Mystery of Lawlessness II How Iniquity Can Affect the Church of God #1

Fred R. Coulter

The mystery of lawlessness is also called *the mystery of iniquity* (2-Thess. 2). The mystery of lawlessness started in the Garden of Eden. I want to focus in on how it has affected the Church. Then we will see how all of these churches that have professed Christianity are really lawless. They don't think they are and they don't look like they are because they do profess some law-keeping.

For example: If you'd go up to a Sundaykeeper and you would say, 'What church do you belong to?' 'I'm a fundamentalist. I go to church every Sunday and every Wednesday Bible study.' If you would say to that person, 'Don't you know that you're really not an fundamentalist if you don't keep the seventh-day Sabbath?' *Aw*, *no*, *no*, *no*. *That's not so*, *because God wouldn't hold me to that*. 'God says we are to keep the seventh-day Sabbath, and what about your Christmas, Easter and New Years, those are all pagan, you know.' They'd get down right mad. If it was a clerk behind the counter, they might assume you were ready to rob them or something, and try and get rid of you.

You might tell them, 'Yes, God is going to hold you as accountable for Sabbath-breaking and Sunday-keeping as He is for murder, adultery and everything like that. Of course, I don't recommend that you do that, but if you did that I would really be surprised if you had someone say, 'Wow! Boy! Tell me about the Sabbath. I've really wanted to know about that.' They think that they are sincere, good, upstanding, law-abiding citizens and Christians.

I want you to hearken back a few years ago during the 'stinking thinking.' What they want to do is to get everyone in on 'group think.' All your news programs are all panels. No one is there to bring out the truth; everyone has an opinion on everything.

It's the same way with what is called religion. Everyone has an opinion on religion. 'Religion' is no longer the Word of God; 'religion' never was, but for those people who thought that religion based on the Bible and was the Word of God, most of them no longer believe it.

On the Larry King show they were talking about, 'What do you think about this Orthodox Jew being nominated for the vice presidency with Al Gore?' One of the commentators said, 'Most of the people in America believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior.' Then he was talking to Imus, a radio commentator, and he said, 'I believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior, but all these other religions, they have a way to God, too. We cannot put them down and we cannot exclude them. We have to be all-inclusive on this.'

That's precisely what they want in destroying Christianity whenever it is that you come to that point. That is the ultimate goal of the *mystery of lawlessness*, to get you to reject God. They don't tell you that, but that's the ultimate goal. That's why in the many things that we have covered, remember the principle: *a little leaven leavens the whole lump.* I've seen this happen over and *over* again. You start out with a little leaven, a little sin, your own doctrine which is not conforming to the Bible and guess what, two or three years down the road, you can have:

- any kind of heresy
- any kind of belief
- any kind of non-belief

We've seen it over and over again. I want you to understand how precious it is that you have been called and how precious the Word of God is and why we need to really be about doing God's business and doing the things that we need to do in a very zealous and a profound way. When you look upon the earth, there're just not that many.

Most of the things that we will cover will be basic and fundamental. I have right here in my 'hot little hand' five books of which I'm going to read parts of; all *mysteries of iniquity*. *It's amazing!*

I was on the plane when I went to Seattle and I was reading the book by Alan Knight, *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*. An excellent book!

A woman came in and there was the middle seat and she had the ticket for the middle seat. She sat down and she was reading a book: *How To Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries* by Deepak Chopra. I thought, 'My, that's a good title.' I said, 'How do you like the book?' She said, 'I just started reading it.' I said, 'He's a Hindu. You'll never really know about God from him.' It's true! Sometimes you need to shock people a little bit; it didn't hurt. She didn't know me, didn't sue me, beat me up, pull a gun on me or call for the stewardess to have me arrested or anything like that.

When I got home, I wanted to find out where I could get the book so I had Jim Hyles get on the Internet and he got me both of these books:

• How To Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries by Deepak Chopra • *Genesis of Justice* by Alan M. Dershowitz

Remember the lawyer who was on Larry King Live and really supported getting O.J. Simpson off the hook and all that sort of thing?

When I read you parts of this, you'll understand what they've written in all of these books. The other books are:

- The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus by the Dalai Lama
- *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* by Pope John Paul II

We're going to read some excerpts from all of these and you'll understand *the mystery of iniquity* as you have never understood before. *This is something!*

This book, *How to Know God* by Deepak Chopra, is a best seller and has sold over 3-million copies. *Think of it!* You compare the Truth of the Passover and we've sent out a few thousand copies. How many people want the Truth? *None of them!*

Matt. 7 lays the foundation and the framework for all of this. This sets the tone and gives the definitions on how you know what is right and how you know what is wrong. When the apostles had all of the interferences—we will see coming down from the New Testament where it came from and what it was doing—they could go right back to the book of Matthew and know.

Matthew 7:13: "Enter in through the narrow gate..." That means difficult, and *it is difficult*. That's why professing Christianity today:

- is smooth
- it's easy
- it's broad
- how to be successful
- love your neighbor

All this sort of good stuff!

"...for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction..." (v 13). The thing that is important to understand is that *destruction doesn't* happen immediately.

- 1. because God is merciful, kind and longsuffering, hoping that they will repent
- 2. because there is success in sin for a season and people will think that they're doing right

Whatever other reasons you can add on to those. Judgment does not come instantly, and judgment does not come in a way that people think.

I call your attention to the book of Esther. Remember Mordecai sitting at the gate and Haman the Agagite, the equivalent of the pope in Persia? *He* set out to kill Mordecai and all the Jews! What happened? Right at the end, it turned out that Haman_[transcriber's correction] was hung on the gallows! It took a while. It took some suffering and it took some belief in God, because Mordecai was sitting there and everybody despised him, **but God worked it out**.

