

Before we begin to focus on Passover season that's now coming upon us, there is one sermon that we need to cover first – this sermon today. It's entitled, *Increasing the Body of Christ*. This sermon has to do with the focus that God has given us at this phase of the end-time that's now upon us. Two weeks ago we had a ministerial conference in Cincinnati, primarily for all the newly ordained people and this has been a truly unique experience for several reasons and I wanted to mention some of those. It's been very much upon my mind and something that needs to be shared because there are some things we need to address so that the whole Church understands and comprehends what we're doing, why we're doing it and again, a little bit of a preparation that we're getting ready for in the future here and if we all understand these things then we comprehend when things happen in a different way, or a unique way; we are on the same page.

Since the Church-wide fast on February 6th we entered into the second seventh of the entire time we know as 'time, times and a half a time', if we understand that period of time divided into sevenths and being a half a time – 1/7th is equivalent to half a time of 'time, times and a half a time'. We are now entering the Passover season and before long we'll have observed Pentecost 2010 and it's quite incredible when we look around and see what's taking place and how things are transpiring. I'm very excited about it, I'm very inspired by seeing how God's doing what He's doing and how things can happen in a much faster way toward the end where all the horrible things that we had thought for so long in the Church would begin right away at the beginning of 3 ½ years and thankfully it's not that way. Shortly after Pentecost we'll come up to a point of time of June 27th and we'll have passed an entire time period called 'a time'. The first time will be over with and we'll have entered into then the second period that's called 'times' which is two 'times'; that's why it's referred to as that; and to me it's incredible just seeing the time passing as it is, where we're going and what we're doing.

And at this unique time in human history where do we find ourselves? Jesus Christ is organizing us within the Church, preparing us for an incredible work that's just ahead of us. He is the head of the Church and all things that are given to us are given to us from Him. God the Father has given all things into His hands and when things are given to us by/from God, they are given through Jesus Christ to be given to us and it's an inspiring thing to understand what's taking place. And God's great purpose is to make a great increase in the Body of Christ before He returns to this earth; and that's an incredible thing to understand that we haven't understood to this magnitude until just recently.

Second, we have the unique and distinct privilege of witnessing the ordination of women into the ministry of God's Church. That's incredible to understand...to understand the time period of mankind and understand what's taking place now that we have the opportunity of witnessing. I've talked of this at different times with people... If somebody had asked me a year ago, "Are we going to ordain women in the Church?" I would have probably given them a bit of a funny look, kind of one of those, "are you crazy?" looks... and then when God reveals something and shows it, it becomes so clear. Everything fits together. When it's God's time and God gives His spirit to perceive and understand why things are the way they are it becomes very motivating and very exciting to see what He's doing.

This is *God's Church*! This is God's Church and God reveals things when He wills, in His time, and all we have as a choice in that respect then is, "Am I going to do *exactly* what God gives when God gives it." That's our choice. We don't resist God, we don't fight against God – and yet the truth is we do at times.

That's our nature. But the reality is we become deeply convicted in God's Church that this is *His* Church. Incredible! That's why it bears His name.

And thirdly; we have had an incredible increase in the structure for the Church within the ministry and that has only just begun. Behind this increase in the structure and the training of this new ministry is going to result in incredibly great increase in the Body of Christ – far greater than the previous 2,000 years. If we can comprehend where we are in time, that's why we're here...but as we comprehend where we are in time to grasp what God is doing and what He's getting ready to do as far as preparing the Church and making it far greater than what it has ever been – it's going to become much, much, much greater than the combined 2,000 years. It's going to pale that into insignificance as far as the numbers are concerned. And that's an awesome thing to understand – that we get to participate in that.

So God is preparing a great Church to be ready for the return of His Son Jesus Christ as King of Kings, as the Messiah to rule the world; to already have a great structure in place, a Body that is prepared, a Body that's convicted of the Sabbath and the Holy Days...a Body, that just like you and all those of you especially who are new that have had this experience in your life...when all of a sudden you understand God's word? ...whether it be through something you've heard or something you've read and all of a sudden you see it and you never understood it before. You might have... God might have given little things to you here and there as far as a part of drawing you over ever how long a period that might have been, but when it came time for Him to bring you to His Church He opened up your mind and you began to see things that you've never seen before. When it all started coming together, flooding together for you, things you couldn't piece together in life until God's spirit was in your mind drawing you and leading you into the Church because that was His will and His purpose. And I think of all those who are getting ready to be called who are going to become deeply convicted, because of everything that's going to happen in their lives, everything that they're going to see come to pass, and when God gives them His spirit at that time, to open their minds – and they believe the Sabbath Day and they're willing to suffer to keep it.

I was asked a question before services about what happens when this world begins to go into what it's going to go into, in this country here especially, when it goes into captivity, because that's prophesied to happen when Europe conquers this country. And what's going to happen when there are going to be some who may want you to go to work on the Sabbath Day? We keep the Sabbath Day! And that's going to be a large part of the job, as I've mentioned in times past, of what my wife and I will be doing at that time. A lot of that has to do with things that are going to be taking place in Europe in order to give you favour. Very much like what happened when God took the children of Israel out of Egypt and He said, "Let My people go!" And God's going to do the same things with miracles and power to say, "Leave those people alone! You bother them and you're going to be immensely bothered. You cause them to suffer; you don't know suffering... you're going to suffer." That's our job. That's why some poke fun at and mock and ridicule and say, "Why don't you cause certain things to happen now?" It's not time, it's not God's will, it's not just to make a show for people...it's not for that purpose. It is for a purpose, and when that time comes it's going to be an incredible time. God'll take care of us, God'll watch over us. Some are going to suffer and there'll be a lot who suffer. It's not going to be an easy time, but to understand that hundreds of thousands, maybe into the low millions who actually have the opportunity of being baptized in a time period here that in times past we'd have said there's no way on earth anything like that could happen? A year ago, I would have said, "There's no way on earth anything like that could happen." And then God shows us what He's going to do and you say, "Oh, now I get it. That's what you're going to do? Okay! We're going to do it." That's how we respond to God.

And so we live in incredible and exciting times, we truly do; and those people that are called, just like you, they're not going to understand as much as you in many cases and all of them are not going to receive as much as you have except they come in contact with you, or with others who've been in contact with the Body; because they're not going to be able to have the internet as a whole; they're not going to be able to read the books as a whole like you have read and have the opportunities that you have had. So you're going to have the opportunity to help people, to work with people that God begins to call, that God begins to draw – to pass along what you have learned; nothing more and nothing less, but to pass along what you have learned. That's why it's so important to be in unity and oneness, that we give exactly what God has given to us and be faithful stewards in that. That's what it means. To be a faithful steward; to faithfully pass along what God has given to us – stewards of His word, His way of life.

God's getting ready to give incredible increase to the Church and it's something hard for us to grasp and comprehend in the deepness of our being because it has to do with where we are in the Church, how long we've been in the Church and to the magnitude of what we see spiritually. Because I have mentioned this so many times – *God has an excitement* that I can't even speak in words; about what's getting ready to take place. He has waited so long and if you've ever waited a long time to do something, a project your working at and it comes to pass and the reward and the blessings of that as you see something coming together and the excitement of sharing that with others; and what you want to give to others is finally coming to pass – something you want to pass along, something you want to give and you see their joy in it. God is there so many times beyond that that we can't even comprehend it; we can't even begin to comprehend that kind of excitement that God has right now. And it's because *a part of that excitement that God has a great desire to honour His Son in a very powerful way by preparing a great Church that He'll be living in.* It's an awesome thing to understand how God dwells in human flesh and He hasn't dwelt in many over the past 6,000 years; but God has dwelt in some over the past 6,000 years – primarily in the 144,000 until we finally came toward the end here and now He's beginning to add more so it's *more* than that. Incredible to understand those things.

