

In this sermon being given from Las Vegas we're going to continue in this new series that began last week in Detroit: with this being *Part 2 of Our Journey of Faith*. I find it interesting where we're located today: in a city that is so often advertised in the statement that 'whatever happens in Vegas stays in Vegas'. That attitude is amazing to me because it does reflect one of the most basic attitudes of human nature, of mankind, concerning how you can lie and sin and it should only be private. It's like it doesn't affect anyone else. All sin hurts others and yet it's an attitude...and I know it's an advertisement, but that's also an attitude and it's like, "It's my private life and it's nobody else's business," and sadly that's not true. The world doesn't understand that. Mankind tries to hide sinful nature but nevertheless we remain in sin. I think of Adam and Eve in the very beginning. You know what they were doing when they were trying to hide in the garden? They were trying to hide from God. The mind is so distorted in things like that and it's like their life is private and not even God should interfere and that's the way man has been ever since obviously because of basic human nature. I think it'd be good to ask today as a part of this... Is Vegas worse than any other city? Because a lot of people have that attitude, especially in what is so called religion in the world and we obviously find a lot of hypocrisy in that but I think of New Orleans, especially Bourbon Street: that's a cesspool of the world just because of what it pictures and what it is. What about Detroit? Chicago? Los Angeles? San Francisco? New York? What about Jerusalem? Jerusalem is one city that bothers me more than most of those larger cities to be candid with you because of all the sickness that's there, because it is spiritual, because of all the false religions and things that are there, but people don't see through the same eyes, or have the same vision obviously. But it's what's exciting about the time we live in because every city is going to be cleaned up, all people are going to begin learning a different way of life and it has to do with how you think. But for the present it's a sick world we live in.

Thought I'd mention too with all the senior elders and evangelists being out here...Laura and I were commenting about it this morning as we were walking over to get my daily fix of Starbucks. We were just walking outside a little bit – nice and beautiful in the morning out here and the sun just barely coming up and kind of brisk, but very refreshing. And as a part of that we were talking about the group as we got on the elevator last night - how pleasing that had to be to God, because that's what struck me as we were getting on. She made the comment to me how pleasing that had to be to God. And seeing everyone together with the kind of spirit of unity and oneness and the maturity that God has given to the leadership in the Church, the growth that God has given to the leadership in the Church and it's very inspiring to see that. Very exciting being able to have everyone here this weekend for the ministerial meeting. But anyway, I thought about in the midst of the sick and dying world, as we were just talking about here a moment ago concerning cities of the world and what they're like, and concepts that people get in their mind. Being at the end-time here, at the end of man's age of self rule, that God has re-established the Church once again. That's what we're talking about in this particular series, the journey we've taken to get where we are. Of how God has brought us to the point where we are, the things we're able to see and understand now and how we didn't get here overnight. It's been a long journey and it's good at times to go back and reflect upon some of those things and to think about how God has led us, guided us, directed us, moulded and fashioned us...whether it be as far as the Church is concerned at this time, or in our own private lives because it's very inspiring. When you see God's spirit at work and how God's spirit works in our life it is a very moving and a very inspiring thing, because He's the one that builds this.

It's like you look out in the universe; you think about some of the things you see in the Hubble Telescope and the things that have come back to this earth that God has put out there and you think those things are *nothing* compared to what He's doing in us. Because what He's doing in us is taking a long time because our nature resists Him and yet He's building. There's construction going on, the temple is being built and He's doing those things in each individual's life that He calls into the Church, that He gives His holy spirit to and as long as we continue faithfully along that course responding to God...and the reality is the only way we can do that is if He has a purpose in our life and He's going to bring us through from one point to another. What an incredible thing it is to realize we're a part of a building, we're a part of construction that's ongoing and God is building something in our life and it's exciting to look at those things – to see what has taken place through time.

This series is about that journey, about how God has been blessing us and that it's our journey of faith because it's about relying on God, looking to God and looking at what God is doing.

Last week we spoke of some of the timing of things that God has brought us to, things that are still not fully known until they're seen, until there's physical evidence brought forth in the Trumpet blasts that are directly in front of us. We look to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet blast as the next thing that's going to be seen as something that will begin a process of physical evidence in the world that will begin shaking people up because nothing is at this point because mankind is the same as he's always been. He doesn't listen to God, he doesn't believe God, he doesn't believe what God has told him is going to take place: and all of it is ending on Pentecost – May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012. What an incredible thing.

Let's go back to **Hebrews 11** where we left off. It's good to pick this up again here, just these last few verses that we were reading and make a comment about a few of them. We were in **Hebrews 11:6** - where it says, **But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.** So again, a reminder to everyone of the importance of diligently seeking God. You have to apply yourself. You have to work at it. It's an attitude of mind, of a desire to seek after God, a desire to discipline one's life, seek discipline in one's life because if we don't diligently seek after Him and fight that fight against our human nature, we'll go by the wayside, we'll do exactly what happened in Laodicea – became lukewarm – began to come to a point in time where people weren't on guard spiritually, weren't spiritually alert and that is a consequence of what happens when people are not diligently seeking God, God's way of life, and how to live it and apply it in your life. If you're just going through the motions, you're in for some hard lessons in life and God will bring you to that if He's moulding and fashioning you.

**Hebrews 11:1** going back to that... **Now faith is the substance**, it's the support as we talked about last week, that which gives us support, that which is like in a building, that which is like concrete that holds everything together. **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.** And that's how we live our lives. We've always lived our lives that way as we talked about last Sabbath; from day to day, week to week, month to month, year by year – always looking to God to guide, direct and lead us.

**Verse 25**, let's jump ahead here now to where we were, and at the very end of the sermon last week talking about the life of Moses, his journey of faith that was being covered in that sermon at the very end. **Verse 25**: it talked about Moses... it says where he came to a point - **Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season**; having an understanding that our life is short on this earth and that living it any way we desire, that it's our private life and as long as it doesn't hurt anybody else...and some don't care if it even hurts others – it's not that

way at all. And to understand here an attitude of mind that there is going to be suffering involved. That's why I like the expression in scripture when it talks about 'we have to enter into Christ's sufferings'. And a lot of people go through time not understanding what that means, even in God's Church. But it's an understanding in life and the reality is human beings are going to suffer. We're going to suffer. We're either going to suffer because of our stupidity, which we do anyway, but I mean if we ignore God and refuse to follow His way, then we're really going to suffer. We're going to suffer the hardships of not living God's way of life, of fighting and resisting and the things that make our life harder and worse as time goes along. And then the other way is the reality of living God's way of life – that you're going to suffer because of the battles you're going to enter into because of a willingness to fight human nature and so in the Church we suffer. You know, you suffer when your family doesn't believe you. You suffer when the boss looks down upon you and you lose your job because of the Sabbath and troubles with the Holy Days and on and on it goes: because you're striving to live a certain way of life and it's going against the way the world lives. The world doesn't live that way. So again, it's a different kind of suffering but it's suffering for the right purpose.

**Esteeming the reproach of Christ**, and that's what Moses did. Every person who has ever lived has had to make those choices. We'd rather choose to suffer along with the people of God, with the people that God is working with, for the purpose that God has, even though that was a very physical purpose back then. We see even more a spiritual purpose of God working in our lives. And it says here.... **esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt**: that which God gave to them, an understanding of a part of His plan and an understanding of things that were yet to come, things that they believed and understood about; to the degree that they did, whatever God gave to them about a Passover, about a Messiah, things that they looked forward to as it talked about Abraham seeking a 'city whose builder and maker is God.' And that's what everyone has done. **Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt**: and it's like that lesson we talked about last week regarding Peter and sometimes when things get difficult, when things get hard it was pretty easy for him at that point because he didn't have God's spirit at that point. The Day of Pentecost hadn't begun, the Church hadn't begun and when they came up and asked him at a time when Christ was suffering and going through the things He did and they started saying aren't you so and so... aren't you with so and so...aren't you with this group... aren't you... I think I've seen you before. And he denied those things. We come to a point in time where we recognize, **esteeming the reproach of Christ as greater riches**, when you come to a point in time where you realize, no, living this way of life, doing what we're to do, understanding that there's going to be a reproach, the way we're going to be treated by others for a purpose, for what God has given to us – that's what it's all about and we're willing to suffer that because it's really not suffering – it's a part of our moulding and fashioning and it's inspiring.

**...for he who had respect**, as it says here, **unto the recompense of the reward**. It talks about looking forward to those things that God was going to grant, that God was going to give. Not just for the sake of getting! You know, it's not what this is about; it's not what we're going to get out of it and what Moses was going to get out of it for what he did! That's not what this is talking about. It's talking about a desire that we see something beyond this human life, that we have a desire for eternal life, that we have a desire for God's Kingdom and what God is offering to us, that there's more than just this human life, thank God.

**By faith he forsook Egypt**, and we all have to come to that point where we don't have any desire to stay in this human life anymore and everybody comes to that point in time through growth and sometimes when people are younger they have these battles that they don't really see and grasp fully yet what God is offering and have a greater desire for that and they still have a desire for human life. You know, you

come to a point in time where you really don't have a desire for human life: you have a full desire for God's life and for continuing on as a spirit being, not in a physical body. **By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.** Again, we all follow the same pattern.

