

Revelation 16:8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun and power was given unto him to scorch

men with fire.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of

God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

THE FOURTH VIAL

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The Day of God's Wrath

God is stirred because people are lining up with all kinds of religion and not truly repenting. Their lives are not giving God glory as He desires. Revelation 6:17 declares that the day of God's wrath is come, not speaking of His Second Coming, but a time when God was going to pour forth His wrath against those things which were contrary to His true Christianity.

There were three vials poured out against Babylon in the sixth-seal ministry; the fourth vial is poured out on the sun; then those first three vials are repeated under the seventh-seal ministry, the seventh and last seal. Revelation 18 says that Babylon was to get two cups. They gave her one cup in the sixth seal, and in the seventh and last seal age we are giving Babylon the second cup. Those seven vials, just as the seven trumpets, are divided to cover two generations, or two seal ages. The first three that we already have studied were truths that the sixth-seal ministry, beginning in 1886 A.D., poured out on Babylon when the reformation Church of God came forth in all her glory and power.

In this message, we are preaching on the break between the two ages. You may ask: "Why was there a break? Why did He pour out a vial on the sun?" Well, the first thing we have to understand is what the

sun is a symbol of. Second, we must understand why He poured wrath out on us. In our study, we have found that the sun is a symbol of the New Testament, or new covenant. The true church had risen above the moon (Old Testament) and was clothed in the sun; she had put on Christ, or the New Testament.

Holding the fact that the sun is a symbol of the New Testament, or new covenant, let's read Matthew 13:5-6, Jesus here talking about seeds, the Word of God, and how it falls on different hearts of men: "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."

He explains in verses 20-21: "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

Jesus used the expression that "when the sun was up," this individual is scorched and withers away because he has no root. We get the picture here of the New Testament as the sun. He shows us people who get a light experience with Christ: they receive the Word with joy when it is preached, but

they don't really sell out; there is no depth of experience. When the sun comes up (a standard being lifted up, the Gospel being lifted up), they get scorched and wither.

Jesus makes it very plain that if we sit under the sound preaching of God's Word, we must have a deep experience with God. It also very plainly teaches us that the sun is the New Testament. In Revelation 12:1, the sun was what the woman was clothed in. Why would God be stirred with the sun, the New Testament? Why would His anger be stirred until He poured out the vial of wrath on the New Testament?

Our Scripture text says that when He poured it out on the sun, men were scorched with great heat. The reason God became stirred in this period of time with the sun or New Testament is because of the way it is shining. Notice when He poured out on the New Testament, power was as given to this ministry to scorch men with great heat. God is not stirred in wrath against His Word, but against the way the sun is shining today, or the way the light of the Gospel is going forth. The New Testament truth can only shine as it is preached straight and lived straight.

The sixth-seal ministry faithfully poured out three vials on Babylon, so why did God have to pour out a vial on the New Testament? Because we fell right into this age of lukewarmness, carelessness, and

indifference where people do not put forth real force, power, and zeal in their preaching of the Word. The same spirit has taken hold of saints who are living the same way. Because of it, there is no repetition of those last three vials. Why has there been such a let up? It isn't because Babylon is healed; she needs the truth put on her today more than ever before. Truth is not being put on her because things have become too cold, dead, dry, and formal. So God is putting the heat back in the Word.

God Is Just

Our Scripture text says that He poured out a vial on the sun, and power was given to that ministry to scorch men with great heat. God is a just God; whenever the church gets to acting just like Babylon, He will put a vial on us just as quickly as He will on Babylon. That is exactly what He is doing right here. Brother, we are in an age when many places that call themselves the Church of God are as formal, dry, and dead as any place you could go in Babylon. Even right here, we who are endeavoring to stand for the truth are battling week after week against formality, deadness, coldness, and indifference in the hearts and minds of the people.

So God poured out a vial on the sun, and when He poured out the vial, He gave power to that ministry to scorch men. Why scorch men? Well, it is just like pressing clothes. You have to be extra careful with certain fabrics such as polyester; you have to either keep the iron or the cloth moving, or it is going to get scorched. Men get scorched under this message because they won't move. When God puts the heat on them and shows them what they need to do to get hot, and out of their lukewarmness and indifference, they won't move. When the iron comes by the next time, they are going to get scorched.

This fourth vial, according to history, tune, prophecy, and revela-

tion, is poured out just beyond 1930 right on up into this Laodicean age. The dragon is not satisfied to have paganism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and the many other "isms" of the world. He is not satisfied with holding them in a dead position; he is surrounding the camp of the saints. He is after you and me. That flood of false doctrines and false thoughts is still coming out of his mouth.

