

## Our Father and Our God

### Part 14

By Boyd Yahn

Hello everyone, it is January the 9<sup>th</sup> of 2024 and this is part 14 of the Our Father and Our God series. Recently it has come up as to, why do I do what I do? Why do I send out studies, as is the case? My history in the COG (Church of God) goes back to January the first of 1983 when I attended my first Sabbath service in what was then the Worldwide Church of God.

0:00:32

I was a consulting geologist at the time and had spent approximately two years taking to task whether evolution or creationism was the truth. It takes a while to sort things out and the make a commitment one way or the other. Making such a change isn't something lightly considered.

0:00:54

Donna and I were baptized after the first feast that year in 1983 and the learning curve, coming from my heathenarian background, was incredibly steep. I had had no religious understanding really up until that part, other than knowing in Sunday school, at age 8, this whole thing was just a joke. So, I had some room to catch up.

0:01:18

So much to jettison, so many new things to embrace, yet it didn't take terribly long, some few years, until the learning curve stopped. And through the mid-80s through the 90s, the messages we heard became more and more fluff. In that time of concentrated fluff, drivel really, was a huge test for all when it became obvious great change was upon us.

0:01:47

While denying change from headquarters, frankly lying about it, as to the direction they were headed, I learned that in 1995 the local ministry had been told that if they wished to remain in the employee column, they had to accept Sunday, Christmas and Easter as being equivalent to the Sabbath and the Holydays.

0:02:13

They were told that each set of days was fine and you shouldn't have to stand against one or the other, but if you held to the understanding that the Sabbath and the Holydays were the only acceptable method of worship, you were done.

0:02:29

Our local pastor functioned under those rules and by 1997 it was clear there was a fly in the ointment. Finding out what had been set in motion, what they had been specifically told two years prior made sense of it all. The local congregation scattered to the four winds, many embracing the road to Rome and some not. It was a difficult time for all.

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While I didn't realize it at the time, most were not in covenant with God, myself included. They were in covenant with the church, and God calls that idolatry. That was, and still is, a huge problem. The ecclesia's head, which is supposed to be Christ, was in fact something much different, and willingly so.

0:03:30

There was a sense of community by being "in the church", as it were. We moved seamlessly to UCG (United Church of God) in 1998, and purely due to a manpower shortage of speakers, it occurred to me that I really had two choices, stick with the status-quo and grumble about the quality of the messages, or attempt to do something about it and step up to the plate.

0:03:54

I was a speaker in UCG, un-ordained, until just before Passover in 2016. All the while I had had the mistaken impression that we were actually supposed to teach from the Bible, God's words, when in fact we were supposed to teach from the booklets. Again, the church is your head, and 400 ministers couldn't possibly be wrong, just like the same 400 ministers in 1995, right.

0:04:28

We left over Passover issues, I guess it was about a dozen of us, and we had all independently concluded that things were not right there. What was being done wasn't biblical and we knew we had to change.

0:04:51

The choices made to us were the church way, and I was supposed to conduct the Passover service that year, along with the pastor, or the highway, when our request to keep Passover separately and then join it for the high day, where I was scheduled to speak.

0:05:08

Choosing to not have, the church, as your head can create a bit of turbulence as many people have actually found out. When we left, folks in Saskatoon's congregation said, "If you continue to speak, please send out what you do." And that started the process.

0:05:30

I was told at that time by the pastor, that since he had withdrawn his blessing from my speaking, or capacity to speak, somehow, I would no longer be able to, since the connection between the spirit that leads the ecclesia had somehow been severed. As if the connection between God and His ecclesia had been severed because somebody had said that was the case.

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I thought at the time, are you kidding me. Recently a brother told me, he had a visit from someone still in the corporation, and he was a bit astonished at what he concluded. In his view, the corporate attendee had so completely embraced what the church teaches, that anything contrary to it, would have to be a lie.

0:06:26

The authority and teachings of the church, as it were, had been completely raised above the scriptures themselves, and that is exactly the way it is to my experience. The ecclesia must never, ever allow anything or anyone to come between them and Christ, because that is the very definition of idolatry.

0:06:56

I've been accused of wanting to start my own church by more than one, and that's what they actually think, when that is the very source of the problem. People want to have someone between them and Christ, and Christ always, and without exception, pointed the ecclesia to the Father.

0:07:15

The studies that I send out are an attempt to articulate where I am in my understanding currently, and that is changing, as it should if we are growing in understanding, so that it might benefit those who would be doing the same and growing along. Folks are free to listen, unsubscribe, delete, send them on to people who think they might have some value. Or whatever they choose.

