

What It *Really* Means to Keep God's Word

by Steve Barwick

Most people think keeping God's Word means studious obedience to the commandments. But that's not the case. Obedience to God's commandments is vital, of course. It keeps sin at bay. It brings about God's manifold blessings. And it makes for a very happy life in the long run.

But that's *not* what it means to "keep God's Word." And knowing what it actually means sheds new light on what's entailed in your job for the Lord in the final days of this flesh earth age.

So in the course of this study, let's take a good long look at that phrase "keep God's Word," and in particular, at both the Hebrew and Greek definitions of the word "keep" and how the word is used throughout key Bible passages. I promise, it will open up your understanding of your primary duty to your heavenly Father in the final days of this flesh earth age as the modern church continues its headlong freefall into apostasy.

The New Testament Greek word most often translated "keep" (in relation to keeping God's Word) is Strong's 5083, *tereo*, which means "a watch," as in the military term "standing watch." But more specifically, it means or "to guard from loss or injury by keeping the eye upon it."

G5083

τηρέω

tēreō

tay-reh'-o

From τηρός *teros* (*a watch*; perhaps akin to G2334); **to guard (from loss or injury, properly by keeping the eye upon.**

It's the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew word *shamar* (Strong's 8104) which is first used in Genesis 2:15 and which has virtually the identical meaning to *tereo*, i.e., "to hedge about" and "to guard, protect, attend to, observe, watch over."

In other words, Christians are to keep God's Word *by watching over it with open eyes and guarding it from loss or injury.*

Keeping that definition in mind, let's begin our study on this topic in the great book of Revelation, chapter 22:18-19...

Rev 22:18 -- For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall **add** unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

Rev 22:19 -- And if any man shall **take away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

The Scripture says it's an extremely serious and potentially *life-threatening* offense to distort God's Word by adding anything to it, or by subtracting anything from it. As God's faithful servants, we're to watch over God's Word like a military sentry, and *preserve* it exactly as it's written.

Man tends to add his vain religious traditions to God's Word, such as holding Ishtar (i.e., Easter) celebrations instead of holding the proper, Bible-based celebration of Passover. Or teaching little children that Eve ate an apple, when the word "apple" appears nowhere in the Genesis account of the Garden of Eden, and what Eve actually partook of (i.e., the *forbidden fruit* known as adultery) resulted in the birth of a murderous child named Cain (I John 3:12; John 8:42-44).

Modern church tradition also teaches God's children to await the any-moment-now rapture "Jesus" (who comes at the sixth trumpet and is actually the antichrist), instead of teaching God's children to faithfully wait for the advent of the *true* Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which does not happen until the 7th trump. This puts virtually every Christian who believes that "Jesus can come at any moment now" in direct opposition to what the Bible actually says (II Thessalonians 2:1-4).

What's more, modern Christians tend to gloss over, or worse yet, completely *eliminate* those parts of God's Word that don't fit in with their church traditions.

For example, the Scriptures about the false Jews and their blasphemies (i.e., Revelation 2:9 and 3:9) are almost never discussed in church. Why? Because church tradition contradicts God's Word on the matter. Church tradition teaches that the *synagogue Jews* of today are "God's chosen people" -- a people who, by their own admission, hate, loathe and despise Jesus Christ, Who as we'll see in this study, is God in the flesh. The Scripture tells us that God's chosen people of this final generation are actually *believers* in Christ (Galations 3:7-9), not *unbelievers* (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

So religious tradition dilutes and distorts the truth of God's Word. And it's the job of God's faithful servants to set the record straight and keep it set straight. We're to guard God's Word from loss or injury by keeping a watchful eye upon it, and correcting the mis-teachings wherever possible.

Because of the plethora of *additions* to God's Word and *omissions* from God's Word in the churches, God's children of this final generation are either completely oblivious to what His Word actually states on most key topics, or they're so thoroughly deceived on those topics by church tradition replacing what God's Word actually says, that their very souls are at risk.

That's precisely why our heavenly Father has told us to preserve His Word *unmarred*...to guard over it and protect it from loss or injury through careful watchfulness.

When we fail to do so, the only ones that it ultimately harms are our own children, and their progeny. In other words, when we fail to do our duty to “keep God’s Word,” *future generations* grow up with a grossly distorted view of God’s Word that ultimately estranges them from Jesus Christ and from our heavenly Father and His eternal family household.

When You “Keep” God’s Word Blessings and Persecutions Follow

When you work to watch over and guard God’s Word from loss or injury, two important things happen:

One, you’re *blessed* immensely by your heavenly Father. The blessings, as you’re about to see below, are absolutely astonishing.

And two, you’re *persecuted* by our old adversary the devil for refusing to cave in to the growing body of false doctrine and religious traditions that make God’s Word void.

So let’s start this study by taking a quick look at the blessings from God *and* the persecution from Satan that comes to those who “keep” God’s Word by watching over it with open eyes and preserving it from loss or injury.

We’ll start in Revelation chapter three, with the *blessings* from God upon those who “keep” His Word. Then we’ll go to Revelation chapter 12 to understand the *persecutions* from Satan that can be expected by those who faithfully “keep” the Lord’s Word.

Revelation 3: The Blessings for “Keeping” God’s Word

In the following verses, Christ Himself is addressing the faithful church of Philadelphia, which was one of the major Christian churches of St. John’s time that stood firmly grounded in His Word, watching over it and guarding it from loss or injury.

Let’s take a quick look at what our Lord and Savior has to say to the faithful church of Philadelphia:

Rev 3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

Here Christ identifies Himself, letting us know that He’s the heir of David destined to inherit all things. He’s also in control of who gets into His eternal kingdom, and who doesn’t. He holds the key to salvation. And He’s addressing the faithful Philadelphia church.

Rev 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

The word “know” in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *eido* (i.e., Strong’s G-1492), which means to know something by careful observation. In other words, Christ is saying to the church of Philadelphia “I’ve *observed* your works.” He keeps His eyes on all of His servants and notes their works, good or bad.

It’s important to understand that Christ spells out two key criteria in this verse for having the “open door” of wisdom, knowledge and eternal life set before you. One, you must “*keep*” His Word (i.e., “and hast kept my word”). And two, you must not deny His name when it comes your time to be delivered up to testify at those great trials described in Mark chapter 13.

The word “kept” in the above verse is our Greek word *tereo* (i.e., Strong’s G-5083), meaning to “watch over in order to guard from loss or injury,” i.e., *to preserve unmarred by guarding over with open eyes*.

So in this verse Christ tells us that the ongoing act of preserving His Word unmarred (which is to say, not adding religious traditions in to His Word, nor throwing anything out of His Word), is critical to His view of your faithfulness.

What’s more, not caving in to the temptation to deny His name when you’re under pressure to do so is also critical to His view of your faithfulness. These are the two main criteria that bring you into His presence and trigger the blessings we’re about to take a look at as we move along in these verses.

Next, our Lord goes on to make a revelation that the vast majority of the Christian church today either leaves out of their teachings, or misteaches.

