Man's Ceaseless Attempt to be God Pt.2

By Charles Feinberg

Satan's attempt to be God was only one part of the whole spectrum of events in his early ministry climaxing in the cross, then remember how often his enemies thought themselves competent to pronounce on him his words, his claims, his acts. You remember his arrangements, what a travesty. Every one of these was Christ before Pilate. Read it in Matthew 27, verses 11 to 26. John 19, verse 10 and 11, then Christ appears before that hideous one, Herod. Luke 23, verses 7 to 12 and then that sham of a high priest. Christ before Annas. John 18:15 to 23 and his co high priest if you will. Christ before Caiaphas in John 18:24 and 28. And then the Lord Jesus Christ before the Sanhedrin, that's the council that you read of in translations c.o.u.n.c.i.l. Sanhedrin is the Hebrew. Synhedrion is the Greek, which is translated council. They brought him before the council, all gospels tell us this. Matthew 26:59, Mark 15:1, Luke 22:66 to 71, John 11:53. What are we saying? We're saying that every one of these arraignments was, though they realized it, possibly only very faintly and inadequately, every one of them saw these men assuming divine prerogatives, divine prerogatives. Judgment is a divine prerogative. Abraham didn't have a book of the Old Testament in his day and yet he knew it. He knew that judgment was a prerogative, a right of God alone in Genesis 18:25 as he prayed for the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. We read, "He says, shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Who's the judge of all the earth? God, in our Lord Jesus Christ stated in just so many words. That's one of the marvelous chapters of the Bible John. It's gospel, the fifth chapter, verse 22 and 23. We should begin with verse 21. For as the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, notice the
power of resurrection resides in God the Father, even so the Son in equal power also giveth life
to whom he will. For neither does the Father judge any man his judgment again, but he has given
all judgment unto the Son that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. Divine
prerogative in Revelation, chapter 6 and verse 16, where we read of how the seals are broken and
how God is beginning to pour out upon the earth judgments. Only God, only Christ has the right
to execute judgment. For we read they say to the mountains, Revelation 6:16, the godless ones
say to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on
the throne." My, what a prayer meeting. I'm glad I'm not going to be at that one, aren't you. "Fall
on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb,
for the great day of their wrath has come and who is able to stand?" Their Day of Wrath is the
day in which they execute their judgment. You say, Well, I notice there are prohibitions in the
Bible that say, Judge not, lest you be not judged. Matthew 7:1 and Romans 14:10 and 13. We're
not to judge a brother because to his own master he standeth or falleth. Let's not misinterpret
those passages, though, friend; they are in the Bible, but they don't mean that we're not to make
discerning evaluations. It doesn't mean we're not to exercise church discipline for which there is
plenty of authority in the Word of God when it's done in official capacity. But those passages
mean we have no right individually, in ourselves. We have no right to judge as though we are the
final absolute judge who is God. If we are not to judge other men on earth in this way, how dare
men sit in judgment on God, making themselves God. What was the aim of all that transpired in
the life and in the ministry of our Lord? Well, Matthew makes it quite clear. He gives it under a
statement of a parable. A certain man had a tremendous vineyard. And he sent certain ones, after
he had leased it out, he sent certain ones to go and get the rightful returns, the fruits of the labor
of the land, they were to be divided. So you see there was a king who had lent out this farm, this
Man's Ceaseless Attempt to be God Pt. 2

land of his. Now look at Matthew 21:38. But afterward he's sent unto them, verse thirty seven, his son. What happened here? After he had sent his son, He said, "They will surely, they will certainly reverence my son."

But the husbandmen, that's the farmers, when they saw the son, said among themselves, "This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance." And they took him and cast him forth out of the vineyard and killed him. Think of it, as a parable, a man as a householder and he planted a vineyard and set it about him. And they did the same thing with reference to an invitation of a king. They were not going to have it. And here the son, the heir, let's kill him.