Paul called them "seducing spirits" that will sit on the shoulder of saints right while the man of God is preaching. These old seducing spirits will tell you that you don't have to listen to that; that is just his idea; you can get to Heaven without measuring to that Word. The devil has one thing in mind: to cool your experience, take out the heat, and leave you in coldness, indifference, and deadness.

When God poured out the vial on the sun, He didn't wither the sun. He put heat, or power, in it. In too many cases today, the New Testament is being preached in coldness and formality. False religion is telling the people that Jesus loves them. God is stirred because the devil has moved in such a way that the Gospel has lost its stirring force. Let's face it, unless we can get back to where the Gospel stirs us, unless we can get enough power to convince and convict the saints, we will never convict the world. Judgment begins at the house of God. If judgment laid to the line won't move the saints, there isn't any hope of moving the lost world.

God is not stirred a bit with the New Testament; it is as true and powerful as it ever was. The thing which stirs Him is the way it is shining forth. Men have shaded the truth in message and in life until in too many cases, there is no power to heal spiritual or physical infirmities. There is no power to bring down judgment on ungodly conditions about us. This situation—a lack of real fire and power—has done much to kill faith among God's people. It has been a discouraging factor in

the eyes of many honest hearts, and God is stirred.

The Power of Fire

We read in Malachi 3:13-18, 4:12: "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up yea, they that tempt God are eves delivered.

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

Here Malachi is prophesying four hundred years before Christ came. The first time, things had become so bad that the world couldn't tell who was serving God and who wasn't. It was just as conditions are today: the world is so much like the church and the church is so much like the word that you can't tell where one stops and the other starts. Malachi said that the day would come, speaking of the

day of the Lord in His first advent, when God would start a fire and burn the proud, the wicked, and put heat on people who were not living right.

At the same time it burned some people, it would be pleasingly nice to another people. This is one of the mysteries of the Gospel. People can sit in a crowd and listen to one Gospel message: some get burned up, get mad and walk out; others shake the preacher's hand and say, "That message strengthened me. I received good out of that message." When Malachi brings up the thought of fire burning up the stubble, or the proud and the wicked, it does not mean that it consumes them physically. Fire is one of the most familiar figures of divine working. Fire is one of the forces that man dreads, most of all when it gets out of control. Malachi is telling us that the operation of divine fire depends completely upon what it operates. The divine fire of God's Word will have a burning, scorching effect upon that one who is lost. The same fire will be a blessing to someone whose heart is right.

This is one of the most marked peculiarities of common fire: it has different qualities depending on what it is operating on. Fire scatters water, melts wax, destroys wood, and hardens clay. Fire purifies metal, makes silver more valuable, and makes dross worthless.

Works Will Be Tried by Fire

In 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, Paul sets forth some vivid truths that we need to consider: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones [precious truths of God's Word that will stand the fire], wood, hay, stubble [men's ideas and thoughts that cannot stand the fire]; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day [the Gospel day] shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire [the fire of God's Word]; and

the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. [You aren't going to receive a reward for getting saved; you will receive a reward for how you work after you get saved.] If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

It is possible that after you find an experience with Christ to put our time in building up systems that are contrary to God's Word. Sooner or later, God is going to bring you around where you hear the truth, and the truth will destroy all the work that you have put in any false system. This is the reason God wants us to get the message across to those who are true people of God, yet laboring in Babylon. Why? Their works are in vain. They are working to build up something that God says is false. They are leading people into that which God says to come out of. If they will sit under the fire of God's Word and obey it, they will be saved by the fire of God's Word, but all their works and efforts have to burn. Why? They are wood, hay, and stubble—they won't stand the fire of God's Word.

This fourth vial was poured out because too many people right in this day and time are wasting their time and effort at things which won't stand up according to God's Word. While they waste their time and effort on that, they are wasting the Church of God. Paul said he persecuted and wasted the Church of God. Too many people stand clear and say, "Well, I don't persecute the church." Well, are you wasting it? Are you standing in Gospel light? Do you claim to be a part of the church, yet you are putting your time in at earthly things and have no time for God's work? How long has it been since you have visited a backslidden one and told him you loved him?

Malachi 4:2 lets us know that while the fire was going to scorch some, it would do a healing work

and help others. It is just like the natural sun: all that are healthy in nature get revived and lift up their heads, but that which has no depth of root gets scorched and withers away. Oh, how much salvation is on the surface today. That is why people can't take any tribulation or trials. They wither out because there is no depth to their experience.

