

We are going to continue today with *Part 2* of a new sermon series entitled *The Body of Christ*. I'm very inspired by this series because God has been showing that we're going to be able to continue to go into various things as a spinoff of what we have been covering since Passover. We need to grasp in a far greater way *what God has given to the Church!* ...where we are in time, how *blessed* we are because of what God has given to us and candidly, what is expected on a greater plane of God's people. We haven't always fared well in God's Church when it comes to understanding what it means to be *IN the Body of Christ!* What an *awesome* responsibility! What an *incredible* opportunity that God has given to us as His people.

You don't have to look very far to witness the ignorance of people. Look in the city we're in, look in the city you're in, look in society and look in the world – they don't know what you have! They don't have the hope you have! They don't comprehend what's going to happen in a couple of years! They don't have that belief, not even the scattered body - they think you're nuttier than a fruitcake! ...to believe something like that. "God says nobody knows the day or the hour so who do you think you are?" See, I know who I am. God has shown me over time who I am. He's shown you who you are to the depth of your conviction and your belief, your faith determines those things.

I'm dumbfounded sometimes when I now read certain things in the Bible about what certain ones were given and what they saw and what they believed regardless of what happened around them. It doesn't matter what happens around us. I've carried it through all the way in my mind in a very powerful way. *I HOPE that we're able to have a Feast of Tabernacles in 2011.* But you know if we do, there are going to be those out there who are going to be laughing louder and harder. I feel sorry for them. Still going to happen exactly as it's written – not the timing as to what we thought. That's already changed dramatically, *but the events are still going to come to pass* and God can put them in a package wherever He wants. There's certain things that have to happen (I don't want to get into some other sermons...) but there are certain things that have to happen in a 6 month period of time, we already know that, from the 5th Trumpet. And some ask, "What about the day, the month and the year or the year, month and day," where it talks about China and so forth. Well, there was a time when we kind of felt that maybe it had something to do with what Germany does when Germany does it, when Europe does what it does, but it could be something that precedes that by a month and a year and a day... or precedes some other point in time when they actually act and do what they do by a month and a year and a day. What they do may not last very long. What China and Russia do may not last very long and I truly hope and pray that be the case because what they do when they destroy a 1/3 of the earth with the magnitude of what they're going to do – nuclear weapons – how long does anyone in the world have to live through that? How long does that have to be around? How long do the effects of that have to be experienced before God brings it to an end when He intervenes? A year? A week? Could it happen that it only be for a week? ...or a few days that they actually have any power whatsoever and destroy what they're going to destroy and then God says, "No more! I'm going to destroy those who destroy the earth?" Well, we don't tell God what to do. We watch and we learn and we grow from what God reveals to us. God is all mighty and all powerful. An awesome thing!

And so as I was saying...sometimes within the Church we haven't fared real well when it comes to understanding what it means to be *in the Body of Christ*, the kind of responsibility and opportunity we have; because you're able to see and know things that others in the world don't know and sometimes

we don't grasp what we've been given, sometimes we don't really grasp the magnitude of that and what that means by our reaction in our lives of *what* we should be living! ...especially toward each other!

What did we experience, some of us sitting in this room, during Philadelphia which is stated in Matthew 24? "And the love of many shall wax cold." And it uses God's love, agape; and there's one reason that happens: because people aren't *IN* and don't stay *in* and remain *in* and continue and abide *in*, and continue to dwell in, live in, the Body of Christ. They go to Sabbath services, they pay their tithes, they go to the Feast of Tabernacles and they go through the motions of religion like others in the world do as well, *but God is not alive in them*. And there's a *gigantic* difference in that. The love of God comes from God and the only way you can experience that and have that coming in and through your life is by the power of God's spirit because God dwells in you. It's one thing to be impregnated with God's spirit, it's another thing to continue to grow and have the in-biding, the dwelling in of God's spirit in your life that continues to give you life and growth. It's a powerful thing to understand.