0:07:47

If they are of value, great. If folks find them a waste of time, then why bother listening? But it is my attempt to put something out there that is of value to those who wish to listen. The historical understanding, that if someone from the front speaks, that it's the last word in anything, is really quite poisonous to us.

0:08:18

All speakers, I don't care who it is, must be parsed and considered in one's own understanding, and one must be spiritually mature enough to do so. If after 40 years of being in the faith, critical thinking and listening skills aren't in place, we all might consider fixing that.

0: 08:36

Our Bibles are the guide to truth, and never mind an individual or a corporation. Some find value in these studies and others don't or simply won't listen, and that's fine. It's just the way it is. We really are all in a different place, and I'm fine with that.

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To get on with the whole study, let's go to John 17 and verses 21 – 23. This is Christ's prayer, and He really does articulate His wishes for the ecclesia. In John 17, verses 21 – 23, His prayer was:

*<sup>21</sup>that they all may be one,*

0:09:23

These are God's called.

*as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us,*

So, separate beings, of one purpose and one intent.

*that the world may believe that You sent Me. <sup>22</sup>And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:*

0:09:51

Christ's prayer is very plain in that regard; He wants us to be in unity with the father, like He is.

*<sup>23</sup>I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect*

So, the way to perfection is becoming at one, at one with God the Father, who is the source of it all, and Jesus Christ.

*in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

0:10:28

He wishes the ecclesia be one with Him, the Father. Notice the goal is to become perfect and that's what we would be if we were at one with Him, and that is referenced as being at one with God.

0:10:48

This exact same theme is stated in Matthew 5, and verse 48. Part of the beatitudes section, where it just tells us flat out what the end goal is. It says:

*<sup>48</sup>Therefore you*

Humanity, because He was speaking to the masses.

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*shall be perfect, just as (I)*

No, no, it doesn't say that, it says:

*just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

0:11:23

And we need to differentiate some of that stuff. The Father sets the bar, for He is perfect. Our elder brother is also perfect, because He is at one with the one who is, not the other way around.

0:11:50

We see the same thing in Revelation 15; Revelation 15, and verses 1 – 4. These folks had come to the realization of who they needed to be at one with, and not the beast. And then they were in a condition of perfection, having been made immortal and incorruptible. Let's read that.

*<sup>1</sup> Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. <sup>2</sup> And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire,*

0:12:34

The sea of glass is mentioned earlier in the book of Revelation. And what he sees is:

*and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass,*

In heaven.

*having harps of God.*

0:12:58

They have, in fact, received salvation, and are pictured here as being in heaven, and if you follow through the text the timing is before the bowl plagues are poured out. Their resurrection had to have occurred before that, and that is a problem for some; maybe many.

0:13:27

This particular passage, and I think I've mentioned it in the past, was mentioned to the pastor, by another fellow, an elder, and said, "What about the sea of glass and the people standing on it?" A promise was made to look at that, and get right on that. Ah, that's probably now 11 years ago, and the reason it hasn't been gotten back to is

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because this blows up traditional Church of God theology, which has to, as I mentioned in the opening piece, be on par, if something is on par, it's actually greater if you look at it, than the scriptures themselves.

0:14:10

You always go with the teachings of the church, not the authority of scripture.

*<sup>3</sup>They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God,*

So, these people, who have received salvation, they

*<sup>3</sup>They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:*

0:14:37

So, the Lamb is on board with the same song. And look at the realization these folks have come to.

*"Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty!*

There is no question who that is.

*Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints!*

So, who is our king? Well, it's God the Father, and these folks, in their resurrected state, realize that His ways are true and just, and that He is their king.

*<sup>4</sup>Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?*

0:15:21

So, it appears that they probably knew what God's name was, and these folks, in their resurrected state, realized that:

*For You alone are holy.*

The source of holiness is God the Father.

*For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested."*

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And it's interesting to look at this passage, the description of who this group of people is, is given to us, these are people who have the victory over the beast, over his image, his mark and the number of his name, so a very specific group.

0:16:08

Well, what about Abraham and Abel, Enoch and Issac, Jacob and king David? What about the folks who didn't face the beast directly? But that's another study and another story.