God wants you to get some roots in yourself. He wants you to get, as Paul said, rooted and grounded and built up in Him. When the devil goes to pluck you up, he has something on his hands. If your roots have no depth, with just one trial the devil just picks you up and throws you away. All it takes is a good wind of trial, and it blows you clear out of the ground. We need to get some depth to our experience where we can stand something for God.

Tares Amongst the Wheat

Because of a failure in this day and time to preach the truth with power, ungodliness has crept into the nominal church until many can't tell the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between those who truly serve God and those who don't serve God. Babylon wants to be included in the church because they join a church and sign a card. That same beast spirit, second beast, will come right over to the Church of God and make you feel you are a part because you come to God's Acres and sit in the congregation. No, don't say you are serving God because you come here, because you come twice on Sunday and on Wednesday night: No, it goes deeper than that.

God is stirred because there is not a clear line drawn between those who serve God and those who don't serve God. Since God wants the church to shine forth as the sun in full strength, He begins to put the heat on those things that need to be removed, which keep the church from shining as she ought.

Jesus taught this many places in

the Bible. We read in Matthew 13:24-30: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, [Matthew 25 shows the whole kingdom sleeping just before the Second Coming of Christ. While the church sleeps, the devil puts the tares right in among the wheat. Jesus makes it very plain that the good seed is the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the enemy who have made their way right in among the people of God.] his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

"But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

He explained the parable in verses 37-39: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world" The end of the world, according to Hebrews 9:26, began at Calvary; the end of the world is these last days. So, this harvest is to be in the end of the world.

We have a picture of something going on in this Gospel Day. He said in verses 41-42: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels [or His ministers], and they shall gather

out of his kingdom all things that offend [this is the kind of ministry that people are against, but this is the kind of ministry that God has today], and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire [The fire and furnace are in Zion, the church; Isaiah 31] there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." When Stephen stood and laid judgment on people who thought they were in the kingdom, when he put the heat on them and told them what they really were, the Bible says that they gnashed their teeth on him..

We read in verse 43, "Then [after the burning up of things that offend] shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." My friend, God is interested in the sun shining forth in its full clarity. The sun is the New Testament, and there is no other way for it to shine but through our living: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). There are too many things that offend. The truth is being shaded by too many people's lives, and God is stirred about it. He said that if we will gather out the things that offend, then the children of the kingdom will shine forth as the sun in its fullness. My friend, it will shed light for a darkened world.

Jesus as He Is

Let's take a look at Jesus. The story of Jesus has gotten so far from Him as He really is. Today, most people's picture of Jesus comes to their minds by some artist's conception. Artists have painted what they think He looks, but nobody knows what He looks like except what the Bible declares. If you read from Isaiah through to the Revelation, you will find what the Bible depicts Jesus to look like is a million miles from these nice looking young men that artists have painted.

First of all, Isaiah prophesied of

Him as a man of sorrow. He was not a man to be desired. As far as the natural eye could see, there was no beauty in him. His beauty can only be seen with the spiritual eyes. We read in Revelation 1:14-16: "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame .of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars [ministers]; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." Why was shining that way? Why did He appear like this? My friend, He was ready to put the heat on five of seven congregations which claimed to be the church; but were loaded down with things, that offended and did not line up with the standard that makes the Church of God the Church of God.

I want you to see that He is the same way today. When we as a congregation begin to act like any of those churches mentioned in the Revelation, He will put the heat on us. His attitude never changes. Unless you have protection of some kind, you are going to get scorched. Thank God, the church is a shadow; it is a tabernacle that keeps us from the heat. When God is scorching others, we are air-conditioned. When those outside the church are getting burned up from the New Testament being poured out, the church has a tabernacle from the heat.

Our Scripture text said that men are scorched with great heat. We are in the time when God is putting the heat on. Men are being scorched with great heat. What are the things that offend and keep the church from shining? One is men's thoughts. People who claim to be Christians sit right in the pew and challenge God's thoughts with their thoughts. Men's sayings, men's standards, and men's organizations are so working among us that the man Christ Jesus is hidden.

Isaiah depicted what happens when men get scorched with great heat. Isaiah 40:6-8 tells us: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

In the New Testament, we read in 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever: For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

James tells us: "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth . . ." (1:9-11). The truth of the matter is, friend, when we get right under the sound teaching of God's Word and believe it like it is, none of us has anything to glory in except the cross of Jesus Christ. Anything we have that is forth glorying in, God gave it to us.