As a part of this sermon series it's important that we go back sometimes and look at our history, sometimes for the inspiration obviously, sometimes for the lessons to be learned and so that we don't slip and repeat certain things of life. Let's turn over to **II Thessalonians**. This was a big change for the Church as God began to restore the Church; as He began to again rebuild and strengthen the Church because of those things that had happened, understanding the entire Church was spewed out of God's mouth, vomited out. That's the expression that's used in Revelation when it talks about Laodicea. And God began to rebuild again, if you will, because we were all separated from God when that happened. And **II Thessalonians**, as I mentioned, was a big part of that. Everyone as a whole knows exactly what **II Thessalonians** is about. It's about the apostasy that took place and it'd be good to review some of this even though we've had sermons in the past – just like the Feast of Tabernacles, just like Pentecost, just like Passover, just like the Days of Unleavened Bread – every year God tells us to go back and review these things so we can keep focused upon what they're all about. And so it is with things like this, from time to time it's so important that we go back and read things that we have lived through and that are going to be written about, candidly.

**II Thessalonians 2:1 - Now we beseech you, brethren**, notice the context here for those of you who are new. Again, **by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, this is what Paul was talking about; this is the entire focus of chapter 2. It's about looking forward to the time that Jesus Christ is going to return, from the very beginning. From the very beginning of the Church the Church had a desire, from the very beginning of Pentecost they had a desire for the things they began to understand when God's spirit was poured out upon the Church and the Church began. They had this desire, and that was for Jesus Christ, that was for God's Kingdom; for everything He'd been telling them and they had this desire to see, and they understood, God gave them understanding that He was going to return again; not as a lamb but as a lion. That began to be given to them, they began to understand, they began to look forward to it. The Church had a great desire to see Him come back and candidly for a long time there they thought He was going to come back in their lifetime. They didn't understand that 2000 years was in front of them. And so the Church has been on a long journey for almost 2000 years and every era has had to go through this and there's been that attitude and that mind that it talks about in Revelation and one of the Seals there – if you look at that – it talks about, you know, 'How long Eternal...How long?' That's been something that the prophets wanted to know going back in time...and then the Church all through time, that people have had inside of them, 'How long before these things are fulfilled?' ...because the journey is not easy; it's a difficult journey and so, an incredible thing that we have the opportunity to live at a time to see, to experience the things that everybody in the Church in the very beginning wanted to see. And so even Paul in some of his writings, some of those things are geared toward, thinking about the return of Jesus Christ and this is where God, candidly, at this point, revealed something to him that's prophetic about the return of Jesus Christ, helping Paul to understand that some things had to happen first and that until these things did happen Jesus Christ wasn't going to return.

And so again here, **we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that's the context of what he's going to talk about, the return of Jesus Christ, **and by our gathering together unto Him**, that's what God's going to do. There's an understanding even at this time before Revelation was written, a gathering together unto Him - what does that mean? But they understood that we're going to be gathered together, the Church is going to be gathered together, all those that have lived righteous

lives are going to be brought together at the beginning of God's Kingdom. **That you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that day of Christ is at hand.** So, he's telling them, don't let anyone come along and shake you and cause you to believe something different because some things have to happen first. And so don't be moved, don't be stirred, don't be shaken.

He goes on to say **Let no man deceive you by any means:** don't let someone come along because their purpose is going to be different, they're going to have a different purpose in why they're leading you to some other doctrine, some other belief. That's the way it's always been. **Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,** a lot of those words have been added but that's the context...talking about the return of Christ, **except there come an apostasy/a falling away** that's what this word is; **unless there come a falling away first**, you know, **an apostasy from the truth/a turning away from the truth**, we in the Church, before it ever took place in 1994, knew that there was going to be an apostasy. We had no comprehension it was going to be of the magnitude that it was, that all of us here in this room experienced. **For that day shall not come except there come a falling away first except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;** and so, before Jesus Christ could return there had to be an apostasy: someone who would have an effect upon the Church that would work to turn the Church away from the truth of God; an individual referred to here as the son of perdition; the man of sin. There was only one other person every referred to in that respect in this context, speaking of Judas, because of what he did toward Jesus Christ and what he fulfilled because of his betrayal of Jesus Christ and so Paul is talking about someone who's going to come along and he's going to betray Jesus Christ in a greater way.

**Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;** and so a person could go... "How could anyone do that in the Church? How could anyone exalt them self before God?" We read about Lucifer doing that; that he sought to take over the angelic realm, he sought to take over everything that God had placed out there and raise himself up above it and be as God, be God, and we can kind of understand that obviously, but this here... How can this happen in the Church? And yet we experienced it. **Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God,** and so we learn how a person can do that, **or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** In the Church we tended to read this in a very physical way. How can a human being sit in the temple of God and be considered in any fashion or form to think he is God? That didn't make sense because some of these things were looked at very physically, not spiritually as to what happened and as time came along, God showed us what some of this means...to sit in the temple of God. We know the temple of God is the Church and to sit there, we see how the word is used throughout the New Testament as a word having to do with authority; one who is seated in authority, placed in authority. And here was an individual that was placed in authority by Mr. Armstrong after he died, up to his death knowing he was going to die. He said that this man would be the one who would follow him and he was placed in a position of authority over all the Church on the earth under Jesus Christ, as Mr. Armstrong was before. And so he sat in the temple of God but he would begin reflecting something else, showing that he is God. How do you do that? Well, we learn that as time goes along you see that all law, all truth, the way of God can only come from God and we're either in unity with that or not. Now someone comes along and tries to take the Church in a different direction and says, "No, this is what God is saying. This is what the truth is..." and it's directly opposite of what you've been told in the past, then this individual has raised himself up as God. That's what he's done spiritually – to usurp the truth of God, to teach something that's different, a lie or lies.

**Remember you not, that when I was with you, I told you these things? And now you know what withholds,** and it goes on to say, **that he might be revealed in his time.** Now what this word means, ‘to withhold’, it’s just a phrase showing that what is holding it back... and that’s not really a good translation in one sense, but basically it is just showing that which holds back this period of time. In other words, that nothing can happen until this takes place. There’s something that cannot happen, it’s keeping it back, that particular day when Christ truly comes back to this earth – until this event happens. And so, again here, **you know what withholds,** or what holds back or what keeps back, **that he might be revealed in his time,** referring back to the man of sin. So the man of sin had to be revealed so that people... what people? The Church. It’s only for the Church – it’s not for the world. So the Church could be told, could understand that Jesus Christ was going to return.

**For the mystery of iniquity does,** or as the word is in the Greek, **is already working:** it was already in the Church. There is a spirit of iniquity. What is that? It’s the way mankind is, it’s a refusal to follow God even within the Church and let alone within the world. But they were dealing with things in the Church. There were people who came along at different times – it’s always been that way in God’s Church, where some would come along and then begin to work against what God was doing. And that’s what John wrote about when he said, ‘there are many anti-Christ’s’. There were already anti-Christ’s but again, the prophecy about anti-Christ’s – those who would work against Christ and the only ones who can do that are people in the Church. The world can’t fulfill the meaning because they’ve always been against Christ and against God. But those who have been brought to the truth have choices to make and they can choose to turn against God and work against God.

Paul says **that mystery of iniquity,** that which is hard to see and understand, that spirit that’s out there – it’s already working. ...**only He who now,** and it’s the same word as ‘withhold’ in Greek, ‘holds back’ or ‘holds’, in other words, that date can’t happen until this takes place. The return of Christ can’t happen. And so again, **only He who holds,** until he’s revealed, until he comes along, Jesus Christ isn’t going to return until he comes along. ...**until he,** again, speaking of the man of sin, **be taken out of the way.** It’s interesting to see what happened and to understand that God determined a long time ago exactly what was going to take place in the Church; what He was going to allow to transpire; that He was going to allow an apostasy to happen within the Church on a massive scale to teach such an incredible lesson to the Church – one that goes back to Lucifer, so that we could begin to understand spiritually what Lucifer did – spiritually. God is showing that mankind can do the same thing even when you have His spirit dwelling within you – you can do exactly, spiritually, what Lucifer did - you can turn against God. And so God predetermined before time how He was going to mould and fashion His Church, how He was going to work through the ages and teach mankind that the way of pride and the way of rebellion are attributes that He is not going to allow into His Family. And so He was going to allow the Church, before the Messiah would come, the one who was predetermined before time, before all these things would transpire, that there would be an individual that would be placed in the seat of authority over the entirety of the Church on earth who would be allowed to go his own course and turn against God and lead the Church in the same direction. That’s powerful influence.

We started experiencing that in the Church at different times in what’s referred to in Matthew 24 and some of the places about some of the battles and the warring that was going on and I think of 1974 when Westby, I think he was in Washington D.C. and the entire Washington area, just wiped out an entire region in the Church that followed him because he was like Lucifer. He was out here in an area remote from headquarters because headquarters didn’t know what was going on. If everyone’s not faithful, you can’t know what people are doing sometimes and things can be hidden and a person can send in monthly reports and lie like mad! They can paint things and make things nice because they

know that's what headquarters wants to hear. What does headquarters want to hear? Everyone's in unity, everybody's in support of Mr. Armstrong and we're all behind you, that kind of a report. And those kinds of things were sent in – month after month – not knowing that there's a snake in the grass out here and what he was really up to. And because he chirps a little bit behind the scenes - that's exactly what Lucifer did – he went to some of those angelic beings. How do they do it? The ones who are higher in authority because there is a process, there is an order within the angelic realm as well. And so who did he start to work with? He started working with those that were higher in authority – began to sway them individually, one on one type of thing, you know? And that's what Westby and so many others did. They'd begin to work with some of the leaders in the Church, some of the other pastors that were under them because they were regional directors – and so they worked with some of the Church pastors in different areas and began to sway them over to their thinking. “Did you hear what Mr. Armstrong... can you believe that old man?! ...what he's been doing... what he's been saying?! You know?! He's getting old!” Whatever doctrines and different ideas that people want to slip in then and they start turning you against someone and eventually they start slipping in some different ideas and by this time some of them are sinning because their attitudes toward God's leader is beginning to be infected and they begin to cut themselves off spiritually from God in the mind. And once you do that you can then start slipping in some false doctrine. Why? Because they're weak: they can't stand up to it anymore, because they can't see it because they've already started sinning against God's apostle. It's amazing how the process works. They begin to feed on those things until finally no one is left. Those things happen in different regions like Hawaii. They went through 2 different times of being totally wiped out in the Church – nobody left. 2 times! Once in 1974 and then later on. There were 2 occasions specifically when all the people in Hawaii totally left the Church as a whole and there wasn't anybody left!

