

If you were to use one word that would help describe the great purpose of the Millennium, and the Great White Throne, you might think of different words that would carry a lot of meaning and connection to this great purpose, but we're going to begin this Feast by focusing on a word that carries great meaning for this Holy Day season. There is another word that magnifies the importance even more if we were to think of different ones, but there is a specific one that I'm zeroing in on at the beginning of this Feast that God wants us to focus on and has so much meaning for what we're getting ready to enter into, a new era, a new time: and the word is Family. *Family*: it's what it's all about – the God Family and what God is doing. That's the title of this particular sermon, it's *Part 1* and I do have some series within this Feast that I'm going to be giving. *Family*. So you might think of other words and there are a lot of them we could zero in on but this one really has a lot of meaning and depth to it for what we're picturing and what we're going to be picturing throughout this period of the Feast that pictures a millennial period and finally the Great White Throne – what God is doing all about His Family. From the very beginning of time... I marvel about it when I think about it; I marvel at God's plan and how everything was predetermined, everything was decided, God doesn't do anything as a matter of a last minute decision or just by a matter of chance or anything... everything is mapped out. Everything is planned out – meticulously, beautifully, awesomely so and I marvel in thinking about that: how that before God ever created anything in the spirit world... because there are two worlds... a spirit world and a literal physical world if you will as far as this galaxy is concerned and when you think of the spirit world – God created things in a spirit world that we cannot grasp nor comprehend – things that are described about His throne and so forth; things that are described about beings who've been given life in a spirit world and on and on it goes. And awesome to understand the very purpose of why He did all that and then finally making a physical creation and the angels that shouted for joy when they saw those things come into existence that had never existed before. We can't comprehend things like that.

That's why it mentions in the book of Hebrews that it's a matter of faith. We believe it. We believe that God created it all and it's awesome but all for a purpose about a family – His Family, the God Family and He didn't reveal all that in the beginning – just like things that have happened in the last 6000 years. I think as a people or as a Church we have come to more deeply appreciate even that, that everything that God is giving is progressive in revelation. If you go back through and start with Adam and Eve and go on through time, everything that God has given to mankind about what He is doing has been a progressive revelation through time and the farther you go into that time, the more God gives. And so even with the angelic realm...God didn't give them everything in the beginning. It's an ever learning process as God reveals things of what He's doing and why He's doing it and hence some of the problems that began when God finally revealed to the angelic realm why: and it had to do with Family. That there were going to be those in His creation that were going to be made physical. There were things explained... that would one day have the opportunity of being a part of a spiritual Family, but of the God Family, of the Godkind, and there were several beings then obviously – millions – that could not take that and one in particular who hated it from the very beginning and jealousy and envy entered in and the things that began to interfere – be carried down through time then – in family. Things about family that Satan attacks over and over again and has through time. Started working with the very first family on this earth – got one brother to kill another, in the very beginning, because Satan hates family and he stirs those things up; emotions and feelings that people have, the jealousies, and he plays on those things. He knows how to work with the human mind, and he's done that from the very beginning of time. Incredible those things that God reveals.

Let's begin in **Genesis 8**. The first place the Hebrew word for 'family' is used is not translated as family in the King James version because of the broader way the word can be used in Hebrew. And even things like this will teach us. This first example now is right after the flood. **Genesis 8:1 - And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle were with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;** You have to understand a lot of words like this are awkward in their translation... it's like, God forgot him? No, He didn't forget him, but it's just showing here when God was going to intervene to do certain things and why He did it – that now was the time for doing it; more appropriate, the time for accomplishing these things. **...and the waters assuaged;** in other words, the waters began to calm and subside. **The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heavens were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; And the waters returned from off the earth continually:** or better said the flood waters began to recede, modern English, **and after the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.** I marvel sometimes when you listen to some of the things from different people who go back and study and talk about it, that there was a regional flood, but to be a greater flood... oh no, that couldn't have happened, and some of the crazy reasoning that sometimes people use. That it wasn't really a very great flood, just enough to drown people, and you think, well, how much does it take to drown... but here, it gets very explicit about what it was, how long it took for waters to recede. Things we can't comprehend, how something this massive could take place.

Verse 13 - And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, of Noah's life in other words, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, twenty seventh day, was the earth dried. And God spoke unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, you, and your wife, and your sons, and your sons' wives with you. Bring forth with you every living thing that is with you, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of the cattle, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. God's desire was once again to repopulate the earth, of the animal kingdom, and things of mankind as well obviously here – the beginning of that once again. **And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, which creeps upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.** The words, 'their kinds' is the Hebrew word for 'family' or 'families'. And the purpose was to multiply.

So again, the word for 'families' is used here and should be used in that respect if we understand the meaning of it – talking about 'their kinds', 'families'. Everything, including all creatures and mankind was starting anew – from a new beginning and everything was going to go out for the purpose of multiplying upon the earth once again – from their small families. God inspired that word to be used for different kinds of animals and creeping things, different things upon the earth to repopulate the earth and everything that existed. And so the families were small, whether it be of creatures and of mankind, and more importantly here it's a word that is like a single family, or as one family. So, the importance of this is really lost on mankind when you think about what God is doing. Adam and Eve and the importance of family, of being *one family*, because it's especially about mankind and a single family was soon lost upon them. From the very beginning of time, but especially even after the flood. I marvel at what happened to Noah and his sons and their attitudes and the way they thought that family wasn't something that was valued and it's very evident when you look at what took place and what happened. It was not valued in the sense of what God had given and His purpose for us and why He put us here.

Even with Adam and Eve, from the very beginning when you start looking at some of the things that took place and from the very first two individuals – when Cain killed Abel, Satan was happy about that. From the very beginning, and the way the earth was sometimes... It's very difficult for us to comprehend why God came to a point in time where He said that it's just time to destroy it all and all this was a part of what God was going to reveal and give as well. But it wasn't very long after the very beginning, the 1st generation – incredible to see something like this take place.

We don't know the whole story of some of the things that took place, but right after leaving the ark it didn't take very long and trouble started. You would think that of all people that they would have been knit close together – seeing what they saw? Seeing the earth destroyed? All mankind – everything that was alive except what was on that ark... you would think in looking at something, if I experienced that what would I do? How would I react? But that's because of what we know, and because of what we have lived, but if we were back there, we would have done exactly the same thing. If we'd have come out of that kind of society and that kind of world, we would have done the same thing and it's hard sometimes for us to comprehend. Some think, no, I'd have done it different. No you wouldn't. We're all human beings, we all have human nature and if you're in a certain environment and you grow up in a certain way and you see certain things take place and if you'd witnessed and saw the world destroyed like they did, and some of the things they began to experience... All their friends! They had friends you know. They weren't just out there doing this all by themselves – his son's weren't. They mingled with others around them, they got to know others, they had wives and those wives had families and they knew those families –but they had to see all of them destroyed and that had quite an impact upon them in a carnal way and that's hard for us to comprehend what they experienced.

But even after this great flood that destroyed all the families of the earth, you'd think surely they'll hold on to that tie and the importance of family and why God did what He did. Surely they'd be sobered by that. We know the story. Didn't take very long and they lost the concept of a single family, of one family, when God told them in essence everything that was on the ark; every single family; every one family if you will, was to go out and multiply on the earth again. So with selfish human nature – doesn't take long for true values and a God given purpose of family to become lost on people – especially with Satan around, because we're drawn to, by human nature, things that aren't good for us. That's the way we are as human beings. That's why God has to humble this world in the way He's getting ready to; that's why there has to be the kind of government established on this earth with 144,000 beings who are the God Family and Jesus Christ before mankind can begin to make a change, before mankind will even begin to listen; because mankind today doesn't listen. He doesn't want to listen, he hasn't for 6000 years: no matter what people have gone through; and you think surely the flood would have sharpened peoples listening – doesn't. Doesn't last long, does it? You think of the children of Israel leaving Egypt. How long was their sense of hearing sharpened. They got out there and Moses is gone for a little while up in the mountain and he's not coming back as quick as they think he should. They think something's happened to him so they start doing their own thing. It doesn't take very long. Incredible what they did. It doesn't take long to gravitate to carnal human nature, the desires of carnal human nature and everything else is forgotten.

