

Hopefully we are beginning to be more fully moved by understanding the timing of God having us focus on the subject of Family here at the Feast in the first three sermons here. Today is *Part 3* of this series, this is the final part of this particular series, but that's quite a bit at the Feast of Tabernacles to have that many sermons on a particular subject. The next subject will be like manner because they are two very important things that God is having us focus on during this Feast of Tabernacles, but this one here being '*Family*.' We are now very near that time, that period of time, a junction or juncture in time when God has waited so long to see this come to pass as we have been talking about. A time when this is going to become a reality, something that He has purpose for so long now and 144,000 to be the first to be able to enter into that Family of those born of man and woman.

God is sharing with us that excitement and the deeper appreciation of Family and how He is bringing it about and something we really need to focus on and pray about during the Feast; that we might be able to have more of that desire, more of that moving us as well in *our* lives. Especially within the Church, there are things we understand and can see and learn within physical family, but that's where we really practice it the most and begin to practice the right principles that move us into things of understanding even within the community and the like. But there is that which we have a greater responsibility for within the environment of the Church where we have opportunities. We have a lot of people who are so scattered they rarely see anyone else in God's Church. I think of different ones when I think about this and it's very unique; some people are so far away. We have some scattered up in Canada that are so far away from others, it's just very, very hard to be with anyone else. And they don't have those opportunities to be able to practice, to begin to learn some of the same things that some of you do who are able to come together. There are some place in the States and Europe and over in Australia and a few places where some of you are able to get together on a regular basis. But most people are so scattered they don't have that opportunity in the same manner.

So again, appreciation of family and recognising what it's all about and this is where we begin to apply a lot of the principles and things that God wants us to understand and to learn. And of course then there are things we begin to work within our own physical families as much as lies within us, as much as we're able to. There are some things that we can't address in this world because it's not the time to be able to address some of those things. Some things would be a one-sided matter and yet we're always responsible for doing *our* part. Whether it be in physical family as much as we can, whether it be in the community – neighbours, neighbourhoods or whatever it might be. We're to strive to do the best we can on our jobs and so forth. An incredible time we live in and one that God has been waiting so long to see this come to pass.

So let's continue on where we left off yesterday in the book of Acts. We need to begin looking again at when we are talking about Family it is not a matter of race. That view has caused *so many problems* throughout the ages, different peoples; not just with race but different families even and the prejudices that go along with that. Even brothers that have fought each other through time and we don't have to look very far in history to see some of those things that have taken place. Look throughout history at the peoples that have fought against each other, whether it be in families and a lot of times there are greater differences when it comes to races amongst people, greater divisions between peoples. It doesn't matter where you look. Things are not a matter of race in that respect. We have so many people as I mentioned yesterday that are being called and drawn from different parts of the world. It is becoming quite evident that God is doing that as a matter of a witness of things, of different peoples throughout the world; bringing them into the Church here at the very end to have that ability to witness various things and then that opportunity right behind that of the door being wide open for everyone. The first time, in that respect, in all of human history where everyone is going to have the opportunity of being called, of being drawn, of being able to begin to make the changes in their life in order to become a part of the Family that God is leading all this

too in the first place.

Let's begin here in **Acts 3:25** picking up where we left off. It says, **You are the children of the prophets**, so again, a matter of family and understanding a background here of certain things that God wants us to focus upon. Paul is talking to the Jewish people here. This is on the day of Pentecost, this is following up some of the things that have just taken place and now Peter is continuing to speak here and to remind them of where they came from, of that which they have been blessed to have. And it says, **and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in your seed shall all the kindreds**, which in the Greek here is the word for 'families', **shall all the 'families' of the earth be blessed**. The translation even in the Old Testament there, it's about the families; **In your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed**. And so God's purpose and God's plan has been from the very beginning of time, beginning with Abraham when He began to reveal this; that He had a plan of blessing all the families on the earth through *a seed*. A seed that would come from, through, if you will then, Abraham. Going on, it says **And unto you first**, speaking unto the Jews, they were blessed to be able to have these things; to have much of the knowledge of things of the past as far as a history of events that have taken place in their life and a relationship that God was working with Israel and with the Jewish people because Israel was taken captive and scattered. But the Jewish people were brought back, **Unto you first**, in other words the 'blessed of the families of the earth', **God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning every one of you from your/his iniquities**, each person from his iniquities. Peter knew that there would be very few who would be able to receive this message. There weren't that many that God was going to draw and continue to draw and work with here; but there were those that he was speaking to that were listening, those who could hear, and those who were being baptised at that particular period of time who were becoming a part of the Church, a very beginning for the Church he was addressing. And it was to the Jewish people, it wasn't to the Gentiles yet, it wasn't to the other foreign nations yet.

And we might go on over here to **Galatians** because we see a much broader application of family and how it would come through the promise of one seed as we've talked about some of these things recently, but we're looking at it today in a different context. And again, focussing on family and how these things are mentioned in such a profound way in scripture. So in **Galatians 1:1**, the emphasis on Family that God has given. **Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;)** I think it is interesting here in the beginning because even for the Church it was somewhat uncomfortable for some when I began to make comment about being a prophet. And it was like, as it came back to me on occasion, "Why do you have to tell anyone? You don't have to tell someone if it's going to become obvious, then God will make it obvious." No, that's not the case; God gave a job. When prophets went to people they were told to tell them who they are, who they represented, who they were coming for, what the message was; that it was a message from God. And so those were the credentials, they had to tell about what those credentials were, where they came from; that was a part of their responsibility and the rest would follow in time. The same with a matter of an apostle here, and so Paul is making it very clear in the very beginning, "I am an apostle sent from God." Showing here in essence the credentials and the importance of the message that was going to follow.

And it goes on to say then in **verse 2 - And all the brethren**, 'brothers and sisters.' The term 'brethren' in the English is a matter of family in that respect, but referring to everyone within the Church. That term that we have used through time, basically because of what is given from the Greek to the English in the translation here, but it is referring to brothers and sisters; we're all one Family, we are Family as we come together. It says, **And all the brethren who are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father**, just driving this point home over and over again as Paul did. If you look at some of the other books he wrote, he continually drove the point home about how God now is our Father. In the Old Testament you don't see that in emphasis in the same manner until Jesus Christ came along and then all of sudden, God is wanting to reveal in a more powerful way to His people, especially in the Church, because that's what it's about, that He is our Father. He wants us to understand that family relationship and to begin to grab a hold of that in every respect and to pray to Him in that manner – of a very close family relationship. Yes God, yes God Almighty, but He wants to have a close relationship in there. Not to be

something that's very remote and removed as so often happened in the Old Testament with so many people and their attitude towards God because a lot of that was a result of other nations and their attitude towards gods and that they, the people, were so removed from their gods. And so when God worked with Israel some of that still lingered in them; this attitude of mind that God is there, they don't understand fully what this is all about, but there is this relationship here and a certain way you're to act and respond, but it wasn't that of a close family. It wasn't the attitude of mind of a Father that you could go before and kneel down in private to pray to as you would in a family. And so God through this period of time that Paul is writing here wanted the Church to understand; no, that *is* the relationship He wants to have. One that is filled with respect and awe and love toward Him *being* God Almighty, being the one who gives us every breath we have, giving us *everything* we have. But yet that close personal relationship on a plain that's closer than any physical family relationship – a Father, a spiritual Father, God our Father.

And that's why within the Church I find it exciting, inspiring when I see this take place area to area that we visit, when new people are coming along especially. We're gone for a period of time, maybe six months, and then Laura and I are able to go back around to an area and we have a bunch of new ones coming along. And you see some that maybe are coming for the first time on that day when we're there, some who have maybe been there for a few weeks and yet you see how the entire Church brings them in and you see that response that they have toward them. Sometimes in the beginning, those of you who remember maybe the first time or second time you came and it's kind of difficult; new people, you don't know them, it's a very physical thing in the beginning. But all of a sudden you begin to have this closeness that is unique and it's as unique to each individual as God's calling is because you are able to see the truth and now you have this unique experience with others. That you know you are a family, you have that sense of family that is stronger than your own physical family and that's the way it is in God's Church. We're able to be closer together in a spiritual family than people can in this world in physical families – far closer, because it has to do with God's spirit and that's an awesome thing to understand.