Rev 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

For the most part, the *synagogue Jews* of today are a people who only claim to be Jews. But in reality, they’re not of the Biblical tribe of Judah at all. Nor are they of any of other 11 tribes of Israel. They’re simply lying. In other words, they’re play-acting the role of Jews, i.e., pretending to be members of the Biblical tribe of Judah, when in reality they’re not even remotely of God’s chosen people. Those are not my words, beloved. They’re your Lord and Savior’s. So you ought to pay particular attention to the verse above if your church teaches differently.

As Christ’s half-brother, St. Jude, had warned many years earlier, “*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Jude 1:4).

If they claim to be a Jew...attend synagogue...and deny our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...then they're probably of these "certain men crept in unawares."

The word "unawares," as used by St. Jude, is translated from the Greek word *pareisduno* (i.e., Strong's G-3921) which means "to lodge stealthily alongside."

Yes, the false Jews -- who are actually descendants of Cain -- crept right into Jerusalem long ago, and worked their ways into the synagogues, and gradually took them over. They're the very same money-changer "Jews" Christ drove out of the temple with a whip. And they're the very same "Jews" who, with murder in their hearts from their ancient father, Cain, incited the mobs to scream "Crucify Him!" when Christ was being tried by Pilate, who wanted to allow Christ to go free.

It's important to understand that our elder brother Judah largely Christianized long ago -- that is to say, the tribe of Judah converted from Judaism to Christianity when the Gospel message was first spread throughout the world. They recognized Christ as the Messiah of God, and embraced the Gospel message.

But the *synagogue Jews* did not. They remained true to the Talmud and other so-called "holy books" of Judaism which claim that Jesus Christ was a fake messiah.

So in the two verses we've looked at above, Jesus says He's going to make the false Jews know beyond any shadow of a doubt that the ones He loves are those who have "kept" His Word, which is to say, have guarded over His Word with open eyes in order to preserve it from loss or injury. These are otherwise known as God's elect, beloved.

Rev 3:10 Because thou hast **kept** the word of my patience, **I also will keep** thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

There's our key words "kept" and "keep" again. In both cases they're translated from the Greek word *tereo* (i.e., Strong's G-5083) meaning "to watch over so as to guard from loss or injury," which is to say, to *preserve unmarred by watching over with open eyes*.

This faithful church of Philadelphia -- which represents God's elect servants of the final generation -- had "kept" God's "word of patience." In the original Greek tongue, that means they stood watch over God's Word of *patient endurance* and didn't let the long passage of time distort or dilute the original meaning of His Word.

While other churches, over the long course of time, caved in to political correctness and allowed the false Jews to portray themselves as "God's chosen people," this church stood firmly in the truth, refusing to be conformed to empty church tradition or even remotely allowing God's Word to be diluted with falsehood.

In other words, they stayed *true* to the Word of God.

In return for keeping that crucial message about the false Jews alive -- without loss of meaning, and without empty religious tradition added in to muddle up the meaning -- Christ makes the following promise to the members of this faithful church: “I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all of the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

Wow. Think about that. By refusing to cave in to empty religious traditions, but instead guarding and preserving God’s Word unmarred, our Lord and Savior will *preserve you unmarred* from the hour of temptation, which is Satan’s “hour” on this earth in the final days of this flesh age, just before Christ’s Second Advent.

In other words, Christ won’t let you fall during the great tribulation. And it’s all because you didn’t let His *Word* fall when false doctrine and church tradition began to creep in and replace it over the long course of time.

During the great tribulation of the antichrist, the faith of the whole world will be tried. But God’s faithful servants will be *guarded and preserved* from falling during that precarious time in which Satan arrives to this earth at the very seat of the false Jews in Jerusalem, and “deceives the whole world” into worshiping him as the Messiah of God (Revelation 12:9; Revelation 13:8).

Rev 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Here Christ tells the faithful church of Philadelphia that when it’s time for His second advent, everything is going to happen very quickly. And at that time they’ll need to “hold that fast” (i.e., “use strength to retain”) their knowledge of God’s Word, for such will be the pressure to fall into line with the rest of the world and worship the antichrist.

In other words, the time will come when there will be a lot of pressure to *refrain* from manning the sentry post over God’s Word and preserving it unmarred. The temptation to go along with the crowd and even to deny the Lord Jesus Christ and accept with open arms the false Christ, which is Satan in his role as the antichrist, will be great.

But God’s faithful servants will not do so. They’ll faithfully continue to stand the sentry watch over God’s Word and preserve it exactly as it’s written, just as the faithful church of Philadelphia did centuries ago.

Rev 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

The rewards are awesome, beloved, for keeping God’s Word (i.e., for guarding over it with a

watchful eye and preserving it *unmarred by false doctrine and empty religious tradition*) as well as for refusing to deny His name when the false Christ arrives. It's these two distinctive characteristics that make you an overcomer, beloved. In the Greek tongue, the word "overcomer" means a *conqueror*. You conquer Satan and his helpers by *keeping God's Word*.

Your first reward for "keeping" God's Word is that you get to dwell in the temple of God with the Lord Himself. Not just dwell there, but become a "pillar," which is to say, a most prominent member.

Christ says He'll also write God's name upon you, which means He's going to write you into the eternal family household. He's putting His name on you. He's the Son of God, and you're part of His body. And just as He carries God's name (the name "Jesus" is *Yahshuah* in the Hebrew language, meaning "YHVH Savior") so too will you carry God's name as a family sign of respect.

Yes, just as an earthly child generally carries his or her father's surname, so in the eternity you'll carry God's name (more on that later in the study when we visit John chapter 17).

The above verse tells us that He's also going to write upon you the name of the eternal city of God, meaning you'll be a *citizen of the eternity* -- a member in good standing of His eternal family household.

As background, the eternal city of New Jerusalem will indeed have a new name at that time. That new name is "YHVH Shamah," meaning "the Lord is there," or, even better translated, "the Self-Existent One is there" (Ezekiel 48:35). Since your heavenly Father YHVH dwells *within you* through the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, it's quite an appropriate name to have written upon you at that time. Think about it. Meditate on it. This is actually pretty deep stuff. When God writes the name of His city upon you -- YHVH Shamah -- He's saying you're part and parcel of that eternal city. You're a brick in the city wall, so to speak.

You see, in Revelation 21:2, when we're told, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*," that means the city of God, new Jerusalem, is composed of *people*, rather than of brick-and-mortar buildings.

Come with me into the spiritual realm on this. We'll be in the spiritual dimension at that time, not the physical dimension. So don't think in physical terms. Faithful Christian overcomers will be the spiritual "bricks" (so to speak) that make up the eternal city. The faithful body of Christ *is* the city known as New Jerusalem. And that city will be renamed "YHVH is there" because He dwells *within each and every one of us*.

In short, this verse certifies, straight from the mouth of Jesus Christ, that those who "keep His Word" *now*, in this flesh age, will *then* become an intricate part of His eternal dwelling place in the spiritual age to come.

Finally, Christ is going to write upon you His new name. You'll find that new name written in

Revelation 19:13. It's "The Word of God." Don't let it throw you. Having His new name written upon you simply means you're a certified faithful carrier of His Word. You "kept" that Word. You watched over it with open eyes, jealously guarded it, and never allowed it to suffer loss or injury. Therefore, it will be *written upon you*, and upon all faithful Christian overcomers. The Word of God, in essence, becomes coded into your being. If I can use computer terminology for a moment, God's Word becomes your *spiritual operating system* at that time. It will be your spiritual "DNA."

