

# Savor the Things of God

(Sermon Notes)      By: Warren Zehrung      8/25/2018

Let's begin by going to the Blessings and Cursings chapter. Do we **savor the things of God** far above everything this world has to offer? How willing are we to suffer in the same way that Jesus Christ suffered for us?

## Blessings and Cursings Chapter

Deuteronomy 28:1 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

Deuteronomy 28:2 And **all these blessings** shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 28:3 Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

Deuteronomy 28:4 Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

Deuteronomy 28:5 Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

Deuteronomy 28:6 Blessed shalt thou be when thou come in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou go out.

Deuteronomy 28:7 The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

## IF -- God is Rejected

Deuteronomy 28:15 But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that **all these curses** shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

Deuteronomy 28:16 Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

Just **how bad** are the curses going to be on our land and people?

Deuteronomy 28:58 If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou may fear this glorious and fearful name, "THE LORD THY GOD."

Deuteronomy 28:59 Then the LORD will make thy plagues dreadful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

Deuteronomy 28:60 Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou were afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

Deuteronomy 28:61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, **until thou be destroyed.**

Brethren, the curses are only just beginning.

Deuteronomy 28:62 And ye shall be left **few in number**, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou would not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

What are we in God's Church to be doing? Do we have a responsibility to live the Gospel? What about our own personal lives? God warns the Church in the last days not to become complacent and lackadaisical.

It seems to me that the by-word today – even in the Church of God is "Be comfortable; avoid stress; find your comfort zone; avoid problems and by all means avoid confrontations; don't rock the boat, and avoid trouble by any means.

It is a false concept to think that True Christianity is an easy road to the Kingdom of God. Jesus said in:

Matthew 10:34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, **but a sword**.

God warns us about acquiring a Laodicean attitude of "lukewarm-ness." I'm aware that different church groups **accuse** the other church groups of being Laodicean – but let's have ears to hear what the Spirit of God says to us.

Let's apply God's Words to ourselves. It is profitable to consider that Jesus Christ was speaking to all the churches of God today – because we are all pretty much in the same boat – aren't we?

Revelation 3:15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Revelation 3:16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Revelation 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou may be rich; and white raiment, that thou may be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou may see.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and **repent**.

Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man **hear my voice**, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Revelation 3:22 He that hath an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

We ought to recognize that all too often genuine care for the brethren within the Church of God has not been taught and practiced as much as the Word of God shows it should be.

1John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to **love one another...**

1John 4:11 **If** we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us.

Perhaps God is giving us – the Body of Christ – additional time to grow up spiritually in areas in which we still come short.

Sure, we know doctrine, we know prophecy, we keep the Sabbath, etc., but there is much more.

Paul tells us that we still have a lot of growing to do.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ezekiel speaks of the time when “the sword comes upon the land.”

It is a **wakeup call for God's people**. Terrorist's attacks in the United States show that the time to “*warn the people*” and to “*cry aloud and spare not*” is at hand. Acknowledging that time is short, let's be motivated to real Christian action.

We are told to watch, and be ready:

Ezekiel 33:1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying...

Prior to this God had set Ezekiel to be the Watchman and warn the people of what ruin would happen to Jerusalem.

Remember that Israel had gone into Assyrian captivity about 136 years before this.

Of course, the Jews thought that because they had the Temple at Jerusalem – no harm would ever befall them.

They had a superstitious form of religion.

Now, I'm just trying to tie these things to what is going on in Ephraim and Manasseh today – England and the USA – and all the present-day Children of Israel.

The siege and subsequent fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians, and the destruction of the Temple in 585 BC - forms a turning-point in the prophetic work of Ezekiel.

What constitutes the enemy bringing a sword against Israel?

When the Japanese attack occurred against Hawaii and the USA beginning WWII, did that constitute the enemy bringing a sword against Israel? Herbert W. Armstrong began to warn America and the nations.

When the radical Islamic jihadist 9/11 attack occurred against the World Trade Center Towers in New York, did that constitute the enemy bringing a sword against Israel?

God has removed our hedge of protection. The enemy is bringing the sword against Israel?

Ezekiel 33:2 Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, **When** I bring the **sword upon a land**, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

God renews Ezekiel as the Watchman.