Amazing things as we read through things like this. Generally we start out a book in the Bible in the New Testament like this and we rush through this first introduction, we don't think about the words. We rush right into it to get into some of the other things, not thinking about what's being stated in the very beginning. But what's being stated in the very beginning is the emphasis upon *brethren*, we are a family, brothers and sisters in the body, in the Church and *we have a Father – God*, who wants us to look to Him in that manner. And *His Son* that God wants us to *honour* and respect and love and so that powerful relationship over and over again here that is being emphasised.

That's why it says again, **Grace be to you and peace**, a peace that God desires us to have and to learn. And you know how we learn that peace? The more we learn to live by His way of life. There is a peace of God that comes from living His way of life that God gives to us – peace with others, peace towards others. Others may be at war with you, others may *hate* you, they're not at peace, they're not content – they're at war. You have people, most of you probably I'm sure one way or another, somewhere back there; maybe in family, maybe in neighbours, maybe at the job; somewhere, as a whole, there are people out there that have a distaste for you primarily because of what you believe. Now if it's for other reasons then you have some different things to work out, but if it's because of the truth of God then obviously you know there is that which we can be at peace with toward them; we don't have to have the same attitudes towards them. On the contrary, we should have more of the mind of God – patience, mercy, understanding that they don't see what you see. Understanding that they're captive in a world, that we look forward to a time that they can be freed from that, to where they can be filled with the fullness of God and the peace of God that they just don't have right now. And so our ability to deal with other people has so much to do with being able to see them as God wants us to see them and working with them. And so God with us, He gives us peace, He truly does; the more we live His way of life.

**Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins**, He gave himself; you do that in a very close relationship. If you think about His mind and His attitude toward everyone, toward all mankind, toward the Church that was going to follow and that's a

close relationship. It's filled with a great deal of love and that's what's described in scripture. I love it; those scriptures that go through and describe some of those things; that kind of love that is from God the Father in and through Jesus Christ to the point of sacrificing oneself and you do that for those you love. You are willing to sacrifice for those you love, even your life and that is the height of it, this is what is being shown. And He did this for all mankind. So it should show the ties there and the closeness of that family relationship that God is bringing us into and wants us to understand.

**Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world,** and from the evil one. That's the only way we begin a process of being delivered from Satan and the hold he has on us, the power that he has over mankind is because of sin. That's what Corinthians goes through and talks about, 1 Corinthians 15, it describes some of that – the power that Satan has in our life is that of sin because of our selfish human nature he has power and he wields that power. Only when God begins to work with us, calls us, then through Jesus Christ, being able to be forgiven of those sins and being able to have a mind that begins to think differently, begins to change; then we go through a process where Satan doesn't have that same hold on us anymore; demons don't have that same influence over us any more in the Church of God – that's an awesome thing. But they still have sway and power in the world, but not over the Church; we're freed. We begin a process of being freed from those things. Sometimes we get entrapped in some of it because of our sins, but then we can quickly repent and be back on the right track. Close family relationship.

**Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world,** I was thinking about this again, our neighbours, people out here on the job, whatever it might be. Do we share some of that desire for them? When we are dealing with bad situations on the job or whatever it is, are we able to analyse that just a little bit; look at that in a perspective from God? From Jesus Christ's perspective of what we should be like because of what He was like? To understand where they're from, where they're at, that they are captive, that they are caught up in this present evil world? We've been freed from it, but they haven't been. Do we have some mercy and empathy upon them because of that? Or do we meet out a justice and an expectation of something they can't deliver? Because so often we do that, **that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father,** emphasising this over and over again as he did and as he does, our Father, God our Father, **to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.**

It goes on to show here how Paul shows the error of the Jewish family of people if you will, he begins to address some very specific things. **Galatians 1:11 - But I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached to me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.** There is a unique thing that happened in Philadelphia because the exact same thing happened there. There is no one that taught Mr. Armstrong, there is no individual, but by revelation from Jesus Christ and God the Father that Mr. Armstrong received what he did. He wasn't taught those things from the Church because the Church was at a point of death, dying, that's what God said. That's why God raised up Mr. Armstrong like He did and began to draw him out of a Protestant background, out of a Protestant world over many years, getting rid of different false doctrines in the Church, continually growing, being given more and more to see that was true and being able to share that, give that then to the Church; that's how God worked. A very powerful process here, but it was by a process of revelation, that's how God worked with him. And so Peter and James and John and all the rest, they had a beginning as they were taught by Jesus Christ. They didn't understand it; they didn't really understand most of everything He said until the day of Pentecost when the holy spirit was poured out. Then all of a sudden he said, because of God's spirit being there now in a very powerful way at that period of time, something unique began to happen to them. They began to see the spirit of everything that Christ taught them, a very powerful thing that took place on the day of Pentecost and from then on, it was unique for them.

But Paul was worked with in a unique way; he was worked with directly by Jesus Christ. He appeared to Paul and continued then even in revealing things to Paul as Paul was kept separate from others for a period of time and God continued to reveal things to him. Mr. Armstrong was even more unique in that respect,

because everything that had been written in this book, God gave it by revelation and understanding. There have been a lot of religions that have come out of reading this book (the bible) that have never understood the truth, but God gave it.

Going on here, **verse 13 - For you have heard of my conversation**, or my 'conduct' as the word means in the Greek. It comes out so often in conversation, that's why it's translated like this. **For you have heard of my conversation**, or my 'conduct', **in times past in the Jews' religion**, you know, how he behaved himself, what he did, **how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it**: he sought to destroy it, that was his purpose, that was his aim. And he had great favour then among some of the Jewish leaders because of his zealousness in doing so. He was the one standing there that gave approval to have Stephen martyred, killed if you will. When Stephen was put to death, Paul was the one on the spot there and gave approval of those things that were taking place.

And it says, **And profited in the Jews' religion above many of my equals in my own nation, being more exceedingly jealous in the tradition of my fathers**. But for the wrong purpose, for the wrong reasons. There are people who think they do God's service because of their *ideas* about God and yet they are not doing God's service; they are working against God and they don't understand that until they are drawn and called to the truth. **But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, To reveal His Son in me**, or 'through me'. And so he was given a job to do and he understood what that job was. God let him know very early on, it wasn't going to be to the Jewish people, it was going to be... as it goes on to say, **that I might preach Him among the heathen**; this Greek word here that is translated different ways; sometimes as 'Gentile' or 'heathen,' it just means to those who are non-Israelite; to all other foreigners, to all other nations of people. That's what this word means as we talked about yesterday, how it is spoken of in the Hebrew in the Old Testament, some of those terms. And it's just a term that used here, when it's translated, just meaning 'everybody else' because God was working with primarily one set of people, one nation. And Israel was a part of that until they sinned and did what they did, to the point and the degree that God took them away, that they became the Lost Ten Tribes, but the Jewish people continued on. And they were the primary ones then through whom *the seed would come* that God was working with. So again, **To reveal His Son in me**, or 'through me', **that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood**: you know, with Jesus Christ.

**Galatians 3:1** - it says, **O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth**, that's what it always boils down too, it's amazing. It's about the truth, everything that God gives; His word is about the truth. And the message about Jesus Christ is about the truth and yet the Protestant world can't even begin to understand that, **before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?** Again I hate that word crucified because it brings up the idea that there was a 'cross' and it wasn't a cross, just making it real plain again, that it was a stake. **This only would I learn from you, Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law**, so again we have looked at this recently when we went through this series, talking about 'Judgement, Mercy and Faith' and discussing some of these things: but today in a very specific context now as we review some of this. **Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?** He is reminding them of something very basic that sometimes in God's Church is good that we always be reminded of or think about from time to time because sometimes people go astray a little bit and they begin to think that by the things they are doing, that they feel better before God or more justified in the things they do. We are expected to obey God's Law, we should seek to obey God's Law, to be at one with God, but that's not how we're saved. We understand that as a whole within the Church or we *should* understand that and yet sometimes people look to the wrong things as though it was by how well they *keep* the Law that...as I have mentioned before here: I think of one minister in particular that sticks out in my mind and his attitude when he'd give some sermons was, "How long can you go without sinning?" It was like, "You can do this on your own." It's like, "How righteous are you?" And that's not what it's all about. Yes, we should strive to obey God all the time but the reality is we have sin all the time too in our life – physical human beings – it's pretty tough to go through an entire day and be without sin, you know? Because of our minds and how we come in contact with people. Unless we are living with some bears up in the mountains somewhere totally, you know, hibernating with them, not having much to

do with other people. But if you are around other people and especially in this world and society, the way the selfishness is so great in this world; there are going to be times when you have a battle, when you're going to think wrong towards someone else in a way that isn't good. So anyway, we should strive to obey God but that's not how we're saved and that's the whole process here.

**Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law**, so he's making it very clear here; no, it's not how well you keep God's way of life. Just like for all of us, like I have mentioned in the last two days now, God didn't call us because of how good we were. And sometimes the more we've come out of, the more God has been merciful to us, the more we can see of what changes we've been able to make in our life, in some respects the more thankful we can become of that. To understand the mercy of God because we know what we are. We should, everyone of us, know what we are hopefully because the more we see that, the more we grasp this; it's a matter of faith by what God gave to us. I mention these things because so many people have made so many mistakes in times past. We're going to be preaching this in the world to come here, in the Millennium... to the Church, these kinds of things: to help people to remember and to understand that there are those things that you receive by God's mercy, by God's favour, and that you didn't figure it out on your own.

I think of those that grew up through Imperial Schools. Bricketwood, Big Sandy and at Pasadena, they had Imperial Schools. There were so many people there on the campuses, working with the campuses, working with the grounds, working with the college, working with different things that were there; especially like Pasadena and Bricketwood because they had the printing presses there. Over in Europe they had the printing presses that printed 'the Plain Truth' for most of Europe and Africa and different parts of the world. A tremendous amount of work that was done just printing the magazines and the booklets and so forth.

And so there were a lot of families there, a lot of employees of the Church at that time and so there were a lot of children. And rather than having to send them to public school, it became a good thing to be able to raise them with teachers who could teach the truth and teach things of the truth along with the education they received. But you know, for a lot of those young people who grew up in that and then a bunch of them that went on from there to Ambassador College – they began to get high heads, big heads; of how important they were, how much they knew. And that's just a tendency of human nature. That's why in the Millennium, generations that come up and continue to come along, it's going to be a lot easier for them to think that, "Well, they've always known this." They've always known the truth and that *they're* intellectual and they can figure certain things out and it's going to be harder for them to understand what *we* know because we were dragged out of the world! We had to be *dragged* out of the world! Some of us kicking and screaming, you know? And God humbling us and bringing us to a point where we would receive His way of life and receive His truth to be a part of His Family. I mention these things because I lived through it in Philadelphia, I lived through it into Laodicea and seeing those things continually around me within the Church and how much damage was done in the Church. People who continually thought that they had truth to share and to give that they had figured out on their own, not understanding how God's spirit works in the mind and leads and guides and directs the Church. There's a way that God works with human beings and yet we started losing a lot of that in the Church and people began to be lifted up with pride and haughtiness. Even with their attitude towards Mr. Armstrong, even within the ministry towards him.

So it's a matter of the hearing, God just gives it to us. Not because we're so smart, not because we're so intellectual, not because we're so talented, not because we're so good; just because He's called us and He just gives it to us in our minds. Just like this thing of the languages we talked about yesterday; all of a sudden you are speaking a particular language like English and the next instant you are speaking French and you don't understand a word of English; it sounds like gobbledegook to you and French is so clear. 'Parlez-vous Francais?' And that's all you could talk to, people who speak French, you could understand them. Same thing with the truth; far more powerful; God just puts it in your mind the moment you hear it. Something about the Sabbath, something about the Holy Days and all of a sudden a light bulb has gone off and you see it, it's so clear – what an awesome thing! And that's a matter of faith, what God gives to you, you are able to see and it's your choice whether or not you're going to hold on to it and believe it, but you

can see it – amazing. He says, **Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?** This has happened to a lot of people in God's Church! They began to be drawn by the spirit and they were able to see things and learn things and then all of a sudden, after a period of time, they began to think it was by their own abilities, by how good they were, and were looking down upon others. That happened, sadly, in that environment of the College and Imperial Schools. Those young people grew up, they went off to college and it began to be even taught by the teachers because they even began to believe that garbage...that they were better than other people in other congregations out here in Church areas. You think, what a sick thing that took place! Those of you who are older and have been around for some time, you probably saw some of those things as some would come back from college and that attitude, you know? It's a sad thing, it was just misused. It was a great tool and a great opportunity to learn, but look at human nature and how human nature can so misuse something like that to their own detriment. When you start looking down on any other human being... As I was going through some of this and thinking about family, I was thinking about how so often I have seen judgement within the Church towards other people but there's one place we come to here that makes it very clear there, in essence here, it's talking to both men and women.

And I know that within the Church of God because of what God says about an order of things; that there has been an attitude that has existed in God's Church and *still exists* to a point and to a degree. That there are men who look down upon women, they think they are superior to them and that is so *sick and perverted* that I can hardly stand it! And my wife has even received that; *even as a prophet and after the ordination, there are still some men who treat her in a wrong way because they do not understand the office and the responsibility that is there.* There are some, even elders in God's Church who just don't get it like they should. Isn't that an amazing thing? And I hope you are all appalled at that because the more appalled you are the more you can see yourself and understand then *your* attitude to *all women*. You are *not* superior. It's like race, if you think that way *you are a bigot!* I hope you understand. I see situations, I see people in different areas and as much as I spoke of one of her relatives the other day who was a bigot in race. He grew up in East Texas and I'm sure his father was and I'm sure his mother probably was. I'm sure he learned it because of the region they lived in in that part of the country and how they thought about another race of people. And *they were sick* because they felt, that's how they looked at it, "Those people, they're inferior to us, they're beneath us." There are some people who have looked upon another race of people as being like animals; that's how they thought about them and in many cases that's how they treated them. And that's hard to understand, that's truly hard...

Do you know that in Big Sandy, Texas, for a time, because of the influence of society and the way the world was back in the 50's and 60's, early 60's, even got into the 70's a bit but by that time a lot of that was cleaned up. That there was still segregation, there was a separation of the races there at Big Sandy, even in the college, even in the Church? You know there was a time there in that part of Texas where there were whites, I guess that's how they referred to it as, they used other words, but 'whites' and 'blacks'. And they had separate water fountains in places, in the cities, in the towns around there. It hasn't been that long ago, you know? Some of those things had impact upon people and their thinking and a lot of that came out of religion as well. A lot of people don't understand, a lot of that has come out of religion because those religions in the south had to *justify* what they were doing. And they would look at the Old Testament and try to make claims... talk about slavery and how slavery is okay and all that garbage that goes along. Not *that* kind, not *that* way. There were different circumstances and different situations that happened in the Old Testament. I hope I've made the point really clear here that we are family and that there is never a matter of superiority, there is never a matter of looking down upon other people if that attitude is ever, ever there in a person's mind. And a lot people don't realise sometimes how they judge. We have to be able to look at our minds and think about how we judge, how we treat someone else. I hope I made the point really clear here because I'm tired of seeing that in God's Church and yet I see it from time to time in different places and where we go and it is an attitude of being superior, it's like, even when it comes to the Church and the truth, "Well you can't understand as much as I do. You don't see it as well as I do." Do we not all have God's spirit working within us? Do we not all see and understand? Do we have different responsibilities in life sometimes? Yes. But are we the same Family and do we have the knowledge and

understanding of God's way of life? Yes.

That's why I made comment sometime back to the elders; I might have made it to the Church as well: that if there were ordinations, if God had given it that way that in a lot of areas there would have been women ordained and not those men in some areas. That there are some areas where there are women that are far more qualified in the sense of spiritual understanding than some of the men in some of the areas. But there is a need to conduct certain kinds of business and certain things at the end-time, having to do with ordination and so forth, having to do with baptising and so forth, that God has placed within the Church as we have been given. And yet as far as that which is spiritual, if you are looking at something spiritual and those who have a great ability that God has given to them...That's why even Paul talks about different women in the Bible in a very powerful way. I think of Timothy's mother and grandmother: he speaks incredibly highly about them and their spiritual state and understanding. And that's why Timothy was so blessed to have what he was able to have; he was raised in that, he was given favour and help and he learned from that example in those things from his mother and his grandmother.