In region after region some of these things took place but what is it like when the one who is in charge of all of it... that's an awesome thing then to begin to think about. When you have one who's in charge of all of it, who's sitting in that position of authority and responsibility and slowly but surely... because these things didn't start in 1987...see? A couple years up the road, some things begin a little bit here, just little things... and also some things that really needed to be addressed as well. Satan's very smooth, very slick, very cunning. And so he began to interject just a few little things here, of some things that *did* need to be addressed that were true and right and that the Church needed to come to in time, that God would bring the Church to and then a pattern began to develop where other things began to be inserted that weren't from God. Changes, a little bit here and a little bit there and by the time we got to about 1992 there were those who were in full sway wanting to lead the Church in a different direction and those things were not out in the open, coming out to the ministry and they would deny if someone would ask.

I'm amazed how Satan works, how demons work – the cunning that is there and when you approach someone like that, who has a mind that's going to turn, or is turning away from the truth, and they have someone come to them who is questioning them...you know what they do? They lie and they say, “Oh no, no, no, we're not making that change. You must have heard wrong.” I was lied to several times and I swallowed it because I was weak and because it was hard to believe anyway that certain changes would take place. Until it finally happened to the entirety of the Church. And there were a lot of ministers who did that. They questioned. And so this process of what God was allowing to build up was something God allowed to take place, not only allowed but predetermined before time. And someone could say, well, that's not fair! It's like this attitude of mind that I've known a lot of people have a hard time understanding when it talks about 'God hardened Pharaoh's heart.' It's like... well, then Pharaoh didn't have a chance. And no one has a chance in this world unless God's calling them out of the world.

But He wasn't calling Pharaoh out of the world and He was allowing Pharaoh to live by his own human nature and because of that human nature he suffered in it. And the way God hardened his heart... which, again, I have known people in the Church... I hope all of us understand that, because if we don't we really do need to strive to understand what God did in working with Pharaoh. God was allowing Pharaoh to experience something greater than himself, something of power that was mightier than him. And so when a plague came along Pharaoh saw something that his magicians couldn't copy, that they couldn't duplicate and this was more powerful than him and he began to be softened a little bit in heart – that there's something more powerful out here that maybe... maybe there's something of a god...something out here that's greater than he is, that he's been raised to believe but as soon as Moses removed the plague, and God took it away through Moses, what then happened to Pharaoh? He went right back to the way he was before, but each time he got harder. Why? Because he wasn't repenting, because he was resisting God – that's what happens to human nature. The more you resist God, the harder you become. And that's what happens in the world – that's what happened to a lot of ministers. They continued to resist God and if you resist God the 3<sup>rd</sup> time... the 4<sup>th</sup> time... the 5<sup>th</sup> time... you so sear your conscience and your mind and your being and you're making choices there that you really don't want God's way of life. Now, again, Pharaoh's different than the ministry or people in the Church because God's spirit wasn't working with him to convert him, but it shows what human nature is like and the power of it.

Let's go back to **verse 7** – lessons here that God wants us to learn. Even for the man of sin, was it fair? God didn't force him to make those choices. If someone's impregnated with God's spirit, has the gift of God's spirit in their life and they make choices to fight and resist God...and if God allows them, because of sin, to go on their own way, they're making their own choices and it's to not follow God, and it is to do something different. God allowed that to happen. God could have stopped it but that's the whole point of the apostasy...His purpose was to allow the apostasy so we could learn from it now. So that those in the millennium can learn from those lessons – beyond that which Mr. Armstrong used to teach so powerfully. You all heard those sermons Mr. Armstrong gave over and over again about government – always starting with Lucifer and then going to things about Adam and Eve so often and what they did – showing human nature – and then on to Israel and what Israel did. But he never had the example that we've lived through. He died before that. One of the most powerful examples yet to take that matter of government even farther in unity and oneness with God and we still have one big one coming at the end of the millennium when Satan's let loose for a little season. It's the bigger lesson coming... it's bigger than what happened during Laodicea. It's the same spirit, it's the same kind of thing – except it's bigger – see? Because at that point, not only do human beings have the begettal of God's spirit living within them, they also have access to God across the board, everyone in the world. When Satan is released, look at what they do. It goes way, way beyond what we did, or what happened to us within the Church during Laodicea – it truly does – on a massive scale. Something else I want to mention that those during the millennium will have that we in Laodicea never did is that God's Family is on the earth. We didn't have that in Worldwide. The begotten family, being in embryo, the Church of God in embryo, or God's Kingdom in embryo or whatever the expression Mr. Armstrong gave, but in the millennium God's Kingdom is going to be on this earth. Jesus Christ is going to be on this earth. And to conceive of those things happening...it's pretty difficult for us, as difficult even more so for us at the time before this happened, the apostasy.

**For the mystery of iniquity is already working, only He who now holds back/will hold back, until he, the man of sin, is taken out of the way.** So God predetermined that he was going to be taken out of the way. Not only that, but how it would happen. 280 days. God didn't just come up with that all of a sudden. You know what happened to the children of Israel – some of the things that took place in time

are all by design – see? God leads, guides, moulds and fashions by design. He truly does – meticulously so. We have choices all along the way, but God knows how to work with us to mould and fashion us, thank God. And so there’s going to come a time when the man of sin is going to be taken out of the way. **And then shall that wicked be revealed.** There was one individual who called himself a prophet... there are things that Satan knows, he knows how to muddy the waters just enough to make things look bad so that when true prophets come along, they’re made to look weird because of someone who already is weird and has said weird things and has done weird things and has set a wrong example. One group calls themselves Philadelphia. And the individual said that Mr. Tkach was the man of sin and he was right in the truth of that, but he was wrong in saying it because it hadn’t been revealed to the Church – it hadn’t been given to the Church from God. You can be right about a matter and be wrong in it before God. Truly. We can be presumptuous. He was presumptuous in what he did because God wasn’t working with him in the first place. The point being is later on when Mr. Tkach died, you know what he did? He had to change it because he never saw the truth of it anyway. Satan knows things that are going on. He knows what’s written here in II Thessalonians. He knows what’s going to happen to certain people in certain situations in time because it’s already been written about – okay? So, there’s certain things that he knows; there are battles going on continuously about the Church and things that have taken place. Some of those things he hasn’t been able to piece together fully by any measure. Some things he does.

Satan knew the man of sin was going to be taken out of the way, but when the man of sin died then it began to be revealed to the Church, but the individual who said he was the man of sin then had to change it to his son because he didn’t understand something that is written that follows this. He thought that the man of sin still had to be alive when Jesus Christ returned. So because Mr. Tkach was no longer alive, his son was still alive after taking over the position of authority and power, he changed his teaching then to say, “oh, so it has to be his son” – see? So he was right for a while about what he said, but he was wrong in saying it because God hadn’t revealed it to the Church. That’s what it says here – that’s what it’s talking about.

**And then shall that wicked be revealed**, how does God reveal the truth? Through His Church, through those He works with – that’s the only way He does it. And going on here; **and then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth**, awesome! Given to Paul, what God was going to do to the man of sin. That there was going to be that which he was going to have as a matter of judgement upon himself that would reveal something to the Church – to reveal indeed that he was the man of sin, and to reveal God’s judgement upon the man of sin and to reveal indeed that he was consumed by God. God is the one who directly punished him for what he did. **And then shall that wicked be revealed**, the man of sin, the son of perdition, **whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth...** what does that mean? It means that by God’s command he died exactly to the day and the hour that God intended for him to die. It was God’s judgement – it was something that God did directly, not something that was allowed by mankind to do, or the angelic realm, but something that came directly from God.

**...with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:** See, because of that word there, that expression, this false prophet then changed his mind to say, “well, Jesus Christ hasn’t come... so it must be his son. He’s going to destroy him **with the brightness of His coming** when He returns.” And he didn’t understand what was being said, because of not having God’s spirit and it wasn’t being given from God. **...whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.** I have given sermons on all those things before.

**Verse 9 - Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,** again, we've talked about those things so many times, about what that means and how so many of us that were sitting in congregations – we saw that power sweep through congregations because of sin – people being fully cut off from God, spewed out of God's mouth and that attitude of mind of people yielding to this – the power of Satan and the false doctrines – some just giving up, not having answers and just quitting: others who wanted to go back to Protestantism right away... lying wonders, power that was there.

**And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** That is a beautiful verse, because every one of us out here...if we don't have a love of the truth, if we don't love the truth and love every truth that God gives to us with all of our being, if we don't desire and seek after this way of life... as it said back there in Hebrews... to **diligently** seek after Him, God can't work with us unless we diligently seek after Him. And that's why things happened in the Church the way they did. We had moved away from the trunk of the tree so much in different things, we became so weak spiritually that this wave could conquer and overcome to the power that it did except that God had a purpose in drawing us out of there. ...**with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,** because of sin, **in them that perish;** because that's a choice, that's what happens when you begin to sin and you willingly choose to go against God – you're perishing, you're no longer living, you're dying... spiritually. ...**because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** It's the only way you can be saved: and the word used for 'love' is agape. You can't even have that unless you're close to God, unless you're crying out to God, continually repenting, seeking to be filled with God's spirit... you can't exercise that kind of love because of what God's truth is. That's something that comes from God. Even God gives you then the help, the ability to love His truth, His way of life.