Rev 3:13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Do you have an ear to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying unto the churches? If you can't grasp the enormity of what you've just learned, set it aside and meditate on it later. It's a beautiful message, beloved. God's going to be putting a lot of trust and responsibility in you at that time, in return for your faithfulness to His Word, today. But you have to earn it *now*, to obtain it *then*.

The bottom line is that when you "keep God's Word" in this flesh age, you'll be blessed immensely in the age to come for having done so. As it's written in Psalm 37:34, "*Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.*" In that verse the word "keep" is translated from the Hebrew word we looked at earlier, *shamar* (i.e., Strong's H-8104), which is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word for "keep," *tereo*, which we've been studying. It too means "to guard, protect, attend to, watch over."

When we keep His word, He exalts us (i.e., promotes us in rank) to inherit the land. We even get to see the wicked ones, Satan and his children, go down in the lake of fire at the great white throne judgment.

But while keeping God's Word today earns you a high position in the kingdom after Christ's Second Advent, it *automatically* makes you an enemy of Satan in this flesh age. After all, Satan's job is to tangle God's Word up in false doctrine and religious traditions so that Christians will unwittingly become estranged through deception from God and His family household.

And he'll do his part to trip *you* up, through persecution, both now, and particularly when he arrives in his role as the false Christ. Why? Because when he arrives, he finds you doing something he abhors -- watchfully guarding over and preserving the very Word of God he wants to tear down.

Revelation 12: The Persecution for "Keeping" God's Word

Now that we've looked at the awesome blessings for "keeping" God's Word by watching over it and guarding it from loss or injury, let's take a quick look at the *persecution* God's faithful servants will have to endure for their faithfulness to His Word and for their readiness to preserve it unmarried by false doctrine and religious tradition.

And while we're looking at the persecution Satan will bring against us, let's also keep our eyes peeled for that key word again, i.e., "keep":

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Many of you know these passages by heart. So I'll keep the explanation simple. In the final days of this flesh earth age, Michael and the faithful angels of Jesus Christ do battle *in heaven* against the dragon and his fallen angels. It's that simple. It's war in heaven. But as you'll see it's about to spill over onto the earth.

Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

Satan and his fallen angels lose the battle. They're no match for Michael the archangel and the faithful angels of Jesus Christ.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Satan and his fallen angels will be cast out of heaven, and down onto this earth, *physically*. You'll be able to see them with your own eyes when they arrive onto the scene in Jerusalem, where the false Jews will proclaim them to be the Lord Most High and His angels. God's faithful elect know better, however.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Satan's expulsion from heaven and subsequent arrival to this earth signals Christ's Second Advent.

We know from II Thessalonians 2:1-4 that Satan arrives to this earth shortly *before* Jesus Christ, and that his arrival causes mass worldwide apostasy, which is to say, *Christians* of this world flock to embrace him, erroneously believing him to be Jesus.

Members of other religions will also flock to embrace him, believing him to be the promised savior of their own religion. Every religion is waiting for a savior, beloved. The Muslims have their Madhi, for example. The Hindu have their Kalki. Even the Buddhists believe a "Fifth Buddha" named Maitreya is coming to show them the way. And the false Jews have a messiah they believe will lead to Jewish conquest of the entire world.

Now listen up for me:

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Christ's faithful servants know God's Word intimately, because they put the very focus of their being upon His Word rather than upon church tradition. And they faithfully stand watchful guard over it. So they won't fall to Satan's wiles when he arrives. They stick with the blood of the Passover Lamb of God. And they refuse to accept the false messiah and the many benefits he'll be promising the people of this world for following him (Daniel 11:24).

What's more, Christ's faithful servants will allow the Lord to speak through them (i.e., "by the word of their testimony") at those trials described in Mark 13, even while under penalty of death from Satan for failing to bow the knee to him (Romans 11:4-5).

But they don't fear or falter at all, even under penalty of death, because they know the Word of God has warned them in advance how it will be in those days. As it's written, "*And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*" (Mark 13:13). And also "*...ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish*" (Luke 21:17-18).

In other words, Christ's faithful servants are prepared in advance -- mentally and spiritually -- stand firmly in Christ's redeeming blood and on the solid foundation of the Word of God, which they watchfully guard over and protect from loss or injury. And they won't let go of either one. Therefore, Satan's empty threats mean nothing to them. Their strength is in the Lord and His Word.

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Once Satan arrives to this earth with his fallen angels, he'll only have "but a short time" to work his great deception.

Revelation 9:11 tells us that Satan – referred to in that verse as the "angel of the bottomless pit" as well as Abaddon (i.e., destruction) and Apollyon (i.e., destroyer) – will only have *five months* to work his great deception on the people of this earth (see Revelation 9:5 and 9:10).

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

Here comes the persecution. The "woman which brought forth the man child," of course, is mother Mary. Just as she conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit and carried the Living Word of God in her bosom, so God's faithful servants of these end days carry the unmarred Word of God in their bosoms. They do so through daily study, and through the power and in-dwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

That means *you*, like the blessed virgin Mary, have been impregnated (spiritually speaking) with the Word of God. And Satan *hates* you for it. At his arrival, he'll begin persecuting those who "keep" (i.e., watch over and guard from loss or injury) God's Word and refuse to abort it during the great worldwide apostasy his arrival to this earth triggers.

Rev 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

God takes care of His own. Just as He warned Joseph and Mary in a dream to take the Holy Child to Egypt when Herod was murdering the most recently born babies in an attempt to prevent the first advent of the Lord, so your heavenly Father will intervene supernaturally to protect *you*, the "woman" (i.e., Christ's wife) who carries God's precious Word in her bosom and guards over it.

I'm speaking spiritually, of course. I hope you can understand the analogy. You "keep" His Word *and He'll use it to nourish you and protect you from Satan*. It's really that simple. That's why you never want to allow His Word to be diluted or otherwise distorted. Your future blessings and protection depend upon it. Indeed, your eternal life depends upon it.

Rev 12:15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

This is what's often referred to as Satan's great flood of lies. Just as Christ's Word is known as the "living waters" or "water of life," so Satan's words are symbolized as the raging flood waters of death. Like a physical flood that destroys everything in its path, Satan's flood of lies brings only spiritual destruction to all who unwittingly allow themselves to be swept away by it.

Rev 12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

You know when this happens, beloved. At Christ's Second Advent that great earthquake strikes Jerusalem, and Satan's 7,000 fallen angels who carry his deceptive words to the people of this earth are slain in an instant (Revelation 11:13). Simultaneously, the "remnant," which is to say, God's faithful servants, give glory to Him for intervening on their behalf.

Like the Korahites of Old Testament times who arrogantly and presumptuously stood against Moses and were swallowed up in a great earthquake (Numbers 16:31-35), so Satan's fallen angels – his brash and arrogant mouthpieces on this earth -- will be swallowed up and destroyed in a great quake from God, as well. And it will happen right there in Jerusalem at the Lord's Second Advent. That will put a sudden screeching halt to Satan's flood of lies.