But anyway I just mentioned that because to me those things are as bad as bigotry in race. I so hate it, I can't tell you how much I hate bigotry in race and bigotry in sexes, between male and female – bigotry. And there's really not a better word to describe it, so I hope we'll all look at those things very deeply in our life because it's not what God wants us to have. When there's bigotry, there is no respect. And God makes it very clear in scripture over and over again; in family there is to be respect. If there is not respect, brother to brother, sister to sister, brother to sister, sister to brother, child to parent, parent to child; if there isn't a measure of respect in life that is shown and given in everything we do then there is some problem in our thinking, and there is bigotry somewhere, some wrong judgement that's taking place to where we can't have that closeness and that bond that God wants us to have and we've got to repent of those things. And sometimes those things are very hard for people to see, to be able to understand where they are coming from; how they were raised, why they think towards certain peoples or whatever the way they do. The world is sick because of that, the families of the earth have suffered because of that because of bigotry over and over again in different areas of life and life shouldn't be like that. It hurts the enjoyment and the peace of life, the fullness of life that we should really be able to have. I'll tell you what, you don't have to go very far around this world and looking at different peoples and different cultures and just the matter of how some women are treated is so appalling. It's as bad as slavery ever was in the south in the United States; it really is, in some cases far worse. Some of the things that take place sometimes, that have taken place, it really is sick.

Anyway it says, **Are you so foolish? having begun in the spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.** In other words, hopefully it is not in vain, hopefully we are suffering and learning from it and going through the process and God working with us. But sometimes if we are not careful the reality is we could throw it all away, we don't want to do that. **He therefore who ministers to you the spirit, and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?** Making it very clear, especially at that time here there were both things taking place. There were certain miracles that God continued to do within the Church around Paul and around Peter especially to promote and to build-up this way of life and the message about Jesus Christ and the truth that was contained in that message. And he says, "Are they doing it by how good they are? By their works? By how well they obey? Or is it by faith." And he's making it clear here, it's by faith; it's by what God has given to them.

**Verse 6 - Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.** Again, we've covered some of these things here, but very inspiring to understand this entire process. **Know you therefore that they who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.** All the nations of people that are going to be able to become a part, just like with Abraham, because of the seed that's talked about here. So anyone who is called as a matter of faith and what they are able to live, believe and see, they are the children of Abraham; that is an awesome thing. **And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen,** again that same word here, 'other nations, other peoples', **through faith, preached before the**



**gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations, all families of the earth, be blessed. So then they who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.** I am so looking forward to that time here, all peoples of the earth, people that are so messed up in their minds in different...any place you just start travelling around the globe. **For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:** you know if someone is trying to live by the law again, obviously they are under the curse. The curse of the law is the death penalty because the wages of sin is death and everyone has sinned; God makes that very clear over and over again. And so it says if anyone is trying to be saved that way, by how well they do things, then they are missing the mark, cursed... **because it says, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**

**Galatians 3:11 - But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident:** again because all have sinned, **for that, the just, again, shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, the man who does them shall live in them.** So again here, we've covered all these things about faith and the law and trying to be saved by it, but again the message here about a family that continues on through these verses as well. **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law,** it doesn't say 'He redeemed us from the law.' The curse is the penalty for not being able to *keep* the law, it requires the death penalty if you are striving to be saved by the law, and we are saved from the curse of the law, from the death penalty. That's why our sins can be forgiven us so that we can continue on by God's grace and God will actually dwell within us and Jesus Christ dwell within us by the power of the holy spirit. So, **Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree:** so we've gone through those scriptures in the Old Testament. **That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles,** again, that same word that's used for 'heathen' in other areas. Again, just other 'foreign peoples,' everyone else besides the Jews because it was to the Jew first, but it's meant for everyone. **...through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds to it.** As we've talked about in that series of sermons, about contracts, about covenants and so forth and these things here that God has kept with man that are set.

**Verse 16 - Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He did not say, to seeds,** he's striving to make it very clear here because Paul had a special mission, a special job, a special commission that was unique to him. Just as Mr. Armstrong had a special commission that was given to him: the gospel going into all the world as a witness unto all nations and then the end would come; to the degree that God intended that it should go into all the world... to that degree, through 'the Plain Truth'; through the telecasts; through the broadcasts and so forth; and when that witness had been given sufficiently so, then the end came. Mr. Armstrong died, the last era came and we saw the disintegration of the Church and the things that were prophesied about the last era. And so in this particular case here Paul had a commission and his was to go to other peoples besides the Jews – all foreign peoples, all other families. To let them know they can become a part of one Family. That's what the message is about, we are not different families, we are one family; we come from the same family in time.

**Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He did not say, to seeds,** making it very clear here it was not to the Israelites only, to those who would follow from Abraham. Even there it wasn't in through Ishmael and that was his seed and the promises weren't there. It went down through the family and it's a very specific manner in a very specific way; through Sarah as God said would be the case; and on down through then of those that were born through time here. **...but as of one, And to your seed, who is Christ.** And so he's making it very clear here, that seed is Jesus Christ. That was the promise given to Abraham. That all nations of the earth, all families of the earth were going to be blessed coming *from* Abraham, through Abraham in a specific seed. **And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.** We've gone through all before but it is very powerful what is being said here, over and over again.

**Verse 19 - Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should**

**come**, so even there it talks about a 'schoolmaster' because with the law came a sacrificial system as well because they weren't able to keep the law. And because of sin they brought in offerings, they brought in sacrifices; they were to learn that sin costs. So if you bring an ox, or you bring a sheep, you learn that there is a *cost* involved with sin, there is something you must pay. And hopefully they were to learn the greater lessons of some of those things, but it was again, a part of a schoolmaster type of system to bring them to what the truth was, of what was pictured in it, regarding Jesus Christ. That's the book of Hebrews says, 'The blood of bulls and goats couldn't take away sins, only the blood of Christ.' Awesome, some of the picture of those things that had been given. And then it talks about in **verse 25 - But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For you**, again speaking to those Gentiles, to those foreigners, **are all the children of God by faith in**, or through, **Christ Jesus**. Everyone – we're a family.

**Verse 27**, making it very clear, very powerful here, driving the point home - **For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ**. Everyone. **There is neither Jew nor Greek**, 'foreigner', it's not a matter of 'Jew'; it's not a matter of race; it's not a matter of these kinds of things that people in the world so often look upon. I don't care where you look. You look at the United Nations, you look at some of the peoples that have come in there and talk and some that are for other peoples and some that are against other peoples; there's always this division in the world - for different reasons and those reasons are endless it seems. People who look down upon others and people who look up to others and why they do and *all* the reasons that are there – sick, sick world.

**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free**, no matter what condition, no matter what kind of situation people are in out here, **there is neither male nor female**: there is the scripture, there's one of them. *It's not a matter* of male and female, that one is better than another; that somebody should look down upon another, that 'bond' is less than someone who is 'free'. Or that the Jew is somehow better than the Gentile, because that kind of judgement is all over this earth! Everywhere you go there are those kinds of feelings and those kinds of judgements that people make; they grow up with it, people grow up with it and they look down upon other people. And that is one of the *sickest* things for a human being to do, *to look down upon other people!* ...to think they're superior, better! *If they could only understand their sin* for thinking that way! That they're living in great sin because of such putrid thinking, sick thinking; it is sick, it is perverted and only by the calling of God can we begin to have our minds healed of that kind of garbage and learn to embrace one another and love each other. And so I encourage everyone in the Church to examine your prejudices, your bigotry in different things in life; your judgements in life and think about how you think about other people within your own congregation or people you have met or people in your community. If you look down upon anyone... Why? Why do you do so? How hard can we be sometimes as human beings?

