Gospel of John XVII Children of God/Children of Light

(**John 10**) Fred R. Coulter

There is so much in the book of John and it's really going to be amazing when we get through it.

John 10:22: Now it was winter, and the Feast of Dedication was taking place at Jerusalem." This is what the Jews call today *Hanukah*. This is the dedication of the temple, as it was rededicated and cleansed during the days of the Macabees.

When you have a chance to watch, they'll have something on television about Hanukah. The Jews have all their rituals and they have everything that they add to it. At least you can understand the reasoning behind it. Jesus was there at the Feast of Dedication. This is not saying that during Christmas time we can all run out and keep Hanukah and do as the Jews do.

Verse 23: "And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, 'How long are You going to hold us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' Jesus answered them, 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me.'" (vs 23-25).

Jesus told them; they wanted do know, 'Who are You?' John 5:17: "But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I work.' So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him..." (vs 17-18).

This is a classical, apparently 'good work,' that is apparently evil. According to the ways that the Jews thought, you get rid of all of your enemies and those who oppose you by *killing* them. To the Jew, to kill Jesus was a good thing. Many of them to this day believe it.

"...not only because He had loosed the Sabbath, but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" (v 18). They *knew* who He was.

John 8:58: "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM." Who is I AM? He told them plainly Who He was.

Exodus 3:13—Moses said to God: "... 'What shall I say to them?' And God said to Moses, 'I AM THAT I AM'" (vs 13-14). He told them Who He was. They *knew* Who He was! But for those Jews

who did not want to follow Christ—they wanted to hold onto their own things—they would just as soon kill Him. There's nothing objective in 'religion.' When you *play* 'religion' there is nothing objective! There are people who *play* 'religion.'

I've done business with a Baptist minister who has a large church. I walked into his office and here they have this Easter thing. Here's the assistant pastor preparing for Easter. They were working on their Easter play. You get the whole congregation worked up because someone is going to play Jesus and comes all beaten down and rag-tag and carries a cross. They have the passion scene and the whole thing.

I thought what a classic example of *playing* 'religion.' A lot of people *play* 'religion,' Jesus said that the Jews did. I've watched this series on the *History of the Jews* by Abba Eban and there's a book I want to get. It showed that the Jews—when they get the Torah—get it out of their little cubicle up at the altar in front of the synagogue.

When you hear me describe this, just think how the Catholics have an altar—they have an idol on it; the Jews don't have an idol on it—and they open a little door and they bring out the little wafers that have been 'blessed' by the priests and they all bow down to it. The Jews don't do anything different, only instead of a wafer supposing to be Christ, they have the Torah and they bring out the Torah and it's in this metal tube where it's rolled up. It has it's little bells and the pomegranates and bells. All the Jews bow down to it when it comes down the aisle. If they can reach out and kiss it, that's what they do. Before the rabbi reads anything they kiss the scroll and then open it up.

They have their own ritual! They are not worshiping God anymore than Catholics are worshiping God. They are worshiping their religion! Their idol is the physical law. It's not in their heart; that's how you can tell the difference between playing religion or having a religion and being a Christian!

Once you understand that it becomes so clear. Don't run around and put other people down by saying, 'Yeah, we're the greatest because we know.' Don't do that because then it puts you in the same position as others.

John 10:25: "Jesus answered them, 'I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me." He had the works to do: the healings, the miracles, the preaching. There again, we're dealing with people who see, who hear, who have witnessed, and yet, what does it take for a person to believe? Just like we've mentioned many times, the Israelites in the wilderness. God was there in the pillars of cloud and fire was there, and yet, they rebelled and didn't believe God.

Like Thomas who said, 'Well, I'll believe it when I can put my hand into His side and into His wound.' So, a week later Jesus came and said, 'Thomas, come here.' And Thomas said, 'Lord, I believe.' You need to believe the works that Jesus did.

When we really comprehend that Jesus is Creator, and comprehend what He has made and the greatness and vastness of it. The works that He did is very easy to believe that He did those, once you understand it. That's why it's so important.

They have all these litmus tests for various things nowadays and those things we believe because we can see. But people won't believe in God. A real quirk of human nature.