Now sharpen up, beloved. Here comes that word "keep" again:

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Satan takes his warfare (i.e., spiritual battle, or spiritual persecution) to the “remnant of her seed,” which is to say, to God’s faithful servants of the final days of this flesh earth age who “keep” His commandments (i.e., guard His Word from loss or injury by careful watch) and who possess the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The “remnant of her seed” is that very same “seed” of the final generation which is spoken of in Psalms 22: *“A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this.”*

Yes, at those trials described in Mark 13, that precious “seed” of faithful believers known as God’s elect will “declare His righteousness” unto the people of this final generation. This will happen when they’re delivered up to those trials described in Mark chapter 13, “for a testimony against” the rulers and kings of this earth who will at that time have sold their souls to the devil himself.

And yes, of course, that word “keep” in the verse above is once again our key word for this study, translated from the Greek word we’ve been looking at, *tereo* (i.e., Strong’s G-5083), meaning to “watch over so as guard from loss or injury,” i.e., to *preserve unmarred by watching over*.

The faithful servants of God “keep” God’s Word, and possess “the testimony of Jesus Christ,” which is to say, the Gospel truth. Therefore, they’ll be targeted by Satan, and ultimately arrested and delivered up to those trials described in Mark 13. But they’ll be saved by Jesus Christ after He speaks through their lips at those trials (Mark 13:11), for it’s their destiny to do so.

And that’s what “keeping God’s Word” is all about, beloved.

It’s not merely about obeying God and His Word. It’s much more than that. It’s *preserving* His Word from loss or injury by watching over it and jealously guarding it, like one would guard a precious jewel from theft or harm. To put it succinctly, it means to teach His Word exactly as it’s written, without leaving anything out or adding anything in.

So again, much more than mere obedience, it’s total *preservation* of the Word of God from the forces that seek to substitute false doctrine and empty religious tradition in its place. That’s what the Lord wants from us. And *that’s* what we’re going to deliver.

So now you know that when you *keep* (i.e., guard from loss or injury by watching over) God’s Word, you’ll be immensely blessed by your heavenly Father. But you’ll also be persecuted by Satan, because *you’re* what’s standing in *his* way as he attempts to corrupt the true meaning of God’s Word and thereby deceive God’s children into worshipping him.

As it's written of Satan's actions when he arrives to this earth in chapter 13 of the great book of Revelation:

Rev 13:5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

Rev 13:6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Rev 13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Rev 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Rev 13:9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

If you've got ears to hear God's message to His faithful servants, this big-mouthed false messiah is who you need to be prepared to stand against. Keep in mind that he knows our flesh and spiritual weaknesses. But that's why God gave you the Gospel armor of Ephesians chapter 6, i.e., "to stand against the wiles of the devil" and to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

This is *why* you need to be knowledgeable enough in God's Word to watch over it and preserve it from loss or injury. Satan is a big mouth. He's a liar. He's a play actor. And he's going to do everything in his power to distort God's Word and promote himself as the "Christ" of this earth. It's utter blasphemy. But it will deceive most of the world's population, thanks to the astonishing miracles he'll perform at that time.

As it's written in Revelation 13:13-14, "*And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast...*"

In closing, we'll take a look at Christ's beautiful prayer to the Father on behalf of His faithful servants. And in that prayer we'll learn a bit more about what it means to keep God's Word, and what the benefits are for so doing.

Christ's Beautiful Prayer for His Elect

This prayer, which is found in John chapter 17, is also known as the "Farewell Prayer," because Christ prayed it just before He was crucified. It's the longest prayer by Christ in any of the four gospels.

It's also frequently referred to as the "High Priestly Prayer," for the simple reason that Jesus Christ is our eternal High Priest "after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:6), and one of the High

Priest's job is to pray for the well-being of God's faithful servants. It's called intercessory prayer.

You're going to see certain key words repeated in this prayer, including our words "keep" and "kept." It's good to check into the meanings of all of those key words, for the deeper message provided. They make the prayer all the more touching and meaningful. So let's take a look.

Joh 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

The hour had come for Christ's betrayal and public trial, followed by His crucifixion and resurrection. He asks the Father to use the crucifixion and resurrection to glorify (i.e., honor, esteem) Him, that He might in turn glorify God the Father through His great act of redemption.

Joh 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

The words "given" and "give" are used three times in the above verse. Each time they're translated from the Greek word *didōmi* (i.e., Strong's G-1325) meaning to bestow upon, or to commit to.

God bestowed upon Christ Jesus "power over all flesh" that Christ might in turn bestow upon us eternal life. In other words, Christ would provide the opportunity for salvation to God's children through the fulfillment of the law of the kinsman redeemer. That means He's your closest relative who can pay the price for your sins and shortcomings through blood redemption.

Joh 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

The word "know" in this verse is translated from the Greek word *ginōskō* (i.e., Strong's G-1097), meaning *absolute* or *unshakeable* knowledge.

God's faithful servants know the true God and His Christ from the false one. They know that Satan arrives to this earth first, in his deceptive role as the antichrist, or better translated, the *instead-of-Christ*, because he comes in *Christ's stead* in order to deceive the world.

You're not going to get Christ's faithful servants to let go of that knowledge no matter how hard you might try. It's written. Therefore they believe it. And you can't bribe them with a fake fly-away "rapture" doctrine to change their minds. They know better than to add into God's Word church traditions and doctrine that are not written there.

Joh 17:4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

The word “work” in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *ergon* (i.e., Strong’s G-2041), meaning “toil” or “labor.”

The word “gavest” in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *didōmi* (i.e., Strong’s G-1325) meaning to bestow upon, or to commit to.

God bestowed upon Christ Jesus the work (i.e., toil, labor) of providing the opportunity for salvation to His children, through the fulfillment of the law of the kinsman redeemer, meaning He’s your closest relative who can pay the price for your sins and shortcomings should you willingly accept and embrace Him.

Joh 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

We’ll speak of the glory Christ had with the Father “before the world was” in just a moment. But we need to grasp the following verse, first:

Joh 17:6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

There’s a LOT in the above two verses, beloved. And I’m hesitant to go into everything, because I don’t want to get too far off track of the topic of what it means to “keep God’s Word.” But let’s see what we can do to keep it as simple as possible. You’ll have to put on your spiritual eyes and ears for this, and let your mind go back to what you learned in Revelation chapter three, earlier, when we studied the astonishing blessings afforded to those who “keep” God’s Word.

In the above verse, Christ states to the Father, in prayer, that He has “manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me.”

The word “manifested” in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *phaneroō* (i.e., Strong’s G-5319), meaning “to render apparent.” It can also mean to “declare,” or to “show one’s self.” In other words, the flesh man, Jesus Christ, is telling the heavenly Father, “I’ve let them know who you are.”

You see, our heavenly Father is made known *through His name*. Our heavenly Father’s name is not “God.” Nor is it “Lord.” Those are just English titles we use for Him. They’re very appropriate titles. But *titles*, nonetheless.

His name is not even Jehovah. That’s a close English translation of His Hebrew name. But there’s no letter “J” in the Hebrew language. And there are no vowels, either.