That's the plea that God has given with mankind from the beginning of time, but it started with the very first, didn't it? First two sons, first two children, one killed the other. Astonishing! And that's just the way of man, that's the way we are. **And if you be Christ's, then you**, speaking to those Gentiles, those foreigners that he was speaking to, **are Abraham's seed**, 'If you are Christ's, you are *Abraham's seed*', because of the one seed. It doesn't matter who it is, not just for the Jew; they have to become a part of that seed too because the reality is they're not a part of that seed! Do you understand that about the Jews even? That they are not a part of that seed until they are able to be brought into the Church of God?! Then they can be a part of that seed because before that they are not a part of that seed *because it's not about the physical seed; it's a spiritual thing!* **Then are you Abraham's seed**, and they are all...we're Abraham's seed. Yes, physically you are, but spiritually you're sadly amiss and you of all people... of all people, to go back in the Old Testament and not acknowledge what it say in Isaiah that happened to Christ? And other areas of scripture in the Psalms and you will not acknowledge the Passover? Your Messiah? The one you still think is going to come that you don't even begin to understand? You've so watered down your religious beliefs. Jewish people have so watered down their beliefs, it's absolutely atrocious.

Through the time of Mr. Armstrong and the Philadelphia era and so forth, we can look at the Church and learn much about what God is doing or what God is not doing. What God is doing even when we were

spewed out of His mouth, but that was a big thing; to understand an apostasy take place, somebody who is given authority on this earth over the Church under Jesus Christ; and he says in a sermon that you no longer have to keep the Sabbath day, that every day we can worship God. Well, duh. It tries to water something down and goes back to Protestantism and moving towards Sunday and other things that were contained in there about the Holy Days. And no longer clean and unclean meat, it's like... somehow all meat is now clean, it's fine to eat everything, you know. And they came out with this thing about catfish at one time there, that because now they're fed grain in these tanks that they are okay to eat because they're not bottom-feeders now, "they feed them grain, so it's okay!" That's about as stupid as some of the evolutionists ideas out there, obviously. And on and on it went...

But this happened within the Church of God and it was a marvel – 'power, signs and lying wonders' that began to take place in God's Church. A lot of power that was there that came from a specific being. 'Signs' of things that happened; there were things that happened in congregations that you'd say, "how can this be possible what we are seeing?" See? Manifest itself...and 'lying wonders' – a perfect description of what took place. But a third of the Church just gave up and quit because there were no answers. Why? You know if you look at the Church you say, "This is God's Church, there is no other answer. There's no place else that has this truth. The 18 Truths that have been given to the Church, restored to the Church. And...so...Why?" That should have been the question, "Why? How could this happen?" And there was only one answer that it finally led to – God spewed us out of His mouth. He let it happen because of what we did, because of our sins and on and on it went and that's when we finally started growing. That's when the Church started growing again. God finally brought us to the point of that understanding, of that recognition that the stones of the temple, just as Jesus Christ said, they were all cast down. And the scattering that took place, all those things that fit into scripture, and on and on it went. And finally we understood; we were the problem, it wasn't God. Yes we were God's Church, but look at what we did; so God had to separate us from the Church, spew us out of His mouth, separate us from the power of His holy spirit living within us, dwelling within us. And some of us started a process of repenting and God began to work with us again and began to dwell within us again. But again, I marvel here.

I keep this list in my Bible as I am encouraged by it. Of the very thing we are talking about today: we're all one family and I marvel as *small* as we are. England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, France, Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, you know, Zebulon and Issachar. Portugal, Luxembourg, Poland, Russia, Bulgaria, Moldova, of course the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Panama, Cameroon, Zambia, Nigeria, Malawi, Ghana, South Africa, Ethiopia, Algeria, Lebanon, Philippines, Mauritius, China, Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, New Zealand, Australia, Samoa, Vietnam, Korea. I think I've missed some here. But anyway, to me that's an exciting thing because there are so many places in the world, as small as we are, to be able to say, "Look at what God is doing!" As small as we are, how could there be so many people, so many backgrounds that have been brought into the area of the Israelite nations to be able to be called at this time and so many are new people! Not people of the past, not because the gospel had gone out to them through what had happened in times past, but people as a whole in that respect who God has brought along who are new; brought them along for a purpose. So many who are young too – it's amazing, it's inspiring. So you can look at something like that and say, "What is God doing?" I *know* what God is going, it's a powerful thing and so much of what's happening at the end of this age is about a witness. It goes right along with what it says about 'two witnesses' and every one of us who are part of this, one of our primary jobs is that of a witness of what's taking place at the very end of the age. You have the opportunity. Those of you who are continuing on as a part of the Church from the time of the apostasy and those of you who have been brought along as new since that time; your great job in so many respects is one of a witness and what you are experiencing and what you are seeing of those things in your region of the world. It's an awesome thing that's taking place, it really is, because God has had witness for 6,000 years of what man is like. Witnesses of every age; He had twelve witnesses, very specific about His own Son. That one there was very powerful and very meaningful in that which He wanted to ensure in a very powerful way by, in essence, His own law – the power of what it means to witness, to have a witness.

Family, family, family... and family should not look down upon other family members. It happens in the world and sometimes it happens in the Church. We shouldn't have that in our thinking because if it exists in our family, then it carries on out from there. But because of the ways of the world, there are so many things that have happened in people's lives but that's not how people are reared and grow up and learn to respect each other as a whole and have respect toward each other because people do disrespectful things. Disrespectful things toward each other and then hurt and pain that comes as a result and the inability of people saying, "I'm sorry, I was wrong," and not accepting responsibility and so things happen and things that are carried down from generation to generation to generation and that's why we have problems in nations then, because those same prejudices are there. **Ephesians 1:1 - Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God**, making it very clear here what his job was, what he was supposed to do and where it was coming from, **to the saints who are in Ephesus**, again, Gentiles, foreigners, **and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace**, that message again, **and peace**, something that God wants those that He calls to receive because the world doesn't have peace. Sad – it doesn't matter whether it be between nations, or in communities, it doesn't matter where you look: corporations, peoples, jobs – peace just doesn't exist like it *could*, like it *should*, like it *will*.

**Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly in Christ:** in other words, 'it comes', that is the location, that's where it comes from, in and through Jesus Christ to us that we're able to receive. And even our own begetting and so forth and the power that exists and lives and dwells within us comes from there. God's making it very clear where it comes from; the source is from Him through His Son. **According as He**, speaking of God, **has chosen us in Him**, in Christ, isn't it amazing how we can see these things today and a few years ago we couldn't see what we are reading here now? **According as He**, God, **has chosen us in Him**, in Christ, **before the foundation of the world**, does that mean every individual personally He knew and knew them before they were born and our lives are predestinated and predetermined who is going to be born and so forth? No, no, no, no, no because there is free choice. God has been involved in some things in time. He's had influence in some things through time in people being born - hence 12 sons. Why not 6? Why didn't they stop? There were to be 12, see? So, there are certain things that God has worked with and inspired and moved to be accomplished and to be done. They had choice in things, but God had a hand in it, in working with peoples. He's brought many things to pass as a part of life as well.

**According as God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world**, so before anything was here, all these things were predetermined, of how we were going to be *in* Christ. That that is the only way we can be saved, God knowing exactly what we're like as human beings, what we would be like being made physical, that's why He made us this way - and knowing that we would sin, knowing that we could not do anything else but sin. Adam and Eve, from the very beginning, started sinning. I still marvel at this sometimes when I think about Bricketwood at times when I sat in class there, especially one day when this was being discussed in class and it's still in my mind, engraved in my mind, and probably for a purpose. And some of this was being discussed: it was like when Adam sinned and Eve sinned and they did that, it was like God hit Himself on His forehead with the palm of His hand and said, "Now what am I going to do? What can we do now?" It was like this was a shock, a surprise – mankind has sinned! And so at some point God had to come up with this idea of having to have a saviour to be saved, to save mankind from sin. You think, no...**According as He has chosen us in Him**, in Christ, **before the foundation of the world**, it was all mapped out, all predetermined, all planned out meticulously so. Passover to the Last Great Day was all planned out before the angelic realm was even created, incredible to understand that. I'm thankful God's given that to us, that deeper understanding, that deeper appreciation and it glorifies and honours Him even that much more. It helps us to grasp and comprehend in a greater way how great God is, how awesome, how powerful, how *Almighty* God is - Our Father.