So when family is not valued in the way God intends and the very purpose of human life becomes lost – and that's the way it's been since the days of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve from the very beginning lost the concept of what God was wanting to teach them and what He was giving to them, that they didn't hold onto it. Think about it, think about Abel and he was the first one that began to believe God – the first one. Adam and Eve didn't. Even the very ones that God made – Adam is never recognized as a preacher of righteousness. He didn't teach about God. He didn't teach his family about God; the very

one that was made by God; the very first human being on earth. You would think surely – surely he would pass that along to his children but he didn't. It took one of his sons to do so, but Adam wouldn't. Eve didn't either. Their minds were perverted because of choices they made. Eve's mind was perverted because of choices she made. It's hard for us to understand sometimes.

And so, you think of all the things they went through until God finally brought them to a certain point – the true rewards that would otherwise come when you value family. People robbing themselves and not understanding what they are robbing themselves of.

Let's go over to **Exodus 20**. This is something that God Almighty wants us to deeply embrace with all of our being because this is something that from the very beginning - and when I talk about the very beginning, I'm talking about before the angelic realm was created. This desire for family that has been so intense with God, with His will, the things we have gone through in life, and why we're experiencing the things we are. 6000 years of mankind on this earth because God has a desire for family and He wants us to embrace that same desire and *yet in the Church of God we fail to do that to the degree that we should be able to with God's spirit. We don't grasp the importance of family! We truly don't.* And you think, well if we have difficulty are we going to have difficulty in the millennium? The answer is yes. It's a growing process, it truly is, learning to value family according to God's will and God's purpose for us. We fall short – and God understands that and we hopefully understand that and the more we understand that then the more we can *repent* in areas we fall short. Because that's what it's all about – God gives us opportunity to repent when He shows us things where we're in error so that we can embrace that which is right and good for us and healthy and spiritual for us. And this is the greatest thing in that respect that God is giving to us: this concept, this idea, this knowledge of Elohim – Family on a spirit plane – for eternity. And so we have to go through much in physical life to begin to learn and to value; to have a desire to value such ideas of family. And yet when we think of family a lot of times we think of our own personal physical family. It's hard for us to get beyond that and yet God brings us into a family that's *bigger* than that: that's *more important* than that: that has *greater meaning* in it than that. Because in time, with God's time, all will be able to become a part, through choice, a part of that spiritual family. The life is not in the physical family: the life that God intends for us to have. In the physical family there is suffering, there is hurt, there is pain, there is sorrow, there's disappointment – all those things that go along because people, human beings, tend to hurt each other and they say things and so we live life going through many things like that, we truly do.

I have mentioned oftentimes that for people in the Church that I've worked with over the years, my own life, everyone else's life – things that moulded and fashioned you, that brought you into your teen years, those things that happened to you when you were younger – all those things made you who you are and your battles throughout life are a result of the early years of life – they truly are. The things that made you, the things that you became through time, the things that you experienced through time are the things that mould and fashion you and as a result are so many of our battles for the rest of our life, they truly are. Awesomely so.

So again, what is the first great law that God gave to mankind on a physical plane so that some value of family could be retained and blessings received for such obedience? We know the answer to that.

Exodus 20:12. I said on a physical plane because the first of the laws have to do with a relationship with God, but human beings can only as a whole even grasp those laws physically so. They're never looked at by people spiritually – they don't understand the spiritual intent of the first 4 laws that God gave at all. You have to be called by God and begin to understand the truth of God with the spirit of God in order to understand the spirit of those things. And so even physically those things are only seen on a physical

plane. Worshipping or praying to statues, not cursing – we look at things in the simplest and most simplistic of ways when it comes to what we see as physical law, but they're far deeper than, and far more meaningful than that, but that's how we take them as physical human beings. So it takes time to grow in understanding of that in the first 4 as well. But here...**verse 12 - Honour your father and your mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Eternal your God gives you.** And so a beginning process would start there – with family – for people to understand certain basic concepts about family and so God gave a law here so that even on a physical plane... to be able to retain certain blessings, to have certain blessings that God said He would give starts right here in understanding in a physical way.

I want you to notice how this is referred to by Paul back in **Ephesians 6**, you can hold your place here because we're going to come back here to Exodus 20 in a little bit. But let's go over to **Ephesians 6** for a moment and look at what Paul had to say as he was discussing this with the Church. **Verse 1 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right...** a lot said right there because even within the Church not everyone remained 'in the Lord', in the Church, in God, God dwelling in them and them dwelling in God. But nevertheless says, **Children, obey your parents in the Lord:** In God's way of life and what God has given. He's talking to the Church here in this case and certainly those things about the Church to be passed along to children but I have seen and known over the years, especially going back before the apostasy took place, so many cases of where parents did not pass along the ways of God – no more than Adam and Eve did to their children. They didn't teach about God like they should have. They didn't do those things that they should have done and because of that the family began to suffer very early on; and one picked up on those things – God began to work with 1 individual – Abel, but the rest of the family from the very beginning was not turned toward God, was not worked with by God. They were allowed to go their own way.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour your father and mother; (which is the first commandment, the first commandment, with promise ;) so God understands what we're like as human beings. He understands that and this is the way we are. That we can begin to work with something that we can see on a physical plane. We can't see things about God. We don't really grasp the spiritual meaning, the significance of the first 4 commandments as a whole, the purpose of the Sabbath itself. When people come across the commandment for the Sabbath, in the world especially, that do have a little bit of understanding, whether it be 7th Day Adventists or whatever – the basic thing that most people see is there are do's and don'ts. There are some people who even use that for Sunday because they think that's the Sabbath and so there are some people who won't work. There's a chicken franchise in the States called Chick-fil-A; they don't open up on Sunday because of their beliefs of not working on – what they believe at this point in their time – is the Sabbath. Very unique to go through a shopping mall or someplace else where everything is opened on a Sunday, but not them – see? So again, even from people's physical perspective it's a matter of more do's and don'ts. They don't grasp the meaning of the Sabbath. They don't understand why God gave the Sabbath, but in their own understanding at least they don't work. And that's how most people take it – certain things you do and don't do on the Sabbath. They don't understand the spiritual significance of why God gave it, of why it's important to the Church, how it's the life's blood for the Church – that without it people die; spiritually, they can't survive, they can't live without the Sabbath. That's when God nurtures us and gives us nourishment and helps us to grow.

Going on... **Honour your father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise) that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.** Incredible how God gave something very physical here that if people would strive to live by a certain standard of life, that they would be

blessed because of it. The first commandment with promise. Incredible! A better life, a longer life, and the reality is... I said better life – it talks about longer life, but it is a better life. The more that people can obey the physical things of God’s law, the better life is. Don’t steal. The more people can live by that law, the better their life’s going to be. If they’ll live by those standards of not taking from others; of not ripping off someone else – even if a mistake has been made – you give back to them, you don’t take advantage of people in the world. Not to lie; not to bear false witness – those kinds of things. What a wonderful thing and people are blessed when they live by that. A lot of people would be out of jobs today in corporations; corporations wouldn’t go very far. Politicians couldn’t survive very long if they really are true politicians and go very far in this world. But people don’t live by that – but what a blessing in life the more people would obey. And so it is with a family – that there are blessings there if those things are taught because that has to be taught. Children are not going to understand how to honour a father and mother unless the father and mother has certain morality that they’re striving to live by. It’s not a matter of just a do and don’t; it’s not a matter of being hard upon them, making them obey everything that is said but it’s a matter of family that is carried through to a child – that a child will have that desire as they grow to honour, to love their father and their mother and so the point being is – this isn’t just about the children! This isn’t something that’s left with the responsibility of a child. It’s with the parent! It’s with the parent to mould and fashion and strive to teach certain principles. But in the world and in society, especially in this age, so often that doesn’t even work – because society pulls them away. The world is geared, especially in the last 20, 40 years, because of technology of pulling children away. You go back a hundred years; you didn’t have the influence of music like it is today. That’s a powerful, powerful tool to pull children away from family. It’s powerful. I know, I was called and it was very much a part of my life and it was hard for me to come out of that. It had a powerful pull upon me, music did, and I had to get away from it. I understood very early on in the Church what a powerful pull that music has on young people. It is a powerful tool. It started with radio and then TV, and now MTV... some of these kinds of video things that are out there. Sick, sick perverted... now it’s not just a matter of the hearing, it’s a matter of the seeing and if you want to talk about perversion and tearing things apart in family and tearing things apart in society and tearing down every kind of value that exists – those are powerful tools of Satan, they truly are because it’s misused in the world. I don’t know how many times you’ve ever thought about some of those things that are out there – they’re very powerful. So to be able to teach your children certain things is a much harder job over the past century than it was beforehand; if a person was striving to accomplish that, because of the pulls of technology that are out there.