**And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:** I marvel as I look back and think about those things, sitting there in a congregation when a previous minister came to Toledo and I sat and listened to the stupidity fall out of his mouth and how a congregation was swept through... there's that desire and the applause and how the mind can receive that like it does – to **believe a lie,** to believe a **delusion** here as it talks about, to **believe a lie.** And people did.

**That they all might be damned,** judged, it's a matter of judgement, **who believed not the truth,** that's what happens if we don't believe the truth, hold on to the truth that God has given to us with all of our being, with all of our might, then God will judge us accordingly. I think of what's happened to us: only by God's mercy and by God's grace have we been drawn out of that, the Church, because God had a purpose in strengthening the Church once again before the return of Christ; in raising us up again before the return of Christ because of a work He was going to do – small, but big. Incredible how God works. And going on here... **That they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.** They enjoyed something else more than what God was giving to them. They enjoyed the lies more than what God gave to them as the truth. **But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:** We're blessed to be in that category by God's mercy because God awakened us out of sleep. He stirred us up again with His spirit, otherwise we'd be where everyone else is, waiting for a day of judgement in the future... a time when we're going to be able to continue on and live a second life in the last 100 years.

**Verse 14 - Whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast,** these things never wear out, these things never become old.

They should never become dull to our hearing. **Therefore, brethren, stand fast**, this was in the time of Paul and it applies to every Church generation that came along afterward – that’s exactly what we have to do. We’re supposed to stand fast and hold on to what God has given to us. As it says, **and hold the traditions**, which has to do with things of the Church, things given through the Church – the commandments, the guidance that is given through the Church that God gives to the Church. It’s not a matter of tradition that man makes up, it’s not men’s traditions, it’s traditions that God has established within the Church, whatever God has given in the Church at that time. **Therefore brethren stand fast and hold the traditions which you have been taught**. It’s a matter of what God teaches and when does He primarily do that? On the Sabbath. In this case here, it was through these letters as well but so many of these things were given on the Sabbath and to the brethren. **Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold to the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle**. And their word was primarily on the Sabbath, sometimes in bible studies as well but again, here in epistles too, the way that God taught, directed and led the Church.

**Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which has loved us, and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace**, so God’s mercy and favour and help, **Comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work**. It’s God that establishes us. We don’t do it, we just have to yield ourselves to God. We can never look to ourselves and begin to think how good we are. I run across this quite often with new people because it takes time to grow and understand some of these things, how that sometimes we can have a judgement that we’re doing pretty good – that *we’re* maybe pretty good and that we’re not really ‘bad’. We don’t have ‘bad’ motives and we really want to do the right thing. Well, in time you’ll come to understand more about your nature and that your nature is not good and your motivations aren’t good. Only that which God gives to you that you yield to God in – that’s good – He’ll help you to see yourself and help you to change, but again, God has to help you to be of a right mind, to be of a right spirit.

Let’s go over to **Revelation 6**. We lived through a period of time of an apostasy. We lived through a period of time like on the chart, on the first 280 days – that’s why the chart starts out this way, because it’s a matter of judgement, it’s a matter of God’s judgement of 40 X 7 that He began to give to the Church – not fully understanding what that meant yet – not understanding the magnitude of it, but it was this very thing here that helped us to come to understand – it was the very thing that God revealed to the Church that we are in a period of time where Jesus Christ is returning. He led us to understand that the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal had been opened already. If it weren’t for these things here that God began to reveal to us, that God gave a judgement upon the man of sin, that God is the one who destroyed him, we couldn’t begin to learn. II Thessalonians 2 was a message to the Church that we are now at the end – that Jesus Christ can now return. Nothing’s holding it back anymore. Not only that, we came to understand that Jesus Christ had opened the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal – that is what happened on the day that Mr. Tkach, the man of sin, did what he did. We learned that, God showed us that this is the beginning of it all. So we knew, very powerfully so, that all the things of Revelation, not only in II Thessalonians, but now in the book of Revelation about the Seals – that it started and that we’re getting closer. We didn’t know what all the timeline was yet, but we knew we were in it. All the things that people have read in every Church era now has come upon the Church – we’re living it. We’re in it – the end-time – it started, the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal has been opened. And so again, God began to reveal something here about time from the moment that Mr. Tkach gave that sermon to the moment in time when he finally died – being 280 days (7 X 40), the number of God’s judgement. 7, the number of that which is complete – complete judgement, isn’t that amazing? Complete judgement. It’s complete. His judgement’s complete – it’s from God. Powerful when we understand the meaning of some of the things that God uses and 40 is a very powerful one having to do with judgement and having to do with that which is complete – it’s done – 280 days.

I find that awesome in what God's revealed to the Church in showing that Jesus Christ is not being withheld anymore. He's not being held back – His coming has started. It's already taking place. We didn't know the timing but God does and did at that time and He began to reveal it a little bit to us at a time. We didn't even know who we were yet as far as the Church was concerned. At this moment in time, at the end of those 280 days, we didn't even know who we were yet. We were still groggy, coming out of what Wayne talks about as being in a coma, we weren't just asleep. Truly. It takes time to wake up spiritually and we didn't do it overnight and God continued to shake us at different times. He shook us again and again to keep us awake, to help us to awaken even more to come out of that sleep. And so we had to go through a lot of things. We went through a lot of hardships! The Wrozek's sitting here today – we went through a lot of hardships together at the very beginning and then the Harrell's came along. We went through a lot of hardships – all of us together – things in the Church and the organization and the resistance and things are still continuing on – battles that took place to get started. And God had to keep shaking us and presenting things in front of us. And then the Dalrymples came along a little bit later on.

That's why we went to Europe. I would never have gone to Europe if I hadn't been invited over. They were still asleep, but God was already using them to invite us over and we wouldn't have gone if they hadn't invited us over. He used some of his miles to pay for the flight over. Used some of his miles that he'd built up because of his business travel, working for Proctor and Gamble flying back and forth on a regular basis and because of those miles that he offered us we went, otherwise I wouldn't have paid the money. I wouldn't have paid the money! There are many times where I wouldn't do things because I felt a responsibility, which I should, and certain things I didn't want to purchase, didn't feel like I should do. I wouldn't have gone to Jerusalem if Terry hadn't said, "If that's what you feel – go!" I wouldn't have done it. We wouldn't have gone to Europe if we weren't invited, and so we went over there. We were laughing about it the other day... you wonder – why did we invite them over... you know? And we were talking about... why did we go? Because they were good friends of ours but they were asleep and thank God that He woke them up so we could share in this together, because we had a good friendship many years back when we were in Cincinnati, long before we were ever up in Toledo area – not knowing what God was going to do in some of these regions and different areas and different people's He's going to call in time. So yeah, we were laughing about that the other day. "Why did we go over there?" and they were wondering, "Why did we invite them?" And that's where we started meeting some people in that area that began to lead to God working with Europe. Otherwise I'd never have gone over there. We had resistance enough just dealing with things here in the States. People saying, "You're our minister and we're not going to spend that money if you're going down to Georgia or other areas out here, you're supposed to stay here in Toledo!" type of thing... not knowing what God was doing.

And then Australia was coming along, and New Zealand and people down in those areas were coming along. There's still some asleep down there though. ☺ It's amazing how God works with us – it is exciting and inspiring to see those things that have happened in our lives. But again, my wife and I, we talk about some of these things from time to time and because of this series here, some of you listening out there maybe don't know what I'm talking about – maybe I should explain a little bit more. We got started in the Toledo area within that first 280 days. I wrote up some bylaws – we were all very distrustful of government – we were very distrustful of anything organized – very distrustful of things that could happen and so in our stupidity and my stupidity I didn't know what else to do, the Church wasn't organized. We kept calling up different Regional Pastors, some that were at headquarters in Pasadena, knowing that they weren't of the same mind, there were some that resigned early at the same time, a handful, but asking them, the Church is suffering out here, we need to get organized, we

need help, and people weren't doing anything – they weren't getting organized. Nobody was taking the initiative. No one was trying to do anything so some Church groups in some areas, not knowing what else to do, we became incorporated so that we could function locally and that's what we did in Toledo. We became the United Church of God – Toledo. That's what we called ourselves – having a desire to be united again, that was the common theme in the Church – we want to be united again, we want to be drawn back together again. A very strong yearning that we had. Then some people in Detroit needed help too and so we became kind of Toledo and Detroit there in the beginning and there were a lot of battles that went on of the process we went through and some of those things happened within that first 280 days. We had no idea where God was leading us, and yet God was working with us from the very get go... from the very get go – drawing us out of and working with us and going through different experiences to teach us.

One of the big things I had to learn, I was talking about it today, was the matter of government. Mr. Armstrong wrote about it many times, including in his autobiography, and he talked about it many times. I think he even addressed some of those things in the Mystery of the Ages and so forth, about the history of some things that he went through and how, in the very beginning, because of the kind of world he was coming out of, he wasn't over the Church, in the sense of that which was a matter of government if you will, but in time he came to understand that one person has to make the decisions. One person has to be led by God. One person has to receive of God's spirit to lead and guide and direct and help others. Some bring up the examples...well, what about Peter and what about Paul because... and that's a simple one. Peter was over the Church to the Jews and Paul was over the Church to the Gentiles and that's how they functioned, that's how God was working – through both and yet they both cooperated and worked together in things and had some battles, little things are there, things that come up with human nature and because of background but very inspiring when you understand some of the process that took place.

Within that 280 days and by the time it was over, just a little bit here and there being revealed, being given as we went along.