0:16:26

The oneness, if I can use that term, is given more clarity in the book of John. John 5, and verses 19 – 30 is where we'll have a look see, just at the moment here. John 5, and verses 19 – 30. Christ answered and said:

*<sup>19</sup>... "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.*

0:17:15

Is the Son of God, and for that matter, is a Son of God, regardless of stripe, is that what they do? Do they recognize the source of holiness is God the Father, as Christ does? He's our example, He's our older brother. Should the ecclesia not be similarly minded?

0:17:48

Whatever our Father, who is perfect, says and does, that's what we do.

*<sup>20</sup>For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does;*

And if we stop and think about that a little bit, why would there be a need if He were co-existent and co-eternal? What's the point, does that even make any sense? I think we've come to understand, it doesn't make any sense.

*and He (The Father) will show Him (Christ) greater works than these, that you may marvel. <sup>21</sup> For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.*

0:18:39

What capacity, what level of existence is the Son at, when He can give life to the dead? I would have to think that is a definition of God level existence and capacity. Going on:

*<sup>22</sup>For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,*

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Well, why exactly would He be able to do that? And look at the level here that we are talking about.

*<sup>23</sup>that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

0:19:34

So, has our Father given a very lofty position to His firstborn Son? Sure sounds like it to me.

*<sup>24</sup>“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me*

So, the Father sent the Son.

*has everlasting life,*

0:20:00

Is it important that we listen to what Christ's word actually is, because He spoke the words of the Father? And they're described in here as being life to us. Reading it again:

*I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.*

0:20:37

And that word is zoe, it's God life.

*<sup>25</sup>Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God;*

And this is interesting.

*and those who hear will live.*

0:20:56

Well, what about the ones who don't hear? So, this is talking of at least a partial resurrection, and we do know, as we are told, in Matthew 27, I think it is in verse 54. I'm trying to go by sense of memory here, that there were a lot of saints resurrected physically at the time of Christ's death, or shortly thereafter, at His resurrection, rather. So, we need to think about that.



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0:21:22

Was that a resurrection? Well, yes indeed it was.

*<sup>26</sup>For as the Father has life in Himself,*

The Father, we are told, who alone has immortality.

*so He (The Father) has granted the Son to have life in Himself,*

0:21:46

So, we can see here, when God makes a Son of God, He grants them to have life within themselves, just like He did with Christ. If Christ was a co-eternal, co-existent, which is the teaching of the Binity, this passage simply makes no sense at all. But, what we have here, is that Father has life within Himself and He has granted or He has given the Son to have life within Himself.

0:22:21

Christ was physical at the time, subject to dying, so this is obviously speaking about the time before that.

*<sup>27</sup>and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup>Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice*

0:22:49

As opposed to what we read before, that some, those who will hear, will live. This is a more complete description.

*<sup>29</sup>and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life,*

To spirit life.

*and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation*

0:23:10

So, Christ knew there was a time when that would occur. Notice:

*<sup>30</sup>I can of myself do nothing. As I hear,*

From who? God the Father.

*I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will*

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0:23:44

Did Christ have His own will, was He indeed a separate being? Yes.

*but the will of the Father who sent Me.*

Notice the oneness, the responsibility to one who is in scripture.

0:24:12

You know, and I think I should mention this at this time, there's a book called "The Screwtape Letters", and it is the story, written by C. S. Lewis actually, of how to deceive. And in the story, this young fellow, I think a little demon, had become horrified that somebody had discovered the truth.

0:24:46

So, he went to his uncle, who was a far more experienced person in the idea of deception, and he said, it's no problem, don't worry about that, we'll just sort it for them. So, basically one of the ways the enemy can confuse us, is to simply take obvious cameos and understanding of events that will happen, and instead of it happening at year 1000, well, let's just let them think that it happens in year 4000, and let's see how that works for them.

0:25:24

That is one of the methods by which we are deceived in many cases. And it's important to understand what we're up against. There is no lie big enough or small enough to be told, to throw something underneath our feet to cause us to trip up, and I don't think that is generally realized.

0:25:51

So, in the past, what has actually happened, is that, we, I, others, have been reading scriptures about a certain resurrection, all the while having us think it's another resurrection entirely, and you can see where it would cause all kinds of problems. We need to be aware of the tactics of our enemy.

0:26:23

If Christ, getting back to the story, if Christ as an elder brother to us, operates this way, He does what His Father shows Him to do, you don't suppose the same understanding of behavior would apply to the ecclesia, who are being made over in the image of Christ, as we have recently looked at?