Notice why He says they didn't believe, v 26: "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep..."—meaning anyone that God calls. He didn't say that the Israelites and Jews were sheep and the Gentiles were beasts and animals. NO! Anyone whom Christ calls is a lamb of God.

Here were the Jews, and Jesus said, "...you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life..." (vs 26-28). That's what to focus in on, that's why we're here! That's why God has called us: for eternal life! Not to have a 'religion,' not to 'play church,' not to beat up on each other, but for eternal life!

"...and they shall never perish..." (v 28). We'll see how this statement really means it. Because He said of Lazarus, who had died, *he sleeps* (John 11). But He was not speaking of the sleep of *rest*. God views things entirely differently, completely differently.

"...and **no one shall take them out of My hand**" (v 28). That's comforting! What does this one Scripture alone say? If we begin to magnify it, what do we come up with? God came and sent Jesus Christ so that we could have eternal life! Not die! Not be in the clutches of death; it cannot hold us forever. That's a fantastic thing. "...no one shall

take them out of My hand."

This tells us that we need to constantly go to Christ, because there's the encouragement there that we *will* receive eternal life. Not beat people over the head and threaten them with every little thing that comes along, that you're not going to make it into the Kingdom of God.

I've seen some people almost paranoid that they're afraid to *believe God*. They're afraid to relax and trust God. They're afraid to say, 'God, that's a fantastic thing that You have done; that is so marvelous that You're going to give us eternal life.' And *it is a guarantee!*

Sure there are some who will reject it, but no one is going to take us from it. *No man* can take it. The only way you can get out of His hand is to jump out. *No one can take you out!*

Verse 29: "My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, <u>is greater than all</u>..."—greater than everything; greater than all human beings.

John 14:28: "You have heard Me say to you that I am going away, and *that* I will come to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, 'I am going to the Father' <u>because My Father is greater than I</u>." That's something!

Let's have more in our relationship with God, the rejoicing of the happiness that we need, because God has guaranteed what He said.

- Do you believe God? Yes!
- Do you believe the Word of God? Yes!
- Do you believe that God will do what He says? *Yes!*
- Do you believe that God can perform these things? *Yes!*

Then when God says He's going to give us eternal life, that's fantastic, absolutely amazing! When you are a spirit being, believe me you will be completely unleavened. That's something to look forward to. I don't know about you, but I get real excited about that.

John 10:30: "I and the Father are one.' Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him" (vs 30-31). They were doing a 'good work.' Jesus said, "I and the Father are one." Every time He said that they almost went into a riot; 'Where's a rock, let's get this guy.'

Don't they have the same mentality today among the Jews? Every time someone says something against the Jews you have the Anti-Defamation League coming down your throat. Or if you're real nasty they'll send the JDL and they'll

blow up your house. Same mentality!

Verse 32: "Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?' The Jews answered Him, saying, 'We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God'" (vs 32-33).

Did they know Who He was? Yes, they did, because they wouldn't say that unless they understood that if You say that God is your Father, that You are the Son of God! If You're the Son of God then You're God!

Verse 34: "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in <u>your</u> law, "I said, 'You are gods' [elohim]"? If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken), why do you say of Him Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"?" (vs 34-36).

Psalm 82:6: "I have said, 'You are gods [elohim]... [in the Greek it is 'atheo'—plural for gods] ...and all of you are sons of the Most High." Let's just think concerning the Old Testament. What did God say about creating man? God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image' (Gen. 1). So, Jesus wasn't taking to Himself to make Himself the Son of God in a presumptuous way. It was a fact!

Let's see what the Old Testament teaches about man becoming a son of God, teaches about man becoming *as* God:

Psalm 104:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty, covering Yourself with **light as with a garment**..." (vs 1-2)—shows what God is like.

Did the Jews have the book of Daniel? Sure they did! That's how they understood that it was supposed to be Christ Who was coming as the Messiah. Does the Old Testament teach a resurrection of human beings to an existence like God? Yes! Not as clearly as the New Testament, but nevertheless, it is there.

Daniel 12:2: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life..."

- Isn't that eternal life"
- Living forever?
- Being equal with God?
- Yes, it is!

"...and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they who are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever" (vs 2-3).

- Do the stars have light? Yes, they do!
- Does it say in Psa 104:2 that God covers Himself with light as a garment? Yes, it does!