It's important that the Church understand that the 2<sup>nd</sup> chart down (on the timeline chart), to understand that the next 980 days was a 'time, time and a half a times'. In other words, it was a period of time that God was going to continue to awaken us, and I had to come to understand that within the Church that there has to be government as well and that it can't be done by a board, it can't be done by people deciding and voting and determining what should take place – how God's going to lead and guide and direct the Church. It doesn't work that way, If it was supposed to be that way then God would make it something that'd be very clear. Mr. Armstrong had to learn that lesson. I had to learn it; I had to relearn it, because I'd been taught it and I believed it, but I became weak. I became distrustful, distrustful of the Church, of what people can do and the Church was distrustful, so we wrote bylaws. Stupid. But we wrote bylaws of how things should be governed and the reality is there is one way that God governs the Church.

I think it's good that we go into **Revelation 6:1**. So in the beginning we were just struggling and in time we became associated with the United Church of God, the largest group that was out there – and when everyone came together in the early part of 1995, not too long after we were incorporated some people finally did get on the ball in that respect and decided to have a conference and about 100 elders came together throughout the United States, I'm not sure if anybody overseas came or not. I think it was just primarily the United States at that time to help get something started, to help the Church hold on and to come to a point of healing. And I really feel at that time the majority of the ministers really had a right

desire because we were shaken in the Church – Sabbath, Holy Days, everything turned upside down and we saw that people were hurting. My phone bill was the highest at that time. I know Johnny’s was the highest at that time. I don’t know that Terry was at that time, but some of us had some incredibly high phone bills at that time because we were calling around different parts of the country to people we knew, trying to get something off the ground, trying to have some resolution to some things and trying to help a Church that was hurting. There was a lot of suffering out there in the Church at that time, truly was. I’ll never forget it.

It finally came together and had that conference but six months later that attitude of mind was gone. It wasn’t a matter of healing the Church anymore, it wasn’t a matter of helping the Church anymore, it was a matter of doing the things the way they had been done at the end that led to the apostasy. Incredible.

**Revelation 6:1 - And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder and one of the beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.** We came to understand that this was what the man of sin was given to him to do – to conquer. It was a matter of something that happened in the Church in a spiritual plane and that happened on a specific day – Dec. 17, 1994. And God began to help us to see those things as time went along.

**And when he had opened the second seal, it says, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat upon it to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.** These were spiritual things and in time God showed us that this was about the Church. It’s not about the world. There have been times we’ve been waiting for physical destruction to take place. In times past we thought the 2<sup>nd</sup> Seal was about great physical destruction on the earth and it wasn’t. It was about what was happening in the Church – people killing one another on a spiritual plane; all the backstabbing, the lying, the so called building of bridges, all that did was destroy brethren. It’s a spiritual thing: far worse than taking someone’s physical life is to mess with, to have a power in and to have influence over someone’s spiritual life in this regard. There’s been a lot of damage done, a lot of hurt, some of it irreparable because of choices that people have made.

**Verse 5 - And when he had opened the third seal...** These next 3 seals are a matter of what took place when the first seal was opened, what the man of sin did, that began then because these are things that happened within the ministry and within the Church. **And when he had opened the third seal I heard and saw a third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat upon him, as it talks about, had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that you don’t hurt the oil and the wine.** Interesting that there’s still going to be that which is going to be left behind; there’s still that which is working; there’s still going to be that which comes from God – that which is symbolic here of things that come from God on a spiritual plane; speaking of oil and wine, that which was still going to exist, that God was still going to work with. It is talking about famine, famine that began to sweep through the Church then because of ministers making choices of teaching false and wrong things and that’s what happens to people then, they begin to be famished spiritually. I remember that we would go to the Feast of Tabernacles and what did we hear? Sermons that had nothing to do with the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles! By the second Feast, on the Last Great Day there was a huge uproar in United because a minister got up and gave a sermon that was perverted and

distorted because he was wrong in everything he had to say and it was a sermon about homosexuality, on the Last Great Day – his entire sermon had nothing to do with the meaning of the Last Great Day, it was all about homosexuality. Think... what does that have to do with the Last Great Day? ...but that's all he gave and what he gave was distorted, it wasn't even biblical. It was upside down. When we went back I had to give a sermon the following or two Sabbath correcting everything that was given. Saying that this is not true, that's not right – this is what's right - this is what's true. Incredible! That's famine; that's what you call spiritual famine - when people are no longer moved by God's spirit and they're no longer being used by God to feed and so people give whatever comes out of their own human mind, their own human thinking. And so spiritual famine was deep within the Church by that period of time.

**And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed after him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.** Still about the Church; not about physical things out here. It's about the Church. And this seal that was opened here is really a repetition of the others, of the things that began to work in the scattered group because what began to happen in the scattered group out here then in time, in some of the different organizations was this concept of building bridges and one large group, United, what was happening there was like this is your Catholic Church of the Church of God. It's like everybody can come here, you can have different ideas and different beliefs – it's kind of like a building bridges thing, we're going to have some uniformity of sorts but you can still kind of believe your own thing too. It became like everybody could come there to kind of have a bit of a safety, a bit of a protection there – different ones believing their own thing, doing their own thing out here – different ministers – as long as we still work under the same umbrella and the same organization, and yet different people had different ideas and different teachings and that began to come out in time. One of the most basic ones was about Passover; that there were a lot of ministers in United, and still are because they're still there, who believe in a 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover. They've never changed. They've never repented. They've gone underground a little bit in the sense of kind of being told that they shouldn't be speaking about things like that and causing division but that's what is still in their heart and when they talk to people that's what they teach... 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover.

Let's turn over to **Revelation 3** backing up a little bit. Some of these things I don't like to revisit but there are a lot of lessons in them of what we've gone through but it's awesome to recognize how God brought us through that mess because no human being could do it. I couldn't do it. There's not a one of you here that could do it, that would be here today if it weren't for the fact that God had mercy on us and continued to work with us, continued to mould us, continued to fashion us, continued to reveal things to us. Almost every doctrine that we came to that had to be addressed I didn't really want to address, I didn't want to go into it, I didn't want to go into Passover. I didn't want to have to go into things about Pentecost. I didn't want to have to go into things about heaven; some of the ideas of things ministers were teaching out here. I resisted that one for a long time and said I am not going to speak on it. I talked to my wife about that – I'm not going to talk on this one here. I'm not going to get involved with that and go into all that garbage. And God kept bringing me to the edge and said, you're going to go into all that garbage. After a while you have to do what God gives you to do and quit resisting. But that's our nature and that's why if God has a purpose He's going to continue to work with us and bring us to a point where we do what He gives us to do.

**Revelation 3:14 - And unto the Church of the Laodiceans write; These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the Beginner, saying beginning here, it's the Beginner of the creation of God;** It's about Jesus Christ as a part of God's plan. This is the beginning of the creation of God. When people

read some of these things they think about the physical creation of the universe and yes, the physical creation of the universe is still about the same plan and the same purpose... and what is that plan and purpose? It's the God Family! Everything that God has done has always been about the God Family. The creation of the angelic realm is about the God Family. The creation of the physical universe is about the God Family. The moulding and fashioning of this earth and placing man upon it is about the God Family; and how does the God Family come to be? What's the beginning of it? What is the first part of it? Jesus Christ – Passover. Can't have a God Family with human beings. Can't have all that that's out there. Can't have the angelic realm that works with God, serves God to accomplish and serve within the Church as they do, behind the scenes of things we don't even grasp and comprehend because they're spirit beings; but it talks about them ministering to us, to help us come to the point we need to come. They work in our lives, they work around our lives, there are things they do around us that we don't grasp and comprehend that is in a spirit world and so, again here, speaking of Jesus Christ, **the Beginner of the creation of God**; because that's what the Greek word means here, it's **the Beginner of the creation of God**. It all begins with Jesus Christ, just like the plan of God and the Holy Days. The first day that comes is not a Holy Day; it's the Passover and without that you can't enter into God's plan, you can't enter into the Holy Days.

**I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot:** how many times we've been through this? I've been over it a lot in my life now...thinking about what happened to us, thinking about what was going to happen to us. We used to read this and think ahead about what was going to happen to the Church... because in our minds not a one of us was going to be a Laodicean. We were taught in such a way that if anybody becomes a Laodicean – you are one bad apple. And the reality was, we were all bad apples. **I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot:** because human nature tends to see itself as being hot. We definitely don't fit in that cold category, you know, we're not going to be like this, we're not going to be lukewarm. And yet we all were. **...that you're neither cold nor hot: I wish that you were...**that's what it's talking about here. **I wish that you were cold or hot.** Why? In the beginning of when these events were happening this is what I wished. I didn't understand it in the same light here – I came to understand it as time came along. My desire was that it be really clear where God is working. My desire was that those that those whom God is working with – that it was clearer for them who was hot and who was cold – that everything might be really clear out here. In the beginning when we didn't know where to go, when it finally came to a point where I knew I couldn't stay in United anymore because of the lying and the things that were going on there, I couldn't conscientiously support it anymore and be a part of it anymore. I didn't know where to go, didn't know what to do. That's when I wanted to see what's cold and what's hot out here. Please God, show me! That's what the spirit and the attitude was and what is it you are wanting to see? You're wanting to see where God is working. Didn't want to be out here doing this ourselves. That's why we didn't have a Feast in 1997. We resisted having a Feast. Johnny and Myrtle were over here this morning and we were talking about some of this in the beginning when they were coming along and when God was drawing them along to the group here and what was taking place in the early stages here as we were getting fully underway as a group separate from United and the process we went through and what was taking place. And we talked about that first Feast; where we all went.