And brethren, let's understand – Ezekiel stands as the Watchman **today!** – because these prophecies are types for the end time as well!

Ezekiel 33:3 If when he sees **the sword come** upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

Ezekiel 33:4 Then whosoever hears the sound of the trumpet, and takes not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

This certainly sounds like a **wakeup call**, to me.

Ezekiel 33:5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that takes warning shall deliver his soul.

Ezekiel 33:6 But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

Ezekiel 33:7 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and **warn them from Me**. [God says.]

Brethren, you do realize that Israel never heard this warning form Ezekiel because they were already in captivity when Ezekiel wrote this down – **this warning is for us today!**

Ezekiel 33:8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Ezekiel 33:9 Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Ezekiel 33:10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto **the house of Israel**; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?

The people are lamenting – saying their suffering is too much.

The answer is repentance. "**Turn ye, turn ye**" means to **Repent** when you see that phrase in the Old Testament.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the **wicked turn from his way and live**: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel 33:12 Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The **righteousness of the righteous** shall **not** deliver him in the day of his transgression:

Ezekiel 33:12 ...as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that **he turns** [repents] from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sins.

Put your marker here in Ezekiel – we will be right back:

People love to have **substitute** religion for the True Worship of God.

God says don't do it:

Jeremiah 7:4 Trust **ye not** in lying [deceptive] words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

What is deceptive about those words?

Jeremiah 7:5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor;

That sounds like New Testament **Pure Religion** doesn't it?

Jeremiah 7:6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:

Zechariah 7:9-10 Thus says the Lord of hosts, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Jeremiah 7:7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.

Jeremiah 7:8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.

Jeremiah 7:9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

Jeremiah 7:10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

"We are God's special people – He can't let anything happen to us! He will not allow our enemy to prevail."

Brethren, Yes He will. He will use our enemy as the rod of His anger.

**In the same way that** Judah thought that they had an "Ace in the hole" a "get out of jail free card," A "Sure thing" because they had the Temple in Jerusalem to save them.

Saying, "God would never let anything happen to His Temple."

We in the Church of God today sometimes think we have it made because we are God's People – we are in God's Church.

Brethren, that Temple was utterly destroyed. Buildings and organizations are not permanent. Even the First Century Church of God all but disappeared from history. Paul told Timothy:

2Timothy 1:15 This you know, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.

Brethren, can we see the Big Picture here? We must remain faithful to God – and to God alone.

Ezekiel 33:13 When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall **not** be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

Ezekiel 33:14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

Ezekiel 33:15 If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Ezekiel 33:16 None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

Ezekiel 33:17 Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

Ezekiel 33:18 When the righteous turns from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, he shall even die thereby.

Ezekiel 33:19 But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

The judgment of God is averted by **repentance**.

Ezekiel 33:20 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you every one after his ways.

If you keep studying beyond this point you will see the attitude of the people toward the prophet's further announcements.

Matthew 24:42 Watch therefore: for you know not what hour your Lord doth come.

In the remainder of the sermon we are going to switch gears – slightly and speak to the subject of how our suffering must be like unto the sufferings of Jesus Christ if indeed we are to complete our Christian course.

Paul wrote to Timothy:

2Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ **Jesus shall suffer persecution**.

That is a Christian principle we often don't like to think about. "**All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**."

As we become one with Christ (Galatians 3:28) through partaking of His blood, our life with Him involves suffering as He suffered.

Luke 24:25 Then He said to them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

Luke 24:26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and [then] to enter into His glory?

We are called to suffer in like manner.

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we **suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together**.

Peter also spends a great deal of time expounding on this principle of Christian suffering because we must suffer with Christ if we are to share in His glory.

Some people believe that a Christian should not have any trials – and that only blessings come from God's way of life.

Brethren, here is a serious question to ponder: Are you suffering persecution because of the Christian principles that you stand up for and live by?

In this selfish world, we often witness the "every man for himself" attitude that permeates society.

We should certainly understand the extent to which Jesus Christ demonstrated His love for us in giving His life.

But to what degree have we followed His example in demonstrating our loving concern for each other?

Who in the Church of God today is willing to suffer in order to help another person into the Kingdom of God?

1Peter 1:10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

1Peter 1:11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the **sufferings of Christ**, and the glory that should follow.

1Peter 2:19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, **suffering wrongfully**.