Put the two together and you have those who are resurrected according to the Old Testament will be raised to an existence like God.

The Jews had no Biblical basis to say that Christ was blaspheming. If Christ blasphemed by saying that He was the Son of God, then surely the Prophets blasphemed by writing these words. That isn't true! The Prophets didn't blaspheme and Christ didn't blaspheme!

Psalm 149:4: "For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; **He crowns the meek with salvation**." When you put that together with the Scriptures we just covered, if the righteous are going to shine as the stars forever, and *God beautifies the meek with salvation*, that also shows that they're also going to be clothed with light as God is clothed with light.

Why didn't they believe? There has to be something that we supply. Then we will see what the rest of the New Testament shows us about eternal life.

John 5:39: "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life" (vs 39-40). It's almost the same conversation as it is in John 10.

Verse 41: "I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves" (vs 41-42). That's the first thing that has to be *before you can believe*, *before you can have faith*. You have to love God!

Verse 43: "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father..." (vs 43-45). That's very important. Jesus didn't accuse anyone.

We don't have to accuse anyone before the Father, or before anyone else, simply because we can observe and see something that is wrong. We can say that that is wrong, let it be, God will take

care of it. Even Jesus didn't accuse them before the Father.

"...There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?" (vs 45-47). That whole thing is keyed on loving God, *if* you really love God!

There's one thing that makes me more uncomfortable than anything else is for someone to come around and say, 'How good this is, how great you are.' That sort of thing just turns me off. I see, 'Ut oh, here comes a stroker; what does he want?

I know that everyone needs to be informed when they do something that is a good and decent job. That's fine! No one minds that! But when strokers come along purring and throwing out the compliments, I just back away and think: What does he want? What can happen? Anyone can fall into that trap if you don't love God! If you start receiving the honor of men and honoring men back, you're going to fall into the pit of Satan the devil and down the tube you go.

A lot of people get conned into things. That's how they get conned, because people like to be complimented and stroked, especially if they're beaten down a little bit. They go after those compliments like a starving dog after a bone. That's how people are manipulated! Give them so many compliments when they're hungry for it, you've got them! Then you can start controlling them. I've seen how people have done that in business. Here comes the bone, then comes the control. When the bone comes, don't get taken in by it.

How many girls have gotten pregnant because some guy looked into her eyes and said, 'You're the most beautiful thing that has ever walked the face of the earth'? Devour that and guess what? How many girls have had that done to them? How many girls have done that to boys? It works both ways!

Now we're going to focus in on you are the children of God. Rom. 9 is referring to when all Israel shall be saved, talking about the salvation of Jews and Gentiles, etc. Then Paul says:

Romans 9:26: "And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, 'You *are* not My people'..." Talking about the Gentiles; Paul takes a Scripture that has been applied to Israel and rejected, and applies it to Gentiles who were previously rejected.

"...there they shall be called *the* sons of *the*

living God" (v 26). The Bible is full of references to the *children of God*. It makes you wonder why the Jews were so angry when Jesus said, 'I'm the Son of God.' That's why Jesus said, 'Doesn't it say in the Scriptures that you are gods; and the Scripture cannot be broken.'

Matthew 5:9: "Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they **shall be called** *the* **sons of God**."

Everyone who has had children has experienced the same thing. Children grow up. On a height basis we look down on them, and then we look up to them—they are taller. The point is, children grow up and become adults. If physical human beings are called the children of God, that tells us that we are to grow up to the fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ!

Luke 20:34—when they came and asked about all these husbands and wives with no children and so forth: "And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'The children of this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are accounted worthy to obtain that age... [the coming age] ...and the resurrection from *the* dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."

The more that I study and find out about the human body and mind the more that I understand that it isn't going to be any great trick for God to not have sexes in the Kingdom of God. We used to run around and worry about that: I wonder what place God is going to have for women in the Kingdom of God? There were ministers who were always saying, 'You're always going to be under a man'—forever! It's no great trick to God; the only difference is a little chromosome and some hormones in the physical sense, and that's it!

Really, that's right! They've found by some of the medical mistakes that they do, they give the wrong hormone shot to a man and he ain't a man much more, and he doesn't look like one.