The group in Toledo and Detroit went off in different directions. We were kind of scouting things out. I called up Global. I talked to Larry Salyer. We had some long conversations. My wife had talked to him. We talked about wanting to be able to talk to them and we want to see what they're doing and how they're doing it. To that point in time I couldn't go in that direction in the beginning as I had some things in my mind that I didn't understand why. I understand why now, but I didn't feel comfortable going that direction. We didn't know what to do and I wasn't going to be a small group by ourselves, by myself

doing my own thing. I resisted that with all my being. We didn't want to be like all these weird groups out here and I candidly felt that it was presumptuous anyway. Who am I? Who are we? How can we do such a thing? To host a Feast of Tabernacles... how can you do that? I couldn't do it that year. There was no way on earth I could host a Feast of Tabernacles. To me that would have been so presumptuous that it's like God's going to smack you good. You know? It's going to be over with for you the moment you do that because it is so highly presumptuous.

I had to go through some more things for another year and so we scattered and we went to a couple of different Feast sites down in Florida. One I don't even want to mention I am so embarrassed by it. We went there one day – I got my nose rubbed in it really good there because I thought maybe this individual had repented. This guy that darts around in all he does... So then we went to Global and we were treated like a plague and we prayed before we ever went that God would show us. If this is what we're supposed to do, if this is where we are supposed to be please let it be clear – and if not – please let it be clear. And something was made real clear – you don't belong there. We learned that real quick that year and we began to understand that we are not of the same spirit, we're not of the same mind. We can't be there! They're going in a different direction and each one of us said, "We have to follow God where God is leading us. Where is that?" Still didn't know. Still didn't fully know primarily because we hadn't come to Pentecost yet. You know what Pentecost was? The end of the 980 days and we hadn't come to that yet in 1998. We weren't there yet, God hadn't really established us fully yet. He was working with us. We were being protected from Satan, from Lucifer – see? The things that happened during that period of time that we used to call 3½ years which really was 3½ years... it was 1260 days, but we didn't understand the importance of the 280 and the 980 that followed, but that's really this whole story.

But there was this period of 'time, times and a half a time' that God protected us – He truly did... from Satan. We were too weak. We could not stand on our own and God wasn't going to allow Satan to have a hold of us or to influence us, or to work with us. He protected us from him until we were strong enough to be able to stand out there now as 'the group' that God was working with – the Church, finally, re-established again. It wasn't re-established yet. The framework of it was being moulded and fashioned during that 980 days, and finally on Pentecost, we got our start; and the plans were being made then for the Feast of Tabernacles in Niagara Falls. By that time we had the ability and the boldness and the understanding to realize we've got to do what we've got to do regardless. Regardless of what anyone else does out here, I've got to follow God. We talked about it this morning with Johnny. I think everyone has to come to this point in time too in their lives. I'm going to do what I have to do regardless of what anybody else does. If nobody else does it, I have to do it, otherwise – what does that say? If you don't do that then you're not being true to your conscience toward God, toward your mind toward God. I've got to do what I'm going to do – my wife and I. We have to do what we have to do and if nobody else is doing it we're going to do it. They did the same thing. I'm sure the Wrozek's and different ones have gone through the same thing, in the very beginning especially, and it actually even comes down to the point of saying – even between husband and wife... we hope that both of us are going to do the same thing together, but if not, this is still what I'm going to do. I can't do anything else. Thankfully we were blessed, so many of us, to be able to do it together as a team.

A part of our history, things we learn from, things that we learn great lessons from that moulded and fashioned us, that has made us what we are to give us the kind of character. Character takes a long time to build. That's why those of you who are young out here... you've got many things to go through yet – don't rush it. You'll get there, you know? You can't have what we have. You can't have yet what we have. We're going to lead you in it, we're going to work with you to develop, to grow in it...God is the

primary one always that's working with you in this, but He works through us to help you along the way and most of what you're going to receive is going to be in sermons as a whole, and you're going to be able to latch onto a few things here and there as time goes along and as you respond to it and have your personal relationship with God, you're going to be repenting and growing and overcoming – but it takes a lot of time. So be patient with God: and allow Him to work His work within you, but make sure you do it with the desire where you're desiring to hold fast to what He's given and that you're doing exactly what it said back there in Hebrews, that you are applying yourself diligently! That you're diligently seeking Him – not half haphazardly, not half way, not just going through the motions; because that's an easy thing to do and there are people who do that today, to this day, there are people who just go through the motions. You can't get in that rut of just going through the motions.

**I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot.** And so as we were looking for a group to belong with, to be with, to see with, because we didn't want to be presumptuous. What did we see? Building bridges, doing this, doing that – no sign of anything that was *hot!* Nothing that was clear, stating that this is of God's spirit. Because if it were, what would we do? We'd be there in the blink of an eye yielding to that government! Tell me what to do and I'll do it! ...if God's spirit's there, but we didn't see that. Why? Because it was Laodicea – neither cold nor hot and that's what God is saying. **I wish that you were cold or hot.** If you're cold, it's obvious – what happens? You're out of the Church, totally. You're going to stay out. And if you're *HOT*, then your responding to the holy spirit, He can work with you, He can mould and fashion you. But if you're lukewarm, kind of in the middle, and that's where we were... that's what God had to awaken us out of. If you're lukewarm – God can't work with that! If we just go through the motions – send in our tithes and go to Sabbath services and go to the Feast of Tabernacles and kind of deceive ourselves and we're not zealously seeking God? We're not praying like we should? We're not earnestly desiring that because we see the need? It's one thing to go through the motions... there were people who went through the motions of prayer in the Church because they were told that you had to pray 30 minutes a day, or an hour a day or whatever it is and you have to be in this routine of so much bible study a day and so people got in this routine of doing these things, but it wasn't because they hungered and wanted it and saw the need for it. They were going through the routine, just as much as they'd go to the Sabbath Services or go to the Feast of Tabernacles or send in their tithes... it was a *routine!* ...*not because it comes out of the heart!* God wants what's inside because you hunger for it, because you want it. And then when we want it and desire it, then God can work with us and that means you have to be on fire; it means you have to be hot for God's way of life. It means you have to diligently seek His way of life. If you don't, you're not going to receive it.

**I know your works that you're neither cold nor hot, I wish that you were cold. So then because you are lukewarm,** God's making it clear here, you're going to be just like that which is cold in that respect. You're not cold, you're not totally cut off, you're just lukewarm but I can't work with that so I'm going to spew you out of my mouth anyway. In other words, you're as good as that which is cold, you can't stay in the middle like this, you can't straddle the fence. That is what was so frustrating in the beginning – trying to get something going – people straddling the fence and the only reason they got moving finally and came together in a conference in Indianapolis was because some of us were talking about getting together in Houston because at least there was a group that were going to get together down there – we set a date and a time and as soon as that got out, you know what they did? They came up with a date and time to have a bigger conference – more ministers were going to go. We were tired of waiting and so they went ahead and decided to have one. So that one in Houston was cancelled and we all came together in Indianapolis. Amazing!

**And so then because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth/ vomit you out of my mouth because you say I am rich, and increased with goods,** an attitude of mind – see? That’s why I’ve told some of you younger people sometimes that you have an image of yourself of feeling like you know quite a bit, or that you understand quite a bit and so forth and that’s a dangerous state to be in. Don’t allow that to happen to yourself. You don’t have the experiences that those who’ve been around for a long time have. If you’ve been called in the last couple of years? You don’t have near the experiences of all those who’ve gone through the apostasy and you can’t expect to have that. Be thankful for the knowledge that God has given to you; be thankful for the truth that God has given to you and seek to change and keep repenting of what God shows you that’s wrong in your life and don’t allow yourself to be lifted up with the knowledge you have, to where you get to the point where you have been judging people within the body, within the Church who’ve been around for a long time. There are many things you just don’t grasp and understand. You have to change and repent of those things.

I wanted to read a few things here before we go on, before we get in this part of being **rich and increased with goods...** Again, always lessons to be learned, to be reminded of and sometimes we might feel, well, that’s a little hard, or a little harsh and it’s not. It’s love. It’s a matter of love – of a desire to see people change, of a desire to help people to see themselves because you can’t change unless you see yourself. So see it as the blessing it is when you see yourself more.

During the first 280 days of judgement upon the man of sin, and during a time when Satan was still furiously attacking the Church and at this 280 days of judgement upon the Church and it’s being spewed out of God’s mouth – this is when it was taking place. It was this period that all of these things were taking place – being spewed out of God’s mouth, what we’re reading right here happened at this moment in time. We were all being spewed out of God’s mouth when this took place. When Mr. Tkach did what he did at the very beginning of this and through-out that period of time, you know it was an ongoing process there, but all of us had to come to a point of repentance and of being able to see ourselves.

During this period of time of the 280 days that followed after Mr. Tkach did what he did and after we were spewed out of His mouth, because when the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was opened this is what took place to us. God vomited us out. We were all separated from Him and so during this period of 280 days, God was bringing people to repentance and a lot of people were shaken up in the Church. Some people had already gotten an earlier start in one respect if you want to talk about Global. They had a little bit of an earlier start because they did act upon, as they should have, knowledge they had of things that were going on in headquarters of being said out there already. And many of us, as we would call into headquarters and ask about some of those things, were told, “No, no, no, this isn’t being taught.” And so for two years there were those at headquarters who know certain things were already being said and planned but many of us didn’t know. A lot of us were in the dark and candidly every one of the individuals who were regional pastors, who became a part of the head of the organization in United – they knew two years in advance of the apostasy of what was being taught and what was being said. Just want to put a little bit on the record here about some of that.