Of course the man here is that represents the great king of the universe, the Lord God. Let's come and kill him and take his inheritance. Man actually wants to dethrone God and usurp His place. If you want to see it later in the New Testament, you can find it in Acts 12, verse 20 and 23, verses 22-23, where Herod, on a certain day, he had an audience before the people that were very displeased with what he'd been doing with James. His taking on himself the right of persecution and seeking to kill. And he did kill him and seeking others as well, putting Peter in prison. So one day he thought he'd make an appearance and overpower them, and he spoke so eloquently they said, "Why this," those who wanted to curry favor with him said, "This is certainly the voice of a god, of God and not a man." And oh, how he was puffed up with pride. And the scripture says, "Since he didn't give God glory." What happened to him? He fell down and he was eaten up of worms. He had internal difficulty that brought on his death. So we've seen it then. At Calvary. Now let's look at this ceaseless attempt, never ending attempt of man to be like God in this age. Let's bring it right down to our own age and then we shall see it in time yet ahead of us.
in prophetic times. As a matter of actual count, there have been some threescore false messiahs, most if not all claiming divine powers and honors. The whole philosophy of pantheism. Of Baruch Spinoza was: all is God and God is all. Given great impetus through Baruch Spinoza of Holland, it had an influence on biblical criticism, the way in men, which men looked at the Bible. It influenced it adversely in the 17th century in Holland, and then that miserable system spread, spread throughout Europe and into our country. We know it as modern religious liberalism.

This system of philosophy enters definitely into so many cults of our day that seek to be God, and even gets delusional, John Steinbeck said once, he was a Nobel Prize winner. He said, you know, our fathers read John's Gospel: in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. He said, now that we've advanced so in science and in knowledge in this encyclopedic day and age, we should rather read it: in the beginning was man and the word was with man and man is the all-sufficient one, displacing God. And then we had a hideous and brazen insult to God in our eastern part of our country. He was in New York for a while and then went into Philadelphia. Called himself the divine. What a brazen insult to God. Said emphatically he is God.

Then some time ago, Moses Guibbory, G-U-I-B-O-R-Y, with the help of Boake Carter, who was on the Philko, a radio commentator. Moses Guibbory worked up a book called The Bible in the Hands of its Creators, I've seen it. What a blasphemous thing. It's often repeated: I the Lord God, I the Lord God.
It's said that Benjamin Ullmo, U-L-L-M-O, a French convict, served a 26-year sentence on Devil's Island. That's the famous French penal colony. And you would think that surely he yearned in his prison many a day, many an hour for a chance to return to civilization. Well, one day he did get back to France. Suppose his time of imprisonment had run out and after he stayed in France a short time he voluntarily went back to Devil's Island. He wanted to go back. They asked him why. He said, I'm disappointed with what I've found. It's interesting to learn what this ex-convict thought about the modern world. He was struck most with, and I'm quoting him, "the extraordinary spiritual collapse of the world and the decline in conscience and intelligence."

Unquote. That's hard criticism coming from a convict. He was less impressed with the material progress around him that he saw, and the lowering, but he was more impressed by the lowering of moral standards, and even more than that, he was astounded. At the quote "immeasurable stupidity of present-day humanity which regards itself as so superior." Unquote. Notice those last words: thinks it's so superior. More recent years spell out quite a story of man's attempt to be God.

With the end of World War II man entered into the atomic age. He has now gone into the space age. Atom, from Greek, two Greek words, means indivisible. With a splitting of the atom, there was a handling of the elemental forces of the universe. Then came the hydrogen bomb, a linking up of the elements in the atmosphere as well. Now we've had, for some space of time, the satellites. Research keeps on and to travel to other planets. It's the desire to duplicate God's work and creative power. You see, you're just thinking of it. Well, just witness the experiments, the experiments, for instance, in seeding clouds sometimes with detrimental effects.