And so we have experienced within the Church the love of many waxing cold and the Church getting weaker and weaker and weaker until finally God just had to vomit us out of His mouth, out of His Body. What a horrible thing to understand what happened to us. And so sometimes if we're not careful we can go back and repeat some of the same kinds of things. It has so much more to do with what we're talking about here today. I'm very excited that we're able to continue on with the series of sermons; we're going to have a small pause here as we go into talking about Pentecost but then after that we're going to go back into a couple of series of sermons that still have to do with subjects relating to Jesus Christ, about the Church, about our relationships and all these things in a very powerful way with a great focus that God is giving to us, and giving us incredible opportunity to do so as we go through this to become stronger and stronger and stronger spiritually.

We're focusing on the deeper meaning of what it means to be *in* the Body of Christ and how that state of being involves the kind of *focus* we have or the *lack of it* when it comes to *walking in the spirit* instead of our normal state of walking in the flesh. That's how Paul describes it in one area. There are a lot of different ways of describing different things, but this is one way he describes it.

Let's pick up where we left off last Sabbath; **Ephesians 2**. If we could only grasp how important our relationships are, our minds and our attitude and the way we treat other people in the Church and outside the Church. It is so powerful, so incredible if we can truly grasp and see the importance of that; because in so many ways that's what it all boils down to. God is love and if He dwells in us it's going to come through us and if He's not dwelling in us or we're letting self come through too much in our life, because we're not looking to God for that help to live that way. It's a night and day difference, isn't it?

Ephesians 2:1 - And you who were dead in trespasses and sins, that's what God says our state is, the state of the world, until someone is drawn and called and able to have their sins forgiven them. Until that, people are dead in trespasses and sins, that's the penalty. It is a reality. No one gets by with anything. God sees all, God knows all in our life.

Verse 2 - Because in times past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, in other words we just lived as everybody else lived in the world – carnal human nature, giving in, giving power to Satan, giving power to a demonic world *over us*. That's what we do when we sin. We no longer are yielding ourselves to protection and favour and blessings from God and protection from Him, on the contrary, we take our selves out of the way of that, even within the Church if we're not careful. But especially in the world, they don't even have a choice. And so Paul's

talking about some of those things; and so what we have done in the past we can go back to doing if we're not careful, **walking according** as it says here, **the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, in the spirit that is even now working in the children of disobedience**: in other words, that's just the way the world is. That spirit is out there and sin gives them power; power to deceive, power to have far greater influence in your life, to harass you, to broadcast to you. But when you're blessed with God's spirit dwelling in you and the stronger that spirit is and that mind is the less power they have and the more they're going to flee away from you. They can't stand being around God and God's spirit.

Look at what happened to the Church when we came to a point of being spewed out. I still remember sitting in the front row of a school auditorium in the Toledo area, actually in Temperance, Michigan, and a wave coming through the place as a minister got up there and started preaching. This happened after I had already resigned from the ministry and they brought in an old pastor who had accepted all of the 'new' teachings hook, line, and sinker, very much so... and as he started speaking, and continued to speak, it was as though a wave went through the audience. Power, there was a spirit there, that's what I'm talking about when I talk about a wave. There was a power that was very evident that sucked people in immediately, powerfully so; power, signs and lying wonders. I experienced it and several of you here experienced that and several of you listening today experienced that occasion when the apostasy began. Incredible what we experienced! Demonic spirits and the power of demonic spirits influencing people because they're cut off from God now. A dangerous game that we sometimes play as human beings, it truly is, that's why it's so important to repent *quickly*, to seek to be of the same mind with God, to seek help to be of a sound mind, a balanced mind. And that comes from God.

Among whom also we all had our conduct, that word 'conversation' is used so often in the King James because generally it comes out in our conversation; but it's about conduct, it's the way we act. There are certain things that can happen in our actions, our expressions, the way we treat others, what we do, how we act in this world, but it has to do with conduct, and sometimes that conduct sadly comes out of our mouths as well, it most certainly does eventually to show where we're really coming from, what we really think, what's really in our mind. **Among whom also we had our conduct in times past**, along with the rest of the world, **in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind**; in other words in our thinking and how we think...**and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others**. When it talks about the 'children of wrath', that word 'wrath' that's used over and over again by Paul, the way it's translated in the King James, has to do with the death penalty. It has to do with the wrath of God on disobedient human beings because they won't repent, because they won't change, because they don't live by the way of God. And so the wrath is the death penalty that eventually they have to pay. And so that 'wrath' that they're going to have to pay in time, God's judgement is upon them, upon all human beings, and the wrath of God is that you die because of sin if you choose sin, if you don't choose God, if you don't choose to be at one with God. It's a simple choice – the answer is death if you don't choose God. But people don't believe it. They eventually will.