When I talked to Larry Salyer he talked of how all of them had agreed to resign at the same time in California two years in advance but he’s the only one that did. When it came down to resigning the rest of them wouldn’t follow suit and even after the apostasy happened there were only three, I think, that actually resigned even then and it took a few more weeks and a few more months before the rest of them finally resigned because they saw an organization finally being formed and it made it a little bit

easier to go from one... I'll just call it what it is... one pay check to another one. They didn't miss a heartbeat – they were able to go out of Worldwide into United without missing a heartbeat. Not stepping out on faith, not doing it because of conviction, but waiting for it to be established. Some of those things make you so sick, but that's what happened to us.

And once this period of time was complete God began His special protection from Satan during the next 980 days. I've already mentioned that but I want to make sure I talk about these things – helping us to come to a point where we were more fully awakened, but we had to go through a lot to be continually wakened up. We don't always awaken overnight, in the beginning when it all starts and it depends on what God is doing and how God shakes us, to what degree He brings us to see. I think of this period of time that we've gone through and I think of the period of time after Trumpets.

Let me read this comment here... after one full day into this new period of time, the Feast of Trumpets was upon the Church. God was leading His Church to grasp that the fulfillment of Trumpets was on the way – hence the talk of II Thessalonians 2 about His, Jesus Christ's coming. Trumpets and talking about the return of Jesus Christ. I hope we understand this deeply within the Church now, that the Trumpets are about the announcement of Jesus Christ's return and about His coming back, not His coming back on that particular day.

Going on here about Laodicea. **I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot: So then because you are lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I'm going to spew you/vomit you out of My mouth.** Again, **Because you say, that I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:** In today's sermon I want to mention here again for everyone who's new to strive to understand that about yourself, to have an attitude of mind and if any of us have ever forgotten this... If we don't understand what Paul said, "Oh wretched man that I am, who's going to deliver me from this body of this death." If we don't see ourselves in that light, if we think we're doing things pretty good and we're doing okay... please understand – you're not! If you think things are going along well for you and that you're doing a good job and that you're doing good and that you're a pretty good person... if that's the light you see yourself in: because of all the knowledge you receive – be careful – that's a dangerous state to get into. On the contrary, understand your human nature and understand what you're fighting and understand that only God can clothe you and deliver you from what we are.

**I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich;** and that has to do with repentance. That's why God says seek to get rid of that which is the dross, that is what we're being told here. Gold heats up, the trial you go through, and the dross that goes to the surface – that's what God uses to teach us and to help us to stay awake spiritually and to continue to grow. **...and with white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear;** that's why you have to diligently seek God because we have to be close to God in order to be filled with His spirit so that we recognize that He's the one that clothes us and keeps us in white, or gives us that which is white. It doesn't come from us. **...and anoint your eyes with eye salve that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten:** if you don't feel like you're being rebuked from Sabbath to Sabbath, being corrected from Sabbath to Sabbath – then something's wrong. If we don't receive something in a sermon where we can go afterward and repent of something in our life, as a whole, most of the time then, something's wrong. Every one of us at times should feel like our toes are stepped on a little bit and when I preach, I step on my own toes – God does by the things that are spoken because we have things that need to be changed. That's why God leads us from one Sabbath to another and shows us what needs to change in our life, what we need to be cautious of, what we need to be careful of. That's

why we go through things like this on a regular basis – because we’ve got changes we’ve got to make! We’ve got to overcome.

**As many as I love, God says, I rebuke and chasten,** because everything about us has to change: what we are, how we think. It’s a part of the process of becoming more and more in oneness with God. **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.** That’s an awesome thing that’s said, **be zealous and repent.** God is saying you have to be zealous about repentance. That doesn’t change in any era and time, at any period in time of your life. And the day we fail to do that, the day we fail to be able to go before God and say, “I’m sorry” is the day that growth is stopped. Something that human nature has a hard time of doing sometimes – being able to go before God and saying, “I’m wrong. Please forgive me, please strengthen me,” as to whatever it is you’re repenting of, whatever it is you’re looking at. Things you think or say about someone else that you shouldn’t, or whatever it is in life. So God says, **be zealous therefore and repent.** So all of you, in the following week this would be a good scripture to think about. Are we being zealous about repenting, still? Because the day we let down in this, the day we start ceasing to do this like we should is the day we’re not examining ourselves or seeing ourselves or seeing things realistically. We have to repent. I have to repent every day of my life. If I don’t repent every day of my life then something is drastically wrong with me spiritually! If you don’t repent every day of your life, something is wrong with you spiritually. Ask God to help you to see what it is that’s wrong. We’re not seeing something like we should, about ourselves. And that helps you to stay in more of a humble spirit and more of a grateful spirit toward God – a matter of a thankfulness and a gratitude to God. It truly does; because if you see yourself realistically then you understand more of the mercy of God, the patience of God, the love of God. Because every time you do repent, you know what? You walk away free. You don’t have to carry it anymore. You don’t! It’s gone! And sometimes people in the Church don’t have that freedom because it’s a matter of believing God, that He loves us and that He gives us the ability to repent and it’s gone. Whatever you said, whatever you’ve done, whatever you’ve repeated, whatever you’ve done again for the countless time... Thank God He doesn’t keep count and thank God He doesn’t put the count in front of me on a regular basis. How many times has this been now, that you’ve repented of the same thing over and over again...

How do we treat each other when people do things to us? How many times have they done it to us, or said it to us? How many times have you resisted God and repeated the same sin in your life? Thank God He doesn’t put the numbers in front of us and keep reminding us and hold that against us because that’s what we do as human beings as a whole. When somebody does something to us and they keep doing it and they did it last week, they did it a month before that, and they did it 10 years ago too; and every week in between pretty much... And we pretty much peg them, we have a few royal names for them that we don’t like to repeat, not too nice, but that’s the way we see them. And as human beings – we treat each other that way at times and we judge people that way. God doesn’t. He doesn’t. He forgives us and has mercy upon us.

**As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.** If you don’t, you just become lukewarm, you’re not watching spiritually, you’re not being alert spiritually. Being on guard spiritually means that you see the battle. And the primary battle is when you look in the mirror, it’s looking right back at you. That’s the biggest battle you have in life. It’s the biggest one I have. It’s not Satan. Don’t deceive yourselves into thinking it’s Satan. He’s not the biggest battle you have in life, because we really have protection from Satan, we really do, and from the demon world. They broadcast at us, they know what buttons to push, but we have the choices to make and with God’s help and God’s spirit they don’t stay around. If we make the right choice and the right response, they don’t stay around us. They might broadcast at us and something come into our mind, but we have the power to ignore it

and reject it and pray to God for help to do so. So, it's still self. We have the power of choice and only we can make the choice to go into a different direction, to do the wrong things. Can't blame Satan for your sins, can't blame the world for your sins, can't blame Las Vegas for your sins if you're out here. You can't blame the rest of the world. This is a good example here.

I look at what's built here (Las Vegas). I think of the architecture, I think of when man puts his mind together... of course here, it's money, money, but there's a reason for that – a lot of people leave a lot of it behind and because of that you have some very nice things that can be built. But when I see it, I see something different. I see the potential mankind has when he cooperates. When people work together for a common cause, when you have pride in what you build. I'm fascinated, and I guess because I've been in construction and because I used to like laying it. I can't do it anymore. My knees... I've tried to do it in our house. I talked our contractor into letting me do some of the tile and after 3 days I was begging them... please, I'll pay the full amount and get the guy in here, you're going to have to do it, I can't do it like I did 10 years ago when I did the floor in our former house. I couldn't take it. My back, my knees... called home crying to my wife basically so that she'd tell me what I wanted to hear, "Get the contractor to finish it, you know?" So, when I look at some of these things; I see the mosaics and the tile work... I think of Willie Young and of his garage, what he did with his garage, all the tile work he did. All these pieces in a kind of like a mosaic type thing, but here they have these things of marble and granite and tiny minute... if you know what a mosaic is: you make designs and so forth with small pieces and you put them all together and some of them come down to a very sharp point and the designs... I'm fascinated by the workmanship in it. I enjoy it. I enjoy it like I enjoy things of God's creation when you see flowers and trees and we walked into one place the other day here and all the orchids, the different colours and so forth; the different varieties. Whenever I see things like that I enjoy drinking in what God has made available and that's the spice of life. That's the enjoyment of life and then when I see what man is capable of doing when he uses the things that God has given to him out there – like some of these things out here that look like rock. One day we're going to learn – use rock! Don't get something that just looks like it. If you really want to make it more beautiful, do something that God has created that's natural. If you go out here and you make this plastic thing and you spray paint it, or you make these concrete things and you make it look like a rock – it looks more like a rock but you know what? I still know it's not a rock, and I know a rock looks more beautiful. When you see it done that way, it's beautiful, and so I look forward to the day that we're going to take pride in what we build and we're not going to build houses out here... slipping back in the Millennium and the Feast sermons... we're not going to build houses out here that are basically designed within it to fall apart in time. Planned obsolescence, that people design into it that because if they made them last forever where would the rebuilding and the money come from... you know, so we have to design these things so that the termites and stuff and time can really deteriorate it.

It's going to be different in a new world. That's why I'm fascinated when I see things in Europe. I see a barn over there, even a barn, some of the brick barns; they have made them to last generation after generation. And I'm fascinated by just the little extra work it takes to make something last forever – to be passed down from one family to another so that others can have the same thing. And when you have that mentality and you do it for that purpose and not just for selfish reasons, what a beautiful world. And so when I see things out here like this I see the potential of what *can* be done – see? And to me it's a beautiful thing and I have a harder time when I'm in ... I don't want to offend anybody – pick certain cities... pick your city, they're all kind of alike. This one here is different because there are so many things that are newer and kept up better and some things are built to last longer and some of what they're building into it now even more so that way – the beauty that's there. They have a place here with a replica of the Eiffel Tower – 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the size, everything is exactly alike from what I understand.