"...and many are those who enter through it" (v 13). If you go with the majority of people, that's where you're headed. It's that simple.

Verse 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and <u>few</u> are those who find it." I think we're beginning to find out how few *the few* really are. *It's just a few*!

Verse 15: "But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves."

Deepak Chopra doesn't believe that he's a 'ravening wolf.' Wait until I tell you who God is in his book. Chopra is a Hindu and he believes in reincarnation; he believes in these things. He even quotes from the Old Testament and the New Testament, and even quotes Jesus. I tell you, these things are slick as can be.

Verse 16: "You shall know them by their fruits...." Unless you know how to tell the fruits, you cannot tell, because:

- they appear righteous
- they appear good
- they appear sincere

If you've ever seen Deepak Chopra, and know this for sure that anybody who is on Larry King Live is not really going to give you the truth, they're going to give you *a position*. If you see him on Larry King Live, or if you see him on some of his own television shows, he looks honest, sincere, dedicated and mentally he's quite a man, but you have to know the fruits.

"...They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit" (vs 16-18). Satan's job is to come along and try and transplant or graft in evil branches. That's his job.

Verse 19: "Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire.... [the lake of fire, eventually] ...Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits" (vs 19-20). Then He continues and He says this, which is the key to whole understanding of all of these things:

Verse 21: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven." That means *practicing the will of the Father* in heaven.

We will see exactly, the basis of how a lot of these people use the Word of God, misapply it and do not do the will of the Father in heaven. They can use the name of Jesus and they can call themselves Christian, but you can't look at what they say, you have to look at the results of it.

Verse 22: "<u>Many</u> will say to Me in that day... [the day of judgment] ... 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name?....'" Preached in Your name? Prophesied in Your name? I could show you Catholic prophesies where they have their prophets, especially Nostradamus, and all this is supposed to be done in the name of God. Ellen G. White is supposed to be done in the name of God. Whoever else you want there, just plug in the name.

"...And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name?...." (v 22). We've seen all of these, too: Oral Roberts, Benny Hinn. I think of 'The sky is falling, the sky is falling' Then this Ishie, whatever his name is, he also said that as long as you believe in something, that's fine. *It's amazing!* That way you could say, 'I fervently believe in Satan.' How's that? Well, he's the 'god of this world'—isn't he? Do you believe in God? *Yes!* See?

We're in living the day when all of this stuff is totally upside down. Are you doing the 'will of your Father Who is in heaven? Some people will say, 'Do you really need the Word of God to know it, to know God.' The answer is, *yes!* 'And he who says, 'I know Him,' and keeps not His commandments, is a liar'; all false prophets are.

Let me read you something here from a recent meeting that Billy Graham was supposed to have gone to. Many people have not believed it, but he has been an ecumenist from day one. Whenever any minister, Protestant preaching in the name of Christ, comes along and says that all you have to do is believe and 'open your heart, Christ comes in and you are saved,' that is totally contrary to the Bible! You first must *repent*, and after that:

- be baptized
- have hands laid on you for the receiving the Holy Spirit
- keep the commandments of God

Now notice what Billy Graham says:

"I used to think that pagans in far-off countries were lost and were going to hell if they did not have the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached to them. I no longer believe that. I believe there are other ways of recognizing the existence of God..."

(McCall's Magazine, January 1978)

It's not just a matter of believing that God exists. That's not the question, and this is a very clever way of answering the question because *it sounds so good* that there are *ways* of knowing God's existence.

James 2:19: "Do you believe that God is one? You do well to believe this. Even the demons believe and tremble in fear." Does the knowledge of God bring any salvation to the demons? Of course not! Knowledge of God should be basic to everyone in the world, whether they are called or not, by the very creation of God, we'll see that in a little bit.

Verse 20: "But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" That's the whole basis of lawlessness. You have faith, your heart is good, and what's in the heart counts.

Like that tile man who was putting up the tile over where I take my water therapy. Everyone was talking about God and Sunday-keeping. I said, 'Really, the seventh-day is the Sabbath.' He says, 'God knows my heart. I know the seventh day is the Sabbath, but I go to church on Sunday and God knows my heart.' I said to myself: He sure does. He knows your heart. So, there are no works.

Verse 21: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar?" We'll talk about that a little later and what Alan Dershowitz thinks of that.

Verse 22: "Do you not see that faith was working together with his works, and by works *his* faith was perfected? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Now, Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness'; and he was called a friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (vs 22-24).

Verse 18: "But someone is going to say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works." *If you believe, you will automatically have works that follow!* Those works are the works of obedience.

Here we have Billy Graham's new doctrine: 'You are saved *in* your sins not *from* your sins.' That's all part of the 'mystery of iniquity.'

From: *The Legacy of Billy Graham* by Michael G. Long:

"...I believe there are other ways of recognizing the existence of God--through nature for instance—and plenty of other opportunities, therefore, of saying, yes to God."

Billy Graham has previously announced that he also believes that men can be saved apart from the name of Christ. All you good Baptists out there in Bible Beltland, what do you think about Billy Graham now? That the wolf's clothing is showing under the sheep's cover. This is Scripture inspired of God.

One of the forms of lawlessness was Judaism. There were all kinds of Judaism, from Orthodox Judaism to 'orthodox paganism' called Judaism, where they still required circumcision. This whole thing that people have been led to believe that the Jews all believe alike is like saying:

- all the Lutherans believe alike
- all the Catholics believe alike
- all the Baptists believe alike

Nonsense, they don't! They don't believe the Bible.

Acts 4:5: "Now, it came to pass in the morning... [after they were arrested for healing this man] ...*that* their rulers and elders and scribes were assembled together in Jerusalem, and Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander..." (vs 5-6).

