you have been robbed of "The Amen." And sometimes, a Scripture says, "Amen and Amen." That means it is true." One of the prophets says, "It is true, and it is really true."

Sometimes, the King James Bible used to say, "Verily, verily." A better translation is: "Truly, Truly." This word declares a certainty and the fulfillment of the promises of God. In 2 Corinthians 1:20: "For as many as may be the promises of God, in him are the 'Amen' (the 'yes'). Wherefore, also by Him is our 'Amen,' to the glory of God through us:" "As many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are the 'Yes.' They are the truth. Wherefore, also by Him is our 'Amen' by Jesus Christ (He's t the 'Amen') to the glory of God through us.

**Biblical Promises**

Somebody has counted them. There are 4,000 promises in the Bible for church-age believers. These are 4,000 promises that you can count on. You can call upon God, if you know nothing of the Scriptures (the Word of God). These promises are there. This is part of what's the frame of reference of your thinking: that you can call upon to use in your time of need; your time of desire; or, your time of hope – whatever. These promises are no longer good once you go to heaven. They are promises which are only good here on this earth.

So, should you come to church, and be instructed in the Word of God? If you have half of your brain tied behind your back, you'll pick up the promises you can call on. You cannot help it. If you're paying attention, you'll say, "Aha! I can call upon Him for that. I can ask Him for that," because if He has promised, He's going to do it.

So, the word "amen" means to believe God, because He speaks the truth.

Now, the negative volition type of Christian pretends that what Jesus Christ says in the Bible is not clear. So, we don't know how to apply it. This was, of course, Satan's challenge to Eve. That's the oldest trick in the world. Have you ever been hit by somebody who says, "Ah, this preacher says, it means this, and this preacher thinks that." And, of course, if you do that, you're in deep trouble. It's not what the preacher thinks. You never hear me say: "I think," or "I believe that this means this, and this means this." If I don't know, I don't try to tell you. But if I know what the words mean, and I know the frame of reference of doctrine, then I can speak to you the mind of God. And if you don't have that, you have zilch.

**Satan as the Serpent**

Notice how subtle this argument is. This is what brought Eve down. Genesis 3:1: "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said that you shall not eat from any tree of the garden?" Now, Satan takes on the form of the serpent as his medium of communication. He indwells the serpent. Maybe it was a cobra-like serpent, because cobras stand up straight, and they wave back and forth, as they put their hoods out. And here this serpent is speaking. Now, since Eve had not heard any other animals in the garden talk, this should have raised a red flag to her. But the serpent's question was: "God didn't say that, did He?" Satan said, "Eve, did you really understand what He said? Do you think that's what He meant? He didn't want you to eat of this lovely tree? Has God indeed said that you shall not eat from any tree in the garden? That doesn't sound right, Eve. Where did you get that idea?" And that was the trigger point.

Eve picked it up from there, and began to say, "You know, maybe I did misunderstand him. Maybe he meant something else." And if you are not a Christian who's getting fair treatment in your local church services, of explanatory teaching of the Word of God, you can be just as big a foolish person as Eve was. You will be brought down believing the biggest kind of nonsense. And when the book of the Revelation says, "Jesus is going to wipe away all tears in heaven, what are you crying about up there?" You're not in the lake of fire. You're not destined for it. You have made it into the glory land. Why would you be crying? It is for one thing? It is because you doubted the Word of God, and you ignored His guidelines, and you did not live your life on the basis of church-age principles of grace freedom, and of Christian service. The Judgment Seat of Christ – that's where the tears will come streaming down, as you realize how you have been robbed, even by your religious leaders perhaps, of your eternal rewards that you could have earned.

This is not a small thing, because the rewards that you get are eternal. Your treasures will last forever. That's why Jesus says, "Be sure that you're putting a lot of treasures up there, as you are down here.

So, the negative emission type of Christian – he always wants to say, "Oh, did God really say that? Did He really mean that?" Maybe you don't run into that. I run into it all the time, and even by Christians. And do you know what their defense is? Well, Dr. So-and-So over here says this."