So we're going to look at one of the organizational tools that God revealed and gave to the ministry during those meetings in Cincinnati a couple of weeks ago because it is the means through which so many will be brought into the Church and there are some other things we need to understand as I'll introduce a little bit later. God wants this subject matter of baptism to be understood better by the *Church* so that we might all understand the process of baptism in a *better way* than what we have in times past; and so that we might better handle and care for the different situations that will confront us when God begins drawing more people in an increasing manner into the Church. Part of that is so that we can better understand how He and His Son want us to administer matters of baptism for many who will have received some sort of baptism within the Church that was scattered. I'm bringing in a part of something I'm going to come back to in a little bit because there are many people that have received baptisms – because God is working with people in different ways and He is going to bring them eventually to Himself, but there'll be those who've been baptized in different groups at different times and that needs to be addressed. How does God want that to be handled within the Church? How do we handle all those baptisms? Was God in all of them? How do they need to be addressed? God has shown us how to deal with those things, how to handle them.

All this reminds me of a parable over in **Luke 13** – thinking of how small the Church has been through time. It's a difficult thing sometimes for people to comprehend; how small the Church is when you think of churches in the world, the numbers of churches that are in the world and the size of some of those churches in the world and then when people begin to find out how small we are... I think of the time

period when I was called, 1969 and the size of the Church at that time; had no comprehension when I was beginning to hear about it, or read about it – and had no idea at the beginning there of what was going to have to take place, didn't know there were churches until we received a visit later on, but didn't realize there was a Church up in North Platte, Nebraska – lived in northwest Kansas, close to the Colby area, little farther south...but incredible to find out then there was something that close because all we knew of, because of communication at that time was... it may only be in Pasadena, may be really small. But for most people that's a hard pill to swallow. How could we be so small, even when people do find out, especially today because of the scattering that's taken place? To walk into a room like this and see the numbers of people here and say, "This is large! This is *large* for God's Church right now today! A *large* gathering of God's people today...and coming in from different states to make up *this large group* that's here." And there are people out there that look at that and think you've got to be stark raving mad and the only term they can give so often is, "Got to be a cult!" Especially because of some things that are taught and they've never heard it before. Sad, the ignorance of the world. Thankfully they're going to begin learning very soon what is right and what is true.

Luke 13:18 – Jesus says, **What is the Kingdom of God like? and what shall I compare it? It's like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and put into his garden; and it grew, increased, and became a great tree; and the birds of the air nested in its branches.** Well, that sounds a little farfetched doesn't it? A grain of mustard seed? ...grows into a great big tree and birds come and nest in it because it's so large? ...it's so great? ...it's so massive? ...that birds come along and make their dwelling there. Kind of a farfetched story; it's not a possible thing. Nothing like that can happen. You can't do that. Where's the sense in all that? Any of you ever see a mustard seed grow that big? What's impossible with man and what's impossible in nature is not impossible with God. There are things that God is going to accomplish and God is going to do in a massive way, in a great way, things that to man *are* impossible, astounding... That's why I think about where we are now. For some to hear about the kinds of baptisms that are going to take place, the numbers of baptisms, it seems like a bit of a farfetched story. How are you going to do that? How is that going to be able to be accomplished? We don't accomplish it – that's the whole point. God does. It's His Church; it's what He builds and whatever God builds nothing keeps Him from it. And we get the opportunity to share in it, or not. We have those choices before us.

The elders were given a new baptism ceremony that the Church is to follow now and I thought it'd be good to review some of the same verses that we covered in those meetings and some that we've also covered in times past, especially in one sermon called 'Ordinations and Baptisms' and it'd be good to review some of those in the context of a sermon.

Acts 19 – First, we need to remember that the ceremony of baptism is a baptism unto repentance. The water part, the ceremony of baptism, of going under the water is about repentance that involves a covenant agreement a person is making with God in which they are repenting of sins and they want to bury the old self – and then walk in newness of life. That's the desire. That's the desire that each person has. We want to change. We want to be different. We know we need help. We want to obey God and so we have this desire to go under the water, put the old self there and come up as we've been told, to walk in a new way of life, to walk in newness of life – and we know the process that we must go through in order to accomplish that.

So we have a desire to seek God's way of life and it's a matter of an acknowledgement at that time that we accept Jesus Christ as our Passover. We all make that covenant agreement with God at baptism. We acknowledge that. We have a desire to be forgiven of all of our sins and we acknowledge that Jesus

Christ, indeed, is our Christ – He is the Messiah who has died for our sins, all sins and is a personal Passover.

Acts 19:4 - Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, and so Jesus' disciples did as well later on and the Church has ever since – a baptism unto repentance. More was added to that process as time went along and in the time of Christ as well, but more was added to it as far as the Church was concerned as time went forward. And it says here that **John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him who should come after him,** so this is always forward looking. This was forward looking; looking to Christ, looking to the Messiah that was going to come, looking to the one who was going to pay for the sins of mankind, **who should come after him that is, on Christ Jesus. And when,** or the word is 'after' **they had heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** In that name, again, for us by the authority as it is that we are baptized, in other words, dying for us, for our sins, speaking of Christ. **And when Paul had laid hands upon them,** so another ceremony, another part that we've covered in times past here about baptism. **And when [they] had hands laid upon them the holy spirit came to them;** And to me this is all a beautiful picture because the ceremony that follows reflects something so powerful – that before this God will draw us and work with us, drawing us into the Church but He will not dwell in us until we come to baptism. He will work with us; He will draw us to the Church by His spirit that draws us, but He will not dwell in us. He has mercy upon us... He begins... it's forward looking to what we're going to become if we'll respond to that calling and we have the choice to make. And then as we go through the ceremony of baptism we have all of our sins forgiven; and what a beautiful picture that is that at that moment all sins are forgiven and the impregnation of God's spirit is given to you and God begins to dwell in you. He's given you the impregnation, a begetting of His spirit, the beginning of a process that leads to birth, to being born into His Family later on. It's an awesome thing to understand and to understand why He won't dwell in us, why we can't have that impregnation until we've been fully forgiven of sin through Jesus Christ. That's why it's so important that we continue to repent, so He'll continue dwelling/living in/abiding in us on a continuing basis. Because when we begin to sin and we don't repent and we refuse to repent or we let that period go on longer and longer we begin to get weaker and weaker because God will not be in us. Not a good position to be in: so important to continue to repent day by day by day – to fight self, to fight the mind.

And when Paul had laid hands upon them, the holy spirit came to them; and they spoke in other languages, and prophesied. So, right away God gave them power, gave them greater ability to perceive, to understand things that they had heard in the past and it was able to come together for them just like for you...and all of a sudden you can have a conversation with others in a greater way than you did before within the Body if we understand what happens to us within the Church as we grow, as we learn.

In times past we've had a ceremony that was fulfilled in both the ceremony of baptism and the ceremony of the laying on of hands; and in the past this has been done individually one person at a time. I thought it'd be good to go back and read to you the ceremony that each of you have heard because it's been the same, as a whole, for a long, long time. And so this is what was told to you, at least mostly in these words – maybe a few changes here and there but this is the context.

You were first asked your name and then your name was stated; and you were asked, "Have you repented of your sins and accepted Jesus Christ as your personal saviour?" And you were to answer and respond, "Yes." And then you were told, "As a result of your repentance of your sins, which is the transgression of God's holy and righteous and perfect law (and there are a few following along that know this by heart) and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as your personal saviour, your Lord and Master,

your High Priest and soon coming King, I now baptize you... not into any sect, denomination, or organization of this world, but I baptize you into the very name of the Father, in and through the Son through the power of the holy spirit; that is by and through the authority of Jesus Christ for the remission of all your sins. Amen.