Holding Truth in Unrighteousness

Our Scripture text says that men were scorched with great heat and blasphemed the name of God. Human spirits have so taken hold of men that when you put the truth on them and they get scorched with it, instead of saying, "Thank you, Lord,

for showing me," they turn right around and blaspheme God. How do they blaspheme God? Well, in many different ways.

The grace of God teaches us to live godly right in this present world, and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven (Romans 1:18) against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Here he is talking about people who hold the truth in unrighteousness even though they have a knowledge of the truth. They know what they ought to do, but in spite of that, they go on in their unrighteous way.

Just mark it down, whenever you get around where God is, He is going to pour out some wrath on you. What is the wrath of God? Paul said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:16 and 18). When God is good enough to get truth across to you and you know what you should do on certain lines, but in spite of it, you tromp it under your feet and go on your own unrighteous way, it stirs the wrath of God.

I am not just talking about unsaved people, but I am also talking about people who have found the right foundation, but are allowing things in their lives that are not according to truth and not according to righteousness. Friend, when you go on in spite of what God shows you, you restrain, hinder, and keep down the truth. Truth, by that individual's life, is checked, hindered, and held back. Truth, which is designed to bless, is stopped because of unrighteousness. That very sin, my friend, will extinguish the love and the desire for the truth of the Gospel. Right here is where people begin to lose their desire to come to church. There has to be something happen within your own experi-

ence; somebody else may have done terrible things, but you don't lose your desire for truth until you allow something to take place within your own life and your own experience. Truth is held in unrighteousness, in unrighteous thoughts and unrighteous desires.

The Gospel Demands Obedience

Now, friend, this doesn't happen in regard to secular truth. Sin doesn't repress the enthusiasm of the truth of science and other areas; men go right on in their unrighteousness and still have a desire to look into the truth of science. But, my friend, it is very different in regard to the truth that comes from God's Word. Why? The Gospel does not offer a mere abstract truth to excite speculation within you. Bible truth has great demands in it. One of the claims of the Gospel is obedience to God's Word, and it is not as easy to obey the Gospel as it is to admire it and to talk about it.

There are a lot of people on the fringe edges who admire the Gospel, but there is a vast difference between admiring it and obeying it. Friend, it takes a real heartfelt, burning experience of the Holy Spirit in your life to bring you to that place of obedience where you obey the Gospel. Truth prescribes not only the way we should believe, but also the way that we must walk; and to walk righteously is always harder than to believe righteously.

Still talking about men who hold the truth in unrighteousness, the truth of the Gospel is a rebuke to the life of sin. Just mark it down, you are listening to a man preach a perverted Gospel when he makes room for sin in a Christian's life. I care not who he is or where he comes from; he has perverted the Gospel. The truth of the Gospel is a rebuke to the life of sin. Every page in God's Word is dead against sin.

The individual who loves sin and has no wish to give it up, has a bent in his life towards keeping it and going on in it. He doesn't like

the rebuke of the Word. Friend, people don't like to sit and hear a preacher preach the Gospel that writes "Condemned" right across their hearts. No, that is not a good feeling, but that is exactly what the Gospel will do when you get around where the truth is preached. It will tell you what you really are in the sight of God.

So, my friend, right into our state of Egyptian darkness, Laodicean coldness, and Sardis deadness, the Son of righteousness has burst out, brightly and hotly. What for? To gather and cheer His elect and to wither everything that is contrary. Now I want to tell you something: sin cannot grow where the Gospel is. The Gospel preached with the fervency and power of the Holy Spirit will cause men to wither. So, God is putting the heat on to gather His elect, and to wither up and scorch carnal professors. Sad to say, some of them are scorched and moved into rage, hate, and judicial blindness.

One sheep who comes out of Babylon and stands in the sun of righteousness and all His glory is more trouble to a carnal minister and an earthly flock than a hostile army. They begin speaking things that false religion can't come up against.

So men were scorched with great heat and they blasphemed. They get so stirred in truth that they blaspheme and speak evil of the name of God, God's doctrines, and God's grace. They blaspheme Him in two ways. When Jesus was casting out devils, the Pharisees accused Him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Jesus answered, "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges" (Matthew 12:27).

He went on to let them know that He was casting them out in the name of the Father and by the power of God that was given Him as God's only Son, the second person of the Godhead. Jesus let them know that they were blaspheming.

They contributed the power of God to the power of Satan. Jesus was casting out devils by the power of God, but they said He was doing it by the devil.

