

BEING GOD'S REACHER

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COC

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Week 3 - God's Reacher

I. LOREN EISELEY WROTE:

**"MANKIND IS THE COSMIC ORPHAN!
HE IS THE ONLY CREATURE IN THE
UNIVERSE WHO ASKS, 'WHY?'"** ———

A. Since the Enlightenment, mankind has
thrown off the moral restraints of
Christianity —

1. Mankind has long sought to answer the
questions: "**Who Am I?**", "**Why Am I
Here?**", & "**Where Am I Going?**"
through his own Prism of Reason &
Logic —
2. Man seeks to answer these questions
without any input or reference to **God**.
3. But the answers man continues to
conjure up from his godless, *Shinar*-ian
logic is not thrilling, but dark & dreadful.

4. Mankind keeps coming up with "*You are the accidental by-product of nature, a result of matter plus time plus chance. There is no reason for your existence. All you face is death.*"

B. The ever-increasing knowledge of mankind, left to his own intellect formed in his secular, godless mind — has left him the horrific reality that without **God**, the universe is in ruins, & the life of each person is doomed.

1. There is **no** escape.

2. There is **no** hope...

a. if there is **life** without **God**! —

C. If there is **no** **God**, then there can be **no** objective standards of **right & wrong**.

1. All we are confronted with is, in *J.P. Sartre's* words, are the bare, valueless fact of existence.

2. In a world without **God**, who is to say which values are right & which are wrong?
3. In fact, the **Concept of Morality** loses **all meaning in a universe without God**.
 - a. Actually, to say that something is wrong because it is forbidden by God, is perfectly understandable to anyone who believes in a law-giving God. ———
 - b. But to say that something is wrong . . . even though no God exists to forbid it, is not understandable . . ."
 - c. The concept of moral obligation is meaningless apart from the idea of God.
 - d. In a universe without God, good & evil do not exist—there is only the bare, good for nothing fact of existence, & there is no one to say you are right & I am wrong.

D. Ladies & Gentlemen — this culture in which we live & are immersed in —

1. screams for our attention - begging us to remain fixed in our **Obstinate Rebellion against God** —

E. But Truth declares — when we come to faith, & we learn that the royal arm of God's love reached for us while we were sinners —

1. we suddenly discover within the universe of our self-will, the *splendor* of a **Mighty God** who set **Himself** for us as our **Kinsmen Redeemer & Emanuel Savior**

2. **"The Lord's arm is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy, that He cannot hear"** Isa. 59:1

F. When we give our lives to **Jesus Christ** it means we release EVERYTHING that we once knew —

1. The culture we were apart of —

2. Our past that we once lived through —

3. The lifestyles we once lived in —

4. The mindsets we were governed by —

II. GOD IS LIGHT ———

A. John said, "4 *In Him was Life; and that life was the light of men.* 5 *And that light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*" **John 1:4-5**

B. John introduces to us the reality that the *Creation account of Genesis* is elaborated on in his Gospel —

1. **Jesus** brings *Spiritual Life* —

2. The intense conflict between *light & darkness* underlying John's Gospel is foreshadowed in **John 1:4-5**

C. "*The devil comes not, but for to steal, & to kill, & to destroy: I am come (Jesus said) that they might have life, & that they might have it more abundantly.*"

John 10:10

D. When we look into the *Light* of the Scripture, the *brightness of God's glory* is revealed *line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept* — & the more we

adjust our sight to see **Him** exalted in Scripture, the more we **"walk in Jesus' marvelous light."**

III. **2 TIMOTHY 2:15 SAYS...**

A. ***"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."*** 2 Tim. 2:15

B. Script. "20 ***Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*** 21 ***For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."***

2 Peter 1:20-21

C. Peter went on to write 2 Peter 2:20-21, ***"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord & Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein,***

& overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

D. We must, when we *study to show ourselves approved*, we should be unfiltered in our pursuit of truth — we must receive the *Word of God* without adding to it our preconceived ideas & or opinions ———

1. Deut. 4:2 says, *"Ye shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."*

2. Prov. 30:5-6 declares, *"Every Word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. 6 Add thou*

not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, & thou be found a liar."

- E. The **Word of God**, nor its proper presentation, diminishes or takes away from any personal relationship that a person has with the Lord of Glory —
1. But, as we study the **Word of God**, we are *illuminated* by its **Truth** — thus, *convincing* us of its **Authority & Supremacy** while *convicting* us of any **wrong concepts, wrong thinking, or wrong opinion** that we might hold prior to the moment of our newfound discovery of truth ———
 2. **Truth** is progressive in its unfolding, it's *"line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept."*
 3. When we look into the **Words of God**, we must **desire** for **His Truth to be written upon the tablet of our heart** ———

4. When we claim the **Bible** as our sole authority, we can lean into & be confident of, our salvation —

IV. WHEN WE ARE SAVED, WE ARE SAVED 'TO' SOMETHING, SO THAT WE MIGHT BE FOREVER SAVED 'FROM' SOMETHING ———

A. When we walk through the Synoptic Gospels, we at once are confronted with John's revelatory pen — "1 *In the beginning was the Word, & the Word was with God, & the Word was God.* 2 *The same was in the beginning with God.* 3 *All things were made by Him; & without Him was not any thing made that was made.* 4 *In Him was life; & the life was the light of men.* 5 *And the light shineth in darkness; & the darkness comprehended it not.*" **John 1:1-5**

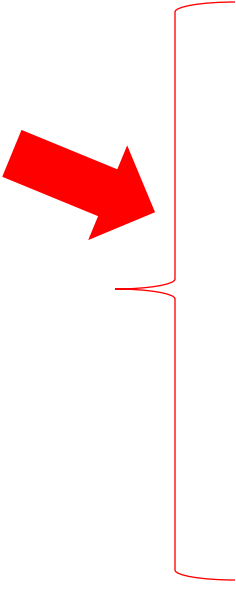
B. John went on to say, "***And the Word was made flesh, & dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace & truth.***" **John 1:14**