I had a woman who was trying to justify a really, way off-the-wall, biblical concept that fit in with her worldly lifestyle. And she was giving me Scripture that justified it. And I told her that that isn't really what it's saying. And she insisted that it was. And I said, "Well, maybe a little wider help would give you a frame of reference. We have a lot of good expositors at Dallas Theological Seminary, and I can tell you they would not agree with what you're saying." Do you know what her response was? She said, "I don't care what they're saying at Dallas Seminary." Well, that's why she wasn't interested in what they were saying in the Bible, because that's what the seminary gives you.

So, here's the attempt to justify the ambitions of the sin nature. It's human viewpoint arrogance. And the absolutes of Scripture are labeled as simplistic thinking. And what people want is their religious opinions. It is so easy to fall into touchy-feely religion. You can hardly go anywhere but get it. When you walk out of here today, you will have something in your mind of understanding of what God thinks that you didn't have when you walked in. That is your right as a Christian. Now, if you ever see that, it'll be stored in your human spirit. It'll be a reservoir of truth that will flow up, and when you need it, the Spirit of God will call your attention to it.

The Laodicean church was filled with Christians who were compromising with evils – the evils of their day for personal gain; their ambitions; and, their money. Now while the Lord Jesus Christ is immutable in the truth, His Laodicean Church was filled with spiritual chameleons, trying to be relevant to their day. Anytime you see a church who wants to be relevant to its day, be on guard. Some of these churches have built vast complexes now. They're so relevant that they even have little refreshment centers right there in the church, such that you can sit there and listen to them over the P.A. system, while the sermon is going on, and you enjoy some refreshments there. It is all so relevant to where people live, and how they live. And what they mean is to help you to be comfortable as living as one of Satan's people, rather than a member of the royal family of God.

The testimony and the commandments of Jesus Christ are never fickle. They are never deficient. Hear Him for what He is. He is the Amen. Where do you put the word "Amen" when you pray? At the end. That means that this is the last word. And He is the last word. Now, if you don't know what He thinks, you haven't even gotten the first word, let alone to have the last.

Here are a few related Scriptures. Hebrews 1:1-3: "God, after He spoke long ago to the Fathers, in the prophets, and many portions and in many ways (in Old Testament past), in these last days, has spoken to us in His Son, Whom he appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the ages. He is the radiance of His glory, the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the Word of His power. When he had made purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High." The Lord Jesus Christ now sits in heaven, at the right hand of God the Father. He's not sitting on His throne. He's sharing the Father's throne. His throne is here on this earth in the city of Jerusalem. He will, in the very near future, come back to occupy that throne, and to govern this world for 1,000 years.

He is the Final Word. Matthew 17:5: Christ, the Last Word – "While he was still speaking (while Jesus was still speaking), behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And behold, a voice out of the cloud (the voice of God the Father) saying, 'This is My Beloved Son, with Whom I am well-pleased. Listen to Him." Why? Because He's the Last Word. Only through Christ, you have the last word on the issues of life, like heaven or hell.

Jesus says in John 14:6: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man comes to the Father but by Me." One of the basic principles of Islam (a teaching of Islam) is that Allah, whom they equate to the God of the Bible, has no son. He has three daughters by his wife in heaven. But God has no son. Now, you must make your choice. Matthew 17:5 says, "While He (Jesus) was still speaking." This was upon the Mount of Transfiguration where the Lord Jesus Christ, for a moment, in the presence of Peter, James, and John, removed His human cloak covering – His humanity covering His deity (His glory). He removed it. And boy, He burst out with the brightest glory light. They had fall to the ground. They could not look at it. And they realized they were in the presence of deity.

So, that's what He's saying now: "While He was still speaking, Peter said (Peter, off the top of his head, said), 'Lord, let's stay here forever. Let's build three little shrines here to remember this great event: one for you; one for Moses; and, one for Elijah," because the Lord had been standing there speaking to Moses and Elijah. By the way, what happens to you when you die? Are you no longer conscious? Oh, no. You're just as conscious as ever. And here, the Lord, on the Mount Transfiguration, was talking to Moses, who went into heaven by natural death, and Elijah, who went into heaven as some Christians will go – by the rector, without dying.