**That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:** So this was what was predetermined, that 'we should be holy' because we're not; from the get-go we have sin and we are very *unholy*. We have sin and the death penalty is hanging over our head and because of sin; we go from one sin to another and so

it's just a matter of how deep in perversion the mind will go. That's why I hate the systems we have today, of the criminal systems we have. Rather than doing what God said, which is righteous, that there are individuals who deserve to be put to death, we just keep them alive as long as we can and put them in a worse environment so that when they are finally resurrected later on after they die, *they're going to be much harder to work with and maybe cannot be saved at all!* ...Because of the stupid stinking environment, because of sin, because we don't obey God! We make it *worse* for human beings, not better, because we are righteous. Because we think it is so bad, so horrible to take some other life; no, it isn't. *No it is not!* It isn't. It can be a very merciful thing, a matter of God's *love* and mercy because those individuals have an opportunity of being resurrected later on in a *right* world, in a place where they *can* be worked with, in a place that things *can* begin to take place if there is any way of salvation being able to be given to them. And there are going to be some that aren't going to have those opportunities. **According as He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame**, how can we be without blame? Because we have a lot of blame, the moment we start sinning there is blame there. How do you get rid of that? Through Jesus Christ, that was predetermined – how we could be saved. **That we could be without blame before Him in**, the word used here is '**agape**', and human beings just don't have that. All the churches in the world who think they have God's love, they don't have it; no one has it, except those who have God's spirit because that kind of love can only be conveyed through God spirit. And by God's spirit dwelling within us, then we begin to experience it and we can begin to live it towards others.

That's why I appreciated that first sermon of the Feast here where it was pointed out, in essence, that spirit that's coming into our life, that it just doesn't come to us and stop. It's to continue living through us; that is the message - so that others can receive and benefit from that spirit. From the response and the life that is lived because of that spirit living and dwelling within an individual. And others can receive the benefit of that grace, that grace that we have received from God that lives through us. If we just receive it, the grace of God and it stops with us and we're selfish... What good has it done? That's not God's way. God's way is that it lives through us and others benefit from it as well – mercy, forgiveness, patience, temperance. All those things that are to live through us, a matter of God's spirit – love, agape, see? It comes from God. And so all this was predetermined before time, **before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in agape: Having predestinated us**, and that word means 'predetermined'. It means 'determined before the foundation of the earth'. In other words God determined this a long, long time ago. **Having predetermined us**, as it is here, **unto the adoption**, the word means 'son-ship', **of children by**, 'through', **Jesus Christ to Himself**. God, from the very beginning, before anything was created...because what is the whole purpose? Elohim – family, family, family, *family* – The God Family, The Family of God. And His purpose from the very beginning was to have all those who could be a part of *His* Family and so He determined how that was going to be able to be accomplished. Awesome to understand that! Create an angelic realm that was to minister and serve and help in accomplishing that in a physical world, that they could share in that as well, the excitement of that to the degree that God had given to them. And then for all of mankind through time that would be able to be drawn and called in different stages in different *ages*. To be able to begin to conquer and overcome self - in and through Jesus Christ; to have agape live through them – incredible!

**Having predetermined us unto the adoption**, that we could come to a point in time, **of children**, it says, **by**, or 'through', **Jesus Christ to Himself**, so we have this process where we can be forgiven of our sins and have the life of God through a begettal begin to dwell within us. ...**according to the good pleasure of His will**. God's will. It's His good pleasure and He's sharing a lot of that with us at this Feast of Tabernacles. His good pleasure of His will that has existed, if you want to count in years, we don't know the years – billions of years... I cannot comprehend. But there are things out there in the universe that cry out: 10, 15 billion years and we haven't reached the end of it; they're trying to find the end. How long has it been? How far? I don't know, but none of that was there before God determined this. This was determined first, awesome, we were - to be a part of His family. **To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted to Him**, because as human beings full of sin... we're not, we can't be. We have to be cleansed of sin and then He can accept us, begin to do what His will is; to live within us, to dwell within us **accepted in the beloved**. ...in Christ.

**Chapter 2 - And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;** 'made us alive', that's what that word 'quickened' means, 'made us alive'. Before that we were dead, not physically, but spiritually dead and so He has quickened us through the power of the holy spirit. That's what's so exciting and unique about the word of God, when the word of God... we're begotten with the word of God, in other words the spirit of God, the mind of God, all those things that mean the same thing. It all happens at the same time and this life, and the mind that begins to live and dwell within us that we receive of God, a portion of God that begins to dwell within us as that begins to take place. And that life, that when we read the Bible or we hear sermons, that things just *come alive* for us in ways that before...you could read the Bible and it didn't come alive, they were words and you could barely get through the genealogies..."This is boring." You know? What does it mean, you know? I remember starting to read the New Testament, somebody gave me a Bible for graduation from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, an aunt of mine and I started reading the Bible at one time when I was about 13, 14. I remember being at my room opening up this red Bible and I started reading in Matthew. I didn't go very far, it just didn't seem to mean anything and didn't make any sense – so I put it away. Incredible!

**And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:** That's the way the world has always been, the 'children of disobedience', and we have all been a part of that and we still are, it's just that a change has taken place. We can repent of that now, we can come out of that now, we can be different from them now - see?

**Among whom also we all had our conversation, or 'conduct', in times past, in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.** The 'children of wrath' - death, the death penalty, that's what it is talking about, because of sin. We were the same as everyone else out here, but now we've been forgiven, we don't have that death penalty over us any more, thank God. We can grow spiritually, God can dwell within us, *does* dwell within us, *desires* – His will is to do so. **But God, our Father, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,** His purpose, His plan of Elohim, of delivering us from this and it starts with us. I am dumbfounded by that, I hope you are; of all the people on the earth, the opportunities we have. And most all human beings, they have to wait until the Last Great Day. To think that the vast majority of human beings have to live *twice*; have to live in a physical body *twice* – that's an incredible thing to understand. And that very few have had the opportunity of not having to do that; and I can't tell you how pleased *I* am. Once for me, knowing the truth... is just quite enough. **But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,** blessed us, given us blessings, such great and incredible blessings, **Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are you saved;)** very powerful words, powerful, powerful, what's being said. **And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly in Christ:**

**Verse 7 - That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.** You know the seed of promise through Abraham. **For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God.** Never, never, never again, not only can we not by the law save ourselves, by how well we're able to do things, but everything that we have has been a gift from God – everything that we receive is God's blessing and God's gift. "Every good thing," as Christ said, "comes from the Father." He said it didn't come from Him, He said it came from the Father. He said everything that He spoke, it came from the Father; that's an awesome thing to understand. **Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship,** awesome. I marvel at that, just like the Feast of Tabernacles here, especially in the next three sermons coming up and the Last Great Day sermon coming up and so forth. I have been in different areas at different times and it's amazing to me and it's not amazing because we have experienced it since the beginning of our calling, every one of us, how that so often there are things that happen in our life, maybe we're talking to someone else, or reading something else, something else comes to our mind and that Sabbath - there it is in the message. Something there that answers something we have thought about and at the Feast, and I have visited different areas and for several weeks now before the Feast here, different ones have made comments, talking about various things

and I just had to tell them, "That's a Feast sermon." Because God is moulding and fashioning us, preparing us for what we receive, so He can give us more, so He prepares our minds. He does; just like it says here, 'He is the one, we are His workmanship,' and it is an awesome thing. It doesn't matter...we're small... in the Church. It wouldn't matter if we were large and had hundreds and thousands or millions of people; *God Almighty* has the power to work with every individual. If there were a billion people, 10 billion, 1 trillion, it doesn't matter the number; God has the power to work with every one of those at one moment in time. You cannot, I cannot, comprehend that, through His great power, to mould and fashion their mind; to feed them, to give them, to nurture them, to lead them, to work with them, to bring them to what He's bringing them to and that's exactly what He's going to continue to do through time because He will be working with that many in time. In the Great White Throne – absolutely. Incredible, the billions of people who are going to be resurrected and God will be working with them *all* throughout that period of time. That's an awesome thing, through the power of His holy spirit; we cannot comprehend the greatness of Almighty God who wants to be, who desires to be, who reveals His desire to be our Father – to be very close to us.