That ceremony for years and years and years, I've not felt totally comfortable with in performing it because we understand there's a ceremony to follow that some of this is involved with – that there are certain things that *don't* take place until you have hands laid upon you by God's ministry and God could have given us a greater understanding earlier on, but He just didn't do it – and it isn't that there's anything wrong with this, as long as we understand, and we do understand there's a ceremony to follow and we have to have hands laid upon us in order to receive the impregnation of God's spirit. So, again, most people in all the scattered organizations, even out there today, still use this same format and that's important to understand because of what I'm going to talk about in a little bit here. But this has pretty much been kept intact; a ceremony that Worldwide Church of God used and it tells everything in a nutshell, in a sense of what you're going to have happen to you when you go under the water, but it also included in the ceremony something that's going to happen to you later on as well, and we really didn't grasp all that – that there are two baptisms involved. There's one in water and there's one of God's spirit and that's why we're blessed to go through some of the sermons we did of recent time where the reality is that we have to go in the water before we can be immersed in God's spirit, before God's spirit will dwell in us, before we can be *impregnated* with God's spirit, before God Himself and His Son will begin to dwell and live within us through the power of His holy spirit. We first have to go under the water – to bury the old self, because it *is a baptism unto repentance, understanding that Jesus Christ is our Messiah and He is our Passover*, so that we can be forgiven of sin through Jesus Christ. And if the other ceremony didn't follow, or if God didn't give us the impregnation of His spirit, what would be the point of all that? That's where the Protestant world stops in reality – at the death of Christ. They don't understand the significance of it all; why He died. That's just the beginning! Yes, you have to have your sins forgiven you. But why? So that God the Father and Jesus Christ will live in you, because God will not dwell in sin, it's a simple thing; it's really a basic thing. But the world doesn't grasp that, they don't understand that, they don't know that.

Acts 8:11 – again, this is the story of Simon Magus when he was on the scene and some of the things that were involved there; just picking up the context here in **verse 11 - And to him they had regard, because that of a long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.** Again, speaking of Simon Magus. There were those people around who were infatuated with him, they were somewhat mesmerized by him and some of the things he did and the reputation that he had. It says, **But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God**, so here's Philip, he's starting to talk and people believing what he has to say. Their minds are beginning to receive something that's from God because as a person speaks... you've done it... you've gone out and you've tried to share this with other people, you've tried to share it with family members or different ones out here and until it's God's time you can't give this to anyone unless God gives the blessing of being drawn or set apart for holy use and purpose as a result of just one being baptized; until that point and time comes whenever it is for an individual that they can begin to see and comprehend; you can't give this to anyone. You can't talk to anyone about it, and they're not going to grasp and comprehend it.

And so here is Philip and people are beginning to understand him because God's opening up their minds through the power of His spirit. God's involved. God's doing it. **And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.** Again, it made a distinction here; I like to point this out because this

was even unique at that time. As much as we're going through unique things right now, *this* was unique to the Church at this time; **both men and women**; because that wasn't something normal in religious service, something that they were familiar with and acquainted with in that respect. And yet it was now happening. **Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and the signs which were done.** He had a wrong motivation in the things he was doing. Awesome thing to understand how the Catholic Church got started; it came from this man here in what he did and they don't understand their own history; where they came from. Incredible. They didn't come from Simon Peter; they came from this man here. Slowly but surely certain things came along from this individual here as he had a desire, because he wasn't *given* the holy spirit. He was baptized; there are certain things he believed when he heard but his motivation being wrong and his choices being wrong and all the things involved with that; he went off on a different course and he was not allowed to be given the holy spirit. God didn't give that to him and the point being in all this is that he took with him an admiration he had of what he saw them doing; that he saw things that he understood man can't do. That's why he wanted this spirit. He wanted to perform and do things with *his* following and to become greater in the eyes of people and awesome how this began a melding, a blending of that which is false with that which is true. Incredible what took place. And that whole church has been known for that through time, bringing in things of other religions in the world around them – things that have to do with little bunnies and eggs and all these types of things that have been through history and through time; and he blended these things together and brought in the name of Jesus Christ, brought in the name of God into it. Incredible what has taken place through history.

What's even more incredible than that is realizing what people were attracted to. Man would far rather have *that* than the truth. That's why God has to draw someone, sometimes drag someone for a little ways; and then we finally begin seeing and we finally begin accepting and making the right choices.

Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and ... beholding the miracles and signs which were done. He saw these things. **Now when the apostles which were in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the holy spirit:** so this is just the beginnings of the Church. There are things they went through that they had to learn of how God was going to do things in the Church and they went through a long process that's covered in the book of Acts here and this is the early stages of things covered in the book of Acts that become more mature. As you go along in the book of Acts the Church is becoming more mature; and God continues to reveal. We haven't even gotten to chapter 10 yet where they had to come together... I guess when God began to show Peter the cloth descending three times and he saw this vision of these little creepy creatures and so forth and the blanket and some people like to say that that makes all food clean. Anyway, if you don't know the story you can go back and read it, or ask one of the elders. But again here, here was the beginning of something and God was beginning to show Peter; He began to show Paul later on and James and different ones here how He was working. God began to reveal to them how He was working with people and the process He was going through and some of the things about circumcision and how that the gospel was to go to the Gentiles – because this was new to them: how that the gospel could now go to the Gentiles. So even for Peter and some of them this was a huge change, they had a hard time with some of this in the beginning. It was hard for them to comprehend; Why was God doing this? And how could God be doing this? And sometimes we don't understand that except for what we can relate to of some hard things we've had to go through to learn what God is doing; and then finally we see it. So we have our struggles. We have always had them through time.

So for them, this was unique and they were beginning to learn about the importance and God setting it apart in a very special way so that all the Church could learn through it throughout time – the importance of the laying on of hands. That the holy spirit is not given to someone automatically just as a result of being baptized in water. God made a distinction in the two services; in the two functions.

Who, when they came down, prayed for them, that they might receive the holy spirit: (For as yet it had not yet fallen on any of them: as they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus only.) It's not enough just to be baptized in water and be forgiven of your sins; to accept Jesus Christ as your Passover.

Then they laid hands on them, and they received the holy spirit. So first there was a prayer and in those kinds of situations... a prayer is for the individual. It's for the individual to hear. It's like an opening prayer we have in services, or a closing prayer. It's for *us* to be able to say, "Amen. I'm in agreement. So be it." That's what we say when we say, "Amen." You're agreeing with what is being said in the prayer; that we have a desire for God to be in our presence; that we have a desire to be able to learn what is fed to us on the Sabbath and on and on it goes; and we say, "Amen/So be it." It's for our good, our benefit so that we can profit from it together. And so is a prayer like this for someone receiving the holy spirit. Certain words are spoken in a prayer so that they can learn from that which is getting ready to take place, the significance, the importance of it, the milestone in their life. And so they can say, "Amen." This is what they desire. This is what they want. They're in agreement – they want, they need – they comprehend that, the holy spirit. And *then*, it says...*then* hands are laid upon them. Not a long time, just their hands put on top of the individual from a minister in God's Church showing how God works. Incredible! It's all it takes. All that they learn from that? How God works. He works through His ministry. He works through the Church.

That's why the greater lesson of James when it tells individuals to call upon elders of the Church if you're sick is how God works. To understand that there's a process you must go through as you look toward God...that we're not out here on our own, that we're not to come up with anything on our own anyway that we want to – between us and God. You want to be healed? Call on the elders of the Church. You want God's intervention? Call on the elders of the Church because it shows how God functions and works within the Church to take care of His people. Awesome thing to understand.

Let's go on to notice the command Jesus Christ gave then concerning this matter of baptism in **Matthew 28** – I guess because I have lived through these things, I've seen these things over and over and over and over again in God's Church within congregations and within the ministry and what we have lived through in times past...and how people felt about bringing along different ideas at times so easily; a little twist here in doctrine, a little twist there in doctrine. See, even the ministry is subject to God's ministry. Does that make sense? Meaning that a pastor in a Church area, in times past, who went out here and began to teach 14/15th Passover, or Pentecost being certain times of the year because they didn't know how to count the wave sheaf, or all these different things we've gone through in times past. A minister comes along and he twists something, just a little bit... he's done something that he should have learned from a long time ago – that he wasn't free to do that. He should have learned that before he was ever ordained. There is a way that God works in the Church – through the ministry, because there is government, there's order.