And then it was reported in our Congress weekly that the world's first successful experiment to air condition an open space was made in Eilot, in the southern part of Israel. Israel scientists
sprinkled high jets of sea water from long pipes into southward winds from positions north of Eilot, cooling the air currents flowing toward the town. That's not fiction, science fiction, that's fact. And space flight, way out of the dream stage now, it's in the realm of serious scientific observation, experimentation. They believe they're going to be able to send an unmanned rocket to Mars with many, many variations to that main thrust, and they expect propelled rockets to reach peak speeds of over 100,000 miles an hour to carry 300 to 500 miles out into space by chemically fueled missiles. None of this is without the range now, and the declared purpose of these tiny Earth satellites, they say, is for space observation purposes, to carry telescopic cameras telemetering devices that could record and transmit information back to Earth. They could be used, of course, to detect military builds. It's interesting to hear these scientists speak. Dr. Joseph Kaplan, who's the chairman of the Department of Physics and meteorology at UCLA, said pointedly, quote, "the satellite" referring to them at the moment, he says "they are the greatest boon to astronomy since Galileo's telescope." Unquote. Hugh Odishaw, O-D-I-S-H-A-W, executive director of the committee, United States Committee for the International geodetic year said why, the satellite is the most significant single achievement of the 20th century bar none. Atomic energy is a poor second. They're even working quite diligently on the sunspots that reach a peak every 11 years and they're wanting to find out just exactly the effects these have on man and what they can do to change this or change that or change the other in the rotation of these areas on the earth. Now look here. All of them seeking to be God. They actually accompany, these sunspots, they found out they actually accompany dramatic changes in the intensity of ultraviolet cosmic rays. The satellite, we're told, is going to have momentous things to report on that in time. Dr. John O'Keefe, who's with the United States Army Map Service, freely admitted quote, "For all our talk of exploring outer space, we still have only the haziest
idea”, it's almost ludicrous to hear him say, "for all our talk of exploring outer space, we still have only the haziest idea of where we are on Earth." And Dr. Kaplan's said recently, "I have a feeling that the satellite will help rid people's minds of superstitions having to do with the mystery of the heavens, and as if that's not enough, Dr. Porter, a scientist on the Vanguard, was speaking at a congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich, Connecticut. And he was trying to tell them some of the questions he felt the exploration of outer space may eventually hold for theologians. Watch this. He said quote, "Our Christian doctrine is based on the importance of man and the belief that God the Creator himself became man for the purpose of saving all mankind from its own sin.

But suppose we seriously consider the possibility of queer but intelligent creatures on some other planet. Are they too saved by the self-sacrifice of Jesus? Are their sins the same as ours? Since they very probably didn't descend from Adam, how do we know they're sinful at all?” He says, I'll tell you.

What we're working on now in science will necessitate a sweeping appraisal of Genesis and he says we may yet find evidence that would require a new and painful adjustment in the believer's understanding of God and the universe. Think of it, in Science Digest, it might occasion and require a new painful adjustment. Even our understanding of God and what these scientists say, listen. A Frenchman said some time before, here France, you know, this comes from one of the missionary magazines for work that's being done in Europe, the voice of Europe says in France today, about a hundred foreign missionaries for a population of forty two million people. And this article goes on to say, it's entitled The False Christ. In this spiritual vacuum the devil and his
angels are very busy trying to direct the adoration and worship of the people from the true God to the one who calls himself Christ and who claims to be, hear it, God incarnate. They are trying to be God, friends. This man was at one time a postman. They don't give his name. He was a postman but now he lives in a large mansion where he's worshipped by his followers. He's secluded from the outside world except by correspondence. The claims which this ex-postman makes would shock every true believer who loves the Lord. The following is a translation, it's out of the French, of a letter that he wrote and published during a recent French election campaign. He and his followers tried to gain political power in that country. And I'm going to give you what he said word for word as translated from the French. "I have create, my dear people of France, I have created you, giving you a free will, but you have foolishly abused this will. However, on the threshold of these elections, you have the choice between those who are up to the present have led you in the direction of ruin and destruction. And me personally, who will open for you the golden age. You will have a reign of peace, love, harmony and happiness." This is not being made up, friends. This actually was written. "My dear children. I love you and you have been chosen by my actual manifestation." Now here is the worst blasphemy of all: signed, two words, your God.