C. So, what do we learn from the John's gospel, "***In the beginning, the WORD was God and became flesh.***"

1. **Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God.**

2. As part of your continued study, be sure to study the entire 1st Chapter of John (I've included the Scriptures below for you) —

a. "John 1:1-13: ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2The same was in the beginning with God. 3All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. 4In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5And the light shineth in***





darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not. 11He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. 12But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: 13Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 1:11-13

- D. The fascinating reality is this, that when we choose to ***believe in God & receive Jesus as our Savior***, **Jesus** gives us power to become the ***sons of GOD*** by a ***supernatural birth***.
- E. We find **Jesus** speaking about this ***New Birth to Nicodemus***, ***a ruler of the Jews*** —
- F. John records, "1 ***There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that You do, except God be with Him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus***

answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

John 3:1-8

1. I see something here — **Jesus** told **Nicodemus** that whosoever **BELIEVES** in **Him** should have eternal life.
2. Jesus seems to suggest that there two different requirements for salvation, ONE is being **born again** and the other is **believing**.
3. And yet, neither contradict the other. There is no contradiction.

4. The very next Scripture explains how **believing** is related to experiencing the birth of the Spirit.
5. Look at John 7:38-39 — "38 **He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)**
- a. So we see here - that if **we believe on Jesus**, according to the *Word of God*, **we will receive the HOLY GHOST**.
- b. Aren't you excited to know that when **Jesus** offered us **New Birth**, He didn't offer us a mere change in the way we think...but **He** promised us a **Scriptural EXPERIENCE** —

6. A person with an Experience is far more powerful than a person with an argument!

G. Mark 16:16 says, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."*

H. What does the Scripture say? He that BELIEVES & is BAPTIZED shall be saved —

1. John 12:35-36 says, *"35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them."*

I. In John 12, we read: 42 *"Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many*

believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John 12:42-43

1. Today, just as in **Jesus'** day, many believe on **Him**. Yet, they will not **CONFESS Him** for fear of what other will do or say.

J. John went on to write: *"Jesus cried and said, he that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. 45 And he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me. 46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the Word that I*

have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12:44-48

K. In response to their fearfulness, Jesus warns that His **WORD** will judge us, so we must be careful not to reject it.

1. Rather, we should *believe* and *obey it*...no matter what others say or do.

L. Now, let's look at John 17:17-20 —

"Sanctify them through Thy Truth: Thy Word is Truth. 18 As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth. 20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; John 17:17-20

1. In **Jesus'** prayer for **His** disciples, just before **His** crucifixion, **He** said **God's Word** is **TRUTH**. **He** also prayed for us;

and for all those who would believe on **Him** through the Apostles' Word.

V. **THIS CREATES AN INTERESTING, ETERNAL CONTINUUM FROM JOHN'S GOSPEL TO THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES** —

- A. This is of course sets us out on the **Adventure of Discovering WHAT** the Apostle's *taught, lived & preached* —
1. To discover what the **Apostles' Words** were to be, we must read exactly what **Jesus** told them to proclaim. —
- B. Look no further than the setting we find in **Luke 24** —
1. In **Luke 24:45-49**, we discover what is commonly known as the **Great Commission**.
 2. This occurs just after the **Lord's death, burial, and resurrection**...& before **His** ascension into heaven.

3. Script: "45 *Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,* 46 *And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:* 47 *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* 48 *And ye are witnesses of these things.* 49 *And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."* Luke 24:45-49

VI. DID THE APOSTLES PREACH THE MESSAGE JESUS COMMANDED TO ANNOUNCE?

A. Let us look at what was preached & let's see what happened at **Jerusalem** ———

1. Acts 1:3-5 — "3 *To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:* 4 *And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me.* 5 *For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."* Acts 1:3-5

B. As we get into the Book of Acts, we begin to see almost immediately that the "*Promise of the Father*" is the baptism of the **HOLY GHOST**. —

C. Acts 2:1-7 — "1 *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.* 2 *And suddenly there came a sound from*

heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

Acts 2:1-7

D. When the **Apostles** were at **Jerusalem**, they along with many others were joyously *filled with the Holy Ghost* and

began to speak with **OTHER TONGUES** as the *Spirit gave them utterance* - the ability to speak. The amazed onlookers from many nations who heard them speaking with tongues asked, *"What Meaneth This?"*

1. Then Peter explained the *Promised Coming* of the *Spirit* and went on to preach *Jesus Christ* and the plan of Salvation for all mankind.
2. Acts 2:36-39 — "36 *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* 37 *Now when they heard this, they were pierced in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* 38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,*

and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:36-39

E. When the people who heard Peter's words ***believed*** that ***Jesus Christ*** was their ***Lord & Savior***, they **were sorry for their sins and asked Peter and the rest of the Apostles what they should do?**

1. Notice, Peter replied by ***preaching*** the **Message** that ***Jesus*** had commanded to be preached in **Luke 24:45-49**.
 - a. #1. **Repentance.**
 - b. #2. **Remission** of sins through baptism in ***Jesus' name***.
 - c. #3. **Receive** the gift of the ***Holy Ghost***.
2. So, the **Message** in **Acts 2** is the fulfillment of the two "New Birth" requirements ***Jesus*** mentioned in **John**

3:5 that were necessary to **See** or **Enter** the **Kingdom of God!**

3. *Water Birth* = Baptism in the Name of **Jesus Christ!**
4. *Spirit Birth* = Infilling of the **Holy Ghost!**