Remember, all of those were the ones who condemned Jesus. All of them were there when Jesus was hauled before them and committed to be crucified.

"...and as many as were of *the* high priest's lineage. And after placing them in the midst, they inquired, 'By what power or in what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit... [from God Himself] ...said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we are examined this day as to a good work *done to the* infirm man, by what *power* he has been cured, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, Whom you crucified, but Whom God has raised from the dead, by Him this man stands before you whole. This is the Stone that was set at naught by you, the builders, which has become the Head of the corner. And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven, which has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (vs 6-12).

The word *must* in the Greek, comes from the Greek word 'dei,' *it's obligatory*. No other name, can't be any other name. *This is something!*

God is going to have an opportunity to say this to Billy Graham. He's the most widely known so-called Christian evangelist in this century. He followed Billy Sunday, who was before him.

Matthew 7:22: "...'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?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you....'" (vs 22-23).

What does it mean to know God? (1-John 2). This becomes very important, because we are going to be fighting this kind of 'mush-mush/fuzz-fuzz' religion and people's belief in God the rest of this age. It's all going into the one-world religion and that's how it's going into it. There is no one that's going to stand for the Truth. If you go into the one-world religion:

- you cannot believe in the Truth
- you cannot believe in God
- you cannot stand for anything

I've been preaching this for a long time and it seems as though that it even affects the Church of God. A lot of times the people in the Church of God, when they find out that many of the ministers were not faithful, they turn around and show their unfaithfulness by having all kinds of silly and just unreal doctrines. Just getting carried away with all kinds of stupidity.

- Who really believes God?
- Who really loves God?
- Who really knows God?

You look at the example of Gideon: God said, 'Get an army.' Gideon said okay and he got 30,000. God said, 'No, I don't want 30,000, only those who lap water like a dog.' That's the silliest requirement you ever heard of for selecting an army. How many did he end up with? *Three hundred!* He ended up with 300, which is 1% of 30,000. That isn't any comparison. There's not even 1% in the world. Of course, there a lot of people out there that we don't know of.

I'm sure that the age that we are living in that one of the things that is going to help a lot of people is what we're doing on our website. I know some people right now, who every Sabbath get on the website and listen to a sermon. How many people there will be doing that wherever...? Then when the one-world government comes down to enforce *the mark of the beast*, there are going to be millions that are going to be resisting. Lo and behold, you're going to find out that a lot of them were keeping the Sabbath at home.

God is doing a lot more than we know. We should not ever get presumptuous to say, 'Well it's just us.' Like one man said one time, 'I thought it would just be me and the ministers to go to a place of safety. Now, I don't even know about them.' We just came to the conclusion that if only 1% of the world's population of 5.5-billion, there would be 55million believers. We know that it's not going to be that. Who knows? Back to the topic at hand. Never forget these verses. These are profound!

1-John 2:3: "And by this *standard*... [by this means] ...we know that we know Him..."

- it's not enough to say I know Him
- it's not enough to have an acquaintance with Him
- it's not enough to say His name

You have to *know* that you know Him and here is the standard:

"...<u>if</u> we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments... [present tense participle] ...is a liar, and the Truth is not in him" (vs 3-4). The day can come that we can say to Sunday-keepers, 'You're a liar and you don't have the Truth.' That's just the way it is.

Verse 5: "On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked" (vs 5-6). We'll see that this a qualifying statement because they were bothered by many antichrists.

Where Christ says, 'I never knew you' that tells you:

- 1. they didn't have the Spirit of God, because God knows everyone who has the Spirit of God
- 2. they didn't keep His commandments
- 3. they never had a relationship with Him

This stuff really gets to be something.

Matthew 7:23: "...'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness." Iniquity (KJV) is lawlessness. That's what the Greek word means. The Greek word is 'anomia,' which means *against law or lawlessness*, but why is it a mystery?

One of the ways they have skillfully done this is say, 'All you need to do is love God.' They say, 'Okay, I love God.' **You don't love Him if you don't keep His commandments,** it's that simple. It's like saying in marriage, 'I will be faithful and obey and I will not be sleeping around with every other partner.' Then all you do the day after you're married is go around and sleep with other men, other women and all this sort of thing. You come back and say, 'I've been faithful.' *Nonsense!* It is absolutely amazing! This stuff is amazing what has happened:

- what is happening in *the Church*
- what is happening in *the world*

John wrote, and here's how you know, 'They are of the world, therefore, they speak of the world.' In this thing Billy Graham is speaking of the world.

1-John 2:15: "Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world…. [Who is the god of this world? *Satan, the devil!*] ...And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever" (vs 15-17). God gave His commandments as the expression of His will.

Verse 18: "Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now **many** antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time." If there were many then, think of what we have now.

Remember how it started out. You go back and go through the book of Acts. The first encounter with a false religionist was Simon Magus. The next encounter was Eliamus the sorcerer. The next encounters after that with the Apostle Paul were all kinds of false ministers:

- claiming that they were Jews
- claiming that they were Israelites
- claiming that they were sent from God

They weren't! All the way through $1^{st} \& 2^{nd}$. Corinthians, he shows that they're false apostles and that 'Satan appears as an angel of light and his ministers appear as ministers of righteousness.' It comes down to *many*!

Verse 19: "They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us."

1-John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit..." Let me just put here, every idea that comes along. Spirits like to give ideas, to come along and put it in the mind.

- Did Satan put it in the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus? *Yes!*
- Does Satan have fiery darts of missiles of ideas? *Yes!*
- Is he 'prince of the power of the air?' Yes!

"...but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (v 1). This tells us who's behind the false prophets: false spirits, demons.