Verse 4 - But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, we can only grasp that to the degree we continue to draw closer to God. The ability to really see God's mercy... you have to be given God's spirit and then you have to grow in it; and you actually grow in grasping and comprehending God's mercy. It's an awesome thing, it truly is; His patience with us, His love that He's given to us, what He's offered us, what He's placed before us. Incredible! **But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us...** How merciful are we to others? It's going to depend on our love toward them, isn't it? God's love living in us toward them. Sometimes we as human beings aren't too merciful, we truly aren't; but if we have God's spirit in us and we understand how God has

dealt with us and we learn how to judge righteous judgement and we grow in that we too will grow in the qualities of grace. Grace is an awesome subject to go into in the Bible because it includes all the things that God gives to us that we don't deserve. His love, when He starts pouring out His love upon us. He's not pouring out His love upon the world. He is to the Church; He is to you at this point in time. He can't love the world yet. His desire is to love all mankind, but He has a plan in how He's going to accomplish that. But when He begins to pour out that love and give you mercy and give you the opportunity to be drawn to Him, the opportunity to come out of slavery and the process that begins in you is an awesome process and it's a lifelong process; God begins to pour out His love, patience, mercy, the time He gives, the forgiveness of sin, all those things that God gives to us.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He has loved us even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us; so we were dead along with the rest of the world until finally we came to a point where God brought us to that which we could be forgiven of our sins and, as it says here, **has quickened us/made us alive along with/in Christ**, finally we have a life, truly, if we understand it; a life that God has given to us that is with His spirit, not just a physical breathing life, now there is a life in us that is growing to the point in time where it can be into eternity. And so there's that process. That's what this word means here, **has quickened us/made us alive**, with a life that is spiritual and goes way beyond that which is physical, but it's going to be reflected in the physical things we do.

So again here, **when we were dead in our sins He has quickened us/He has made us alive**. He gave us the impregnation of His spirit through the forgiveness of sin, hands were laid upon us, we were given the impregnation of His spirit and we began to grow as in a womb, and *then* we begin to have choices to make. Are we going to continue to desire to be fed, whether or not that umbilical cord, that spiritual life, continues to come in us is something in our hands? God has opened the door but it's up to us if the life continues to flow into us, like an umbilical cord – that's on our part. God's already opened up the door and made the life possible, **quickened us/made us alive**, but whether we stay alive and whether we're able to grow and to what degree we grow depends upon us and our choices and how we yield ourselves to God and how much we're wanting to fight and resist and conquer and overcome what we are! *You can't change the world! God has only given you power to CHANGE YOURSELF! And that's what we have to learn! We can only change self* and that's the beginning of a changing of the world but so often in life *we try to change others around us*. We do! We work at that! People get married and they try to *change* the one they married; going to make them different than what they were; "Yeah, we'll work on that after we get married." It's a common thing that happens in the world. It happens in the Church! No you don't, you change yourself! That's all you have control and power over and hopefully the other persons going to be doing the same thing. It doesn't always work that way does it? That's life! And so we work to change self! That's the greatest power God has given you in life. It is an awesome power because that determines how much we grow and conquer and overcome and how much of God can live through us to the benefit of others.

Grace! As I started to mention and talk about, that which you receive from God; when you start living that toward others then you understand and you're living grace. God's grace isn't something we're to receive selfishly, the forgiveness of sin. On the contrary, just in that area alone, we're to learn how to forgive others; that we don't have the *right* to hold onto anything *against* others. We learn that through time spiritually. Awesome! Patience with others. God is so patient with us! He's been so *patient* with me! Blows my mind sometimes when I think about it because I see my human nature and I loathe it, I am *sick* of my human nature. I'm *sick* of the nature and sometimes I have to fight a battle then because I don't like the nature of others either, the human nature. Sometimes it's getting so much; and maybe it

isn't getting so much worse in the world, maybe I'm just seeing it more and more. I know it's getting worse in the world but I'll tell you, the more you grow the more you see it in the world and it's a battle.