Television... powerful, powerful tool and how you’ve seen it change. You see TV the way it was 50 years ago compared to today... some things are almost laughable because the world is so sick today, of what it was back then. But there were principles that were taught back then that aren’t taught anymore. On the contrary, things have changed so quickly. So again, the point being here is that things like this have to be taught with certain concepts in mind as to what is passed along. So in a better world, without the pull of things in society in a wrong way, just like schools today... parents send their children to school and then they have to re-educate them. You have to teach them; you have to stay on top... if you let the schools do all the teaching – see? The answer is not to take them out, unless you have to because the environment is so exceptionally bad, to not be a part of that – but as a whole it’s better for them to be able to deal with others and grow up to learn certain things, even in social abilities and so forth – even in a bad world sadly. But there are certain things that are learned there. If you just let them take care of that and do that and you’re not doing your part to re-educate. Ask your children “what are you learning? What is being sent home?” and tell them what the truth is and what right values are in the midst of it. And if you don’t do that then they’re gone! They’re gone! If you let the system; if you let the world teach them, you’ve lost them.

It's all about family. Satan's great battle has always been against the family, to destroy every facet of it he can and he's done a very good job, he truly has, in societies and in the world. And only because of the Church can people begin to grab a hold of and take charge of various things in life and even then I have seen; those of you who are older and have been around for a long time, you've seen, that even there – without specific favour and help from God it's a losing battle in this world – it truly is. It's a losing battle, the way the world is.

The point of this is it's not just something that's a matter of the children, it's a message to the parents. Don't you want your children to honour you? If you do, in life, then there are certain things that you have to do. So that's the admonition that is being given here very early on to the Church and things that have to be passed along, things that have to be taught so that it becomes a part of them so that certain things will be done later on in life because that's how they've been moulded and fashioned. ...**that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.** Notice now this next verse, **And, you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath:** don't provoke them to anger, to wrath. Be careful how you work with your family. Be careful you don't do things that are going to turn them against family; that are going to provoke them to where they're doing the opposite of honouring father and mother because parents do that in the world. It's an easy thing to do if you yield to Satan's system, to Satan's way, and most of that – you know why? What this word entails when you talk about provoke? See? It's by your example, by what you do, it's by how you live your life. You know one thing children can see very quickly on? Hypocrisy. Children learn it, they know right away, they know very quickly early on if certain things are unfair, if certain things are not right, if mom and dad aren't doing the things that they're supposed to be doing. Young people in the Church grew up, and a lot of the problems we had in the Church were a result of the parents not living what they should be living. Coming out of their mouth was filth and garbage and stupidity and ignorance and murmuring. I used to travel with this one family for a time, back and forth as a young person in the Church. I was around 19 or 20. I've heard sermons in times past, maybe some of you have that have been around longer – talk about 'roast minister'? After services some people would have 'roast minister'. Driving home I heard 'roast minister'. Because they weren't supporting, they weren't talking about any excitement about what was being said, but they were finding fault in things being said by the minister. And you think how's that going to affect the children? How's that going to affect what they are being taught? It's okay to do that? It's okay to talk against God's servants? It's okay to tear apart sermons and tell why or where someone is wrong in something they've said, rather than if there really is something wrong... If there really is something wrong, God says there's a way of addressing that. It isn't talking about it with your mate and having the children listen to it, but people think they can get by with that; they think they can and that happens today as well in the Church. There are things I know of at times where I know that certain things have been discussed within the realm of a family and the children pick it up. And they learn certain things from it. I made a comment here not too long ago that there are times that I can tell some things about a family by the way the children talk to me, or treat me, or act around me – no, not always – but oftentimes it tells a lot. See, when I see a child that does not make any effort whatsoever... now some go to the other extreme and they want the child to, you know I'll just speak plainly... it's almost like a fake protestant thing – it's not genuine. It's like go up there and do this or do that, or say this or say that and so they're prompted and they're prodded beforehand and then it comes across that way. It comes across fake. My wife and I know when someone is genuine, when it's something because if the parents have genuine excitement about seeing us, and excitement that we're going to be there, you know what? It's carried across in their conversation at home. That excitement is in their conversation at home. I know it is. And so the children pick up on that because they're talking about it; they can't wait until Sabbath services because you know, it's been 6 months since the last time we got to see them and

they're going to be out here visiting. And so the children are excited about it too because the parents are excited about it! So children learn from their parents, don't they? And it doesn't matter what the age is because I've seen this with young and old alike. We were just in Arizona where I know how the parents are at home, because every one of those kids – and they know who they are – all 4 of those children are anxious to be there and it's in their eyes, it's in their voice, it's in their speech, it's in their actions – and that says volumes about the parents – see? Because I know where they are spiritually in that regard.

You understand what I'm talking about? You have seen those things in life and so when it talks about **you fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath:** to anger, to those things that would hurt, to those things that would tear down – this is what it's talking about because children learn, how do we so often learn when it comes to right moral values? So often it's not by what's said, it's by what's lived; by the example that someone sets because if someone is saying one thing and yet they're living something different... what is it like? Some of us have had been around ministers who spoke one thing and lived another. Boy, what did that teach congregations? Led them to wrath – to anger – provoked them. It hurt! It did a lot of damage. We saw that; we saw the aftermath of some of those kinds of things. And the same thing in a family if a family does that, a husband or a wife – and what does that do to their children? Same thing you know, and so this is exactly what Paul is talking about here. And so there are blessings and promises that start with what we do in life by what we live and the example we set. No, that isn't perfect, especially in the world because the world is pulling in a different direction. But in a better world that's coming, this is going to have a tremendously powerful impact then in life because as people are taught how to live life – that you live true before God, that you live honestly before God – whatever it is that you do, that it should honour God and if it honours God, when it's right children pick up on that and they tend to emulate, imitate those kinds of things. Interesting. And, **You fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.** God is the focus of the family, God is the focal point of the family and if the family is not just speaking that, but living that, children learn from that more powerfully than any other way. It is the way to teach – by example. And so we must live the best ways. We've even had a sermon here not too long ago about within the Church, of how amongst ourselves, the best way to exhort one another, the words and how it's phrased... is by our example. That's how you encourage and exhort... by your excitement of things you do together and what you're able to share together and so sometimes we have to ask God for help to have that living within us, and that's infectious then, to others. Others pick up on that and they are able to be moved and motivated. That's how we exhort and encourage one another – not by what we say to someone. It's not a corrective thing, it's a matter of an example thing – what we live. And it has a powerful impact, doesn't it? So we learn from each other in those things and we do from Church area to Church area – ever learning.

Let's go back now to **Exodus 20** - family, family, family – it's about family, it's about learning the values of life that God wants us to have so that we can be blessed. He wants to bless us! ... and in the right family environment we receive blessings in life, that's what it's all about. So again, **Honour your father and mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Eternal your God gives you.** Then it goes on...things about right concepts and value of family that's sadly lacking because the world doesn't live by these things.

You shall not kill. You're not to murder, take life; and yet we learn within the Church the spiritual part of that – that we're not to fail to love others even. That's a good way of putting it. We're not to fail loving others because God says if you do; if you have the ability and you know how to, that God has shown you how to love someone, and you fail to do it, you refuse to do it, God says you hate them. And He says, if

you hate them, you murder, you're a murderer. That's what He's said. Those are powerful things that God has said because it's spiritual. So we learn that it's not just a matter of not taking life out here, murdering someone, but we begin to understand the spirit and where that motivation and what the mind is thinking that leads to things like this: what led Cain to killing Abel. It started out with matters of jealousy and envy, that's what it started out with and then that would cause dispute and finding fault with and those kinds of things that work in the mind so often that finally lead to murder, incredible. And so, again, I love the way John explains those things and talks about love and talks about a failure to love...that if we fail to love we hate, and if we hate, we murder – spiritually. It's the same. The same spirit and God wants us to understand those things. And this is fundamental to family, to the concept of family – of how we think about others within the family.