Verse 2: "By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God." I call your attention to chapter 26 in the book, *The Christian Passover*. Christ came in the same exact flesh that we have. How many really truly, truly believe that? *Very few!*

{Note book & sermon series: *The Seven General Epistles*. That's James, 1^{st} & 2^{nd} -Peter, 1^{st} , 2^{nd} & 3^{rd} -John, and Jude which goes through each one of these verse-by-verse} God is serious in what He's doing. We're not to play church, we're not to be 'churchanity.' We're not to hold up fellowshipping as a social idol that we come together just to socialize. We come together on the Sabbath so that we can:

- learn of God
- know of God
- study His Word
- learn how to live
- be exhorted in the way that God wants us to live

That's why we have Sabbath services. That's why we have fellowship groups.

Verse 3: "And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist..." How many say that?

- the Muslims do
- the Hindus do
- many so-called Christians today do

They say, 'Jesus was a good man like Buddha, Mohammed and other prophets.' *They are antichrist!*

"...which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world. You are of God..." (vs 3-4). That's quite a statement. You have to know:

- Are you really of God?
- Do you know that you are of God?
- Do you understand that you are of God?
- Do you know:
 - \checkmark that you have been called?
 - \checkmark that you have been chosen?
 - ✓ that you have been selected for the greatest thing that is ever going to happen to this world?
 - ✓ that you have been chosen to rule when Christ returns?
 - ✓ that you have been chosen to take it away from the synagogue of Satan, the devil and the people of this world?

That's why He's going to make them come and worship before our feet. I tell you, God has called us. It's something!

"...little children, and have overcome them... [stay overcoming them, don't let them overcome you] ...because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world" (v 4).

Here's the one that I referred to before, v 5: "They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them." What do they use? The name of Christ with their 'mystery of lawlessness!'

Verse 6: "We are of God..."

Verse 4: "You are of God..." referring to the brethren.

Verse 6: "We are of God,' referring to the apostles and whatever ministers were there with John.

"...the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us...." (v 6). You can try that at any time with any Sundaykeeper, you'll find out.

"...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception" (v 6). Who is behind that? Satan is 'deceiving the whole world' (Rev. 12:9). He's got the whole synagogue of Satan, which Dr. John Coleman calls in *The Conspirators'* Hierarchy: The Committee of 300, I call it the synagogue of Satan, you need to get the book.

Let me tell you something, we cannot sit back and sit idle and just not know what's going on and not study the things that are happening today. *You cannot! You've got to know! You've got to understand!* If not for yourself, one day you're going to have to tell somebody else.

I talked to a man up in Anchorage, Alaska. I baptized him five years ago. He's been attending one of the other Churches of God up there just for fellowship. He says that they don't know anything. In five years he knows more than some who have been in the Church thirty years. That's why I do what I do, read what I read and preach what I preach. It's not for me. It's for the brethren. It's not to make me look good. If I look good, so what? What does that prove? *It proves nothing, nothing but vanity!* Here's the whole thing:

"...By this *means* we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception" (v 6). We are to *know* the spirit of error/deception.

Remember the movie *Patton*? Remember his first encounter with Rommel? He's out there, he had his helmet on, his binoculars out there and he was watching Rommel's tank column come up. He said, 'You S.O.B. I read your book!' Then he fired the guns on Rommel.

We're going to have to do the same thing. We're going to have to *know*. We're going to have to read their books. We're going to have to understand where they come from, where they're going and what they're saying. You can't go just on what Protestantism was 10, 15, or 30 years ago, but you can rely on the Word of God because it's eternal! Jesus said, 'These Words are spirit and these Words are life' and 'There's no other name under heaven by which you can be saved.'

I tell you, that really got me 'hot under the collar,' that thing with Billy Graham. Imagine the millions that he's going to deceive with that: millions and *millions* and *millions*! *Ghastly*!

I'll read out of some of these books that I have here, and I think you are going to be amazed. I've already covered concerning the 'man of sin, the son of perdition, so we won't go through that.

2-Thessolians 2:7: "For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the* midst."

Right now at this present time, I believe that the restraint has been lifted. It means not be taken away *until he comes out of the midst of the system*; That what it means. It think the restraint has been taken away. That's why all of this is going on.

Verse 8: "And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)."

Showing that this 'mystery of iniquity' or lawlessness—'anomia'—*the mystery of lawlessness*. If he's going to be destroyed when Christ returns, it shows that this is going to last clear on down to the time of Christ. As a matter of fact, grow right alongside. What did it say in the parable of the tares? *Let them grow to the end of the age!* They grow right alongside.

Verse 9: "*Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved" (vs 9-10).

To answer that question you must know the Word of God, because the Word of God is Truth and that's what will save you through Christ. Any other way will not do—*period*—regardless of what a person thinks.

I'll tell you one thing, part of the 'mystery of lawlessness' is that people give their opinion on what God ought to do and they end up telling God what to do and then reach back and gather some of His commandments so that it looks good. That's really the whole heart and core of it.

Verse 11: "And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie, so that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness" (vs 11-12). Unrighteousness is *sin*!

(go to the next track)

I'm going to read certain sections from the book *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*.

From: *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* by Alan Knight

Keep in mind that there is no such thing as pure antinomianism....

Which is *lawlessness*, because that word is hard to pronounce. It's a transliteration of the Greek word 'anomia.'

...Nearly all forms of the mystery of lawlessness...

Which there is the Christian form, Protestant form, Catholic form, and Orthodox form, *all other religions are a form of lawlessness!*

...teach morality of one kind or another...

which they call ethic or conduct, and so forth

...which they substitute for Biblical law.

One of the keys to understanding... [lawlessness] ...is the word itself. 'Antinomian' means 'against law.' The New Testament is not clear on all points of Biblical law and lawful Christians can disagree on many things and make mistakes about what is proper and what is not. The point at which one crosses over from lawful to lawless Christianity, therefore, is the point at which lawless (Nicolaitan) doctrines are introduced.