0:26:51

In John 12, verses 49 and 50, Christ says:

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<sup>49</sup>*For I have not spoken on My own authority;*

He was at one with the Father.

*but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.* <sup>50</sup>*And I know that His command is everlasting life.*

That's what He wants for those who will become at one with Him.

*Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*

0:27:29

And we read, in other places, where Christ identified those who are His brothers and sisters as those who do the will of God. All roads point to being at one with the source of holiness, and that is Yehovah. He is our physical Father, at this point in time, and He is our spiritual Father now, and He will retain that position, when we are spirit, the ecclesia, He will be our spiritual Father and also our God.

0:28:16

Christ does indeed say He has His own will, He is a separate being. He is not part of a Binity or Trinity. But, in recognition of what He stated, that the Father was greater than He, He always submitted His will to the Father, regardless of the circumstance.

0:28:42

Do you suppose that will become our lot? Will we be so submitted to God, as part of the ecclesia, as immortal incorruptible beings, that we will voluntarily submit to whatever directive God gives us to fulfill? Is that where we are going to go?

0:29:08

And you know, when Christ's circumstance was really in tough, we read about that, Luke 22:42.

<sup>42</sup>... *"Father, if it is your will,*

Again, a reference to the One He was at one with.

*(take) this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will,*

Another confirmation that He was a separate being, He had his own will. But He had submitted it to the Father's will.

*but yours, be done."*

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And He knew full well, if you go back to Psalm 22, you can read where Christ, through David, spoke about what He would be going through. He knew, full well, exactly what he would be going through.

0:29:55

We can see the confirmation of the application of this in Isaiah 66; Isaiah 66, and verses 1 and 2. Our calling is exactly the same as Christ's, our elder brother. Let's read this:

*<sup>1</sup> Thus says Yehovah: "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? <sup>2</sup>For all those things My hand has made,*

0:30:29

So, we walked through that, the Father is the Creator.

*and all those things exist," Says Yehovah. "But on this one will I look:*

So, who is He going to be looking down upon, saying, you know, I think I can work with that.

*on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.*

0:30:56

This is our Father's will, do we recognize that? When the ecclesia are made over in the image of Christ, do we suppose that a key part of incorruptibility, maybe even the necessity, will be what we read in Isaiah 11? Isaiah 11, verses 1 – 3. We're, speaking of Christ, let's read that, therefore:

*<sup>1</sup> There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

0:31:40

Obviously, a reference to Christ.

*<sup>2</sup>The Spirit of Yehovah shall rest upon Him,*

He will be in line with the thinking of the Father. He'll have:

*... wisdom and understanding, ... counsel and might,*

He'll have:

*... of knowledge*

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And He'll have the mental disposition, the Spirit

*... of the fear of Yehovah. <sup>3</sup>His delight is in the fear of Yehovah,*

0:32:15

So, if we were made incorruptible and immortal, and God gave us the Spirit, where our mental disposition would be delighting in the fear of Yehovah, always putting Him first, always putting His will first, even though we have separate wills. Do you think that might be a way for the Father, who can put those things in there at His choosing, to cement His Sons into a sinless condition for all eternity?

0:32:58

If this passage was what was given to God's firstborn Son, how likely might it be His brethren will be given the same? Maybe highly likely? Yehovah can put into our spirit whatever He likes, and we can see here what Yehovah put in the spirit of His firstborn Son. And He will do so, at our choosing, that we really want that, and His choosing to fulfill what He has promised. We must first choose Him, so that then He will choose us.

0:33:43

Although it seems obvious to do the will of God, and that is to become at one with Him, is there an outside chance it might be a good idea to know what His will is? This is an area that we need to focus and concentrate on if we are to fulfill, yes, you and I can fulfill Christ's prayer, by desiring to be at one with Him and the Father, in harmony with God's will for us.

0:34:25

His will for us is to come to reject the things articulated in Galatians 5, and Galatians 5, and we touched on that in the previous message, where His will is made rather plain to us. We are to reject the things that are not of His spirit, and we see that of course in Galatians 19 – 21, and embrace the proclivities, and qualities of Galatians 5, verses 22 and 23.

*<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit*

0:35:13

The Spirit is God the Father and His presence in us.

*is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

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0:35:42

We are to become a reflection of our Father and our God, as Christ is. This is the template that we need to follow. Do we come to understand what these terms actually mean? And, you know, in the previous message we walked through some of the meanings of those words in Galatians 5:20 in an effort to identify exactly what they are, and how some of those proclivities are still within us.