In the Hebrew language, our heavenly Father’s sacred name is YHVH, pronounced Yah-veh, or sometimes Yah-ha-veh. It’s from a Hebrew tetragrammaton that means “I will be what I will be.” Or more familiarly translated, “I am that I am.” And it can be summed up in the term “the

self-existent one” (see Strong’s H-3068).

Our heavenly Father is the only being who is self-existent. There are many supernatural beings in the heavens. But there are no *self-existent* beings other than our heavenly Father. We were all created by Him, and we’re all dependent upon *Him* for our existence.

Yes, we can live eternally, *if* we’re faithful to Him and to His Word, which is to say, if we work to “keep” (i.e., preserve from loss or injury by watching over) His Word. But enjoying eternal life is not the same thing as being self-existent. As distinguished from all of His creation, He’s the *only* self-existent one. He *is*, and He always has been. There’s never been a time He hasn’t existed, and there will never be a time that He doesn’t exist. “I am that I am” sums it up.

Why is this important?

It’s important because, in the original Hebrew, our Lord and Savior’s name, “Jesus,” is actually *Yahshua* (or sometimes spelled “Yahashuah”). And that name quite literally means “YHVH the Savior.”

In other words, Christ Jesus was (and is) our heavenly Father YHVH, who came to this earth in His role as the savior of His children. God the Father wouldn’t trust that enormous and precious task to anyone but *Himself*, beloved. So He impregnated Mary through a holy miracle, and manifested Himself in the flesh as “Jesus” (Yahshua) – i.e., *YHVH the Savior*.

That’s why, in John 14:8 when St. Philip pleaded with Christ, “*Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us,*” Christ replied in John 14:9, “*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*”

As Christ would later say, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). Which is precisely why, in I Timothy 3:16, the beloved St. Paul would say, “*God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*”

If you want Old Testament documentation to the fact that Jesus was God in the flesh, here’s what Isaiah 9:6 has to say: “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.***”

I’d wager that, like St. Philip, 99% of Christians today simply don’t grasp that fact that Jesus Christ was the physical manifestation of our heavenly Father, YHVH. On this earth, Jesus was God in the flesh. Not a separate God. But God Himself. He was YHVH, our heavenly Father, in his *physical* role (or “office,” if you prefer) of the redeeming savior.

In other words, our heavenly Father *manifested Himself to us in the flesh*, coming down to us in

order to save us. He took on a tent of flesh. And He gave His own life, shedding His precious blood in redeeming payment for our sins.

That's why Christ said in the verse above, "I have manifested thy name unto the men thou has given me." He manifested, or "rendered apparent" to His disciples who He really was. For example, He declared it when He stated, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am," using the sacred name of God Almighty to identify *Himself*.

Let's continue looking at the key words in the above verse:

The word "gavest" in the above verse (i.e., "the men which thou gavest me out of the world") is once again translated from the Greek word *didōmi* (i.e., Strong's G-1325) meaning to bestow upon, or to commit to.

Before God ever came to this earth in that flesh tabernacle known as "Jesus" (i.e., YHVH the Savior), He chose who His earthly disciples would be, and He bestowed them to *His physical self*, Christ Jesus. In other words, before God's faithful servants were ever born into this flesh earth age, God chose them to be His disciples. He knew them because of their faithfulness to Him in heaven. And He chose them to serve Him faithfully on this earth.

That's why Ephesians 1:11-14 says faithful Christians are "predestinated" to serve Him on this earth. And it's why our heavenly Father said to the ancient prophet, Jeremiah, "*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*"

We *all* used to live in heaven with our Father. It's where your soul and spirit resided, before being temporarily placed into these flesh bodies, beloved. And our heavenly Father was not unwilling to do what He made us do (Hebrews 2:14-16). He too came to this earth in flesh form, born of woman, just like we were.

If that's too much to grasp at once, put it on the shelf for awhile, and meditate on it. It will all make sense to you in time, as you study His Word in more and more depth.

Finally, in John 17:6 above, I hope you didn't miss that key word "kept" (i.e., "and they have *kept* thy word"), being translated from the Greek word *tēreō* which we've examined earlier, meaning to watch over so as preserve unmarred, or "to guard from loss or injury by keeping a watchful eye upon."

You see, what distinguishes God's faithful servants from everyone else is that they know who God actually is, and what He's done for us, and they just won't allow God's Word to be misrepresented, diluted or adulterated. It's too precious. And "keeping" it from being diluted or otherwise distorted brings a multitude of blessings. When it's distorted by false doctrine or religious tradition, *it becomes void and can't save anyone*.

So God's servants faithfully watch over His Word in order to preserve it from loss or injury. That's why God sent them here, as servants of His physical self, Christ Jesus. They know that God's Word is *life itself*. He *is* our existence. Without Him we cannot exist. And because, like all creation, we were *spoken* into existence (i.e., "And God *said*, Let us make man in our own image..."), it is His Word that did the actual creation. His Word is His creative force. His Word is from whence *all life* derives its ability to exist.

As it's written in John chapter 1:1-3, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, **and the Word was God.** The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*"

Yes, "and the Word was God." God and His Word are One. And Jesus is the Living Word of God. Ergo, Jesus is God. That's to say, He is *YHVH the Savior*, which again, is precisely what His name means in the original Hebrew language. He's the physical manifestation of God. In the heavenly dimension, God is a Spirit (John 4:24). But in material form – the form He used when He visited us -- He is Jesus Christ (Yahshuah Messiah).

So when Christ prayed, in John 17:5 above, "glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," He was acknowledging that the crucifixion was about to take place, and was saying, "It's now time for Me to return to my former glory in heaven, where I was your creative force, the very Word that came forth from your mouth."

And when He prayed, "*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have **kept** thy word,*" He's essentially saying, "The Plan has worked out exactly as intended. They now know who you are. They know who I am. And they're busy at work watching and guarding over your Word of Life, because they understand how truly precious it is."

Joh 17:7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

The word "known" in this verse is translated from that same Greek word *ginōskō* (i.e., Strong's G-1097) we looked at earlier, meaning *absolute* or *unshakeable* knowledge.

And the word "given" is translated from that same Greek word we looked at earlier, *didōmi* (i.e., Strong's G-1325), meaning to bestow upon, or to commit to.

God's faithful servants have unshakeable knowledge of the Plan of God. (You can get a free copy of the Bible study, [The Four Parts of God's Plan](#), by opting in at the "Have Ye Not Read?" community website).

And God has "given" them (i.e., bestowed them) to Jesus Christ for the specific purpose of helping bring God's unvarnished, life-giving *truth* to the world, exactly as it's written, without adding anything to it, or taking anything away from it.

Indeed, when God's faithful servants are delivered up to those trials described in Mark 13, for a testimony against "rulers and kings," their job in this flesh earth age will be over with. But they'll do the same work again, afterwards, during the Millennium teaching period, in one last effort to help God's wayward children understand "the difference between the holy and profane" and cause them to "discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 44:23).

That's their job. And as Jesus Christ was without spot or blemish (I Peter 1:19), so the job of God's faithful servants is to present God's Word to His children *without spot or blemish*. They "keep" God's Word, which is to say, they preserve God's Word from loss or injury, by guarding over it with a watchful eye. They won't let anything be added to His Word, nor taken away from it.