Here are some of the things that are signs of a lawless Christianity or any lawless religion:

1. Profession of belief is all that is required....

Like I mentioned before, 'God knows my heart and what is in my heart. I'm a good person.' You're selfrighteous, and you're going on your selfrighteousness.

...Disobedience is wrong, but has no effect on salvation.

So, you can sin and it doesn't have any effect on it. Like one woman was talking to another woman who was a Baptist. She said, 'Once saved, always saved.' The woman who was in the Church said, 'That means even if you sin?' *Well, but of course*. 'What if you're right in the middle of the act of committing adultery, will you still be raptured?' She said, 'Yes!'

2. Eternal security. Salvation cannot be reversed even by intentional sin.

Therefore, there's no Lake of Fire. Therefore, there's no weeping and gnashing of teeth. See how much of the Bible you have to take out or don't read.

3. Progressive revelation has outdated many aspects of New Testament Scripture....

We have a greater revelation: 'Christ appeared to me.' That's what the Gnostics back in the early Church did, they said, 'Christ appeared and after His resurrection gave us new teachings.

> ...Pick and choose what you believe is Christ's true will from current teachers and personal inspiration.

Then you have to be careful which Bible you have, too. Most modern Bibles are already picked and chosen for you. If you get one of those, you don't have to pick and choose, it's already done. Also, the advocates of the *NIV* are advocating against the *King James* as much as I'm advocating against the *NIV*. I'm one voice but they are thousands of them out there.

4. There is no written law under the New Testament. Only the Holy Spirit speaking to us through our soul or a church leader can tell us what to do and not do.

That's part of lawlessness.

5. The literal application of the law ended with the Old Testament. Only the 'magnification' survives. Just apply the 'principle' of goodness found in the law and be a 'good' person by common sensible standards of contemporary society, and you will be saved.

Did I not read almost those identical words from Billy Graham earlier? Yes!

It is the question of the *principle* of obedience, of obedience to Biblical law....

that's what it is

...Those who believe in the principle of obedience to God and Biblical law are lawful, even though undoubtedly they will make mistakes in judging the application of Biblical law. On the other hand, those who include antinomian doctrine...

believe in the lawless doctrines

...about rejection of law in their belief system are lawless.

The issue becomes even more confused because those who teach against the principle of obedience to law under the New Testament at the same time teaching obedience to many substitute rules....

That is the key. They reject the Sabbath but keep Sunday. They reject the Holy Days but keep the holidays.

...This includes many rules from Biblical law they selectively adopt while exercising their antinomian right to reject or modify those they dislike....

So, if you don't like the Law, reject it. That's lawlessness! Then he has some others in there. That's just part of it. I recommend you get this book and read the whole thing.

Let's start out with Jewish lawlessness. Here's a book by Alan M. Dershowitz, *The Genesis* of Justice, which is part of the course that he teaches at Harvard for his law school. Many of you know Alan Dershowitz if you watched the O.J. Simpson trial. He was on Larry King Live many times and he's been on there many times since. He is a 'dyed-in-the-wool' Jew.

Let's understand something concerning Jews: They do not all believe alike. The thing that we were told concerning Jews is that 'they're just like us but all we need is Christ' is about as silly as saying, 'Keep warm by entering into this freezer.' It's a contradiction in fact. There are many Jews who are as pagan and more pagan than pagans. As I read from the *Code of Jewish Law* Gansfried & Goldin, in *Refuting Sunday-Keeping #5*, their lawlessness is doing exactly what Alan Knight wrote about here. That is, they surround it with their own laws and claim that they're based on the Bible.

Here is his interpretation of Genesis 3:1-24. This is talking about Adam and Eve and their sin of eating of the tree.

from: *Genesis of Justice* by Alan M. Dershowitz:

Although Adam and Eve's eventual punishment was considerably more lenient than instant death God had threatened, it was also imposed upon their descendents.... Let me just also mention here, that part of the philosophy of the operation of rabbis and Jews, is that *they* have the right to improve on God. Their words and their writings are more meaningful than the Scriptures. *That is lawlessness in the form of law-keeping!*

... Hence the Christian concept of "original sin," which brought death into the world, increased "man's inclination to evil" and required the eventual redemption of a Savior. The nature of God's punishments raised profound questions-for Christians, Jews and Muslims alike-about His concept of justice. He punishes Eve by inflicting pain of childbirth on all women and making *all* women submissive to men. He punishes Adam by requiring all men to toil for their bread. Finally, God also banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden in order to assure that His wayward creations do not also eat of the Tree of Life and "live forever." All for disobeying His command to refrain from eating the forbidden fruit of a tempting tree!

If we evaluate God by human standards, His first action as Lawgiver seems unfair. The essence of fairness is any system of threats and promises as adequate warning. Punishment should be threatened in unambiguous terms, so that people to whom the threat is directed will understand, a punishment once threatened should be imposed, unless there are mitigating circumstances; and no additional punishments, not specifically threatened, should be tacked on. Moreover, the punishment should be limited to the specific person or persons who violated the law, not to innocent descendants. Jewish law, as it eventually developed recognize that "to punish one person for the transgression of another" is "inconsistent with the vary idea of law." Finally, punishment should be proportional to the harm caused.

God, of course, constantly violates these rules throughout the Bible – ...

A key thing to understand about lawlessness is that they accuse God of wrong; they accuse God of sin. When they do it's perfectly all right for them to do whatever they want to do, even if it violates any commandments, because God is wrong. That's what they do with Sunday-keeping. They say, 'God gave the Sabbath to punish the Jews. Therefore, I'm all right in keeping Sunday.' -He kills without warning, punishes innocent children for the sins of their parents, and imposes disproportionate punishments—so, we should not be surprised that He begins His career as a Lawgiver in a capricious manner....