Any individual who ever began to teach something different from what they learned from God's apostle is a false teacher, is a traitor to God and to Jesus Christ...is not a faithful steward, but a defiled steward. Doesn't even deserve to bear the name of a steward any longer. You understand what I'm saying? There's an order there. So the ministers out in different areas of what so many of us who've been around for a long time experienced, in many of those cases they were people who were not *faithful STEWARDS* of what God gave to them in understanding how God worked. Don't know why I'm getting

into that but it's hitting me again here. I can't help but think of it when I go into subject matter like this of what was happening toward the end when Mr. Armstrong was in an auditorium giving a bible study and he looked out over the audience and if any of you've ever had that opportunity of having been in that auditorium out in California, in Pasadena, it was large. And it struck him, because of God's spirit working in him to make such a declaration, something was very obvious to him – there wasn't one *evangelist* sitting there. There wasn't one pastor he could see in the audience. Where is all the ministry that's out at headquarters? Where are all the instructors? So many of them who are ordained...pastors and evangelists. Where are they? So his question was, basically, "Are there any ministers here?" And there was an elder way at the back who held up his hand. And he made a comment in response to that and he said, "*And you don't count!*" Now I'm not sure exactly the reason why but I think I know why...because it wasn't fulfilling the question he was asking! He was asking about, "Where are the *evangelists*? *Where are the pastors* that are ordained in the Church to take care of the Church?" And there wasn't a one there. You know why? Because they were full already, they thought. They didn't need God's apostle to teach them. They'd forgotten about government and how God works...that if they'd been in there in that bible study they would have learned something that would have added to and enhanced their ministry. You can learn this lesson in a very great way and carry it with you the rest of your life. It's going to be easier, obviously, when Jesus Christ returns but you still have to learn the lesson – even during the Millennium – that there's an order and a way God works. Some of those trials and problems won't come up until a few generations into the Millennium.

So getting back to this...**Matthew 28:16 - Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them to go. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted.** Interesting scripture... here, being with Him for so long and going through periods of time when He had taught them, *dies, resurrected*? That's pretty powerful stuff and some still have some doubts about things? Do we ever have troubles and doubt that comes into our mind from time to time on occasion? I would dare say the longer we go into this period of time – some are going to have some battles. Others aren't going to have any battles at all. Some are already resolved, deeply resolved that it is what it is. We have total confidence in God and what He's doing. We know it's going to come to pass. Incredible! So there are going to be times though when some are going to have some doubt come into their mind. How long can this go on? *How long before the 2nd Trumpet*? It's like I wrote in the book... I have no idea; don't know when it's going to be. Will let you know when it happens. I think you're going to know when it happens. Could it be a year from now? Absolutely! Could it be beyond a year? It could be. Whatever God wills, it'll happen exactly that way; whatever His timing is, whatever His purpose is. If man doesn't have to suffer but a shorter length of time and all the bad that's going to come upon this world happens in a faster way – thank God. Thank God if it can be accomplished and fulfilled that way. And even more so if more can be brought along through that kind of a process because of it. We'll see. I don't know. We may not have Pentecost. I don't know. And yet we may have Pentecost next year... I don't know. We will see.

So it says, **Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed...** and it says...**some doubted** when they saw Him. **And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power.** All power... what an awesome thing to say! **All power has been given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy spirit:** Incredible what they were being told. It's going to start out small, but all power has been given to Me now, if we understand the whole story, to fulfill and accomplish God's purpose according to His purpose and plan – understanding that over the next 2,000 years there's going to be a Church that's going to go through seven eras, seven periods of time that are going to be very unique; Thyatira being the longest existing single era. All the things that were going to

happen, all the things the Church would have to suffer through and go through in order for people to be called through those different periods of time to be moulded and fashioned by God in unique periods of time with unique situations that *make them special!* Because God was working *with* them and bringing everyone to a point where they were going to fit into His Government, into a Temple perfectly; beautifully so. And God has the power and He accomplished that...those things have already been done, structures already complete – that part of it. 144,000 – it's done. Incredible to understand those things.

And then to understand what's getting ready to take place *now* when He returns, when a greater exhibition, if you will, of that power is going to be manifest on the earth. **All power has been given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy spirit:** It's about the Church! It has always been about the Church and it will continue to be about the Church...until there's no more Church. And that will only happen when there are no more human beings...when everybody has finally arrived; when everyone is finally, *who's going to be*, because everyone has to come into the Church in order to be a part of the Family of God, to become Elohim, a part of the God Family. What an awesome thing, what an awesome process here that God is revealing.

I want to give a more perfect translation of this in the English of what it's saying here because it's not just the words; man puts together words, comma's, everything else and sometimes that really messes things up royally; but the spiritual interpretation of the translation... that's why I have gotten a charge out of some as they have translated into different languages, the books, because you can't just go by the words. You cannot just translate a word and pick out a word that maybe comes close in another language and say this is the word we're going to use; because sometimes it doesn't have the same definition. It may be close in some situations, but you've got to know the spirit of what's being said to make sure that you translate in your language in the same spirit of what's being said. I hope we all understand that. I think we do as a whole. Going on here, He told them, **baptizing them in the name and authority**, because that's what this means; that's what these words convey in the Greek language, **of the Father and of the Son in the power of the holy spirit**. It's done and accomplished by God's spirit. But in some translations sometimes, because they wanted to make the holy spirit a being – some things get a little messed up. ...**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age**. He's always with us, always with the Church – going to be with the Church for 2,000 years and then it's going to be a lot more obvious then later on in the Millennium and on into the Great White Throne, until it's complete; until everything's been accomplished according to God's word.

So again, water baptism does not baptize anyone into the holy spirit. You don't receive the holy spirit because you go under the water. It doesn't happen that way. God doesn't give it. That's why we have read some examples in scripture. Water baptism does not baptize anyone with the holy spirit or the power of the holy spirit – that has prompted a change in the ceremony and has led to a better understanding, candidly, of the ceremony itself, of what we go through, and I'd like to read that to you today – what is going to be said in the future in all baptisms.

These things are primarily said for the people who are hearing and the people who are receiving it; so they receive exactly, in understanding, what God is giving to them at that moment in time. So they are told...

You are here because you have acknowledged and repented of your sins, and you desire to be baptized and forgiven through your acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Passover and personal Savior.

As a result of your repentance of your sins, which is the transgression of God's holy and righteous law, and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master, your High Priest and soon coming King, I (we) now baptize you in water and then in the spirit through the laying on of hands by God's ministry.

So that shows them what's going to follow. There's something that must follow the ceremony of going under the water and accepting Jesus Christ as our personal saviour, understanding what it means to be forgiven of sin and so forth. Going on with this part of the ceremony...

The baptism in water is for the remission of your sins through the power and authority of Jesus Christ. You are burying the old self and you are to come up out of the water and live a new life. That new life will be made possible through receiving the gift, the impregnation of God's spirit dwelling in you through the laying on of hands.

By water and by God's spirit, you are being baptized into the very name of the Father, in and through the Son, through the power of the holy spirit – and this is through the power and authority of Jesus Christ.

Very powerful. I'm very excited about what God has given to us in a more succinct way, in a more meaningful way for the Church, for everyone to better understand the process of what they're going through. But more importantly, why this has come to us in this fashion, in this manner at this time is because God has revealed that there are going to be numerous baptisms take place at times – large numbers at times. And how do you do that? How do you do that if a minister has to get in the water with every individual? I quit doing that after a while; I got on the edge of the pool and pushed them under because I realized, "Ah! I don't really have to get in the water!" We get this image of John the Baptist out there in the water and where do you get a lot of these images? Anyway, they pretty much had to get out there with them if they were going to do that; and the robes and everything; pictures that we sometimes get in our mind that doesn't bring about reality of what things are really like. But again, if a minister takes the time to have a ceremony for every individual and you put them under the water and then when you're through you lay hands upon each individual and have a prayer over every individual...that's going to take a lot of people and a lot of time to baptize several hundreds, thousands, or a few million into God's Church. And so because He's revealed these things, He's shown us how it's going to be done in a far greater way, in a far faster way, in a very massive way when the time comes. And to me that's exciting.