We don't have to worry about who's going to marry who. In the resurrection who are you going to marry? 'I've had seven husbands, which one is mine?' You talk about legal complications! The first thing you have to do in that case is run down to the court and get it settled.

Verse 36: "And neither can they die any more, for they are as *the* angels..."—equal in existence, spirits. He made the angels spirit. What does it say of God? *God is spirit!*

"...and are *the* children of God..." (v 36). If you are children of God, you are *god*.

(go to the next track)

That's something to contemplate. When you're driving down the road and have nothing to think about, think on that! I'll guarantee if you do that you won't have any trouble with lusting, you won't have an problem with being angry.

"...being children of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed by his words at the burning bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (vs 36-37). He said that because that's what the Jews always said, 'We be Abraham's seed.'

Verse 38: "For He is not *the* God of *the* dead, but of *the* living; for all live unto Him." That left them speechless, nothing left to say.

There is something that distinguishes the *children of God* in the flesh, while we're still walking in the flesh, from the children of the devil who are walking in the flesh. That is the one who is committing sin, living/practicing as a child of the devil.

1-John 3:10: "By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother." The children of God are manifested by how they keep the commandments of God.

We are called *children of light*. This gets right back to the basic thing of:

- walking in the light
- walking toward the light

There are children of darkness. Didn't Jesus say that 'if the light in you be darkness, how great is that darkness?'

John 12:34: "The people answered Him... [after He said He was going to die] ... 'We have heard out of the law that the Christ lives forever... [here we get all these technical questions again: If you die, how is that you live?] ... and why do You say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?' Then Jesus said to them, 'Yet, a little while the light is with you.... [Who is the Light of the world? Jesus said 'I am the Light of the world.'] ... Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness will not overtake you. For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going" (vs 34-35).

You know how that is. You get someplace where it is totally dark and you can't see anything, you don't know where you're going.

Verse 36: "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become the children of Light.'..." Not only are we called the children of God, we are called the "...children of Light..." Why are we called the children of Light? Because we have the Word of God, which is Light! We have Christ and His Spirit in us, which is Light!

1-Thessalonians 5:5: "For you are all children of the light and children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of the darkness. So then, we should not sleep, as others do; but we should watch, and we should be sober. For those who are sleeping sleep in the night, and those who are drunken get drunk in the night. But we who are of the day should be sober..." (vs 5-8). Then it shows the things we need to do to grow, change and overcome.

Eph. 1 shows how this Light comes into us through God's Spirit. That's a tremendous and fantastic thing to understand; it really is! When we can begin to contemplate the fantastic calling of God, and the greatness that God has, that He's going to give and share with us, that's just ought to thrill us to life—not death!

Ephesians 1:17: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory..." Remember Psa. 104:2 that God clothed Himself with light—a glorious, magnificent Being.

"...may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened..." (vs 17-18). We are the *children of Light*.

Ephesians 5:8: "For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light."

I hope this will help us understand the tremendous significance of what Christ has done, and the tremendous love that God has for us, and the fantastic opportunity that God is giving to us. Remember, He said that *He gives us eternal life* and *no one can take us out of God's hands!* {tie in Rom. 8}

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called **the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are **the children of God,** ..." (vs 1-2). How many times have we read this Scripture in the past? I still don't think we can fully grasp the magnitude of what it's telling us.

"...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him

exactly as He is" (v 2). That's a tremendous thing, being the sons of God, the children of God, the children of Light.

John 10:34: "Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I said, 'You are gods'"? If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken), why do you say of Him Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming," because I said, "I am the Son of God"?" (vs 34-36).

You cannot get any clearer in telling someone who you are. If someone comes up to you and asks: Who are you? You say, 'I'm So and So.' What proof do you have? You whip out your driver's license, your social security card and all your plastic that has your name on it.

Christ told them plainly, "I am *the* Son of God." What a magnificent and wonderful thing this has got to be. They were angry, ready to murder Him.

Verse 37: "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me. But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works..." (vs 37-38). Remember that just a short time before that He healed a man who was born blind.