1Peter 2:20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye **do well, and suffer** for *it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

1Peter 2:21 **For even hereunto were ye called:** because Christ also **suffered** for us, **leaving us an example**, that ye should follow his steps:

1Peter 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1Peter 2:23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to Him that judges righteously:

1Peter 3:14 But and if ye **suffer for righteousness' sake**, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.

1Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

1Peter 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are **partakers of Christ's sufferings**; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

We are not to suffer for our own wrong doings...

1Peter 4:16 Yet if *any man* suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

1Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have **suffered a while**, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you.

1Peter 5:11 To him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We should not be surprised by trials and sufferings.

Matthew 16:21 From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, **and suffer many things** of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Matthew 16:22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

### **The title is from here:**

Matthew 16:23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: **for thou savor not the things that be of God**, but those that be of men.

Brethren, do we **savor the things of God** – or of this world?

Luke 9:22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

Luke 9:23 And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and **take up his cross daily**, and follow me.

Luke 9:24 For whosoever will [seek to] **save his life shall lose it:** but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

1Thessalonians 3:3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that **we are appointed** thereunto.

1Thessalonians 3:4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

We are not the same as the world – God will even the score – it's not for us to do.

2Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounds;

2Thessalonians 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

2Thessalonians 1:5 *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

2Thessalonians 1:6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

2Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

2Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Expect to suffer Brethren – if you are laid back in a comfort zone – which it sometimes seems to be the goal of some in the Church – you do not understand the Gospel message and you have not properly counted the cost.

Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to **suffer for His sake**;

Paul explains how we are called to suffer with Christ:

Philippians 3:10 That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the **fellowship of His sufferings**, being made to correspond unto His death.

Men of influence are beginning to say that our country of America **is dying**. Old England is no more. This is a new and **sad** day.

What will be the straw that breaks the camel's back? Our infrastructure is disintegrating, but no single factor will bring down our nation. Why? Because, it will not be the failure of one single system that will bring about the ultimate destruction of the end-time.

If that were the case, people would be able to say, "If only such and such... none of this would have happened, and Jesus Christ would not have had to return." No, brethren, there is going to be **total failure** of all worldly systems at the same time!

All men, including the Israelitish nations, will realize the utter hopelessness of this world's God-less ways.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, He [Jesus Christ] comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth **shall wail** because of Him.

Men will finally realize how futile all existence is without Jesus Christ ruling in their lives. There will be no second guessing the need for the Kingdom of God because history will have recorded that the result of mankind's best efforts was always ruin, failure, and devastation.

We need to realize that the root cause of our demise is the lack of Godly character. It is rejection of the True God, and disobedience to His Commandments.

The degeneration of the English-speaking peoples in areas such as morality, secular education, and spiritual values is rapidly taking place. This ever-growing trend has made us a people ripe for destruction.

Then, as Europe begins to strengthen and becomes a greater power – politically, religiously, militarily and economically – they will find that the weakened Israelitish peoples have made themselves an easy prey.

The European Beast power will simply inflict the "coup de grace" or deathblow – bringing to an end our mortally wounded Godless society.

The moral decline – the rejection of God and His ways – within America and the other Israelitish countries is the real cause of the coming obliteration of our society.

Look at the obvious signs of how our society is weakening from within:

The Ten Commandments are looked down upon with utter contempt. One parent homes are the norm, and same sex "unions" are politically correct. "Fatherless" births are increasing.

The gambling industry is growing, and the war against drugs is almost forgotten. Genetically modified (GM) foods from greedy agricultural practices and the medical profession's overuse of antibiotics are setting us up for the prophesied pestilence and disease epidemics of "Biblical" proportions.

God prophesied of Ephraim as a type of all Israelitish nations, that these pervasive and ungodly trends will finally result in a people that has made itself to be without substance.

Hosea 13:1-3 And now they sin more and more... according to their own understanding... Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew **that passes away**.

We need to recognize these and other end-time signs, for what they are – a warning to us, brethren, to be lively Christians in a dying world.

Are we like Moses – are we willing to suffer and follow in Christ's steps? Moses could have enjoyed all the luxury afforded those of royalty in Pharaoh's palace.

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Hebrews 11:25 Choosing rather to **suffer affliction** with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

End: Savor the Things of God