In other words, let me paint you a picture here a little bit. Someone could be beside a pool, a body of water and have 50 people out there and maybe some members of the Church who are helping out, giving direction to people, how to do things, what to do, how to line up, how to get ready. And some can be in the water with them if need be, or by the water, or whatever it is – whatever each elder's process of organization is, cause it's going to vary from area to area. And all of a sudden you have maybe 50 people there; it depends on how far you can project your voice. I'm having a hard time today getting toward the back of the room. So let's say you have a hundred, and you can project your voice and you're able to do that, and you tell them... you don't have to be in the water with them. You give

them this ceremony and you also give them instruction, “Now, go under the water. This is what you’re doing.” And they go under the water. And tell them, “As soon as you feel the water over the top of your head come back up out of the water.” You want to tell them that. I get a charge out of it because I had one fellow that I’ve made comment about in times past here that I put under the water down in the Dallas area and he didn’t come back up right away. I was on the side of the pool and I forgot to tell him, so I was reaching down in the water trying to get him... and it’s kind of hard when you’re on the side of the pool so I thought, “I’m going in too...” trying to pull him back out of the water... anyway he came back up.

It’s exciting to me because that is the ceremony of something they’re doing; they’re going under the water, burying the old self and frankly, in some cases they’re more involved than in burying the old self. Somebody else isn’t there to do it for them, they’re doing it themselves. “I’m burying the old self and I’m coming up out of the water now to walk in newness of life.” It has great meaning to it, truly does. And then after that, you can have a hundred people and *one* elder, if need be, and ask everyone to bow their heads and give this prayer...

Following baptism, a short prayer stating: [Ask all to bow their head]. Holy Father we now ask that these who have repented and been baptized in Jesus Christ be blessed with the receiving of your spirit living and dwelling within them, by the impregnation of your spirit, through the laying on of hands of your ministry. We ask this of you in the name of your Son and our High Priest, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Remember the example earlier about a prayer from scripture? They had a prayer and then they laid hands upon the individual – that’s all that has to be done. You could have a hundred people line up and walk by you and you lay your hands upon them very quickly. Doesn’t take long. And that’s exactly how we’re doing baptisms now whether it be one person or whether it be a hundred, or if there be a thousand, or five thousand in a day. And some of you are going to experience that. Awesome if you understand the things that God is going to do. It was an awesome thing that happened on the Day of Pentecost when they got off to a big bang and they had 3,000. Amazing! And God has brought us to a point now to understand this in a very great way, an exciting way of what God’s going to begin doing; and this is such an exciting time anyway - when God begins to pour out His spirit upon the scattered... in the areas, in the regions of primarily the scattered nations of Israel, where they’re located. All peoples from all over the earth, but living in these locations. Incredible how He’s working and how He’s doing it. And He’s not drawing people as a whole in other regions, except a handful here and there – all for a purpose, all by design in a very orderly fashion.

So again, what an awesome thing to understand. This brought up something else at the conference that I was encouraged by because as we were talking about it some of the process was changing because it was back and forth and it reminded me of Acts 15 and a conference when various things were stated and they went back and forth discussing things and then finally, in the authority of the Church – there were different ones that made certain statements that set in a sense a seal upon how things were to be done – and this is kind of what took place at the conference there. Because we had to discuss different situations that have happened in the past about baptisms and how to baptise people, because for all new people who are drawn and are called along – that’s one matter because it’s all brand new. But what about someone who’s been baptized in some other group? What about a situation where we know that the Church was reorganized and established as of Pentecost 1998 – because we’ve only really been given that recently in the sense of understanding that with greater authority and understanding of exactly what God did and how He did it and why He did it at that particular time; and how we really got

our start at that time. And so that brings up an issue... God has drawn people and worked with people and brought them to baptism, but what about the laying on of hands of someone who has been baptized since that time in some other scattered group? Candidly, it bears no authority from God; because it must be done by one of God's ministers who has God's spirit dwelling and working within them. Others who have cut themselves off from the ministry, because of things that have happened in times past, have no authority to lay hands upon anyone. It's an awesome thing to understand.

So we've had to make some decisions of how we're going to work with different ones because God's going to call a lot of people who've been baptized in some of the scattered groups – including some of the large ones since that time because none of them have any authority to lay hands upon an individual. We only have a handful of people, thankfully, who are in that situation, but it's caused us to address it and there was one individual some time back, that we did lay hands upon as I was going through this in my mind, but didn't understand it fully why or how to deal with some of these situations and we did lay hands upon them – not baptize them again because most people in the scattered church have gone through the same baptism ceremony and most people have just been drawn along at different phases by God; but when they come to a point in time that they have a conviction about the Sabbath or the Holy Days... because we've had different ones called out of different areas and different groups and so forth. And so, I guess to wrap a little bit of this up, to make it a little more succinct we've had to make a decision of what to do in all of this.

All individuals in the future that come to us and let us know that they were baptized by Living, by United, by some scattered group out here of all the 500-600 different scattered groups that there are – although they may have had the ceremony, we'll ask them about the ceremony. "What did you repent of? Did you repent of not keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days? Did you start keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days? Did you change your life accordingly?" And if they did accordingly and they, in their own mind is what they were doing before God, it's just a longer span of time before they actually had hands layed upon them...but they must have hands layed upon them by God's ministry. And so that's what will happen in the future. Every individual that's had that happen to them. And so even out here we have 4-5 who have had such baptisms and I'm going to go back a little bit more here in a moment, that need to have hands layed upon them, although I believe with all my being they've already received the impregnation of God's spirit. It's kind of like the situations back in Acts where they still had to follow through with a part of the ceremony because it's what God gave and it's something we must be in unity with and agreement with – this is how God does it. So it's just a matter of a formality with the few that we have, 4-5. So those of you I'm talking about today, just go and talk to your elder, he'll explain it to you, he'll lay hands upon you explaining that by all means we understand as a whole you've already received the impregnation of God's spirit. I fully believe that – okay? But we must go through the formality *now* and especially in the sense of the future. Do you understand what I'm saying? The ministry does and they're the ones that must, by all means, but I hope that everyone understands what I'm saying... those of you who've been around for a long time. And if others of you have questions, you can ask some of the ministers.

But we had to make another decision then along the way there and we talked about the scattering that took place and the 3½ years we went through in the Church where Satan, as it talks about in Revelation, couldn't bother the Church. God protected us during that period of scattering until we were reorganized by Pentecost of 1998. We weren't brought back together yet and so the Church was scattered in a massive way. What about people who were baptized at that period of time in different places and different organizations and stuff? I made a decision that only those in Global and United will be accepted as far as the hands layed upon individuals by ministers in those groups because they were a

scattered ministry at that time. Those who went off and did other things by and of themselves we're not recognizing. They were cut off for different things that had taken place in the first place, different sins and so forth. And we'll even go back a little bit farther. Anyone ever had hands layed upon them by Philadelphia will not be recognized, and I hope we understand why. His is a different situation – Flurry, and some of them – because the moment he did what he did when he left the Church he was cut off from God's spirit – and probably long before that – because he was a false prophet from the very beginning so he had no authority to lay hands upon anyone. Does all this make sense to people why we must lay hands on different ones and so forth? And so anyone who has any questions like that – that that might have happened to – we only have 2-3 – then ask your elder and as a whole, as I said, I understand you've all received the impregnation of God's spirit, but we must go through with the formality of laying hands upon you by the ministry and praying the same prayer that we mentioned here.

So, we have to do that and thankfully if this had happened in a larger way God would have had us address this a long time ago, but we're entering into a period of time where this is going to begin happening in a larger way because a lot of people out here who have an understanding of the Sabbath, the Holy Days, certain things that are going to happen with Europe... When they have had anything that came from Mr. Armstrong as a whole, through Mr. Armstrong, because of the Worldwide Church of God, because of God raising him up to be an apostle at the end-time... the knowledge of those things that people have received as far as knowledge is concerned – there's going to be a lot of them who come along. There's going to be a lot of them come along because God is drawing and working with a lot of them – they just haven't been brought all the way to His Church yet. And I hope we understand that. They have a great advantage; those that are going to be able to be brought to humility. There are some in the larger groups that are going to have a tougher time, but we also understand that there are going to be certain ones who were part of us before 1994 who are going to come along. That's why I want to go on with some of the things of the sermon here... but if you have any questions about it just ask an elder or ask one of us at any time and we'll be glad to talk to you about it; but we're doing these things primarily because we have to be organized to be at one with what we do in the future and a lot of people aren't going to have to be re-baptized but they're going to have to have hands layed upon them because that's where the authority comes from, that's where God acknowledges the giving of His holy spirit to someone – is through an active ministry who truly are His ministers - not someone who's been cut off from Him. That's why if you go back and read Mr. Armstrong's Autobiography and you read about his baptism, he was baptized with the right words, he was convicted of the right things, but his laying on of hands and his receiving an impregnation of the spirit was another matter...had to come from the Church, from a minister within the Church and it did come – see? Interesting when we understand how those things work.