I mention some of the most simplest of things sometimes. It happens all the time; have to watch myself. It blows my mind! You're walking down a sidewalk that was made extra *wide* and 4 people, 5 people are walking abreast on it and here you come - my wife and I walking and nobody will get over. You think, "Something's wrong with this picture! *5 of you are coming toward me, just 2 of us coming toward you...* And you know what we do? We get behind each other and you won't even begin to move until you get right there!" One guy hit my shoulder the other day; my wife was behind me. I wasn't going to go slam myself up against the wall, "Okay, now you can get by (gasp)." We connected shoulders. Think... what a sick, sick world! But that's in everything in the world. You see that multiplied so many times over in attitude. Nobody cares about each other; but we're supposed to care about others and something's wrong with us if we don't. They don't have what you have yet, do they? Be thankful you're not still there; as stupid and as selfish as they are. Because they don't know that they're that selfish, they don't see themselves.

What a blessing that God has blessed you to see yourself, but sometimes we can misuse that 'power' because it is *power*; and you can misuse it to begin to judge others unrighteously and you can begin to mistreat them because you think they should know better! And we try to change them then. You don't change anybody! All you can do is change yourself and yield to the law, the way of life, the spirit of God that's in you. You just keep getting over. Isn't that amazing? You just keep moving over to the side and every time you're reminded of the blessings you have and of what God has given to you that they don't have. They're in captivity. They're in a horrible state, but you've been freed, and you have opportunity. *Most* of them aren't even going to be able to live into a new age. Sad. And you get to. Where's the fairness in that? It's God's choice, isn't it, to determine what He gives and to whom He gives it and when He gives it. But His plan is in time to give it to everyone. So much to learn brethren, so much to learn, but it's so hard for us to keep focused on self; that this where the *change* has to take place, not on others.

And then sometimes within the Church we can really be challenged even more so in some of those things because *then* we begin to think, "*They should know better!! They didn't treat me right! They didn't speak to me properly.*" No, just keep changing self, keep working on yourself. Don't judge others. Those in the Church are God's servants, they're not yours. None of you are mine. We all belong to God and Jesus Christ. We don't belong to each other. We're God's servants, the servants of Jesus Christ, if we understand.

This has so much to do then with how we treat others and how we think toward others and so forth, on and on it goes. ...**(by grace are you saved;)** says so much, but sometimes we read through something like that and we don't have the slightest inkling what it really means; they're just words. I've just explained a part of that in a very small way, **(by grace you're saved;)** and if we receive it, it's to live through us to others, being patient with others, forgiving, kind, merciful, patient – all those qualities, sacrificing, *loving*. When you love others, especially in the world, you have to sacrifice self; you have to sacrifice *self's* wants, what self desires. *My desire*, when I meet someone like that is that they'd get over, but if they don't, *I must sacrifice and I must watch MY attitude and MY mind toward them*, that I don't take anything out on them, or begin to think *ill* of them; but on the contrary, have mercy upon them and grasp and comprehend how thankful I am, how blessed I am to have received what I have received and look forward to the day they can receive it as well, when we're going to be in the same

Family, when we're going to have the same feelings one toward another, when people are going to have that kind of consideration for each other.

Verse 6 - And has raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly (places), 'places' isn't in the Bible, it's not in the Greek word. It just means 'the source of it, where it comes from', in other words, 'in the spiritual purpose originating from heaven'. That's what it's talking about, **sit together in that which originates from heaven, from God's throne**, because that's where God is and Jesus Christ are; **in/through Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.** So again, all of us at different stages in life are going to have this opportunity, as a whole, except for those who've committed the unpardonable sin. God knows whom He can call and whom He cannot call because their mind is already distorted and chosen in a perverted distorted way. Some, who've been given opportunity and turned against God, don't want God, will not receive His way of life no matter how many times they might be brought to repentance for a little while, and feel bad for a little while; but their mind is seared. They have no desire for God's word, for God's way of life.