"...so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.' Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands" (vs 38-39). I just can't imagine what sort of thing was going on. Were they trying to grab Him? Were they trying to surround Him? Was someone grabbing an arm? Another grabbing a leg? Another one ready to tackle His feet? Or what? But:

"...He escaped out of their hands, and departed again beyond Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing; and He remained there. And many came to Him and said, 'John did not do even one miracle, but everything that John said concerning this *Man* is true.' And many believed in Him there" (vs 39-42).

Question: Children of Light & Children of Darkness:

Can there be Christians who are somewhat in between? They have the Light but are sort of standing in the shadow of a dark image and they need to come around it. They really can't see the Light.

If you're standing in front of a big building and on the other side of the building is the sun. If you stand in front of this building and you look directly at the same angle that you know where the sun is, you can't see the sun, but you can look to the right or left and you can see the light of the sun. But you're standing in the darkness of the shadow.

Rev. 3 talks about the Laodiceans, and I think we can draw an analogy. They are the Church of God with a lot of problems; wherever the Laodiceans may be.

- it can be an organization
- it can be an attitude

Notice what Jesus says, Revelation 3:15: "I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot." In other words, they are in the Light, but they are not walking to the Light, and they have some obstruction keeping them from continually walking in the Light as children of Light. They're still of God, but they've got an awful lot of problems. "...you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot."

Verse 16: "So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy..." (vs 16-17). That could be 'look at what a great work I'm doing for God. Look at how many of this we have, how many of that we have, how much of this, how long...and so forth.'

Or just strictly from the point of view of wealth: 'Look how much money we have.' Has there ever been a Church of God that has had so much money? You can apply all of these things to it.

"...and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind... [can't see where they are going] ...and naked" (v 17). That's what that kind of thing would do. If they are blind:

- If the leadership of a church s blind, then they are going to preach things that should not be preached, and do things that should not be done.
- If a congregation is blind, they will accept these things as they come, because they themselves do not see the problems involved.

It works both ways! But I know how it is when people have thought, 'If I leave...'

- God wants us to be held together in love, not fear!
- God wants us to rejoice in eternal life, not be in fear of death!

God tells them to repent and go through the fiery trial. But let's go back to John 3 about walking

in the Light, coming to the Light and so forth. This tells us the real remedy and real repentance.

John 3:19: "And this is the judgment: that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed; but the one who practices the Truth comes to the Light..." (vs 19-21).

Where Christians get themselves in trouble is when they quit coming to the Light—Christ—and quit walking in the way that they need to—in the Light—then they come up to an obstacle and stand in that shadow and they don't grow any further, because they're not walking to the Light.

Then the whole group and organization can get in trouble. So, we have a rare opportunity here that God has granted us in what we are doing. This kind of situation and peace of mind and knowing that you are growing. There are times in the past that we have wondered: 'Am I growing?'

It's really exciting when you *know* that you are growing. We need to grow in the love of God, because any growth that we accomplish, if it's not based first on the love of God, it's going to be a phony growth; a manmade thing. It isn't going to result in what God wants.

We can't take what God has given us and wrap it up in a bundle and stuff it away in a can and bury it. I know that God is going to give growth to us in the time that *He* wants, and we have got to preach the hope that is there. What I see needs to be done is preach exactly what Christ has said: *condemn sin!* That needs to be condemned, absolutely. But unless that has a tremendous measure of *hope* and preaching why Christ came and all the factors of it, then we just have so much exercise and knowledge—which may or may not be good.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 10:22-25
- 2) John 5:17-18
- 3) John 8:58
- 4) Exodus 3:13-14
- 5) John 10:25-29
- 6) John 14:28
- 7) John 10:30-36
- 8) Psalm 82:6

- 9) Psalm 104:1-2
- 10) Daniel 12:2-3
- 11) Psalm 149:4
- 12) John 5:39-47
- 13) Romans 9:26
- 14) Matthew 5:9
- 15) Luke 20:34-38
- 16) 1 John 3:10
- 17) John 12:34-36
- 18) 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8
- 19) Ephesians 1:17-18
- 20) Ephesians 5:8
- 21) 1 John 3:1-2
- 22) John 10:34-42
- 23) Revelation 3:15-17
- 24) John 3:19-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 11
- Genesis 1
- Romans 8

Also referenced: Book: *History of the Jews* by Abba Eban

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