Votre Dieu. Your God. My dear friends, here you have it. A new people want us to think in terms of themselves as God. And now we come to the last of these stages. It's going to take place at Jerusalem. In 2nd Thessalonians. Excuse me, in Psalm 2, we'll get to 2nd Thessalonians in a moment. Psalm 2:1-3. Man's response to God and the Savior after centuries of the offer of a gracious salvation in Christ, what is the answer? What is man's response? Wicked, unbelievable.
They lift defiant hands against God and say we want to break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.

We don't want any restraint of God at all. We don't want God to think he is running this universe. He's not sovereign, we're going to say the last word. And then, as I just mentioned, 2nd Thessalonians two, three and four. This man says he is God. Here we have it, 2nd Thessalonians 2. Let no man beguile you, it's in verse 3, in any wise; It's not going to be, God's wrath on the earth in its fullness, except the falling away come first, and apostasy, and the man of sin be revealed, the anti-Christ, the son of perdition. He that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God. Watch this. He puts himself against all that is called God, that's even idolatry, All that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God. This is in your Bibles, friends. So that he sitteth in the temple of God setting himself forth as whom? As God. He says he's God. In Revelation 13, verse 4 we have a similar defiant word. There we have the beast saying to those who worship him, they worship the beast saying, who is like unto the beast? His followers say, who's able to war with him? A defiant challenge to God answered in chapter 19 of the Revelation where he comes as King of Kings and Lord of the Lords. And the Beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the throne. They think they are equal to the occasion and against his army. What happens? The beast was taken, doesn't even go into details. By Christ's mighty power the beast is taken, with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight. Wherewith he deceived them that received the Mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. They want worship.
They believe they're deity. They were so led astray by Satan they were cast alive into the lake of fire and Revelation, chapter 20, after Christ has reigned for a thousand years. Listen to this, Revelation 20 and verse 9 we read, "And they went up over the breadth of the earth." Satan gets a group with him after the millennium. Life has gone on, procreation has gone on. Here is an ungodly, unsaved generation. They encompassed, they went around, they encircled the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved city. That's Jerusalem. Fire came down out of heaven and devoured them, and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also, where are also the beast and the false prophet and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. They had been there for a thousand years and are still there. Think of it. The beast thinks he's a match for the son of God. And his judgment is told out in a very summary way. Why are they against the beloved city? To make a final thrust at the divine king because they want to be king. They want to be God. He's been ruling there for a thousand years. So you see friends, it's not something we've concocted ourselves or manufactured in our imagination. The struggle is from Genesis to Revelation. From Eden to the lake of fire. There's nothing more comprehensive or pervasive in the Bible or out of it. We're told that shortly after a certain labor-leader in England was elected to Parliament, he thought he'd take his little daughter to Westminster and duly impress her. So he took her to this exhibit and that exhibit and these halls, and those halls and she was evidently awed at the splendors around her. And she maintained a profound, wondering silence all the time. Well, her father was delighted to see her so much impressed. He knew she was a chatterbox most of the time, but here she was as quiet as she could be, and he was happy that she was so impressed. Well finally, he wanted to get some reaction out of her, he says "Well my dear, what are you thinking about so deeply?" The little girl answered, "I was thinking, Daddy, that you're a big man in our kitchen, but you're not very
much here." That's true, friends. When worldly greatness is measured by the heavenly standard, it is very, very small and infinitesimal and insignificant indeed. Beloved, let God be God. Let every man be low before him. When God speaks, let all the earth be silent. Friend, in all earnestness, after this tremendous recital, I plead with you that if you have not trusted Christ as Savior for the full forgiveness and pardon of your sin, and the reception of eternal life, if you haven't done that, do so now. Behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. Do it now and make God abundantly bless you.