You shall not commit adultery. Powerful... so he says, even within family, and if you go back and look at the history of man and look at the history in the Bible. I think of the times of the kings and David's family. And look at all the things that happened within his family, incredible some of the things that took place. David had some tough things to learn through life and made a lot of huge mistakes in life and a lot of it was with his family. He let others raise his children. He succumbed to certain things and had to learn from those harsh things that happened in life then, but they reflected so much in the family. You go through the Bible and you see those kinds of things and again, people have their own choices and it shows the power of human nature and the choices that people have in going the wrong direction and yet so much of it goes back to the responsibility of the father and mother, but even then when things are done perfectly so – it doesn't matter completely because children can go in a wrong direction because of free moral agency. So, depending on the purpose of what God is doing – but so often those things can have a very powerful, very positive in a very carnal world, impact when certain basic principles are taught from youth on: honour, respect, love. Because if those things aren't passed along by example, if a parent isn't living those toward others around them, then if the children start learning those things and it becomes a part of their thinking – it's amazing how it affects their behaviour in society.

You shall not steal... And yet even within family there are things that people begin to do sometimes where they steal from each other. Maybe it's the cousins or the nephews or the uncles or the aunts, brother or a sister and human nature – jealousy, envy... Something what blows my mind the most at times is when a father and mother is dead and there's an estate...amazing! How loving family can be at a time like that. So often in the world you hear about it. So often we have experienced those things in life. There are those of you who have experienced those things in life and you see what other brothers and sisters are like and different ones who want a chunk of the pie and they're not even concerned about the death of what should have been a loved one: a mother or a father, or a grandparent, or whatever it might be. On the contrary, it's like they can't wait to have the will read to find out what their portion is going to be – and then they fight about the portions. Or if it's a piece of land – who got what portion of land... "That's the better portion of land!" There are fights and battles and hatreds and envy that people have because they think this one little piece of partial land over here was better than the one I got farther down the line, you know? Same quantity, same amount but that's how far jealousies go – who gets the rings, who gets the jewellery, who gets the certain furniture or whatever it is and families have huge squabbles. **You shall not steal.** Incredible – human nature, it really is. Concept of family? Not a whole lot of it there is there in this old world. Sick world. Human beings have made it a really sick world. We're so selfish by nature.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. And people will even do that in the family. Starts out at a pretty young age and so you have to work with your children because, "Who broke this?"

We can laugh at some things with children, but when parents do it...when adults do these kinds of things and then children learn from it, that's a way of life – what a horrible thing.

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, his ass, nor anything that's the neighbour's. And so what we see in society and the world and within families? A lot of coveting...a lot of desire. I think of how that's so moulded and fashioned today in society. There are so many cases where parents have worked their lifetime to have some things but society has taught the younger generation, no, you should have it right now. You should have it now. You deserve it now! It's not a concept or matter of working a lifetime, the fruit of your labour and so forth to acquire, to get to where you're going. No, you should be able to start out right where your parents are right now and keep going from there. That's a lot of society today – selfishness, inwardness, concepts of morality that are totally lost.

Let's go on over here to **Ephesians 5** – Do we see? Very powerfully so? Do we have the kind of desire? And we don't, but we're growing in it, that God has for family? That He's had from the very beginning of time? He lets us see at different times and things like this series of sermons that we have right now, to begin focusing on a little bit more, so that we can have that stirred up within us more – the importance, the desire, the excitement. Do you feel the excitement for family, the kind of family that God says that this earth can have? That people can begin to experience more of in a new age? Because He wants us to have that kind of excitement for what He's bringing to pass, what He has worked to bring to pass for millions, maybe billions of years. We don't know how far back these things go through time, that God has had that intense desire. Everything He's done is geared toward, amazingly so, this time in a magnified way. This time, the time we're getting ready to go through and get onto the other side and begin to make these big changes in a millennial period, and then finally the Great White Throne, and then finally, that which God has worked for in order to have something for the rest of eternity – the God family. It's awesome! Really is! And He shares these things with us.

Let's go back here to **Ephesians 5:22**. Things about the very basis, the very fibre, the very beginning of morality that have to do with family where we begin to learn so much and we even begin to learn the spirit of those things as we continue to grow. **Verse 22** says, **Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.** That's tough. To yield to. In other words, there is an order here of things and this is a toughie. It's exciting seeing what God's doing. We were talking about this during lunch and seeing how people's of different parts of the world have been brought into areas of Ephraim and Manasseh primarily and also other parts of Israel in Europe to be called at this time – early on – in the early stages – representations of people's all over the world. It's as though God's going to have a witness from all different kinds of people from all over the world of this end-time, of the things we're finally thrust into being a part of the Church – a scattered Church before the Church is even magnified far more in other parts of the world. So there's this part first that's going to be a powerful witness – because God places witnesses of things through time of individuals that have opportunity to witness things. And to me that's exciting seeing what He's doing right now even from that perspective. Another one is right now, especially within the States and Canada, a lot of young people are being called, but mostly men at this stage. And a lot of them are concerned that there are not a lot of young women being called to kind of equal things out and so you have all these young men being called at this point in time and it's exciting seeing this and what God is preparing and you think about a new age and what God is doing here, and so they've talked to us and talked to my wife about it and my wife has made the comment to them in a certain sort of way that, "Well, you guys need more time. You need more time before they can be called. You need to become well grounded before they're called, before they're drawn." And there's a lot of truth to that because of a structure and the way God has established things

to help concepts of family to exist in a better way, in an easier way, to work with because of human nature. We all have human nature.

So, always remember, young fellows back there and wherever you are, and men everywhere that this is not an easy thing. It is something that they're told to do, but please understand they're doing it to that which is very imperfect – us. We have problems. Of course women have problems too, but we have a lot of problems...and so there's an order of things that God has said here, if you understand what I'm saying. If we understand then, that God has said that there's a certain process here that you're to yield yourself to something as a part of that process, it can be tough can't it? See? But God says it's a responsibility. When you see something that could be done a better way, when you see something that you know is an obvious mistake, when you see something that is a matter of bad behaviour and a decision comes out of that... it's pretty tough to yield to part of that. Now there are things you can do and should do, not just allow a bad decision to take place. You should strive to discuss and talk about certain things and so forth, but you know, then it's the husbands part too to do his job. Every time I've ever started to give sermons in the past, going way, way back, if you want to talk about husband and wife sermons... I don't know to date if I've ever given a full sermon on wives. It's always been to the husbands, because if the husbands will do their job in the way God said; if they understand what God is saying – then the job of what the wife has been given, the responsibility she's been given is made much easier. Truly is. There's a great deal of responsibility God then places, just like He does within the Church upon the ministry – of examples and so forth of things that are said, of things that are done, and things that we do in a certain way and because of that, and we are as individuals, as human beings, very imperfect...then God places a great deal of responsibility that things are to be done a certain way there. And if they're done in a certain way then it makes it easier for the rest of the body and that's the way God wants it to be and that has to do with love; that has to do with certain things that are seen and understood.

Same thing within a family. That's why it goes on and talks about some other matters here. God very clearly so here has established these things to be in a certain way. So the point being... let's say to just make this real simple... that the only time... when does a wife need to yield, submit to her husband? When is there an occasion for that? As a whole, how often does that arise? How often is there a need for that? How often is this even brought in as an issue, as a question? In some families maybe too often because a husband can be authoritarian. We've seen that in the ministry where ministers have been authoritarian and sometimes husbands have this concept of sitting in a chair and, "bring me my beer!" and it's like the wife is supposed to jump up and do that. Who said that they're your servant to wait on you hand and foot, day and night, at your whim? That's not what this is about but I've known men in the Church like that in times past – that have treated wives that way and it's not the way a wife is to be treated. But anyway, how often then does it come up? In a strong family; in the kind that God says exists – it'd be a rare occasion. I'm just telling you it'd be a rare occasion that it comes up – that it has to be addressed as a part of something that a wife would even have to think about – submit. The purpose of yielding to a matter is when there's a decision to be made; someone has to make a decision and God says in this case, a husband has to make a decision. But if you understand about making decisions then there's a certain way within a family you come to those decisions and you talk about certain things and it's not just a matter that because a persons in charge that they go off and make certain decisions.

There's some things obviously in the Church that come from God that I have to do because they come from God and there is no questioning, there's no dealing with it because it's given from God. But there's certain things that happen then throughout the Church within the ministry that have been different within Church areas because of the way we've been established and so forth – especially in times past

that have been different in that regard because there are many different ways of conducting and carrying out various things within how a local congregation functions and how to do certain things and the like and that requires then feedback, not just because someone's in charge, quote unquote. And the same thing in a family. So there are concepts here about husbands and wives that so often are so misunderstood and not learned very quickly. It seems like it takes a lifetime sometimes to learn some of these things depending on what we're coming out of. But very rarely does something come up where a husband is going to have to make a decision that the wife would not make, that she would be in disagreement with: but because of a family situation, whatever it might be, a decision has to be made. If it's done right, it's discussed and talked about and a choice is made. And again, those occasions – men out here, young and old alike; I don't care what age you are – husbands... you need to think about that when you're working with your wives and loving your wives because that's what God gives charge for.