0:36:18

When we have those things in our spirit, we are at one with a different Father, and that is a problem. We need to deal with that. We saw how doctrinal differences can keep us in Galatians 5, verses 19 – 21, while neglecting or overlooking Galatians 5:22 and 23. It's a classic, look here, don't look there, misdirection. And we're shown that, that's one of the other tools that Satan uses; you guys concentrate on this, and maybe don't look so much on this.

0:37:19

Have you ever come across somebody in "the church" and they are absolutely miserable, nothing is ever good enough, nobody can do the right thing, if, somehow, somebody turns left, it should have been right, and if somebody turned right, it should have been left. Never, ever, happy. Absolutely miserable.

0:37:50

And have you ever wondered, and looked at those kinds of situations, and said, "You know, I don't see any of the fruit of the spirit at all." They have knowledge, but as far as the fruit of the spirit showing up in their lives, it just doesn't seem to have a place, and it can be problematic.

0:38:16

If we go to I Corinthians 13, which is the love chapter; I Corinthians 13, things are actually put in perspective here, and we'll read verses 1 – about 7 or 8.

*<sup>1</sup> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love,*

God is love, so, if we want to have love, we have to be the same as God.

*I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love,*

0:39:07

Not at one with God.

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*I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

0:39:24

So, there is human goodness, and goodness is one of the fruits of the Spirit, do you think it might be a good idea looking up goodness as the Bible would use it, because that's one of the proclivities and features of the mind of God, that we are supposed to be at one with.

0:39:49

Going on:

*<sup>4</sup>Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy;*

Has anybody ever seen any envy in people, even within the Church of God?

*love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup>does not behave rudely,*

0:40:20

Doesn't, you know, have you ever tried to do something for somebody, and it doesn't matter what you do, you should have done more, or you should have done differently. You know, there is a saying in this world, "No good deed goes unpunished." And boy, is that ever true.

0:40:36

*does not seek its own*

Love would seek God, not the self.

*is not provoked thinks no evil;*

So, here we have, you know, an expression of what love actually is, given to us, defined biblically for us, and it's one of the fruits of God's spirit; there is no law against that.

*<sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in iniquity,*

0:41:23

You know, when we see something nasty and bad out there happening in the world or in our lives, or somebody gets theirs, are we happy about that, do we rejoice? You know, we are supposed to rejoice in the truth.

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*but rejoices in the truth;*

Who exactly is the truth? It's God the Father. He is it's source.

*<sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

0:41:59

So, when God the Father, or Jesus Christ tells us something, do we actually believe it? My experience has been, maybe not so much.

*<sup>8</sup>Love never fails.*

God never fails.

*But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.*

0:42:26

So, do we have, if we go back to what's mentioned in the Screwtape Letters, can we see, in terms of the so-called doctrinal differences that are out there, where there could be a problem? Are we being focused, in many cases, into Galatians 5:19 – 21, just over doctrinal differences? Will that bring out some of those wrong fruits, where it shows us who our Father really is, or do we concentrate on verses 22 and 23?

0:43:14

What do we do there, how do we actually process that? You know again, what I try to do on these studies is to articulate what I believe I've come to understand. Try and articulate it as clearly as I possibly can, so there is no ambiguity or confusion. I might not have it all right, probably don't, but instead of bickering and wrangling, should we not concentrate on the study and the understanding of others, and source it and parse it, and still retain verse 22? Should we not do that?

0:44:09

Because if we go to Matthew 5, 6 and 7, what is that all about? It is about the beautiful attitudes. I think we need to think about that, and embrace God's will on that, of what we should be choosing. And you can see where Satan has set the various fragments of the whole religious world against each other, for a variety of reasons. And should we not have a collective effort to try and understand the truth?

0:44:57

Again, like I mentioned, it's poisonous to not parse and consider and think about what we are being told.



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I don't care who it's from, we need to filter that, and we need to be spiritually mature enough to do that, and not allow those wrong things to show up in our lives. We just can't let that happen.

0:45:29

So, brethren, let's strive and try to be at one with the will of God and maybe our studies in the future should be focused on, what exactly is the will of God in this area, or that area or the next area. Because, hopefully, from this study, it's shown that positions like Kings and Priests will be given to those who are at one with God, and like Christ, only speaking what a Father told Him to say, or Him to say, and what to do, so that we as humans can direct our steps. Will that not be exactly the role that we will be functioning in, in the kingdom of God, where the ecclesia will be totally at one with our Father and our God?