There is nothing wrong with laying truth on a system, if it is of the devil. There are false systems of religion, such as the false Pentecostal movement, that are under the power of the devil. Just put it right on them. Why? It bears the earmark and manifests the spirit of the devil: it is uncontrollable. Mark this down, when any spirit gets hold of you, religious or otherwise, that you cannot control, it is always the devil.

The Spirit of God, according to 1 Corinthians 14, is subject to the prophets. God will never make you do anything. He will woo at your heart; He will inspire you; He will direct you, but He will never make you do anything. These old false Pentecostal spirits that take hold of people beyond their control are of the devil. If those poor people ever find freedom, somebody will have to lay hands on them and cast out that devilish spirit. On the other hand, my friend, there are things of God that people just get stirred at and say it is of the devil, so they blaspheme.

Lying

The second way people blaspheme is by lying, going right on professing when the truth has shown them that they are not right. In Revelation 2:9, Jesus said, ". . . I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews [or Christians], and are not . . ." Let's go back and read verse 9 of our Scripture text, "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory." John said these people blasphemed when they claimed to be children of God, and were not. How do we blaspheme? When we say we are a Christian, a child of God, when we are not.

Friend, God's name is a character

name; it is the only character name in the world. You can have the name Wilson, and have any kind of character. I was a Wilson when I was lost in sin. My name is still Wilson, and now I am living for God, by the grace of God, I am keeping my life clean. You can have the name Wesley or Luther, and have any kind of character. God is the only character name. To bear the name of God and to say you are a child of God, you must have the character, or the nature, of God within you.

The Bible plainly teaches that when you come in repentance, confessing to God, you are made partakers of His divine nature. What is His nature? God is a Spirit and after, through the blood of Jesus Christ, your heart is cleansed by faith in the blood, then God moves into your heart and life through the Spirit. Through that Spirit you have become a partaker of God's divine nature. The very moment your name is written down in the Lamb's Book of Life, you can call yourself a son of God, a child of God.

God is the only giver of a character name. That is why, if you were [read the genealogy of the world, there is none called the son of God from Adam to Christ. Paul makes it plain in 1 Corinthians 15 that Adam was just a living soul; the only life he had was life for himself. Jesus, however, as the second Adam, came as a quickening Spirit. Thank God, He not only had power to be the Son of God in Himself, but He also can make anyone else sons of God if they will let Him come into their hearts and lives.

So, it is blaspheming to claim you are a Christian, a child of God, and not possess the Spirit of God within your heart and life, because you are living contrary to God's nature. God is a Spirit, and His nature is holy. He says to His children, "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). When does holiness begin? When God comes in through the Spirit.

God told Moses to take off his

shoes because he was standing on holy ground. Moses had seen lots of bushes on fire, but that bush didn't burn up. God was in the bush, setting it on fire, and it was holy ground. Now, once God comes into your heart and life, thank God, is holy ground; it is a holy session. Through the grace and strength of God living within us, we are able to live a holy life.

Does Your Life Honor God?

Verse 9 of our Scripture text says that they repented not. Now, why does God do all this plaguing? To get you to repent. You have been trying to live a Christian life in your own strength and by your own human understanding; it has been too much man. What do we need to repent of? Well, if you haven't anything else to repent of, repent of your humanism. Brother, this is the thing that the devil is using against the people of God like never before—humanism. I realize we are all human, but the devil would like to make us so human that we cannot be spiritual. The devil wants to make us so human that we cannot be conquerors or overcomers. He is using humanism in a great way.

They repented not to give Him glory. How do you give God glory? There is not a way in the world for you and me to give Him glory but to turn from sin. People who profess Christianity while still living in sin are not giving God glory. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Brother, as long as you are living in sin, you are coming short of the glory of God.

On the other hand, when you allow God to deliver you from sin, His very presence will give you strength to live free from sin; then you can glorify God. Real Bible repentance is turning from sin and turning to God. So we give God the glory when we turn from sin. We honor Him by living a life of obedience unto Him.

Romans, Chapter 1, says that

when they knew God, they honored Him not as God. What happened? God turned them over to vile affections, made homosexuals out of them, and turned them loose to every kind of corruption imaginable.

Malachi 3:2 asks, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." Chapter 4, verses 1-2, tell us: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings"

Which way does the message affect you today? Did it burn you, or bless you? It is to be one or the other. If God's Word burns you, if the Word of God strikes you hard, remember that back of it, there is a God who loves you, who thinks you are too good to be lost. Unless you are awakened to your true condition, you will be lost. In His love, He is working to awaken you to your true condition on this side of a final judgment, while there is time to do something about it.

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