In the morning when I get up and sometimes we go on a jog or a walk; I walk, my wife jogs. I can walk through a beautiful area that God has blessed us to live in along the path and see the beauty of those things around me and talk to my Father and He hears me – awesome to understand that – see? Or I can be in a room and be on my knees, or I can be driving in a car and I can talk to my Father any time I choose and want and He is there desirous to hear me. It's an awesome thing because He *is* my Father, He *is* your Father. He desires that close relationship with us. He doesn't want it to be ritualistic, He doesn't want us to just feel that at any moment in time that we can only come before Him in a specific way, but we have the ability to come before Him any time. ...any time – see? Because there have been times when people have felt, and talked about how that you have to count the clock. You have to be concerned about how much time each day that you do this and how much time you study and where you do it and how you do it and this ritualistic thing. A close personal relationship is not a ritualistic relationship, if you understand what I am saying, it's because there is that closeness, that bond that you know is there...that you feel, that you grasp and comprehend; that you're able to share that's very personal and very close. And the location, the place; like my walking, that doesn't take away from my respect, my love, my awe of God. It's like what we used to have in the Church at one time where ministers...everyone was told you had to say Mr. so-and-so, his last name. And the reality is you can't enforce by any kinds of laws or anything of that nature, respect. People would say Mr. and hate their guts, you know, loathe them – I know. And so just by saying it, doesn't mean it's real, does it? It's of the spirit, the relationship is of the spirit and that's what we learn through time. And so some of this is a similar analogy to that; that it's a matter of what's in your mind. It's a matter of what you feel and what you believe concerning your Father and your elder brother, Jesus Christ; we always do it through His name, through our elder brother's name. That's how we're able to approach God and have that relationship with God... always *through* our elder brother.

**For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, His workmanship, God's workmanship, **created in**, and through, **Christ Jesus unto good works**, that which is good, that comes from God. That God wants to mould and fashion within us so that we practice and do and live those things. ...**which God has before ordained**, 'before ordained' ...ordained it from the beginning, preordained, predetermined, **that we should walk in them**. How? Only in this manner, that's what we're being shown; this is the only way we're able to do it as human beings – *through Jesus Christ*. **Wherefore remember, that you being in times past Gentiles**, so he's talking to a specific group of people in Ephesus, 'foreigners' in other words, **in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens**, in other words this word meaning, 'a non-participant', **from the commonwealth of Israel**, they didn't have part in it, they didn't have part in all those things as God began to work with Israel as a nation of people and the thing that were unique to them and everyone else was a stranger around. And as I mentioned before, that began to hurt the Jewish people in time because Israelites, the rest of the family, the rest of the people were taken captive into Assyria. Then the Jews were able to come back. All the things they've suffered and they still had a pride that isn't healthy for them, of 'God's special people'. Now that really goes over well with Ishmael, 'God's special people'. It's even gone over well with Israel, wherever they have dwelt because they like to

flaunt that they are 'God's special people'. And I can't take that haughtiness and pride when I see them in an airport or someplace else bobbing against the wall, just like a Pentecostal. It's no different than a Pentecostal who is in a trance or whatever they get into when they start speaking in tongues. And you see them bobbing against the wall as they pray. Is that what God wants? ...a show of religion like that? And some of those kinds of things are an embarrassment to the Jewish people – sad, pathetic.

And so people have hurt themselves immensely and they look down upon the rest of the world. They do, when it comes to a relationship with God, just as much as the Catholics do; they look down upon the rest of the world, if you are not a Catholic, you just don't understand what they understand. And of course, the Baptists, they *know* that they are the best, the Church of Christ, they know *they're* the best; they don't get along with the Catholics and they don't get along with the Baptists, they don't get along with anybody – they are the Church of Christ. Anyway, you can go on and on, everybody thinks they're the best and looks down upon the others; that's why they are who are they are. Otherwise they'd go join somebody else. The Mormons – they are pretty much convinced they really are the best, they are God's people. Isn't that an amazing thing about human nature? Anyway...and if you don't see things the way they see it... whatever religion it is, then you've got the problem, you're the one that's just misguided... you poor soul. Anyway, going on. Don't ever let what you believe and know be a matter of pride. Be thankful, but don't let it be a matter of pride and haughtiness and looking down upon others because then it disrespects and brings disrespect to God; it takes God's name in vain.

**Verse 12 - That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens, non-participant, from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:** a lot of people have been left to feel that way through time. **But now in Christ Jesus you who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Christ.** Now you can be a part, you can share. **For He is our peace, who has made both one,** speaking of Jew and Gentile here, in other words all foreigners, made them one, **and broken down,** in other words one Family, **and have broken down the middle wall of partition,** that basically separated the two obviously, **[between us;] Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances;** again, those things that were unique to the Israelites, even those things that are contained in rituals and so forth, **for to make of Himself of two one new man,** in the sense of mankind - one new family, the family of man, **so making peace.** What an awesome thing, that God's desire is to give real peace in this world. I think of that statue, 'Beating their swords into ploughshares'; it's right there at the United Nations. The world can't give peace to mankind because they don't know the way; that's what God says, "They don't know the way of peace, they don't understand what brings peace." That's why the world is so ignorant of it; it has to do with God's laws and God's way of life and right relationships that start in the family, that start in the home. And if they can't live it in the home, they can't live it in the community and if they can't live it in the community, they can't live it in the nation, and if they can't live it in a nation, they can't live it in the world and they don't have it. And so what do we have? We have poppy plants growing in Afghanistan and we support that, we call that peace. Such hypocrisy, lying, this world is so sick.

**Verse 16 - And that He might reconcile,** in other words 'to make as one', **both unto God in one body by the stake, having slain the enmity thereby:** everything that separates, everything that's caused division and it's sin that's caused division in families; whether they be a single little family unit or that which grows into what we see in the world – it's the family. **And came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them who were near.** Showing them how to have peace through the truth. **For through Him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father,** because *that* is what makes Him our Father, all peoples of the earth: He is *our Father*. That's why I love that outline of prayer, because when you think about something like that, it should force you to think about what's being said. It's not, 'My Father, who art in heaven...' We're not to pray that way, you are *never to pray* that way, 'My Father, who art in heaven.' Jesus Christ said, "pray Our Father, who art in heaven," because that *teaches* something; that teaches something to the mind if we will think about it of what we're doing and who we're approaching and why and what's being said in that and what God wants us to *remember* at a moment like that, when we begin that – it's powerful.



**Verse 19: Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens,** the same family, brothers and sisters, **with the saints, and of the household of God;** isn't that the way it is in the Church? No matter where it is in the world, someone comes along, anyone comes along, it doesn't matter where they're from, they are a part of the family and it's *exciting*. It's exciting to learn from them, "How were you called? How was your mind opened up? How did God work with you? Why are you here? How did you get here?" And you learn then how God works with everybody in a unique way and it's God that does it; that's what you know from the very get-go. You know that God the Father is the one who's done it because He's the one who draws everyone – no one else can do it. Jesus Christ doesn't do it, His Father does because *He* is our Father, our God, Almighty God and we're brought to Christ then, we're brought to the Church, we are given to Christ. That's why Christ said what He did, 'No man comes to me except God the Father draw him,' and then He brings us to the Church. And then Jesus Christ begins to live in us and work through us and teach and mould and fashion us to do the will of God. To bring everything into subjection to Himself and then to give it all to God the Father when it is done.