That's something! Here's his own interpretation:

My own favorite interpretation of God's failure to carry out His first threat is that God Himself was still learning about justice and injustice. The text of Genesis supports the view of an imperfect, learning God. When He creates, He stands back in wonderment and, like a human artist looking at an canvas, observes that His creations are "good," thus implying it might have turned out otherwise. An omniscient and omnipotent God would have no need to look back at what He knows will always be perfect. Later He repents of the creation of man, in effect conceding that this particular creation was not so good. As we will see in subsequent narratives, this is a God capable of not only "repenting," but also of being persuaded by human beings and learning from His own Divine mistakes. Perhaps He realized that He was wrong to threaten immediate death as a consequence for the desire to obtain knowledge. God should have realized that His test of Adam and Eve was really a "catch 22." Had the humans remained obedient, they would have been barely distinguishable from the beasts-hardly a fitting status for those created in God's image....

This is almost like reading the words of the devil isn't it? Who does Jesus say the god of the Jews is? (John 8).

> By disobeying God's unfair prohibition, however, they became the original sinners whose punishment would transmitted from generation to generation. God's first command is an example of a law without reason—*chok*. God never sought to explain to Adam why he had to refrain from eating of the fruit of knowledge....

Notice how he changes it here:

On the contrary, His command defies reason, since it is entirely natural for humans to seek knowledge, especially when it is so pleasant to taste and easy to secure. It is not surprising, therefore, that God's first command is disobeyed. Perhaps God learns an important lesson from His initial failure as Lawgiver: Humans are more likely to obey reasoned rules consist with their nature than arbitrary dictates that fly in the face of everything human beings are about....

Not so!

Perhaps God's initial command necessarily had to be a *chok*, since human beings lacked the knowledge presumed by reasoned orders.

No! He gave them a language created already in their minds and they could choose, and so forth. If I make comments on all of this, I'll never get through it.

Once Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of knowledge...

It's the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

...they became subject to rule by human reason. Similarly, when young children who lack reason, a parent's earliest commands must necessarily be *chukim*...

the plural of 'chok'

...which gradually evolve into *mishpatim*...

which is teaching

...as children develop their ability to understand rather than simply obey. Parents are sometime slow to recognize that reasoned orders, when age appropriate, tend to be more effective than authoritarian commands. Instead, some become too comfortable with the power to issue unreasonable dictates....

If God, Himself, realized He was wrong to threaten the harsh punishment in immediate death, then perhaps He became more understanding of the sin of Adam and Eve. I offer a contemporary midrash on this issue. A friend of mine who was a federal judge, had sentenced a woman to prison on a Monday. He was bound by the sentencing guidelines that mandated imprisonment, despite the fact that she was a first time offender whose boyfriend had enticed her to transport his drugs. On Sunday the judge was home caring for his toddler. The judge inadvertently forgot to lock his front door and the child wandered out into the street, where a truck barely missed running him over. The judge realized he had made a terrible mistake and that he had been given a second chance. The next day he refused to sentence the woman to prison, saying that she too had made a mistake and was

entitled to a second chance. Perhaps I ought not to analogize a federal judge to God, although lawyers have long joked that when God has delusions of grandeur, He sometimes acts as if He were a federal judge.

It shows you the attitude that they have.

God, like parents and judges, find it less difficult to threaten than to carry out His threats, especially one that would destroy what He had created. Moreover, in the case of Adam and Eve, there was a mitigating circumstance. The serpent did, after all, beguile Eve, who in turn enticed Adam. We see here the first excuse in the Bible. There are many more to come.

This book is filled with this.

Finally, maybe God realized that He was acting out of self-interest in denying to those He had created in His own image the most important aspect of that Divine image, namely, the continuing quest for greater knowledge. A midrash states that the serpent told Eve that God Himself "ate of this tree," and "hates to have a rival in His craft."

The God Who threatened Adam is Himself an ever-learning God, not a statically, omniscient Being Who knows everything that there is to know from the very beginning....

Finally:

The novelist Philip Roth, wrote that "without transgression there is no knowledge"—suggesting that all true knowledge requires rule breaking....

Lawlessness!

...Perhaps God was simply warning human beings of the double-edge nature of knowledge and its potential—if misused to destroy humankind. Maybe God decided to wait and see what Adam and Eve—and their descendents—*did* with that knowledge: whether they used it for good or for evil. Only then could God decide whether or not Adam and Eve did the right thing or—if they did the wrong thing how serious their crime was and whether His initial punishments were sufficient....

So too with the tower builders and their descendants: If they used their collective intelligence without foresight, wisdom and moral constraint, they may well succeed in the producing apocalypse, thus merging our earthly world with God's heavenly domain.

For whatever reason God decided not to punish Adam and Even with instant death, He had expressly threatened, He conveyed a confusing message to future sinners. One of the insights Adam and Eve gained from eating of the tree is that God does not always carry out His threats—that sin (and crime) is not always followed by the threatened punishment....

I imagine Adam and Eve talked about that year 500, 'Well, we're still living.'

...Such knowledge can be quite dangerous. The serpent told them God was bluffing, they called God's bluff, and God backed down—at least to the degree that he did not kill them immediately. No wonder God did not want them to gain this knowledge. He would henceforth have a hard time enforcing His commandments. In fact, God's mixed message about the wages of sin may well have contributed to the Bible's first murder.

So, God was to blame for what Cain did to Abel_[transcriber's correction]. Let's read this one here concerning Abraham and Isaac when he took Isaac out to offer him for the sacrifice.