So again, this brings us back to the ministry that God has been giving to the Church through His Son Jesus Christ. I thought I'd mention this – 59 associate elders have been added to the Church, and only one of them who has not yet had the ordination itself take place, but they've been told. And I thought I'd mention this brings us to a total of the ministry now to over 100. I thought I'd mention too that this could easily multiply by 7 times in a very short period of time. How? By those whom God calls back to share in who've been a part before 1994 because God is going to begin drawing people back and there are going to be individuals there that have been trained, moulded and fashioned and when they come to repentance, like every one of us has that have had to come to a point in time where we had to acknowledge, "I was asleep. I sinned. I let down." And when they do that and they're brought back up to this point in time and understand where they are... it's an awesome thing that takes place in the mind

and very quickly so when God has a desire for that. 700 ministers out here before long? I believe it's going to happen and we only need 100 to baptize several hundred thousand people. Amazing!

As I was preparing this sermon and looked at the numbers added to the ministry I was rather surprised to see that the number came forward to 70, which is inspiring, not that it means anything at this point in time but it was inspiring because of the timing of the sermon and as it came together here and so forth, because we've had three more added since that time. Ordinations are going to continue on and continue on.

Let's turn over to **Luke 10** – I hope you're inspired, I hope you're excited about what God is doing because we're blessed to share in it. We're blessed to share in everything that God does. We're blessed to be able to receive the kind of understanding we do. I think back often upon matters of how through time, of a few whom God has worked with in 6,000 years; and that's an awesome thing in itself to understand; to be a part of something that 1 in 144,000... every individual is called. 1 in 144,000 – in 6,000 years. It's such an awesome thing to grasp and comprehend. To grasp and comprehend where all those of you who are new that are coming along who are at the beginning of something that God is doing in a grand way, in a great way, in an awesome way – greater than any other time in human history – to be a part of it; to share in it; to understand and look back in time that people haven't been blessed to know and understand the things that we know. We've been given so much, we truly have and if we can grasp the excitement of what God is doing now, the excitement that God has and you're able to share in that excitement...to be excited about the ones that are going to be added to the Family because God's excited about His Son coming...and is going to have a great Church waiting for Him. If you understand the first coming and what John the Baptist did on a small scale and to understand what God is doing now on a much larger scale will give you great understanding of some of the things about God and why God is doing what He does and how He's doing it.

Luke 10:1 - because of the timing and because of the number that has recently been ordained this came to mind and I thought it'd be good to go through this today in the sermon. **Verse 1 – after these things the Lord appointed seventy others also**, in other words, in addition to the disciples, **and sent them by pairs before Him into every city and place, where He Himself was going**. So they went ahead of time, different areas, before Jesus Christ would go there and they had a job to do, certain things that God gave them at that time to do. Awesome, inspiring...and so many right now are being prepared, given a job in advance, being told of what that job is and when it comes time...going to be a lot be accomplished. **Therefore He said unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few:** you know what God does through few... a lot. And that's the lesson in all this. God will provide exactly what is needed as it's needed and when it's needed, but to understand how God is building the Church, how God is growing the Church, making increase in the Church – that we're at that pinnacle in time now where the entire world is going to have the opportunity to become a part of the Church: an awesome thing. **Therefore He said unto them, the harvest truly is great**, see, we're at a time when the harvest is at the *greatest*. There's never been a time in 6,000 years where it was time to harvest in such a massive way and this is what we're talking about. We understand there's going to come a *greater* one later on when you talk about the Great White Throne. We look forward to that! All of us in God's Church through time...we look forward to that because we learn something so important; that everyone we've ever known who's died, who's not been a part of the Church, is going to be resurrected at that time to be given opportunity to live in a body, in a life a second time. And so indeed, the harvest is going to be awesomely great at that time and the work of 1,000 years is about preparing for that one. Do we have that vision that the work of 1,000 years on this earth is about preparing for the Great White Throne? Because that's exactly what it is. All those who are going to become a part of the Family of God who can

be in the Family of God, who can help the billions who have died and are going to have opportunity to live this time with the truth, to be in God's Church. I marvel at how God does things and what He does and the plan He has. It's awesome!

So He said, **The harvest truly is great but the labourers are few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.** See, God lets us be a part of it. We get to share in it. It's a matter of reflection of where our heart is, what do we desire, do we want to share in those things that God said will come to pass? And if we have desire for different ones, or if we have desire for different situations... I've had desire for a long time for several thousand people to come along. I've had desire for a long time waiting in anticipation who some of those are going to be that I know. I am immensely looking forward to some of those that I've walked to God's house side by side and council blended sweet who have gone asleep or have even turned against the Church – that God brings back. It's going to be an exciting time and all of us who are a part of God's Church now who were baptized before 1994, there are going to be some who you know that are going to come back. Every one of you is going to know someone who's going to be brought back. I have longed for that for a long, long time and I also long for the Great White Throne of hundreds that I know, hundreds and hundreds and probably into a few thousand that are going to be in the Great White Throne and I look forward to seeing them again because except for the grace of God – there go I. It's only because God has given us the opportunities He has that we are here and they're not. God can call whomever He will and if He's called you then you have an opportunity that is immense indeed and it's because of what God is doing...not because we're great; and on the contrary, if we understand, it's because we're *not* very great, it's because of what we are and then God's going to make it very clear what He's able to accomplish in vessels like me and you. We become greater through time because He moulds and fashions us. I'm not the same person I was back in 1994; I'm not the same person I was back in 1995; I'm not the same person I was back in 1998 when the Church began. God makes us stronger and stronger and stronger and He moulds and fashions things into us that can never be except that God does it and it's an awesome thing to experience and to be a part of.

So God's going to do what God is going to do and this is about sharing in that. **Verse 3 - Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.** I'm excited because that's getting ready to change. What was happening back then is not what is happening now. What they experienced back then, the disciples and different ones, and the 70, and as time went along once Jesus Christ died and was resurrected and once the Church began, the things that were happening back then and how they were functioning is not how we're functioning now and not what we're preparing for now. We're different. We're going through different things. **Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.** As you go out there and different ones you're going to work with...sometimes there's going to be good reception in the world and sometimes there's going to be bad but more and more we're going to be given more and more blessings, authority and power. And when God intends for 500 to be baptized in a day by you He's going to make it possible and He's going to give you the protection that's needed. He's going to give you the help that's needed. No one's going to be able to stop you. If it's God's will and God's purpose it be done and it *is God's will and purpose* that it be done. You're going to marvel at some of the things that are going to take place in your lives. Things that are going to be written about in this book. This book is going to be added to – see? The book of Acts isn't finished.

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatever house you enter, so here are the 70; this is what was given to them that was unique to them. It says, and whatever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: and if not, it shall return to you again. So, all these things had to do with how they're

going to be received and how they were to respond and what they were to do and how they were to do it. **And if they'll receive, it says, in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give:** God is going to take care of His, those that He has a job for to accomplish and do. ...**for the labourer is worthy of his hire.** In other words, when God takes care of you you're taken care of. It's not something you have to worry about. **Go not from house to house;** in other words, wherever you're being taken care of and God's opened that door...that's what He's telling them, that's what He was showing them. **And into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The Kingdom of God is come near unto you.** There are going to be some similarities between some of this, of what I'm telling you today, and some of the things that are going to take place in the future – see? And there's something we learn in this through time; and it doesn't take very long. If God's working someplace you know it and if He's not you know that too because if someone is of the same mind as you, you know it quickly, and if they're not of the same mind as you, you know that quickly. And God's going to sharpen more and more the Church, the ministry especially, to be able to perceive and understand those things.