Verse 8 - For by grace you are saved through faith; What do you believe? What do you live? See, faith has to do with what you believe and then because of what you believe, with God's help, you strive to live it, because the truth has been given to you in your mind about a way of life and all the truths we have – we then live it, whether it has to do with the law, the way of life in relationships or whether it have to do with the *fact that we understand May 27, 2012 Jesus Christ returns to this earth.* It's just a reality as much as the sun comes up in the morning. We live by that. Everything we decide to do, everything we plan is based on that. *I hope that is the case...*for everybody in God's Church, because if it isn't you have things to examine in your life; something's *wrong upstairs in your thinking* if you don't have that kind of *conviction and that kind of mindset!* Because how we live our lives is determined by what we *believe* and then we live it. That's what faith is. That's what faith is! It's a beautiful thing, faith, truly is! Awesome! Powerful! Mighty! And so that's what's being shown here. **For by grace you are saved through faith;** the patience that God continues to give us, the mercy He continues to give us, the forgiveness of sin He continues to give us – on and on it goes, the state of grace that we've been given once we are drawn and begin to be called into the Church and we're able to remain in that if we'll yield to God.

...and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: we didn't deserve any of it. No human being does! Was talking to an elder today about someone that was baptized and the individual was feeling that, in this particular case, that they were not worthy of baptism and so the minister told him, "You're not, nobody is." ...and we all have to come to that. But sometimes people hold back on baptism because they don't feel like they're worthy. Well, we know we're not worthy. No one *deserves* that, but it's a process. Because of different thinking that some have to go through in that particular point it takes some a time to address some of those things that have to be addressed. We all have to address different things before baptism and so it's a unique process that we all go through. And so this is, again, a part of what it's talking about here when **it's a gift of God:** we don't deserve it. God just offers it to us in His time for His purpose. We don't know what it is. I have no idea why... We don't know. All we can do is be thankful and respond with gratitude to God. Who are we? Who am I? I know what I am, I know who I am. Blows my mind, boggles my mind, not only to have been called but to be where I am at this point in time, for God to have given what He's given. I look back and I look at things we've gone through since the apostasy and I'm dumbfounded by it, but it's also made me who I am, given me the strength and so forth to be able to go through and do what's ahead. Awesome how God moulds and

fashions us, but it's for His purpose and by His design that we all fit into a Body, the Body of Christ. It's an awesome thing!

...**Not of works**, in other words there is nothing you can do to earn it, it's not by all the willpower in the world. Willpower sometimes just flat gets in the way because it becomes a matter of pride then for people. People who have a lot of willpower? They have a different problem that they have to battle a lot of times. It's a matter of *pride* because they know they can do certain things by willpower, because of strength of determining to do something and by their own will – not because of God's spirit, not because of conviction, not because of that which is worked in them to bring them to that point. Job had to address that. He was a man filled with pride, *full of sin*, but as far as the law was concerned...anyone look at his life, "he's living a righteous life." But *pride!* Pride has to be conquered, self has to be conquered. It doesn't matter how much of your own willpower you have. You must change because it's a matter of conviction. There are laws you can obey; there are some that we have battles in fighting because of our human nature; but the height of it all is when you're so convicted of God's word and what He says, that you're in agreement with Him that you will not sin. I think I used the example of cigarettes, using a very teeny infinitesimal physical thing regarding will power. But when we talk about bigger things in life that have to do with the mind and how we live and how we think – because we're *convicted* of it before God – *THAT* is a much higher plane, a much more exciting thing that takes place in our life. When you do what you do in obedience because you're *convicted* of it, it comes from the *conviction* because you're of the same mind with God because anything else would just be insanity, so you won't do it. And we all have to come to that. That's what we seek to come to in life in all of our convictions before God, not because we just have the willpower of doing a certain thing a certain way; because we have to be in agreement and unity with it as well. That's the fullness of conversion; it truly is – to be of the same mind, at one with God in these matters of life.