No Biblical narrative is more dramatic, more poignant, more confusing than God's command to Abraham that he sacrifice his son, Isaac. What kind of God would ask such a thing of a father? What kind of father would accede to such a request even from God? Why did Abraham, the man who argued so effectively with God over the fate of strangers...

That is concerning Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah.

...suddenly become silent in the face of so great an injustice toward his own beloved son? Why did God praise Abraham for his willingness to engage in an act of ritual murder and what are we to learn from the patriarch who follows without question immoral, superior orders to murder an innocent child?

There is, of course, the possibility that Abraham went along with God's command for entirely self-serving reasons....

Here's some of the reasons:

He believed that if he disobeyed God's direct order, God would kill him as he killed Lot's wife. By killing his own son, Abraham would be saving himself. Remember, that this is the same Abraham who twice sacrificed Sarah's virtue to save his own neck.

And got a lot of money for it, too, by the way.

Remember, too, that God *invited* Abraham to argue with Him over the condemned of Sodom, but He *commanded* Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Failure to comply with a direct command from God carries a Divine punishment. To suggest a slightly less selfish motive, perhaps Abraham decided that if he refused God's command, both he and Isaac would be killed by God, but if he complied, God might spare at least one of them. We do not know, of course, what was going through Abraham's mind when he lifted the knife to slay his son, but in the light of his prior history—especially with Sarah—a selfserving motive cannot be entirely excluded....

The book of Hebrews said that Abraham counted God worthy that He would raise Isaac from the dead. *That's why!* Of course, Dershowitz doesn't read the New Testament.

There you go, Jewish lawlessness! Correct God! 'We are better than God.' All lawlessness has that attitude: '*We will do better than God.*'

Let's get the one from *How to Know God* by Deepak Chopra. Very interesting! A Hindu perspective! This book is based upon seven stages, which I will enumerate here in a minute. He details them all in his book. You're going to be surprised Who God is. He's got this in chapter two, 'Mystery of Mysteries.' What is the title of this sermon? *Mystery of Lawlessness!*

Please know this, all mystery religions and all lawless religions believe in the immortality of the soul. Boy! Do the Hindus believe in that with reincarnation and everything. I don't have time to go into it anyway.

From: *How to Know God* by Deepak Chopra:

The mystery of God wouldn't exist if the world wasn't also a mystery. Some scientists believe that we are closer than ever to a "The Theory of Everything," or TOE, as a physicists dub it. TOE will explain the beginning of the universe and the end of time, the first and last breath of cosmic existence. From quarks and quasars, all will be revealed, as the old melodramas used to promise. Is there a place for God in this "everything," or does the Creator get booted out of His own creation? His fate may be important, but when it is wrapped up with ours, it becomes all important. The Seven Stages of God, from an Anonymous Christian Heretic: Third Century. He quotes out of the New Testament.

He quotes out of the Old Testament. Here is this heretical quote:

"If you don't make yourself equal to God, you can't perceive God"—Anonymous Christian Heretic, Third Century

Notice how all of these go back to Adam and Eve. What did the serpent tell Eve? *If you eat this you will become as gods!* Meaning as he and the demons. He tells lots of nice stories in there. This is all based upon feeling, not on fact. If you want to know writing for feelings and emotions, this book does it. Very little intellect involved and hardly any Truth whosoever. The very little bit of Truth that may be in there in the way of a quote from the Bible, is only buried by what he teaches.

> ...This belief did not succeed as dogma (the heresy here is, of course, that human and Divine are not equal in Christianity), but at other levels, it is undeniable.

> The god of any religion is only a fragment of God....

Therefore, all religions, you have to have part of them.

...This has to be true, because a being who is bound who is unbounded has no image, no role to play, no location either inside or outside the cosmos, whereas religions offers many images—father, mother, lawyer, judge, ruler of the universe. There are seven versions of God, which can be associated with organized faiths. Each one is a fragment, but so complete as to create a unique world:

In other words, he's saying that God is the 'glob in the sky.' Remember when we heard of that? I did a sermon, *Is Your God a Glob*? He's everywhere; God is everywhere and in everything.

Here are the stages that you find yourself. You are God! So, the whole book is designed for you to self-examine yourself and come to the point that you literally give up yourself to where you can listen to the silence of God and you have found God and behold, it is you.

> Stage one: God the Protector Stage two: God the Almighty Stage three: God of Peace Stage four: God the Redeemer Stage five: God the Creator Stage six: God of Miracles Stage seven: God of Pure Being—"I Am"

What you end up doing is going into this meditative stage to where you can enter into what he calls the sacred place of the Holy of Holies, where there is nothing. It's quite amazing!

> To find God in an empty room is to find the ultimate God in an empty room, is the experience that miracle workers sacrifice all their powers for. In place of the highest ecstasy one get emptiness. The God of stage seven is so intangible that He can be defined by no qualities. Nothing remains to hold on to. In the ancient Indian tradition, they define this aspect of spirit only by a negation. In stage seven God is unborn, undying, unchanging, unmoving, unmanifest, immaterial, invisible, intangible, infinite.

Therefore, when you come to this point in your life, you are God. All of this Eastern meditation and things that they have is pervading our schools. They're teaching witchcraft right now in the grades. The book, *Harry Potter* is nothing but witchcraft, nothing but satanism all the way through. I've got a couple of reports on that, but I don't have time to read those. Here's from the good Dalai Lama. He's a 'doolie.' There was a comment made that Satan has many faces and many voices. I'll try and cover come of this. A lot of this Buddhist philosophy came into the Church of God. *It's amazing! Truly amazing!* They had this Ecumenical Seminar where they had the Dalai Lama.