But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, go your way out in the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaves on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be sure of this, that the Kingdom of God has come near to you. Amazing what Jesus Christ told them to say. Make sure that some hear this. Make sure that you say this. Make sure that you do this. Why? It's for our learning, it's for our inspiration, it's for our understanding of what God does and how God does it and it's for these people who heard it because one day they're going to get resurrected; it's going to all be brought back to them and that will be a lesson for others as well – stories that people learn from. The book of Acts – stories of things that God has done and how God has done it. They're inspiring. Your stories; how God has called you. That's why I enjoy hearing people's stories. How did you get called? What did God do in your life? What kind of a word search were you doing ON your computer? What popped up on your screen when you weren't even looking for it? What *kept* popping up on your screen and you weren't even looking for it? And after a while you just kind of... your attention was finally drawn to it. I've heard some incredible stories that have taken place. It's very clear here what God was doing. Amazing! When God is doing something and gives you an opportunity – get's your attention... He'll get your attention.

He went on to say, **But I say unto you, that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. Woe unto you, Chorazin! Woe unto you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.** Awesome what's being said here. You know, people are different. People in time are different; people in different situations. It's just like some of the scattered groups out here. I feel for some of the ones in some of the larger groups who are deep asleep right now. It's going to be very difficult for some of them to be drawn out, but God's going to draw certain number out; but it's very hard for them because they're so set in their ways and it's going to be very difficult for them as I mentioned here in a sermon not too long ago. It's interesting to think about and see what's happening in Europe right now, to see what's happening in Greece, and to see what's happening in Germany, to see what's happening in Spain and Italy and you put all these countries together and you see a pattern of certain things and people taking sides in different things with one another and against others and you see a frustration developing. And you can see something that can so quickly happen because what seems to move people most? Money, or the lack of it. What causes people to be stirred up sometime and rebel and turn against government's more than anything else? Because it boils down to what you're able to feed your family, what you're able to do, what you can't do and we live in that world today where we're so close to the brim, where things can happen so quickly and they're only being

sustained by one reason, or unable to continue on for one reason and it has to do with God's timing and what God is doing and one day we'll understand all that, it'll all come together.

But we see a pattern... when you watch the news, you look at certain things take place, you see certain things coming together and it's awesome to be able to sit back, in a sense, and to view and to know what's taking place. It's so easy today compared to what it was 2 years ago, or 4 years ago, or even a year ago, to see the frustration that is so built up in Europe that it's quite easy to see how, when it finally comes down to it, that 10 nations, 10 leaders are going to have reached their limit and the only answer they see is *that they do something about it* – that they finally have to take charge...*that they're never going to have an Europe that's united*. They're never going to have it the way they're currently going about it and they're going to have to do something and become united themselves and be in agreement and it says, give power to the whole. And then it's very quick after that they regret what they did, but it's too late. Once you've done what you've done it's too late. But they're going to do it one day because of the exasperation, because of the frustration...and who will those countries be?

There are two large church organizations that came out of Worldwide and that even when those 10 countries of Europe come together; they will not accept it being who they are or what it is because it doesn't fit into their framework. Because there was a minister a long time ago who was an evangelist who began to teach about two different legs of a statue and the clay and the iron mingled together and the 10 toes... and 5 being in the west and 5 being in the east... and oh, it makes so much sense doesn't it. Because doesn't the statue have two legs and don't they kind of... but I think of who *gave* that sermon as well, first time I heard it, and I believe it was at the Feast of Tabernacles in Tucson, Arizona when I heard it... if my memory serves me correctly. Dr. Hoeh, the same who very early on began to teach 14/15th to the Church, who very early on taught ministers that Jesus Christ might have just suffocated. If He suffocated then, like my wife has had conversation before in times past with someone who was a part of the ministry...and she mentioned of how God didn't tell us that we're to *choke* the neck of the lamb to suffocate it. You're to take a knife and kill it and the blood is to fall out to the earth because God's word is true. The Lamb of God was to spill His blood to the earth, not suffocate on a stake, on a pole. That wouldn't fulfill the role of the Passover if His blood didn't spill to the earth.

And so that same man who taught those things is so deeply imbedded in those 5 toes and one set of Europe and 5 toes in another that when it comes to pass it might be a little tough if some of those toes happened to be nations like Luxembourg and France and Belgium and be a part of nations of scattered Israel. That doesn't quite fit into everybody's scenario, does it? You think that can't happen? You know where the capital of the EU is? Do you know where some of the great sentiment is of Europe? It comes as much from there as it does from Germany. They have as great a desire to be one...France, Belgium, Luxembourg, maybe even Switzerland – Gad, some of those nations? And how would some of the scattered church feel if those things happened? It's just one of those things right now... something else later will happen and maybe the 10 will come out of something else later on but this can't be it. You think that can't happen, where some of them are so deeply fighting and resisting what God is giving about a scattering of the Church that they wouldn't think that and it would be much harder, much more difficult for them... into the 5th Trumpet... the 6th Trumpet...to still say it can't be and refuse what's right in front of them that they should be hearing and listening to? Sad. But something like that has to happen so that they refuse. Because you think of what's going to take place and what's been said... you'd think the entire Church would respond and come back. The vast majority is not going to come back. God has to *draw* them out, awaken them out of sleep; there's no other way.

And so again here, people are different, people who would do different things at different times; and the reason I'm mentioning some of this is because even here in different eras of time people in society would have responded differently because of different things that would have happened around them. As He said, they would have repented long before...sitting in sackcloth and ashes. God knows that about them. God knows the mind of every human being in any period of time in human history. It's an awesome thing to understand. That's why I feel like we're a little bit on the doorstep of understanding some other things in a very great way too, that God knows those who've committed the unpardonable sin who've never received His holy spirit, because he knows that they would never receive His spirit and use it and change; they so loathe, their minds are so twisted and distorted that it wouldn't do any good to bring them to baptism. You can't force people into baptism. God will not force His way upon a human being and *make* them... Is that what God wants? Is that how God's going to do it? God doesn't work that way, does He? Incredible!

Going on it says, **But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.** Do you understand why? Because their minds are already the way they are. Their minds are already set in a certain way of thinking. One day they're going to be resurrected. Do you know the ones who are going to be responding more quickly, repenting more deeply? Faster? When the Great White Throne takes place it's not going to be a cake walk...as much as the Millennium won't be as we sometimes have thought. There's going to be a lot of work to do and in time complacency's going to begin setting in and lukewarmness and lethargy and a Laodicean spirit... even though it's not Laodicea. That same spirit is going to begin entering in because it's going to become commonplace with people to be around the God family, to see them on the earth. That's how they're going to grow up. That's their norm! To us that seems astounding and astonishing! And after a while lethargy begins to come in. And so people are different at different times and people who are resurrected in the Great White Throne...there are going to be those who respond quickly, repent quickly and others who aren't going to respond as quickly. It's going to take more time, they're going to have to go through some more before they get where they need to be.

Verse 15 - And you, Capernaum, which have been exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell. He who hears you hears Me; that's an important thing to understand. That's why the entirety of the website is set up the way it is...that's why everything is set up in the way it is and how people come in contact with the Church...some things that some of you have gone through. Some of you, sometimes, have become a little frustrated with how it's set up because it takes a little while and we live in an age where we want quick answers and we want quick responses and we want this and we want that and we realize no, there's a format of something you have to go through until you're to a certain point in time and when you're there – we'll know it. That's why you're here; you come to a point where you're finally baptized. And so even for the ministry and for the things that are going on with how the website is set up and how people are brought into the Church...because it all comes back to this. If you're being drawn by God and you're responding to God, you will do what God says. It's very simple. If you want this way and you want it bad enough you will fight for it, you will work for it. And if you're not willing to fight for it then neither should you receive it. And that's something to carry with you. All who are new – remember that. You've got to fight for this all the way through – what you're in right now – all the way through to the end.

He who hears you hears Me; so what is the message especially to those who are going into some of the things that are going out here in the future and working with different ones that are coming along? Don't spend any time in trying to convince anyone of this way of life. Don't waste any time with anyone who is not convicted, who is not *wanting you* and being drawn to you, who desires you because they

believe what you believe and they want to hear more. Don't waste time with anyone. That's what the message is. That's what the message is now at this time for all who are going out in the ministry and doing things you're going to be doing and baptizing different ones. When God calls someone; when He opens up the mind you know it. **He who hears you hears Me; and he who despises you despises Me; and he who despises Me despises Him who sent Me.** The point being is it all goes back to God. It's about God. It's not about us. We're blessed to be a part in sharing and have an opportunity in that; but those whom God calls will want God and they'll want God's way of life.