Joh 17:8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

The word "given" and the word "gavest" in the verse above are both translated from that Greek word we've previously looked at, *didomai* (i.e., Strong's G-1325), meaning "to bestow upon."

Christ bestowed God's Word of truth upon His disciples. He gave His disciples the very same words our heavenly Father bestowed upon Him in the flesh. We're speaking of the Gospel message, beloved.

The word "received" in the verse above is translated from the Greek word *lambano* (i.e., Strong's 2983), meaning "to take." God's disciples eagerly *took* the words Christ gave them. They recognized the Gospel message as the precious words of Life from God Himself in the flesh.

The phrase "known surely" is translated from two Greek words *ginosko alethos* (i.e., Strong's G-1097 and G-230), meaning "to know truly and with absolute certainty." By the time of the crucifixion, the disciples knew with absolute certainty that Christ's words were true, for they could verify everything He taught them through the Old Testament Scriptures.

The phrase "came out" in the above verse (i.e., "I came out from thee") is translated from the Greek word *exerchomai* (i.e., Strong's G-1831) meaning "to issue forth." But when you break it back to its original Greek root words, *ek* and *erchomai* (i.e., Strong's G-1537 and G-2064) you'll see that it means "to come out from the interior of." In other words, it's genitive of origin. Christ originated from the interior of God. Yes, He is the very Word of God, coming forth from God's mouth, and being manifested to us as God in the flesh. God and His Word are One.

Yes, once more, as it's written, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

The word "believed" in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *pisteuo* (i.e., Strong's G-4100), which is often translated "to have faith in," but actually means "a firm commitment of trust." The disciples had a firm commitment of trust that Christ, the Living Word, was the Father Himself manifested in the flesh through the power of His Word.

And finally, the word “send” in the above verse is translated from the Greek word *apostellō* (i.e., Strong’s G-649), meaning “to set apart and send out on a mission.” It’s where we get our English word “postal,” beloved. Just as the postman is set apart from regular citizens and sent out on a mission of *delivery* each day, so too Jesus Christ -- God’s very Word -- was set apart from all other men and sent out on a mission of delivery for God. His mission was to deliver the Gospel message to His disciples before giving His life on that cross at Calvary and paying the price for our sins.

In turn, the mission of His disciples was to take that Gospel message to the world, after the crucifixion (Mark 16:14-15). That’s why they were called “apostles,” a derivative of the Greek word *apostellō*. Just as Christ was set apart from all men and sent out on a mission by God, so the apostles were set apart from all men and sent out on a mission by God. And so are *you*, beloved. Your mission is to deliver that word unmarred by church tradition or false doctrine.

So Christ is saying that He gave His disciples the very words our heavenly Father gave Him regarding the Gospel message, and the disciples eagerly took those words, knowing with absolute certainty they were true, and having a firm commitment of trust that Jesus Christ and His Gospel message came straight from the interior of the Father. God, through His Word, manifested Himself in the flesh to us in order to teach us the way back home to Him.

That’s why God’s servants are so stringent about *keeping* God’s Word, beloved. They know those words are the very words that sustain all life. And they know that life cannot exist for us if those words are allowed to be in any way distorted or diminished with false doctrine or empty religious tradition.

Joh 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

Christ’s disciples on this earth were *God’s* disciples in the first age. God in turn bestowed them upon His flesh personage, Christ, in this age. When God came into this earthly flesh tabernacle known as Jesus Christ, He went to those very same disciples, for He knew He could trust them. He knows He can trust you, too, beloved, to deliver His Word to others, without adding anything to it or taking anything away from it.

Joh 17:10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

There’s a lot in this verse, beloved. But it all comes back to one simple fact, i.e., if you’re “in” Christ, you’re simultaneously in God, because Christ *is* God. Christ is glorified (i.e., magnified) in His faithful servants because they “keep” His Word. He set the example for them, showing them the way back to God’s eternal family household. And they set the example for all others, showing them the same path, through the unmarred Gospel message.

Here comes that word “keep” again. Let’s see how Christ uses it here:

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Christ acknowledges to the heavenly Father that His crucifixion is at hand. And He prays that Father *keep* (i.e., guard from loss or injury by carefully watching over) His disciples, that they might operate as one body in Christ, just as God and Christ operate as one body.

You are a walking, talking representative of your Lord and Savior, beloved. And that means you represent God Himself.

Joh 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The words translated “kept” in this verse, and the word “lost” are opposites. “Kept,” as we’ve seen, means to guard from loss or injury by carefully watching over. But the word “lost” is translated from the Greek word *apollumi* (i.e., Strong’s G-622), meaning “to destroy fully.”

You’re either *kept* by God’s Word, or you’re *lost*, beloved. And as we learned earlier in our study of Revelation 3, those who keep (i.e., preserve) God’s Word by watching over it are in turn kept (i.e., preserved) by Him who watches over them.

But those who don’t “keep” (i.e., guard over with open eyes so as to preserve from loss or injury) God’s Word are *lost*. That’s why it’s written in Matthew 7:21-23 that at Christ’s Second Advent many Christians will run up to Him crying out loud, “Lord! Lord!” but he will turn to them and say, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Why? Because they didn’t “keep” God’s Word, beloved. They kept false doctrine and empty religious tradition, instead, and applied Christ’s name to it. That simply doesn’t cut the mustard with your heavenly Father. Playing church is not the same as being a Christian (i.e., a Christ-man).

In short, in the above verse Christ tells the Father regarding His disciples, “While I was here, I watched over them and guarded them from loss or injury, in your name. Not one of your servants has been destroyed except the son of *perdition*, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

Yes, Christ even spoke with Satan – the son of perdition -- while He was on this earth. If you’ll remember, it was during His temptation in the wilderness. Satan was the only entity completely lost to Him. And why? Because as always, Satan tried to dilute and distort God’s Word in hopes Christ would bow to Him (i.e. Luke 4:1-13). He used twisted Scripture to try to tempt Christ.

If you don’t work to “keep” God’s Word, but instead, work to distort and dilute it with empty

traditions and false doctrine, then God won't "keep" you, either. You're a goner, short of that sincere turn of heart and mind that makes for genuine repentance.

Joh 17:13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

The crucifixion was no picnic, beloved. Isaiah 52:14 tells us regarding Christ, "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." In other words, He was whipped and beaten to the point of unrecognizability.

But at the same time, giving His life for God's wayward children was a great joy to Him. He knew multitudes would be saved, in the end (Revelation 7:9). And He wanted His faithful servants to experience that great joy as well, as opposed to the flesh sadness of temporarily losing Him in such an awful manner.

Joh 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

You might not realize it, but we're here *behind enemy lines*, beloved. This world is not our home. And as long as we're in the flesh, Christ is not the God of this world. And He won't be until the seventh trumpet blows and He returns, at which time we'll all be given new spiritual bodies "in the twinkling of an eye" (I Corinthians 15:52).

As it's written in Revelation 11:15, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Until that seventh trumpet blows, as long as we're in the flesh we're operating inside of Satan's kingdom. He's the "god of this world" who has "blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, *who is the image of God*, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:4). In other words, Satan runs this flesh world age, and he works to pull God's children away from the Lord, corrupting and debasing them so that they're unfit for God's eternal family household.