So, Jesus said, "While Peter was still speaking about these tabernacles, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, said a voice out of heaven: 'This is My Beloved Son." So, so much for the wisdom of Islam, because it is a perversion of the truth, done by Satan. That's why it's also such a bloody religion.

So, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Truth because He is the very Son of God, a member of the Trinity. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth," Jesus says, "shall passed away. But By words will not pass away." If you need any more influence or encouragement, don't ever miss a church service in an expository setting like this. That's very wealth. These are investments that you will never lose.

John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words," Jesus said, "that I've spoken to you are spirit and life." That's where your life is. It is knowing Bible doctrine.

In John 12:48-49. Jesus says, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My saints has One who judges him. The Word I spoke is what will judge Him at the last day. For I did not speak on My Own initiative. The Father Himself Who sent Me has given me commandment what to say and what to speak." The Lord Jesus Christ spoke for the Trinity. He spoke for the Father.

So, when you know what Christ thinks; what He has said; and, what was recorded in New Testament doctrine, you have the mind of God. If you have the mind of God, you are nobody's religious fool. And you know how to walk through this world, and store your treasures in heaven.

In John 17:8, Jesus said to His Father, in His High priestly prayer here, the night He was taken captive for the crucifixion the next day: "For the words which You gave Me, I've given to them. And they receive them, and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believe that You did send Me." Having the words of God, Jesus could say to the Father, "I'm ready to finish my mission on the cross now. And I have performed My job. I have given Your people Your thinking.

Hebrews 2:1-4: "For this reason, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For the words spoken through angels proved unalterable in every transgression, and disobedience received a just recompense. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard. God also bearing witness with them, both by signs, and wonders, and by various miracles, and by gifts to the Holy Spirit according to His own will."

If you ignore the only way of salvation, which is a gift from God, the question is: where are you going to go? What other hope do you have? Human works will take you into hell? This is a wonderful experience. The moment you accept Jesus Christ the Savior, you're baptized by the Holy Spirit. You're placed into Christ. And because it's a birth, it cannot be reversed. Now you are spiritually alive, and have all the capacities to live a Christ-like life. And that's what we've been talking about, ultimately.

We have one more, in Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge of thoughts and intentions of the heart." Jesus Christ is the only person that ever lived to Whose statements could always be added the word "Amen" – it is true. Or, in modern colloquial terminology, "Amen" means "You better believe it."

Matthew 7:24-29: "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine," Jesus says, "and acts upon them, may be compared to the wise man who built his house upon the rock rain. Rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against the house, and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock." What rock? The rock of doctrine: truth – the "Amen" of Jesus Christ: "And everyone who hears these Words of Mine." Aha! There is the key. How many Christians this morning do you think have gone to church, and they have heard the words of God, rather than the words of religion and of man? "And everyone who hears these Words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man who has built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew and burst against that house, and it fell, and great was its fall."

So, the Lord Jesus Christ is, first of all, in Revelation 2:14, presented as the "Amen."

**The Faithful Witness**

Then He has another title. Let's get it started this morning. He says, that He is the "Amen." And then He is the faithful witness. He's the witness. The witness looks like this. The Greek word is "martus" (the witness).

**The Martyr**

Do you see the word "martyr" in there? That's where we get the English word "martyr." What is a martyr? That's a person who dies as a witness for what he believes to be the truth. This is a legal word for a "bonafide witness in a court of law, that was required under Roman law.” The Lord Jesus Christ is the witness for the Godhead to mankind of what He has seen and heard. It is through Christ that we receive the truth. We do not receive the truth of God through Joseph Smith of Mormonism. We do not receive it through Muhammad of Islam. We do not receive it through the writings of the East of Confucianism. We do not receive the Word of Truth through Mary Baker Glover Eddy of Christian Science. We do not receive the Word of God through any human agency – only through the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is recorded in Scripture. Anytime a false group wants to come along, and Satan wants to give them some basis of authority, they invent another extra New Testament. He is the witness of that which is true. And He has fulfilled this role on the earth. That is what He came to do, and that what he did do.