Notice, **For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church:** so it's a matter of order. There has to be a system of order and so God has established it that way – yes. But to have a right family this needs to be done God's way and sadly in the world it's not done this way as a whole, but some people even live by right principles there, even in the world amazingly so. And they're blessed because of it, they don't understand God's plan and purpose, but how much better and sweeter and greater is it when it's done right within the Church. **Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.** So that should be the attitude of mind as it is with a congregation toward a minister, you know? To be subject, yielding to that process that God has given.

Husbands love your wives, that's the magic key. That says it all. In family, that truly says it all. If there's true love, real love that being exercised and lived; when it comes to certain kinds of decisions... you know from the very beginning, I'll just give you an example in the smallest of things. My wife and I have always lived this way and I've said this example before. I don't care if it's something as simple as planting a plant outside on the side of the house, if I want something that she doesn't like, I don't want it because she doesn't like it. If there's something she'd like to have, you know, it goes both ways. I don't want to have something out there that she doesn't like and she doesn't want to have something out there that I don't like; and so we come to a point where we both say, "I like that," then we do it because we *both agree* on it and that's the way decisions should be made as a whole within family. That if we love our wives...husbands, if we love our wives, if you love your wife, then you're going to want to do those things that make her happy, that are pleasing to her. Why would you want to make a decision and a choice of something *that rubs her the wrong way?* *Are you nuts?* You know... *if you really love yourself, wake up* – smell the roses, smell the coffee. Use some wisdom in your life to have peace and happiness within the family. There are certain things that are just common sense, aren't they? But sometimes we don't live that way as human beings because we don't think. You know why? Because we're selfish. A lot of things we do at times that hurt within the family, cause friction within the family – it's because we're selfish and we want something our way, or it's a matter of envy or jealousy or something carnal. That happens within families! Every argument in a family is a result of some wrong motivation there somewhere: some jealousy, some envy. Lack of self-confidence, lack of whatever it is in life sometimes, whatever it is we're struggling for in our own lives, but something there from selfishness that causes a wrong choice or response or reaction in life.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church, I love this verse. That means you're willing to give your life. So if you're willing to give your life, if you're willing to sacrifice your life, if you're willing to have a sacrificing kind of love then it means, by all means, that you'd want to do things even if you sacrifice your will, your desire, your wants to make your mate happy, to make her filled with life –

because that makes you happy. I don't understand any thinking that's different than that, I really don't and yet it exists in human life because that's the way we are as human beings. But that's really the way we should be, to be willing to give up self for the benefit of others. ...and he gave himself for it; so if that's a part of our mind and a part of our thinking then do we always live like that toward our wives? And you know what? Children will see those things, they'll understand those things. They understand when that hasn't been done well or perfectly and I don't want anyone to think in my own life that I have lived perfectly by any measure. My children could tell you so. You know, there are things that I have said, things I have done because of my own selfishness, because of just not eating on time. There was a time when my wife would know when I came in from outside if I hadn't eaten and she would ask me and I know what she's saying and that didn't always put me in the best mood either because I realized, yeah, it's because of my attitude here. I'm on edge and it's coming out. My son can attest to that. If we don't eat at the right time there is something about our metabolism, our low blood sugar, whatever it is – things that happen to us that affect our attitudes and we have to fight our attitudes sometimes and fasting is another time. How many of you have had to fight your attitude when you're fasting? How many of you really feel on top of the world when you're fasting?

So sometimes people can come home from work – that's what's tough in today's world: you have a husband and wife that come home, they're both working, they both come home, they're both exhausted and then there are matters sometimes with children and who gets to handle the rest of the evening? The wife. Yeah, that's the way society is as a whole. She has to take care of the clothes, she has to do the rest of the duties of the house, the food and preparing all those things and dealing with child rearing and so forth and yet it's like, well the husband...it's kind of owed to him that he be able to relax that evening. Why? Why can't he share in some of that as well in the family?

Family, family, family... if you treasure family, there are things you're going to do within a family because it's valuable and meaningful to you and so in the big things in life... yes, we're all going to have little things in life that we need to strive to do better – always – everyone of us can improve in those things, by all means. But so often the big things that happen within families that cause the big problems and the big disputes are because these things are not done right and it shouldn't be that way. I love the scripture where it talks about resolving an issue... quickly... don't let it go through the night. Talks about Satan, problems that Satan likes because he likes to stir up things and so often then if people put off making reconciliation within a marriage, within a family, and if they go to bed angry, upset with each other – that's a bad thing because it gets easier and easier to let that last longer and longer and it gets worse and worse and people start to drift apart rather than out of love going and resolving and having the ability to say, "I'm sorry." It takes two to Tango and both should be able to say, "I'm sorry." But you know who that responsibility rests with first and foremost? The husband. The husband must initiate it and it must be sincere and genuine because you see yourself and you see your own wrong part in what you have done. So again, that's a part of loving your wife. If you love your wife you'll resolve differences and issues like that and be able to say more quickly, "I'm sorry." That's one of the things I've noticed in the Church that used to get me over the years is that parents sometimes were so filled with pride and this matter of authority that they couldn't tell their own children when they were wrong in regard to certain things of child rearing or some things toward their children. It seems like it's a hard thing sometimes for parents to be able to tell their own child, "I was wrong, I made a mistake there." Why can't we do that as human beings? And yet I've known so many people in the Church... my minds reeling right now with families I've been around in times past who are no longer a part of the Church. The damage that was done within families toward their own children because they couldn't tell their children something as simple as sorry out of love. Sad. Family, family, family! There are laws that regulate family and there are things that produce good family and there are things that just yield

themselves to having bad family situations and bad lives and tough lives and that's in the world around us. That's why people cheat and do the things they do. That's why people spend time getting to know someone better... "Oh you, you know, you seem to understand me. You'll listen to me." And then all of a sudden they're in the closet somewhere, you know? Things like that happen at work – happens all the time in the world. All of a sudden the door is locked or there's this secret meeting place. They'll meet someplace and destroy a family, incredible.

What was it this one TV guy I saw today that just irked the tar out of me. I'm not going to say his name. He's not worth mentioning and I won't give you the letters of his name, I won't spell it out for you. But anyway, the headlines was about extortion. This individual's being extorted and it was written in such a way that it was like... oh, the poor guy. And then underneath it in little letters he's had affairs with some of his workers there at this TV studio, interns, and it was like... because someone was going to extort, try to get money out of him, that the poor guy... just feel so bad for him. What about his wife? What about his children? What about his family? You know? The sick pervert! *He is a pervert! A PERVERT!* And yet millions of people adore the guy and listen to him every night. I think he's sicker than all get out! Anybody that would continue to listen to the guy ought to have their head examined! And yet they listen to that kind of... I'd like to call it what it is, but I won't, because I'm a minister. The swill! The garbage! The feces that exists out there in this world that people worship is really disgusting and it's those kinds of things we see in the world: the tearing down of the family, and it's laughed at. And then I saw a little quip from him on TV in the news and he does it like in this big joking thing that the whole audience is laughing..."Did I have a relationship with any interns? Yes I did!" Like it's okay... and the audience is just roaring and laughing. I wonder what his wife's doing?! I think he's still married. At least I thought he was. Maybe he's not, but I thought he was still married, has family. How do the children feel looking at something like that? Adults, grown up and they see their dad making an absolute you-know-what of himself, you know, the rear end of many animals. Sick!