So you can see why Christ would say of His faithful disciples "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." We're here on a mission behind enemy lines to hold up the plumb-bob of truth to a corrupt and disbelieving world. It's our job. And as you're about to see, because the world hates us so much, Christ asks the heavenly Father to "keep" us (i.e., guard us from loss or injury by watching over us).

Joh 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

In Dr. Bullinger's sidenotes in *The Companion Bible*, he points out that Christ actually asks the

Father to keep His faithful servants from “the evil one,” not merely “the evil.”

This world itself is basically evil. But Christ doesn't want His faithful servants taken out of it. They have a job to do. Their job is to “keep” (i.e., watch over so as to guard from loss or injury) God's Word. So Christ asks the Father to “keep” (i.e., watch over so as to guard from loss or injury) His Faithful servants from being deceived by the evil one in the course of our relatively short stay behind enemy lines.

Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Again, this flesh world is not our permanent home, beloved. One day it will be over, and there will be no more flesh. Our home is the spiritual world to come -- New Jerusalem -- which we read of earlier in our look at some of the verse in Revelation chapter 3.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

“Sanctify” means to make holy. And the Old Testament word “holy” simply means set apart to God for a specific purpose. We are set apart to God for the specific purpose of “keeping” (preserving) His Word of truth. And that truth brings life to all who sincerely embrace it with understanding.

Joh 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Christ's faithful servants are on a mission for Him – a mission to bring the unvarnished and unmarred Gospel truth to anyone and everyone who will listen.

So if you'd like to know who sent you into this flesh world on His behalf, it's your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God. Why? Because He trusts you to “keep” (i.e., watch over and guard from loss or injury) His Word. He knows you can do it, in spite of what might, in some instances, seem like insurmountable odds or unsustainable pressure.

Joh 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Just as Christ was set apart to God for a specific purpose, so are we, through the truth. We “keep” (i.e., guard from loss or injury by watching over”) that truth, and in turn he “keeps” us from deception while the rest of the world wallows in it wholeheartedly as their new chosen “reality.”

Joh 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Christ includes in His beautiful prayer those who come to believe on Him after hearing His faithful servants teach His Word. And this is not just referring to the individuals you might preach to

from time to time during the course of your life. Great multitudes will be woken up to the truth when God's faithful servants are delivered up to those trials described in Mark 13, and God's Word flows forth from their mouths, with God doing the speaking through them (Mark 13:11).

Here, Christ asks the Father to sanctify them all, i.e., those who faithfully speak His Word to others, and those who understand and embrace what's been spoken.

Joh 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

The ultimate goal is to bring the eternal family household back together again as one whole unit, operating in blissful unison with God and His Word.

That's why it's so important that we "keep" His Word, beloved. We studied this in Revelation chapter 3 earlier, when we looked at the magnificent blessings of God bestowed upon those who "keep" His Word.

In doing this job, we ultimately become "one" with God, just as Christ was "one" with God. In other words, in the eternity, the many-membered faithful body carries forth God's Word and God's Holy Spirit, *within themselves*. They are the "New Jerusalem." They are "YHVH Shamah," i.e., YHVH is there. Because He *is* there, within them.

Joh 17:22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

Wow. That's an awesome verse, beloved. As it's written in Revelation 3:21, "*To him that overcometh 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.*"

In other words, it means you're a co-heir to the Kingdom with Christ, and will co-rule with Him. That's a very humbling thought. But as it's written, "*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" (Luke 12:32).

There's a lot more than meets the eye to being "one" with God and His Savior. Meditate on it. Pray on it. And ask God to continue to reveal it to you. I'm not saying we're to become "God." Please don't mistake me. Nor am I talking about some New Age "we're all little gods" nonsense. I'm saying that in the eternity, God operates *through us, and from within us*, just as He operates through and from within Christ Jesus now.

After all, we're the body of Christ. And if you're sincerely serving the Lord and working to preserve His Word from loss or injury. God's in-dwelling Holy Spirit gradually becomes your spiritual operating system. You're operating within Him (as part of His many-membered body), and He's operating *within and through you*, via the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit. And that's how He gets things done.

So as members of His many-membered body, we will indeed rule and reign with Him (Revelation 20:4-6). Naturally, we have to remember that He's the Head of that many-membered body. And without the Head the body can do nothing. But the closeness of the relationship being described here between God and His faithful servants is a very humbling thought. Consider it in terms of the relationship between your head and your hands. You probably get most of your work done with your hands. Yet your hands are subject to your head. It's your head that that guides your hand. The head and the hand are both part of the same body, working in precision tandem with each other. That's the picture I'm trying to draw for you here. We'll rule throughout the eternity in precision tandem with Him. We have His Word on it. All we have to do in return is "keep" His Word.

Joh 17:23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Christ in us, and God in Christ, that we might be "made perfect" (i.e., complete, mature) in one.

In other words, through Christ we'll be part of the divine ruling council of Almighty God. And ultimately the people of this world will know that Christ and His faithful many-membered body were sent by the Father to help them become part of that same working body. It's a family household, beloved, operating as a single-minded unit.

But in the meantime, we're still here behind enemy lines. And therefore it's no big surprise to us that "ye shall be hated of all men for my namesake" (Mark 13:13).

In other words, for "keeping" His precious Word, you'll also suffer tribulation. And that's because the world is not yet ready to become part of the many-membered body -- the single-minded family household of God in Christ.

For the most part, the world doesn't listen because Satan still has their little knickers tied up in knots. But we're working to put a stop to that, one knot at a time if need be, by "keeping" God's Word. The millennium teaching period will be their final opportunity to join with the rest of us in "keeping" God's Word, which are the words of life itself.

Joh 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

When Christ says "Father, I will that..." He's including into this prayer what you might think of as His "last will and testament."

In other words, He's about to die on that cross, and in that sense, He's writing His will into this prayer. He states that it's part and parcel of His will that all of His faithful servants who were given to Him by God get to be with Him throughout the eternity and behold His glory, which is to

say, His dignity and His honor. What a beautiful will! What a beautiful inheritance!

Joh 17:25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

Again, the word “known” as used in this verse, and throughout Christ’s prayer, is translated from the Greek word *ginosko* (i.e., Strong’s G-1097), meaning to know absolutely, or to know for a certainty.

The world does not know God. But Christ knew Him, because He *is* the physical manifestation of God. He set the example for us, teaching God’s Word exactly as it’s written, without adding anything to it, or leaving anything out of it. He “kept” God’s Word. And we’re to do the same. It’s a major part of our mission on this earth.

But you’ve got to *know God’s Word* in order to *know God*. The disciples knew beyond any shadow of a doubt that Christ had been sent by God. They knew, because it was written of in Isaiah chapters 9, 52 and 53, plus Psalm 22, chapter 9 of the book of Daniel and many other places in the Old Testament Scriptures. And they watched with their own eyes as He fulfilled Scripture passage after passage through His actions.

Joh 17:26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

The words “declared” and “declare” in the above verse are translated from the Greek word *gnōrizō* (i.e., Strong’s G-1107), meaning “to make known,” “to certify,” “to declare” or even “to give to understand.” That word is a root of the Greek word *ginosko*, which we looked at in previous verses, meaning to know something for an absolute certainty.