Notice please John 7:7. "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me, because I testify that its works are evil." If you're not received in certain circles in our humanity today, as Christians aren't, especially Christian students in state universities, it is because you testify to what is true, and you stand against evil. And the result is that you are being attacked when you say, "I don't want to do that." And they make fun of you because you don't want to live their unChristlike lifestyle. Well, they're going to be sorry for it, and you'll be glad that you didn't.

John 18:37: "Pilate therefore said to Him, 'So, you are a king.' Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am a king. For this I've been born. And for this I came into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth will hear My Voice.'" Who is of the truth? Those of you who are in temporal fellowship. Those of you who have your spiritual receiving instrument operating. You are the ones who will hear the truth of the voice of God. Other people will sit. They will hear the truth, and it will roll right off of them. The Lord Jesus Christ is a witness for the Godhead to the truth of spiritual reality. If you want the way things are spiritually, you have to go to what is recorded in the New Testament, because Christ wrote it all.

1 Timothy 6:13 says, "I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate." Paul says to Timothy, "Tell the truth. Teach people the way of God. Teach them how to live in the church-age." We're not part of Mosaic Law. We're not part of Judaism. We're part of a much more powerful system.

Let's look at one more in another great passage of Deuteronomy 18:15-22: "The Lord Your God." Deuteronomy is the last book of the Mosaic Law. And Moses is writing this, and God is giving a final message to Israel: "The Lord your God will raise up to a prophet like me, from among you, from your countrymen, and you shall listen to Him." Moses is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is to come: "This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God, in Horeb, on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not here again the voice of the Lord my God. Let me not see this great fire anymore, lest I die." In that experience that they had at Mount Horeb, they saw the glory of God, and it scared them stiff. They realized absolutely holy and perfect God is.

There is so much fakery on what is holiness, and so much put on which is nothing more than human dramatics. But genuine holiness – that is Christlike. That comes from Christ living in us. That comes from living according to the principles of this word, revealing what Jesus had said.

Verse 17: "And the Lord said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen, like you. I'll put my words in His Mouth. He shall speak to them all that I commanded."

Now, the sad part of this story is that when that prophet came, what did they do? They put Him on a cross, and they murdered Him. They didn't like what He was saying, though He was speaking to them and fulfilling this Scripture. The Lord Jesus Christ spoke exactly the truth of God.

Verse 19: "And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My Words, which He shall speak in My Name, I Myself will require of him." OK, you can blow off the Word of God. You can blow off what you've heard this morning. You can blow off what the Scriptures tell us. But you will account for it. You can blow out the moral code of the New Testament. And you could go ahead and break the moral laws. I guarantee you that you'll account for it. There is no question about it. Do you want to play those games? God says, "I myself will require it of him.

Deuteronomy 18:20: "But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My Name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet will die? The false teachers in the religious world will pay the price for misleading the people of God: "And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken? When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously, and you shall not be afraid of him.

The final evidence that this is a witness who is true is that the people who wrote the New Testament have never been proven false. They are true prophets of God. Therefore, you can trust them. You can listen to them. Joseph Smith made a prediction one time in Mormonism, and he declared that by a certain time, a thing would happen. Since he was the prophet of the Mormon Church who was believed, everybody was rejoicing. The time came and went, and nothing happened. Later, when his band of apostles said, "You said this was going to happen as a prophet of God, but it did not." And Joseph Smith said, "Well, I was wrong. Now, if they really knew Scriptures, they would have said, "Wait a minute. You're a prophet of God, and you have made a declaration, speaking for God, and it did not happen. You're not a prophet of God." And that's what they should have packed their gear, and gotten back on track, so that instead of being in the lake of fire, they could have been in heaven. How will it be with you? To whom are you listening? The "Amen: the true witness of God – the Lord Jesus Christ? Or to religion: prominent personalities; or, your sin nature? Make your choice.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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