Family, family, family... people don't treasure family. It's not a high matter of value. It's not valued and treasured and you think, what a sad thing because look at all the misery now that's been caused. Look at the politicians out here that do the things they do and they hurt their constituents, they hurt the people that supposedly... that's a good thing for people to learn from though. You're stupid for doing that aren't you? In trusting politicians who by the very definition of their name – lie – and you're entrusting them and yet they have bad moral lives and they do immoral things and you're shocked by that? Now why are you shocked? How stupid can this world be? We're learning to get our fill of this world, we truly are, and the way this world operates and exists. It is a sick, perverted world and it seeks to destroy family because it's not God's world, it's Satan's world and Satan seeks to destroy family. God is leading us into a period of time where He has to humble this world powerfully so through what is coming and what is going to continue now to intensify, far greater, until a point in time where this world is in what is described as the worst that the world has ever known, has ever been in history – the kind of massive pain and suffering and destruction that exists in order to humble mankind so that he'll finally listen to his God, so that he can finally be shown the way to happiness, to right family values, and how to live it. What a sad thing that we have to go through so much in order to be blessed. What about you? What did God have to take you through in order to bless you? He had to hit me between the eyes with a 4X4 on a spiritual plane and knock me flat on my keister before I'd listen to God, before I could start to be blessed. I had to go through one thing after another for several months in a row to bring me down to a point to humble me, to the point where I would finally listen to Him. Otherwise I know my mind, I know my being, I would never have listened to God; I would have laughed at anyone who ever told me the things that were finally given to me when my mind was opened. I would have thought anyone speaking of those things was a stark raving idiot, lunatic, moron, fool – like people do to us in

the world around us – see? So what did God have to do to you in order to bless you? I like that one word that's in the Greek language when it talks about 'calling'. It's the word for 'drag'. Sometimes we're dragged for a little ways kicking and screaming because it's not something we automatically are attracted to, is it? Human nature is not attracted to God, on the contrary it says, 'the carnal mind is enmity with God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' until God humbles us, until God brings us to a point in time where He can begin to work with us. Incredible!

Going on in this verse here...beautiful verses, beautiful things that God is showing here that start with the physical family and the concept, the things that begin with the husband; the things that began with the *first two people* who let down, who didn't do their job, and not just because of them, it doesn't matter who it would have been: human beings and human nature would have done the same thing and every family has been like that since except for those that God has been dragging and working with.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that should be the driving force in a marriage, truly should be. No marriage is going to succeed and be successful unless the husband is doing this. It will not survive, it will not succeed in the way that God offers it to be so unless this is lived in spirit and in truth. Really.

Verse 26 – notice... **That He might sanctify**, notice what Christ did concerning the Church, **That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word**, a desire, a love that God has, that Christ had toward the Church, a desire for what was to follow in order to become a part of the Church, in order to become a part of the Family of God. And this was a matter of something of spiritual adornment; that's what it's talking about here, a desire to see within everyone that would follow, that would be a part of the Church, a spiritual adornment, something that we could have and possess, and live as a result of God's spirit being given to us, that access being made available to us because of what He suffered and went through so we could be forgiven of sin so that the truth could be given to us and begin to live within us so that God could begin to live within us. Jesus Christ and God the Father could begin to live within us and we in Him. And so there is that desire of His willingness to sacrifice in order to adorn the Church. And a husband should have a desire to see his wife adorned! Truly! In every way, to have love and desire and if that's a motivating desire because you understand the value of family and what that means – there's nothing greater that can be given in life. And then that becomes evident. A matter to see one adorned.

Verse 27 - **That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;** that kind of desire. The world is a little bit upside down in some of that because in most families in the world, it's really the wife that sacrifices. That's the way society has been – sacrifices for the children, not the husband... isn't that upside down? Isn't that backwards of what it's supposed to be? Because it really is to be different than that. It's not supposed to be that way. I think of different societies and different peoples because of mothers, that there's a greater respect so often toward the mother because they understand that the father hasn't cared, that the father's been selfish, but the mothers... because of the motherly love that Mr. Armstrong used to talk about...see, that's why he talked about that – and so because of that, there is a greater respect and honour that's shown to the mother, but why? Because that example she has set that they know, even in correction, that she's done it for their good, that she's sacrificed for their good, she works for their good. Incredible. And it says a lot, truly does. And so the mindset of a man, of a husband should be one of a willingness to sacrifice in order to adorn first his wife, and then his family – to sacrifice for his family. But the world hasn't been like that as a whole, has it? It really hasn't been if you look at it.

Again, **That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies.** I love the ways it's stated here. **He that loves his wife loves himself.** If men could only understand that in the world; if men could only live that; if that could be lived what an incredible thing, but it's something that's a spiritual truth and concept and thing about family that fortifies a family that the world doesn't understand. **For no man,** Paul reasoning here with them said, **No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes it and cherishes it,** I love this. That's what we do. We just love ourselves and that's the way we are as human beings and men first of all – see? That's what he's pointing at here. That's why the world is like it is, because men have just loved themselves more than their wives, more than their children, more than their families, and they haven't understood as a whole, the role that God has given from the very beginning of time that if you understand family and the need to love within the family in the way God has shown it – to adorn the family, and to sacrifice for it, then in reality you're blessed by that. Your life is made rich because of that, better because of that, and the other way never satisfies. Isn't that an incredible thing? The other way never satisfies – only God's way does. That's an awesome thing to understand about God's laws.

For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. To teach family. One family. A singleness of family, that's what this is about...a family unit and so there is a time and God chose that time and what it means and it's all about family and how another family now can begin to develop and grow and so the families of the earth, the way they should have been, could have been...but because of human nature can't be. And so God has to take us through all of this, to bring us to a time when we can begin to reap some of those blessings on the earth.

Going on in **verse 32 - This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.** And so he's showing that even that which is physical in the world is a mystery because it reveals something that God has intended from the beginning of time. It's about Elohim, it's about His Family, it's about the Church – Christ and the Church and that relationship we're able to have: a spiritual process that brings us into one family.

Verse 33 it goes on to say - **Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she respect her husband.** And if that's lived, that will be automatic – that's pretty easy, truly is and the yielding then is not a tough thing to do, if ever an issue comes up where there needs to be any yielding because the ideal thing is with the right kind of love and so forth there is no need, because everything will be done... maybe there'll have to be times, or decision on occasion, or rarity in life, but it isn't that often, it truly isn't.

Let's turn over to **Colossians 3.** Family is a beautiful thing when done God's way and we have been blessed in the Church because the more we see that, the more we're able to drink that in, the more excited we become, the more fulfilled we become of what God is building, of what God is bringing to pass and especially for us because we've all had a lot of suffering within the environment of the Church because of what we saw within the Church. We are many witnesses, at least that which is remaining, of a lot of things that are going to be changed and we have opportunity for that – we truly do in a very powerful way in a new world. But it's all about family, it truly is and the riches and the blessings that flow from that, but in this world, in this society... That's why I mention things recently like Facebook. It doesn't enhance family – it hurts family, the way it's done in this world and too often within the Church there are too many who were yielding to that process that yields to the hurt rather than the help because that tool is not being used in the right way. There are tools that can be used in a good way and

a right way if constructed and applied so, but everything as a whole in the world is not constructed in that way and instead is geared toward tearing down and destroying – it truly is. And so, within the Church even sometimes those things can happen where if we're not careful something can enter in and we don't have the time... we can't change the way the world is using it and what we do in the world and that's for another time... just a few years down the road here yet and we can start working on those things: but what a sick, sick world we live in right now.

Verse 1 of chapter 3 - If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your affection, your desires, on things above, not on things of the earth. And so this enters into everything we do in life and it enters into family as well and the concept we have. I'm not just talking about physical family, this is much bigger than that. If we can start in a stronger way grasping and understanding things about a physical family, then we'll start grasping it and understanding things within a spiritual family and work harder to apply those things and to live those things. That's why I really appreciated hearing Terry Wrozek refer to something that was said in the sermon recently about family because it does mean a great deal and indeed something that needs to be lived by all of us all the time within the Church and that was, 'don't let any part of the family not be part of the family.' You know? And if we have that kind of a mindset toward one another within the body, wherever we are, then we'll be blessed. You have to do your part and in time all the Family is one.

Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. God's telling us to be spiritually oriented, centered, focused on what God is doing and the purpose of everything He's seeking to do in our lives and through our lives, in everything that we do. And then it goes on to talk about...**When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, you also shall appear with Him in glory. Mortify,** it means put to death, **therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection,** on and on it goes here of things that just come out of human life that are sometimes physical, sometimes spiritual in nature. These are where the battles are and you've got to fight those battles, you've got to stay on top of them, you truly do. You've got to ask God for help to accomplish these things... **and covetousness,** it says, **which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience:** it's because of all this and because of this kind of life that this world has to go through what it's getting ready to go through because this is what the world yields itself to. This is what the world wants! And it wants you to want it too – see? To do the things the way it does it. Going on, **In that which you also walked some time,** so hopefully and mainly that's put behind us. We walked that way, we lived that way before we were called. That was our entire life, our motivation as well, but then we enter into a time where we begin to enter into battle and we choose to fight against these things and to change and to repent.