Verse 17 - And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through your name. They were dumbfounded by some of the things they had experienced, and there are going to be many of you who are going to be dumbfounded by the things you experience. But learn the lesson here of what God is showing as well. **And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.** Now, some would look at this and say, "Oh, there He is... He lived a long time ago." That's not what it's talking about, it's not what He is saying. If that's someone's notion then that's what they'll read into it, just like so many things in scripture. Amazing! So knowing His true identity, we know that's not what this is saying. A more correct translation in the Greek language... **He says, "I have beheld Satan, as lightening he has fallen from heaven."** Do you know why He said these things? Do you know what the context of the story is here? It's incredible... let's go on and get the rest of the context. He says, **Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all power of the enemy:** Satan, the demons... *He* gave that power to them through *His* authority to the 70. It's an awesome thing to understand what He's saying here because He beheld Satan. Remember what happened at the very beginning, before His ministry began? And because of what He went through, because of what He did, He defeated Satan. It had to be this way. It had to be done this way. He had to go through what He did. He had to talk to and resist and go through what He did for the 40 days there that He fasted...and He conquered Satan by what He went through, and by what He did and God gave Him all authority to conquer Satan, to defeat Satan. Satan had no power over Him whatsoever. It was made very clear from the very get go, before the ministry even began.

And so He's passing this along and He's saying, "This power is yours. He has no power over you." Now in the world we understand that they can make things kind of tough for you sometimes; God allows different battles to take place out here, but the power to fully go through it and conquer and defeat is given. It's been given to the Church; it's been given to the ministry of the Church to do the things they have to do as well and the things that are coming.

So he says, **Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy:** Why? It says, because **I beheld Satan, I stood before Satan – he strove to defeat Me, to conquer Me. He was not able to and all power is now given to you.** Incredible, or **this power is given unto you, I should say; ...and nothing shall by any means hurt you.**

Now even as we look at the 70 here and what they went out to do and certain things that took place to them...even within the Church in the ministry as time went along; look at what some went through, look at what Paul went through. And I'm not kidding when I talk about this sometimes. We think about this often times when we're travelling if we begin to think that something is tough, perhaps because a flight has been delayed and you have to sit in the airport for 5 more hours, or 6 more hours and you've been flying and getting off and on and whatever it might be and if you begin to have the least little bit of inkling there, "I feel bad, I feel..." and kind of stops there and you think... "Whoa... wouldn't they have loved to have the luxury we have to have a five hour layover someplace...in a nice warm place where you can go get food. And when they're out there following a mule, or whatever, walking beside

one...and walking wherever they have to go and here we have to fly on cushioned seats..." Think about the early Church; think about what they went through. You think about Paul; shipwrecked, bobbing around for a whole day or so in the Mediterranean... I've never had to experience hard things like that and neither have you and you know he understood he was God's minister and he just continued to go forward. Does that mean that at times you're not going to have some tough things to go through and that sometimes some things are going to be thrown at you? Absolutely! But you keep going forward. You all experience that in your life. Right now you're experiencing some of those things in your lives.

This is not an easy time to go through. Right now, because of the economy in this country a lot of people are suffering in God's Church. A lot of people aren't going to be able to come together for a full 8 days at the Feast this year because they can't afford to. You may only be able to come for one day; some of you may not even be able to come for one day; you may not be able to afford to do so, but you're going to keep all 8 days because we've learned how to keep all 8 days; that you keep all 8 days no matter what. If you're by yourself in your own home you can keep the Sabbath and you can keep the High Day and you can keep the Holy Days. See, some of you are going through some hard times – we understand that, I understand that. God has not called you at an easy time, but I'll guarantee you if you look at everything think of how much worse it could be right now than what you have it. We're very blessed to be able to meet together today in a room where we can actually turn down the temperature because it was getting hot in here and to have such luxury. It's an incredible thing to understand what we've been given and how blessed we are. So are you suffering? Do you go through things? Absolutely... but you fight for this way of life and you keep going forward no matter how hard things become sometimes... with family members; some of you are going through some horrible trials sometimes. All for a purpose, all for a reason, for your learning, your training, your moulding and fashioning and sometimes for the training of others later on as they look back and see what others did and how they did things.

So Jesus Christ gave some very important things here when He told them these things and they came back and were talking about, **even the demons are subject to us by Your name**. And so He told them why, how that was possible because of what He did. He said; **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven**. That was His fall. That was the beginning of Satan's fall. Do we understand what Mr. Armstrong was blessed to give to the Church? Do we understand the story of what happened with Lucifer and what happened when He rebelled against God and that government and authority of this earth was given to him for a time and we're getting close to the time where that's going to be taken away, that God fulfills things to a point in time exactly as His word says and there is one who has come that has usurped that authority, taken that authority away from him, in that essence, because of what He went through, Jesus Christ, of what has been given to Him now, the Son of God. And so that's why He made the comments here, **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven**. He saw his downfall because Jesus Christ is the one that's going to receive the government over this earth...but He hasn't received it yet; hasn't come yet, He hasn't returned yet, but its coming. It's a process of bringing the whole earth into subjection, into unity and order.

And it goes on to say here, **Notwithstanding do not rejoice in this, that all this power has been given to you**; We have to be careful – God's ministry, God's Church, members in God's Church...you have to be careful how you think about what you have been given in the sense of, don't allow yourself to be lifted up by it, don't begin to think of yourself more importantly than you should. Don't begin to look down upon others who don't have the same thing in your community or whatever because *you* have understanding. Don't look down upon others who don't and especially when you're given more responsibility or more authority and various things as time goes along – *don't take it to yourself* as

though it's because of how good you are...a person can be lifted up by that. God says, "Don't do that." He says, **Notwithstanding do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject unto you;** because that will lead you down the wrong path. It'll lead you down to exactly what I've mentioned here – self being lifted up with pride. I've seen so many people fall because of pride, because of this very thing. The entire Church of Laodicea fell because of this very thing, if we understand. We became rich and increased with goods; we lifted ourselves up in our understanding of what we thought we had and we didn't have it.

Notwithstanding do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Kind of what I mentioned earlier. *How awesome is it* that of 6,000 years of people, how few there have been and you have this opportunity to be a part, to be called at this time – because there are billions on this earth...if they understood; if they were given the ability to see and understand what you've been given... they would latch onto it with all their being. People in countries that have nothing that would be able to be easily humbled; it's just that that's not how God's working at this time. It's like some of this, what it said earlier; they would have repented and they would have come along, and they would have changed, and they would have had a response to God that would have been greater sometimes than what we would do with what we have.

Verse 21 - In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Your sight. It's a beautiful thing because it goes back to things having to do with humility, meekness and attitude of spirit; and that's what He's saying here. *These* were willing to respond to God in an attitude of humility and meekness and receive what Christ gave to them.

All things...All things are delivered Me of My Father: and a great deal of that came at the time He said what He did, "I saw, I beheld Satan fall." Powerful! ...**and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. And He turned to His disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see:** It's good for us to think about that...think about what you see; understand how blessed you are and what God has given to you. It's easy sometimes for us to begin thinking about what we don't have, what difficulties we're going through, the trials we have and the things that sometimes begin to occupy our mind so much so that if we're not careful it takes us away from our focus: God, the Church, prayer, being close to God, striving to draw closer to God, fighting for this way of life, understanding what blessings we have.

Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which you hear, and have not heard them. That's awesome, because there are many of the 144,000 that have lived in the past 2,000 years who desired to see more and understand more and grasp more about various things. It was not given to them. Sometimes we have and ask questions and the answer is... "Don't know. God'll reveal it to us in His time. Jesus Christ will give it to us when it's His time."

You have been given so much; I have been given so much; we in God's Church today have been given more than at any other time in history. Think about the blessings we have.

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