Christ is saying that He has declared (i.e., made known) God’s name to His disciples. And that He will indeed declare it once again, at His Second Advent.

And the point of declaring the Father’s name to His disciples?

We discussed this earlier in John 17:6. Review that passage if you need to. Christ had let His disciples know that He was God in the flesh. He was, and is, the physical manifestation of our heavenly Father, YHVH, having come to this earth to sacrifice His own life in payment for our sins.

But there’s more to it.

You see, whether you’re speaking in the Hebrew tongue, or the Greek tongue, the word translated “name” has almost precisely the same meaning. In the Hebrew language the word “name” is translated from the Hebrew word *shēm*. And in the Greek language it’s translated from the Greek word *onoma*.

Both of them mean virtually the same thing. They refer to the *honor, authority* and *character* behind the name. They refer to the conspicuous position held by the person -- the person's rank and public renown. Let's take a look at the definitions of both the Hebrew and the Greek words translated "name":

H8034

שֵׁם

shêm

shame

A primitive word (perhaps rather from H7760 through the idea of definite and conspicuous position; compare H8064); an *appellation*, as a mark or memorial of individuality; by implication ***honor, authority, character***: - + base, [in-] fame [-ous], name (-d), renown, report.

G3686

ὄνομα

onoma

on'-om-ah

From a presumed derivative of the base of G1097 (compare G3685); **a "name"** (literally or figuratively), (***authority, character***): - called, (+ sur-) name (-d).

You see, in olden times, a man's name was considered to be part and parcel of his *family reputation*. And men worked hard to maintain a "good name," which is to say, an unsullied reputation. One's *honor, authority* and *character* were imbued within the family name. The name embodied the person's hard-earned position in life.

And so it was that every man protected His family name at all costs. If a son or daughter, for example, dishonored the family name, then short of sincere repentance, including change of heart and mind, that son or daughter could be disowned and cast out of the family. That's how crucial protecting the family name was considered to be.

And so it is with God. God's divine name, YHVH, which is also Christ's name (i.e., Yahshuah means "YHVH the Savior") is intimately associated with His personal *honor, authority* and *character*.

So when Christ tells the Father that He's declared unto His disciples the Father's name, He's

saying He's declared unto them the Father's honor, authority and character. In other words, He's declared that Father is *a man of His Word*.

That's why it's so vitally important to "keep God's Word," beloved. When you watch over God's Word in order to guard it from loss or injury, you're *honoring* God by keeping intact *His* honor, authority and character.

Keep in mind that we're told in the great book of Revelation that when Christ returns at His Second Advent to take vengeance on His enemies, He will be "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: **and his name is called The Word of God**" (Revelation 19:13).

Think about that. His name *is His Word*, beloved. They're one and the same. In other words, His name and His Word are inextricably tied together, because they both reflect His honor, authority and character.

That's why it's such a privilege to "keep His Word." It's not mere obedience to His Word. It's much *more* than that. While the rest of the world cruelly and cavalierly denigrates His name and dilutes and distorts His Word with false doctrine and empty religious traditions, God's faithful servants are here to "bodyguard" His Word and His name, so to speak.

We're here to help preserve His name -- which Revelation 19:13 tells us is "the Word of God" -- from being tarnished by His enemies. We're here to help guard His Word (and thus His name) from loss or injury through careful watching over.

And why? Because His *name* is a reflection of His honor, authority and character. And His *Word* is a reflection of His precious family name. He is YHVH, our heavenly Father. The great "I am that I am." The Self-Existent One.

So to be chosen to help preserve His Word -- which is a reflection of His name -- from loss or injury in the face of the growing mass apostasy we see in the world today, is an honor beyond comprehension.

But we're part and parcel of His many-membered body. And if we remain faithful to the task of "keeping" His Word/Name, we're destined to sit in His throne with Him as co-heirs and co-rulers (Revelation 3:21). Indeed, He will operate *through us*. We are simply His vessels that carry out His will, as directed from the in-dwelling Holy Spirit. Does that make sense to you?

That means His family name is *our* family name, as well. That's why we're told in Revelation chapter three, which we studied earlier, that He writes *His* name upon *us*. Again, please don't mistake what I'm saying. There's only *one* true God, beloved. But we're part of His many-membered body. Thus, for us, His name, which is a reflection of His Word, must remain unsullied, because it's *our* family name, as well. Eternally.

Christ is in the Father. And we're in Christ. And Christ is in *us* through the in-dwelling of the

Holy Spirit of God. It's one big happy family, all together as one. That's the lesson of unity given in Christ's beautiful prayer to the Father in John chapter 17 above. That was the Lord's goal in giving His life for our sins, i.e., to bring God's children together *as one* into His family household, and to place His family name upon them.

When you "keep God's Word," you're acting to guard over and preserve from loss or injury the *honor, authority* and *character* of the family name, which is intricately tied to the Word of God. They are essentially one and the same.

There are great blessings involved in protecting and preserving the family name, and keeping it intact. It means *a lot* to your heavenly Father. More than you might know. And it should mean a lot to *you*, too. It's an honor bestowed upon only a small handful, beloved. As it's further written in the great book of Ezekiel:

Ez 44:15 -- But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that **kept the charge** of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, **they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood,** saith the Lord GOD:

Ez 44:16 -- They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall **keep my charge**.

The word "charge" in the above two verses means "a watch," as in a person manning a sentry post. That sentry post is over His *sanctuary*, beloved.

The word "sanctuary" means a consecrated thing or place. His Word is where we take our sanctuary, beloved (Psalm 91:1-2). And we are *His* sanctuary, meaning we're His many-membered body in which He dwells. That's why it's so important to preserve the sanctuary unmarred. It's composed of His Word which dwells inside of us, and His many-membered body, in which He in-dwells.

And of course the words "kept" and "keep" are translated from the Hebrew word *shamar*, which is akin to the Greek word we've been studying, *tereo*, and which has the same meaning, i.e., "to preserve from loss or injury by watching over."

When the "children of Israel" -- representing *Christians* of today -- go astray from the Lord in order to chase after their fly-away "Jesus" who is in reality the antichrist, God's faithful servants the Zadok (i.e., "the just," or perhaps better stated, "the justified"), preserve that watch over God's sanctuary.

In other words, they don't abandon the sentry post of the sanctuary. They keep a watchful eye on everything for the Lord. They are "*...the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth*" who help Zerubbabel hold up that plumb-bob of truth we know as the Word of God. (Zechariah 4:10).

Those who don't abandon the sentry post of God's sanctuary when the antichrist comes onto the scene, but instead "kept the watch" (i.e., preserved the sentry post) unto the very end, watching over and guarding God's Word from loss or injury, will be the ones who get to dwell *and rule* with Christ in His Holy sanctuary throughout the eternity.

And one of the major blessings of keeping His Word is that He'll *rule and operate within you and through you* in the eternity. For your faithfulness to His Word, now, He'll make His Word *your eternal operating system*, then and forever. What an awesome blessing for remaining faithful to His Word and guarding over it so as to preserve it unmarred and unblemished from the world.

And that's what it means to "keep" God's Word.

-- End --

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