Verse 8 - But now you also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. People have to work at these things in different stages of our calling and wherever we are in our growth. These are the battles that confront us; sometimes very blatantly, so these are the things we have to fight. **Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds;** so why would anybody in the Church have to be told that? Why would anyone have to be told we shouldn't lie one to another? Because it's human nature to lie, to kind of slant the truth, to tell a story about someone else or a disagreement with someone else and why we've had that disagreement and generally as human beings what we tend to do is we tend to colour it a little bit toward our favour, I mean, let's be honest. So we lie and we don't realize sometimes the power to lie that exists and we have to *fight* against those things so that we're not lying in how we deal with situations and matters in life and not colouring things in a wrong way because our judgement is not perfect as human beings. That's why I loved the series when we talked about 'Judgement, Mercy and Faith' because there are

matters of judgement where we have to learn to judge because of the way God says it is to be judged, not because of the way we're feeling, swayed by our own carnal carnality or our own desires and having a tendency sometimes to colour things in a certain way because of our own battles in our own mind.

Verse 10 - And have put on the new man, talking about getting rid of the old man with his deeds in the previous verse and now **put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created Him**: this is what it's all about; an image that we're to be moulded and fashioned into. The very image that it talks about in other places. That Jesus Christ was made after the image of His Father, and then that image that we're the same kind in other words, we're made after the same kind; that same image and that which God is bringing us to – Elohim: the Family of God. **Where there is neither Greek nor Jew**, why does it mention things like this? **Where there is neither Greek nor Jew**, that means you get rid of your *prejudice and how you think toward each other just because you are of a different nationality! And yet people have deep, deep prejudices sometimes that take a lifetime to come to understand!* In places where people grow up and environments they live in and so forth – things they've been taught by their parents. There are *nations...* well, let's just be honest about it. I don't care where you go as a whole, but especially in certain parts of the world – it's very easy to see that nations today have the same feelings they did generations ago; hundreds of years ago; no, thousands of years ago. They're carrying on the same family traits because it's passed on from one generation to another to another to another. There is nothing new under the sun in those areas and it's just passed down to different regions of the world. Why certain peoples feel the way they do toward others, you know? And sometimes that affects our thinking then.

Right here in New Zealand – where people from different nations came to – Great Britain, Australia, Netherlands... There are a lot of different peoples here in this country – but there's one that stands out in a very powerful way – the Maori. And I know of some deep, deep prejudices that have been even within the Church here because of that. And so because of some that have been drawn from different backgrounds and so forth, sometimes there have been prejudices towards certain people because of things that some of you have grown up with – that's in your mind, that's in your being. Has that existed within the Church in times past? Anybody that's been around for a long time, you know that it's existed, you know that it's true. In the very beginning, from the very get go, I knew it was here – okay? From the very get go, from the very first visit I knew those prejudices existed within the Church – see? And that's just common, isn't it? There's certain attitudes and things that people have in Australia toward other peoples in other parts of the world and the country itself – toward the Aborigine as an example – there are attitudes over there today that just reek in the world. Now does that affect anyone in the Church? I don't know. I hope not but I would think that it probably does.

In the United States: North and South...oooo, I'm talking about just within Manasseh – differences, prejudices. You would think that some are still fighting the war, I'm talking about the *civil war*. And their attitudes, there are prejudices that exist there. The North doesn't really care, they won. See, that's the attitude. They really don't care. But the South, some of them care because of being passed down from generation to generation; it's been taught in family. My wife is from the South and her grandpa – incredibly prejudiced man before he died – horribly prejudiced in that part of the country where he lived in – terrible prejudice. He was a sick man. I'm sorry, but he was a sick man and she agrees. He would speak of those of the black race in a sick, sick, filthy way. He would say some things at times that were hard for me not to... anyway... he was an old man so I didn't smack him. You know? But it just grinded me something fierce to hear some of the garbage come out of him. Really! Sick! And those things are passed on to people and families... children pick those things up. We have different cultures that are mixed together and on and on it goes.

I think of Great Britain today: tough... tough, tough, tough, you know, because peoples of different backgrounds where Britain has gone out to..."to conquer the world", I'm sorry, it was called "Great Britain" so they're going to conquer the world, "Rule Britannia". 'Britannia rule the waves' – and there is a lot of that thinking that exists in the British people - you know it! I've been there, lived there, gone to school over there, saw some of the attitudes. And so because they went out to conquer parts of the world, parts of the world came to Great Britain. A lot of people from India: a lot of people from different parts of the Muslim world, because Britain was out there conquering and people come in from these and other countries and now it's causing a problem, they don't like that so much because they opened the floodgates and they let different cultures in; and for some it's kind of beneath them to have let different cultures in. Think, why such prejudices in the world?

You get on the Continent – there are deep feelings because of wars and isn't that human nature? If your family has been hurt by the Germans aren't you going to have a certain attitude and feeling toward them? And the Germans, the generation that's there – they have certain feelings because of the war, because they were ashamed of certain things that they saw different ones do. And so they grow up with a certain stigma's but it's hard for a German to show that so there are different feelings there.

The Netherlands toward Germany. Do we sometimes have problems of not having that as a part of our judgement within the Church? Sure we do. Different people have different attitudes toward different cultures and different peoples around the world sometimes and that has even happen within the Church – that sometimes I've heard people say things that sometimes I've had to grit my teeth because they don't realize they're prejudiced and they don't see how much it hurts in life. It's a horrible thing to have prejudice, it truly is, because it hurts.

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, what a time! What a time to think that we're coming to a time, and it starts within the Church, but even in a new age, that people are going to learn to enjoy the differences of people and not be threatened by the differences because a lot of times it comes down to being threatened by it, envious, jealous, sometimes just rank prejudice of negativism because people think themselves to be better than someone else. No human being is better, if you understand what I'm talking about, than another human being. Who am I that I am better than other human beings? Who am I that I should look down upon any other human being?

Prejudices. It is amazing, isn't it? How we think and when you really look at it in life how much better life is when you don't think of yourself above and beyond what you should, you know? My life is greatly blessed when I am able to think right toward other people. I know that. When I don't look down upon people, but on the contrary, when you learn to respect people in every walk of life, and try to understand some of the things about them and what their battles are, what they've had to live with, what they're coming out of and the empathy, the mercy that you can have toward other human beings and the bond that that develops then in Family, and it draws you closer together. The more we can see that within the Church... I have seen it over my time as a minister through the Church when people haven't gotten along I've seen people on opposite sides over and over again of a wheel of personality: where someone's on this side of the wheel and someone is on that side. That's why I say if we're all moving in the same direction, then that's what it's all about – we're a Family. But sometimes there are some that just rub each other the wrong way like sandpaper, but the more we can seek to understand each other, stand back from an issue... See, I can look at people's lives like that very quickly and God's blessed me in that, I know, because it's something God has to give – to see where both are coming from. I understand it and I see it and I long for the day that they can be closer together. I long for the day that

they can embrace each other. It takes two to do it, but each individual we should always strive to continue to do what we can do no matter who we are and where we are in this world.

It says, **Neither Greek nor Jew, to get rid of those prejudices; circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.** It's about a Family. It's about valuing each other within the family – learning to appreciate the differences. I have learned through time to appreciate the differences in people. I strive to learn to appreciate the differences in people. There's a lot of joy and fullness and richness of life because of that, because the more you can do that the more you can drink in, the more you learn, the stronger the bond that's there and on and on it goes.

Verse 12 - Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, mercies...because so much of it starts there because we have to deal with our own mind and our own judgements and our own thinking and so many things just begin with a moment of mercy because regardless of how anyone else responds to you in life, you must be merciful, **kindness**, you must be kind, **humbleness of mind**, because if you think you're better than them, or more righteous than them or whatever it might be you can never have real mercy, you can never have real kindness and definitely not **meekness**, in the sense of a teachable spirit. Can we learn from others? Can we learn from others' experiences in life and what they've going through and what makes them what they are, who they are? Can we profit from that? ...**longsuffering**; patience; **forbearing one another**, and that's in a positive way and this word here has to do with a word I love... it's like valuing and allowing for the differences: allowing for the differences and learning to even value them, **and forgiving one another, if any have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.** All this is about family – over and over again in the Bible, it's about how to have right family. How to begin to imbibe in and drink in and receive the blessings in life that God wants to give us. He shows us the first one when He talks about 'honouring your father and mother' but then we learn more from that and we recognize then how that God's desire through all of His law is that He wants to bless us. They all have blessings. They all have promises of blessings – that's just the first one that's stated in the very broad and very powerful way in the commandments that were given.