I think it's 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the size, down to every light bulb – everything is exact except 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the size. When I saw it in real life I was highly disappointed because of all the garbage that's around. You would think they'd keep it up nice, have it as a jewel in France and Paris like that. And all of the talk about it being the romantic city. I'll be candid with you, I was so disillusioned by being there and I think of all that people have in their mind – it's in the mind; it's a romantic city... it's the place to go – loved ones, people in love and you go there and the romance that's involved and a man and a woman can be there and it's all so romantic. No, it's not. It stinks. You go through the subway system and it smells like urine because it is urine, because people pee all over the place and there are no morals in some of those things and over there if you have to go, you just go. Why wait to get to a toilet because they've got their hand out there and they want money.

There are so many things in this world that have to change and you can walk down a street out here and it's a matter of what's in *your mind* that determines whether something is sin or not. I don't care what city you're in, I don't care where in the world you are – sin is out there. It's a click away on the computer keyboard – you know? And a lot of you have battles with *that* in this world, in the Church! Because it's so easily available and so easy to keep hidden. It's a reality. And it's in the streets down here. You walk down the streets, there are certain people you just walk by and you don't receive what they have to hand to you because it's a bad picture of what they're going to hand to you, you know? And so they are advertising bad things, but where are your eyes? ...and where is your brain? ...and where is your mind? You're the one... you can't blame them for your sin, you know? A vehicle drives down the street here with an advertisement, and like most advertisements on TV, what are they all about? Sex, sex, sex – see? And so this city is no different than any other city.

That's why I mentioned Jerusalem, because if we really understand it, in many respects it's the sickest city in the world. It's the sickest spiritual city in the world if you want to talk about something to judge as a matter of the spirit from God. It's far worse than what's here in Las Vegas, but human beings, you know what they would say? There are places in any city where there is sin like this, you know? And so there are certain areas around here as well, but if you stay in certain areas and so forth, there's a lot of beauty here as well – a lot of potential for human beings.

So sin comes down to what is in your mind and how you think and so it is here; how we see ourselves and how we think about life and recognize that we are in control of our own lives and so when we talk about repenting here... **be zealous and repent**, again, getting back to that... You look in the mirror, you're your greatest battle. I am my greatest battle and I cannot blame it on anyone else or anything else in life. I have to accept the responsibility myself. Every one of you out there listening to me, all of you who are new, and all of you who are old – and I'm not talking about age, I'm talking about the time in the Church – do you see yourself, do you repent day by day – not because you get into a routine of it and just say "Father forgive me of my sins" and you just go on through a quick prayer, praying about other things that you really want to have happen in your life, to be better in your life, me, me, me, me – as we sometimes do as well, because prayer isn't about me, me, me as a whole... a lot of it is, when we are growing, but where is our focus? What is God's plan? What is He doing in our lives? Where are we going? What is it we desire to see accomplished that's right and just and good for the world? Is that where our heart is?

So again, we're tried in these things and we grow in these things. **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.** So you've got to fight for it. You've got to be zealous to repent and if anyone listening out there doesn't know what they have to repent of day by day... I don't care who you are, I don't care how long you've been in the Church, I don't care how young, or how old

you are physically – every one of you has things to repent of and if you've gotten into a rut and a routine in life and you don't understand that and you think you're doing pretty good and things are going pretty good for you, you're on dangerous ground... you're on dangerous spiritual ground, you truly are and you need to repent – first of all, of that attitude, because it is an attitude and you need to ask God, "Father, show me my nature; help me to see it so I can know what to repent of every day. Help me to see my nature; help me to see what my battles are that I have lost sight of; help me to understand my motives and my nature so that I can repent of the things that are wrong so that I can be more at one with You, more in unity and oneness with You."

**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice,** I can say that today very powerfully so... not about me, it's about God. If anyone hear what God is saying today, to the Church – because going back through our journey of faith, it is a matter of believing what God gives to us and why He gives it to us and learning some of the lessons of the past and realizing we get to a certain point of time and we can begin to coast in our thinking and we look back at those things sometimes – and especially if we're newer and thinking... it's just so hard to understand how anybody could have done that, how people could have done that... and yet, everybody did. And every one of you would have done the same thing. Unless God had mercy upon you, you would have been doing the same thing that others who have gone way off the wall are doing. You can't help it. You have to be delivered by God. God's the only one who can deliver you.

**I will come to him,** so again, if we hear His voice and open the door, **I will come to him.** How do you open the door? Prayer. You respond to God, you listen to God, you hear what He gives us on the Sabbath, what He gives to us at different times and we respond to that, we pray to God about it. We want Him to come into our life. We want Him to dwell in us. We should be praying on a regular basis that God continue to dwell in us and that He never cease doing that and we realize that sin is the thing that causes that to stop, so don't let that happen. "Help us to see ourselves. Help me to see myself." **I will come to him and will sup with him, and he with Me.** Spiritual feasting, spiritual food, not physical...which brings up an issue I just can't let go.

I heard of one particular place during the Feast where people were eating food while they were listening to the sermons. Don't ever let that happen in your life. I've heard of some places now, this is in a lot of different areas, going across the board here... area to area, sometimes people get together on the Sabbath and if they bring food to Sabbath services for after the Sabbath service that sometimes people and children are getting up during the services and going and getting some food. Don't do that! This is a time where we are to sit on our posteriors, being in submission to God and learning and listening and desiring to hear and teaching our children to listen and to learn.

We should have Bibles! I hear of people who don't even have Bibles. I think... what's wrong? You know? To be able to open up your Bible, to follow along with a verse and to prove to yourself what's being said, to follow along and to see the scriptures because there is something about reading it at the same time – you're going along with what God is giving – that something happens in the mind and you see it and you hear it at the same time and there's a power there that God uses and if we're not interested enough to open up a Bible, or to own a Bible, that's mind boggling – if we don't open up our Bible during the Sabbath. What does that say? Man, oh, Man! That causes me concern. That causes me alarm, candidly. I am alarmed if I hear something like that – see?! And so we have to be so careful of our conduct and the desire to honour God when we come before God's presence and if we're not willing to open up a book because we're hungry, because we want to learn and use every avenue and means that God has given to us to do that...then something's wrong with us!

And at what age do you start teaching your children? Well, parents that's up to you, but you know what? You need to buy a Bible, or get one from, I don't know... Salvation Army or someplace – I don't know where they give them out, but I know a lot of religious groups do. If you can't afford one... then let me know, I'll get you one, you know? We'll work it out. We'll get you a Bible to give to your children. You know? Teach your children to find books, to help them, to work with them, to put markers, maybe tabs in their Bible and so they can find Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and Romans. Be able to find those books and to know where they are in the Bible. You start teaching from some of the most basic of things sometimes.

So again, if we're not earnestly seeking after God, if we're not seeking to hold fast, if we're not *diligently* seeking after Him... and if we're not teaching our children then *we're diligently seeking after God then we're neglecting!* ...let alone passing it along to our children. So please, if you're not doing this, you're children aren't going to learn it by osmosis, that somehow they're just going to be able to listen after a while and they're going to be mature one day. That's your job, to teach and to encourage and to help.

A journey of faith – a matter of relying on God and trusting on God to lead us along the way and to show us what we need to see as we need it and God does that. He'll prepare us for the things we hear on the Sabbath, but then we have to respond to what we've received and make the changes, to repent. I'm not trying to be hard, I'm just trying to shake people up to see a reality that there are a lot of you out there who are... we're past the era, but Laodicean to the core. Lukewarm to the core. Please learn from my experience. I got vomited out of God's mouth because I fell asleep. Every one of us sitting here did. We were vomited out of God's mouth because we were asleep, because we were lukewarm and you need to take that history and learn from it and that admonition – I lived it. I don't want to see anybody else live it, but I see people living it. I see people coming along who are living it, who don't see themselves realistically, who don't understand what it means to be on guard spiritually and to watch and I realize I can't give that to anyone. I had to learn that over many years. But my heart and my desire is – please learn it quickly. Please listen to what you're hearing and repent and look at your life closely. Ask God for help to be able to see where you're not zealous, where you're not diligently seeking after Him, because diligence takes work. It is not a weekly routine! It takes work. It's the effort of the mind and so much of that has to do with seeking to see ourselves, seeking to see our own thinking, seeking to see our own minds and only in that fashion can we even repent.

**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.** That's a spiritual situation and condition, that we invite God in, we want God in, that we want God to dwell in us, we want to dwell in God and we desire to have that spiritual feast Sabbath by Sabbath – week by week – even during the week with Him: to drink in of His word.

**To him who overcomes,** that means you're fighting the fight; that means you're repenting; that means you're seeking to change; that means you're looking for things in your life that you can change. If you quit looking for things in your life, as I know that some people have and do from time to time, and some who've been around for a long time – sometimes you get to a point where they're not seeking to overcome anymore. That means you're searching out your life for where your sins are, for where your error are in your life. You've got to keep changing. Overcoming means changing and if you quit overcoming, you're not changing, you're not repenting. **To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and set down with My Father in His throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says unto the Churches.** And it's the same today as it's always been.

You can read about every one of the eras here and there are lessons to be learned and it's a matter of whether we are in tune to God spiritually to whether we hear what He's saying.

So, with that we'll conclude for the day. Again, always our history – what do we learn? We learn from it, we learn things that we need to be doing and things we need to be doing to change. We'll have a guest speaker next Sabbath and then after that we'll pick up again with the series of *Our Journey of Faith*.

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