From: *The Good Heart* by the Dalai Lama

The Dalai Lama was given in advance eight passages from the Christian Scriptures-including the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5), the parable of the mustard seed and the God (Mark 4). Kingdom of the Transfiguration (Luke 9), and the Resurrection (John 20). He was invited to comment on these texts in any way he saw fit. And he was told that his audience was Christian (Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant) ...

They are not Christian. They are Gnostic-professing Christians.

...mostly English-speaking though from all continents, and that virtually all of them practiced silent meditation daily in their own lives..

Here was their routine:

...Early each morning before breakfast, before anything else on the packed schedule of the conference, he entered the darkened hall with his monks and, with the assembled Christians, he sat perfectly still and meditated for half an hour. In the silence, broken only by a rustle or a cough, anxiety fell away and a bond of trust and openness for what was to come took its place....

Whenever you get into meditation via the Oriental Eastern religions, you empty your mind and you're opening yourself for demon possession!

Since we're right here with meditation, we are to meditate on God's Law day and night. When you meditate according to the Bible, you meditate on God:

- His creation
- His greatness
- His goodness
- His power
- His love
- His mercy
- His forgiveness

As a matter of fact, all the Psalms are proper meditations and conversations with God.

Psalm 1:1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the Law of the LORD; and in His Law does he meditate day and night" (vs 1-2).

All of these 'religions' are designed to take away your personal being by having you come to 'nothingness,' so that you won't stand for anything, because if you fall for nothing, you stand for nothing. That's what it's all about. That's how they're able to get all this ecumenical movement in the world and all the religions together. You wait and see this is going to be—I've warned for years and years—so grand and glorious you won't believe it.

Verse 3: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water... [you'll be drinking in of the Spirit of God that way] ...that brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not wither... [regardless of the heat and pressure] ...and all that he does shall prosper. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away.... [I've just read some of that to you] ...Therefore, the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish" (vs 3-6).

If you want a true, converted, attitude toward the:

law

- statutes
- judgments
- commandments
- testimonies
- precepts of God

All of Psa. 119 tells you that!

Psalm 119:1: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD." So, we are to meditate in it day and night and we are to walk in it.

Verse 2: "Blessed are they who keep His testimonies..." By the way, if people say if you keep the laws, then you have to be a Jew. *Nonsense!* The Jews don't keep the Law. I just read it to you. They keep their own version of the law.

"...and who seek Him with the whole heart" (v 2). That's how you do it. When you meditate:

- your mind is busy
- your mind is active
- you are thinking
- you are studying the Word of God
- you are drinking in of the Word of God
- those Words are important
- those Words are powerful

That's what you need to think on!

You can read the rest of Psa. 119. We'll pick it up with the Dalai Lama next time, because I have to go through that and I have to go through what the pope says. The pope has some very interesting things and it's all lawlessness. Remember, lawlessness is:

- 1. you find fault with God so you can continue in your sin
- 2. you accuse God
- 3. you improve on God by giving your own laws, rules, commandments and ideas
- 4. you sit in the seat of God

You're doing just like Deepak Chopra has said, 'I am God.' He says, 'You want to know God? Look in the mirror. There He is looking back at you.'

This is something! I didn't know that this would lead to this when I was sitting on the plane and reading the book, *Primitive Christianity In Crisis* and this woman sat down next to me reading this book *How to Know God*. This is amazing! We've got to have things that fit today. We can't be preaching outdated theories of 10, 15, 30, 40, or 50 years ago. We can't do it.

John 6:63: "It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing...." When he's talking about the Spirit, this is the Spirit of God, of course. There is a spirit in man, which man develops his own selfrighteous spirituality. That spirit of man, apart from the Spirit of God, accomplishes nothing: "...the flesh profits nothing...."

"...<u>The words that I speak to you, they</u> are <u>Spirit and they are Life</u>" (v 63). That's why you meditate on God's way. That's why you think on His Word. That's why He wants it written in your heart and in your mind, instead of coming to silence and emptiness. That is foolishness, satanic and just unbelievably insane. God gave you a mind to think. Why should you exercise it to nothingness? You're going against God.

Verse 64: "'But there are some of you who do not believe.'.... [I think we've found an awful lot in the Church of God that believe *not*] ...For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones that did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, 'For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father.' From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him" (vs 64-66). Because the Words of Christ were too hard, too sharp, too difficult. Their public opinion was, 'We don't want any of that.'

Verse 67: "Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, 'Are you also desiring to go away?'" There it was down to the twelve. Almost the same predicament that we find the Church in today.

Verse 68: "Then Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered them, 'Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is a devil?' Now He spoke of Judas Iscariot..." (vs 68-71).

The Mystery of Lawlessness is a mystery!

All Scripture from The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 7:13-22
- 2) James 2:19-24, 18
- 3) Acts 4:5-12
- 4) Matthew 7:22-23
- 5) 1-John 2:3-6
- 6) Matthew 7:23
- 7) 1-John 2:15-19
- 8) 1-John 4:1-6, 4. 6
- 9) 2-Thessalonians 2:7-12
- 10) Psalm 1:1-6
- 11) Psalm 119:1-2
- 12) John 6:63-71

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12:9
- John 8

Also referenced:

Books:

- Primitive Christianity in Crisis by Alan Knight
- How to Know God: The Soul's Journey Into the Mystery of Mysteries by Deepak Chopra
- Genesis of Justice by Alan M. Dershowitz
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- Crossing the Threshold of Hope by Pope John Paul II
- The Legacy of Billy Graham by Michael G. Long
- The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter
- The Seven General Epistles by Fred R. Coulter
- The Conspirators' Hierarchy: The Committee of 300 by Dr. John Coleman
- *Code of Jewish Law* by Gansfried & Goldin
- *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling

Sermon Series:

- James
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Sermon: Is Your God a Glob?

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