And above all these things put on agape, that's what this word is here, **which is the bond of perfection**, if you will. In other words we must strive to draw closer to God because the love has to come from Him because we don't have it, we don't have the right kind of love toward others; we don't know how to love neighbours as ourselves. God has to help us in that. It takes His kind of love in us. **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts**, the more we live that way, the more peace we have, the more enjoyment of life we have, the more *at peace* we are; **to which you are called in one body; and be you thankful.** Again, going back to that sermon we heard this morning about rejoicing. It's about doing these things, being thankful for one another at the Feast, being thankful for one another in our congregations, be thankful for the things that God is bringing us through to a time and what's ahead for us.

Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. This verse has been so misunderstood by the world. You give this to a protestant and they go off on a tangent. It's like you just start singing praises, you know, you just break out into song. That's not what this is about. It's talking about if we live a certain way of life, there is that which is going to be in you that's going to well out of you in things you do and things that are going to be seen by others and it's going to be because of that which is in your heart and in your being of how you feel, of how you think, whether gratitude is there, whether the song and spirit is there in your being toward others, toward the Church, toward what

God is doing. It's spiritual in nature, in other words. **And whatsoever you do, it says, that you do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.** Powerful, powerful. You can pray about those things, ask God for help to do that. Verse 17 – that's a powerful verse, it truly is. The ability to be thankful and how we're able to have a greater thankfulness and ability to do what Terry mentioned this morning about being thankful and being able to rejoice and so forth.

I wanted to go on here just a little bit farther to mention a couple of things in setting the pace for tomorrow's sermon that we're going to continue with. But first I want to go back to Genesis and set a bit of the stage here and we'll take off with this tomorrow as well. Going back to **Genesis 10**, let's notice how God dealt with the families of the earth shortly after the flood. After the flood a brief history is given concerning the families that came from Noah, and it says that Noah lived 350 years after the flood. Amazing, the life spans back then! The lifespan of Methuselah before all these things came to pass and I can't remember exactly, I'd have to go back and look here – 960 years I believe – whatever it was it was long. To think you'd almost live a millennium?! That's incredible! The lives of some of those people. But the perversion was so sick because of that: because of the long life spans of people and how professionally perverted they became. It was a real sick, sick world – the minds of people. Things we cannot comprehend. To be professional at perversion and sickness, that's a pretty sick thing to be known for. But anyway it goes on to say of how Noah lived 350 years past the flood; and to an age of 950 years. Incredible! That long. To see the things he saw. I'm looking forward to ending mine. I'm serious! I am looking forward to getting out of this body! I've had it! I've had it with my human nature. I don't want to have to live with human nature any longer; the imperfections of human nature when I see what God is offering and realize how close we are; I'm so thankful I don't have to live to be 70-80-100... well, I probably wouldn't live that long anyway. But if I did, or beyond that age – I cannot imagine! I really can't conceive of living for 300-400-900 years in the *same* carnal, physical, selfish body. You want to talk about something that blows your mind – that one really blows my mind! To me that would be the height of misery, but that's only because I know what I know. Not knowing that I wouldn't have been back there, see, I didn't live in that period of time. But knowing what I know and living where I am now, to me that is a horrifying thought, to have to live that long – it truly is...but they did. And the things they saw – incredible!

After the flood there were divisions of people went out upon the earth; they're described in **Genesis 10** here and that's what I want to look at just a little bit to set the stage for tomorrow. These divisions are described as those who came from the 3 basic divisions of the races that went out upon the earth – that evidently, from what we understand that was given to Mr. Armstrong, these races then were brought out through the wives of Noah's three sons.

But anyway, **Genesis 10:1 - Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood. The sons of Japheth; Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.** And then the verses that follow break down the sons even more into specific divisions of people that came from them... and then notice **verse 5**, it talks about: **But these were the isles of the Gentiles**, kind of interesting how it's stated here, **divided in their lands**; The Hebrew uses this much like foreign nations, this word Gentiles, aliens and all other areas that are not specifically a part of Israel in context. The point being is Israel hasn't started yet but it's showing here something that began to happen; the divisions of families and all nationalities, gentiles if you will that were going all over because God was going to start working with a family that would lead into a specific family name that He would work with through a long period of time here and all others are referred to in that sense. So it's showing the formation of those nations, those peoples, those Gentiles that would

come through time. And it goes on to say, **divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nation.**

So again, the divisions came from the basic division of the 3 sons of Noah. Japheth... and I thought I'd just mention this just as a thing on the side that seems to be the case. Of Japheth it's believed there came the people of the orient like Japan, China, Mongolia and so forth. Just like Japheth, there is a spin off of certain consonants and so forth that are used there...Japan... believed to be certain people's like that as well as a wide variations from the oriental peoples to include others that descended from Japheth such as Spaniards, Grecians, Italians and the Medes. That's a belief that has existed in the Church and I don't know any reason why it's not right, but again here, a lot have gone into this in the past of looking into some of these things. It very well may be. We all came from someplace and from certain divisions and obviously from one of Noah's 3 sons. Some of these peoples seem to be in this case a spin off because of different family's and so forth that came through time and where they migrated to and so forth and different mixtures of peoples and what they did.

And then there are those who are attributed to as descending from Ham such as the many regions of Africa and a wide variation of people including people of India, Egypt, some from the southern coast areas of Spain and some peoples of South America – the Hittites who are believed to be the Indians of North America and so forth. So again, different peoples - not always what we'd consider the same colour, but from the same family lines that split out and we have different appearances of people. Wide varieties that came out of these sons like this that spread throughout all the earth and that's what God is showing. An awesome thing! And if we could only understand it – a beautiful thing. But that's not how people react to it and that's not how people in the world react to those things and generally have tried to go around killing each other in order to get rid of the other, so they could just have one people.

Then there are those who descended from Shem, which include those that descended from Abraham, including Israel, and so many of the Arabic nations, also Germany, including other parts of Europe, large areas of Russia and so forth. Different peoples that spread out to different regions of the world and that's what it's talking about: the many family lines. To me it's a fascinating history. Sadly, it's marred with the hatreds that exist and you think of the wars that have been fought against these different peoples and people that didn't get along...families that didn't get along. It's because families didn't get along! And things that were passed down from generations of people through time - the things that still exist in the world today. You look at the Arab world today and Israel and Israelites and some of them don't even understand why they have such hatred for each other.

Great Britain and some of the things going on there with Dan. You talk about Ireland and some of the things that go back in time that have happened...and France and the animosities that existed between brothers. They've even talked about how Manasseh, whether it be true or not, I don't know, but some have felt in times past Manasseh was separated by a river because certain ones didn't get along even there! Even within the same tribe; within the same family! And some have thought and maybe postulated that possibly because of certain ways that people are, they kind of tended to migrate to the same regions in the North and South in the U.S... and then we had our war because there are differences of thinking, with people, separated by a river... and separated by what is called the Mason-Dixon line in the States... Anyway, may or may not be true, but it's amazing how things are passed down through family lines – hatreds and envying and jealousies and... and murder. What a sick, sick world we've lived through in 6000 years.

We'll continue on tomorrow with this sermon on 'Family'. It's interesting when you start thinking about all the different families of the world and where they came from and what should be a beautiful thing, and what should enrich life. This is something that I've enjoyed seeing. My wife and I have talked about seeing that in some of the opportunities our son has had in going to different parts of the world, something that he tends to have a trait of my wife's father who loved people. He loved different people. It was just something he loved. He would love watching different kinds of people and things that they did and different backgrounds of people. He loved talking about and looking at things in music of different nationalities. He just loved things about different nationalities and we kind of got a charge out of Jeremy in some of those things: here he is now in Germany and other different areas that they've travelled to, they went over to Asia recently. They had the opportunity of going over to... was it Indonesia? Borneo area? Malaysia? They went to some of those areas there and they loved it – different things in the world; they love different nationalities of people –his wife and himself both have the same desire and like there. And you think – that's the way life should be, to enjoy the uniqueness of different people and cultures and yet people in the world rob themselves when they don't do that and instead they have jealousies, or envying rather than enjoying and savouring the differences. Human nature and the world's history has been one of opposing those things and being threatened by those things and having haughtiness and pride against those things to the point of wanting to see other people's destroyed. What a sick, sick world and God's getting ready to turn that right side up to where we do learn to enjoy and to love the differences of people and we start doing that within the Church. We learn that within the Church. It's an awesome thing.

So with that, we'll close for today.

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