**And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord:** beautiful picture. **In whom you are built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.** I love these verses, it's hard not to love any of them, all of them, obviously, but some just really jump out at you even more. Talking about the household of God, the family of God being built together for a habitation, where God desires to dwell; not in a physical temple, but in a spiritual one – us. That's why I marvel! He doesn't cease dwelling in us for all eternity, God the Father. The spirit life we will have, the mind we will have, the unity and oneness we will have with God the Father is because He still dwells within us. It's a spiritual temple, something we cannot grasp nor comprehend totally, truly, how God Almighty, the Eternal God...but just as He does right now, we're in a physical body and we're begotten and He dwells in us. He is on our mind, He gives us the ability to see and have what we have, it's by His spirit and when He gives us His spirit and we're made spirit, we're still sustained by God, we truly are. And the mind we have is because of that which God gives to us and continues to give to us, by His spirit He dwells within us – a habitation. **In whom you are being built together for a habitation of God through the spirit.** It's an awesome and a powerful thing to understand – what a Family! One Family – unity. That's what I loved about Mr. Armstrong's sermons, when he would talk about government, when he would talk about that unity and certain things about God and what happened with Lucifer. And for us to come to grasp and comprehend that God will not give the power of God, His power, the power of the God plane, the power of Elohim, to *anyone* who is not at one with Him; been proven and tried and tested to be at one with Him so that when He gives them that power, they are at one. It's an awesome thing to understand; never to rebel, never to turn against God; always at one - see? They have fought for that, they have worked towards that, they have grown in character in that to the point where God will give them that power and that might and that ability – it's an awesome thing to understand and we only understand it in part.

**Chapter 3 - For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,** you foreigners, those of you of other nations, **If you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given me towards you: How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery;** so he's referring to that again as he did before to the Galatians, **(as I wrote in few words, Whereby, when you read, you understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),** so again, it's an amazing thing that we go through. It doesn't matter when it is. That which was given to Mr. Armstrong, we can read 'Mystery of the Ages'; there are things we see, we understand, we grasp and then God continues to give us more. And then there are some things we see and we realise we haven't gotten there in everything, but we read whatever, 'The Prophesied End-Time'; '2008 – God's Final Witness' and go through some of those things and we see that which has been given to the Church – we see it. As much as we read the book of Acts and we see it, we believe it. That's why it is such an encouraging thing sometimes, to see new people come along and to realise, it doesn't matter what stage, we have people out here that are at different stages that have had battles and troubles and I understand that process we go through. It's always been a process through the Church where some have left when they have been enlightened and they see the truth and then they leave and make that choice for various reasons. And then, *always* when there are new people coming along; and they just read

it and they see it. They have *no problems* with anything, they see the things about time, they see the things about fasting, they see the things about Trumpets, they see those things and they are a part right where we are, brought right up to line. Not the experience yet, but they believe because of what they see; it is an awesome thing because that is done by God's spirit; it's the only way we have unity like that.

That's why it was very inspiring and very uplifting to me and exciting and I knew it would be that way, at the Feast in 2005 when we went through every sermon about God, about the God Family, about 'God Almighty and His Son' because that sermon was unique in that respect to help us to understand in a deeper way that Jesus Christ had a beginning and didn't eternally exist. And God cleared up so many things and helped us and we were at one; we came to be at one through the Feast. People at different stages during the Feast...I think of one individual I mentioned before who came up on the very Last Great Day and it wasn't until the sermon on Melchizedek... but we became at one through that process at the Feast of Tabernacles. God did that! It's by God's spirit, it's not by human intellect or human desire or human ability – *God* did something there, see? God accomplished those things and those are powerful thing to witness, to be a part of, to share in.

And so it goes on to say here, **How that by revelation, again (verse 3), He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote of beforehand in few words, Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men,** was not made known to the families on the earth. People didn't understand, that's what he's saying here, **as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;** through God's spirit; **That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body,** the same Family, that's what he is saying here. It's all about the Family, **and partakers of the promise of Christ by the gospel:**

**Verse 7 - Wherefore I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.** So he is letting them know that everything he is doing is because of what God is doing by His power, it's not by *him*. He is saying it is all by God's power and how God's power is working with him and through him. **Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;** he was very moved because of what he did. He knew he had stood there when different ones of the Church were put to death and the persecuting of the Church, he was there for it and that stayed with Paul. He was humbled by that process of how God worked with him in a profound way to do this job; taught, educated very powerfully so throughout the scriptures of the Old Testament. Schooled and educated in ways that the vast majority of people there never were, of the Jewish people, but he had those opportunities of schooling. And so when God opened up his mind and gave to him some very basic understanding of these things here; about Christ and what Christ accomplished and fulfilled. And his mind that was opened, he was zealous as it was for what he understood towards the Old Testament; he was zealous towards God in this in a very powerful way, but he was very humbled by it because he realised he was responsible for fighting against God and fighting against God's Church and that stuck with him. There are some things that sometimes stick with us, that motivate us, that help us to be humbled by and we're able to remember those things and this was one for Paul.

**Verse 9 - And to make all men see what is the fellowship,** beautiful. He says, "It's to you Gentiles, to help make *all* mankind to see," because so much of the message given by Paul; things that are written in Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and other places, the book of Hebrews and so forth, on and on again... it's geared very powerfully to *all mankind*. To help everyone understand how they can be a part of the same Family and that there is no special favour given to a single race of people or a single group of people, or a single physical family of people on the earth, see? It's for everyone – God loves everyone. His salvation, His desire is for everyone; Jesus Christ died for everyone; not for any specific group of people, not just for the Jew. That's where it started; the seed came through the Jewish people, the promises that were given. There were certain things that had to come to pass in a certain way. That's why there's no place for pride or haughtiness in any people, in any physical race, nor of any physical sex as I mentioned a while ago. There is nothing special about male over female - you know? Amazing! And because of that lack of respect in the world, because there is so much disrespect in just that area alone, we have a lot of problems in the world;

let alone sometimes within the Church of God. And so people have to address their own lives and their own thinking because everything in family about God's law is a matter of respect. Respect, respect, respect! And if we can't respect, then we're sinning, something is wrong in our mind that has to be repented of – truly. **And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery**, again, about the Family – Elohim. It's a mystery, man doesn't understand it, **which from the beginning of the world has been hidden in God, who created all things by, 'through', Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose**; this is something that has been continuing from time beginning, if you will, going back again before anything was brought into being because only God the Father existed. I don't understand, but I believe it as you do.

The Eternal God, Almighty God has eternally existed... don't grasp that, but thankful for it. We wouldn't have any life if it weren't for that – eternally existed. And He's had a purpose because of that in ways we cannot comprehend – to share life. Isn't that a marvel? When you think about that, Almighty God, the Eternal God; we cannot comprehend time and yet His desire became so great to share life. And He started with a spiritual creation, then built up to a physical creation and has been doing much for how long? Earth's years? I have no idea – billions upon billions upon billions of years. We don't comprehend. A lot longer than that because if you try to name, as I mentioned the other day here, if you were able to get just a little bit of what we see because of the Hubble Telescope, of all the galaxies out there and all the stars within those galaxies. He says He knows and calls them by name. If you could name so many names within a minute, how fast can you speak? And it can't be very long names because you want to make sure you get a lot within a minute. But the reality is it takes trillions of years just to name what exists out there, if you were able to do large numbers of them in one minute's time. It would take you trillions of years just to name them. I do not comprehend that kind of vastness. We're trying to comprehend it in the States by the national debt... Anyway...

**Verse 11 - According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus...** so from the very beginning there is that which He purposed in His Son in order to have a Family. A desire for a Family and we do not grasp that deep desire, but He shares it with us in the Church and that's why this Feast is so important: to understand the timing of where we are, to understand why He's having us focus on this in three sermons at the Feast of Tabernacles: because God wants us to be excited...to share in that excitement of what He is about to bring to pass now, after all this time. That 144,000 are going to finally enter into that Family in addition to His Son - see? And then their work from that point forward is to then bring in billions into God's Family and we're finally there to do that kind of work. The suffering of the last 6,000 years; there's been much patience with God Almighty toward mankind. All the things that man has done before God, but because He has a purpose He gave much patience and grace, He truly has, even to those of all of us in the world. **According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: For this cause...** How about us? Do we grasp it? **For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, there are those times in every respect that indeed we show greater honour and respect and love toward God. These times are never to be omitted as well. But I also mentioned earlier that there are those times too that we should be able to feel that comfort and that closeness to be able to address Him at any time in our life. But there are these times to be in awe in a greater way and to remind ourselves of the need to be so. **According to the eternal purpose which He purposed through Christ Jesus our Lord: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole Family in heaven and earth is named.**

We'll stop there for today and conclude this series of sermons.

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