Not something because we do it of works, lest any man should boast... Pride! See, that's exactly what happens, it's the exact spinoff. We feel better inside, we feel better than others inside because you know what happens when you have this kind of a mindset? You can't help it; if it's a matter of pride, you will look down upon others who aren't able to or don't do the same thing. You can't help it. When you rely on self, when it's a matter of works because of your willpower; in the same area of that area of life you're going to judge others and condemn them and look down upon them. If it's a matter of God's spirit you'll understand and you'll treat them differently because of that. I'm speaking of things that aren't just words, they're a matter of spirit and it's a matter of being in unity and oneness with God to grasp and see the depth of what is being spoken – truly, because we see these at different levels. I know within the Body, within the Church we grasp this at different levels; in other words, what we see in ourselves.

For we are His workmanship, God is doing the work. The changes that take place in us, God is moulding and fashioning us, He is doing the work. If we're *in* Christ and of the degree we're *in* Christ is to the degree we grow in spirit and conviction and oneness with God. It's an awesome thing. ...**we are His workmanship created in/through Christ Jesus**; so again, it's through Christ Jesus by being *in* the Body of Christ, again, by being continually fed through the spirit, God dwelling in us, continuing to come into our life through the power of His spirit. ...**created in/through Christ Jesus unto/for the purpose of good works**, so that's what God wants in us. He wants that to be accomplished in our lives, He wants that to come through our lives; **which God had ordained before**; when did He ordain that? Long before He ever created human beings. He determined we had to have a Passover. He determined we had to have a Passover before He ever created the first angel. God determined before He ever started creating things what He was going to do, how He was going to have a Family, His own Family; how He was going

to bring it about; how He was going to make human beings; why He was going to make human beings; why it was necessary to create the angelic realm first. God is so incredibly awesome and powerful and mighty our little pea-brains have a difficult time seeing the glory and the beauty of it all, we truly do. And we see it in varying degrees depending on where we are in growth and time; things that are learned through experience in time. ...**which God had ordained before that we should walk in them.** So God determined long before how we were going to be able to walk in 'good works', live in it and these things being mentioned here. It wasn't going to be because of our own ability, our own willpower; on the contrary, it was going to be accomplished by dwelling in the Body of Christ. How God was going to make it possible that we could be forgiven of sin so that *He* could live and do what He's wanted to do for so long – dwell in human flesh, dwell in human life, bring us into His Family. What an awesome thing!

Verse 14 - For He is our peace, who has made both one, and so again, Paul going through here and talking about various things because he's dealing with the Gentile world, himself being Jewish and a uniqueness too of where he was born, a citizenship that he had as well. He was able to talk about things having to do with both worlds but it still has to do with all of mankind, if we grasp it and comprehend it, mankind, not knowing the way of God and then mankind, when He's brought into the Body of Christ, the Church of God. And this is a process of part of what Paul is explaining. **For He is our peace who has made both one;** so speaking of Jew and Gentile in this respect, **and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us;** and candidly here even going farther if we grasp it, a relationship with God that we weren't able to have before that we're able to have now. This is a process of bringing us into oneness and unity with God and breaking down a partition; because the gospel, and in reality even a step farther in what Paul was teaching here. We talked about the curtain that was ripped from top to bottom and this great partition – why was it torn? Now the way into the very throne room of God was made available to us, that God Almighty could live in our life and now we can be at one with God and with Jesus Christ. This is a process here that Paul is really describing in a greater way using something very physical to do with the Gentiles and the Jews, but taking it far beyond that. ...and so, **has broken down the middle wall of partition;** the words 'between us' isn't even in there, isn't even in scriptures, it's in italics here, its not even in the Greek language. They added that because they didn't understand anything beyond that which was physical. All they could see was Jew and Gentile and the whole thing is it's not about Jew and Gentile at all, it's about a relationship we're able to have with God in the Church of God.

Having abolished in/through His flesh, speaking of Christ, **the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances/rituals;** in other words, that Old Testament; the process that some of the Jews went through and so forth that never purified, never cleansed. All the sacrifices, all the things in the Levitical priesthood never took care of sin. Jesus Christ did though; breaking down that curtain that was there, making it possible that we be able to have a relationship with God. These are the things being spoken of here. And that **enmity,** that was in human flesh until God did that because the carnal mind is enmity with God, it *hates* God's law. Human beings don't grasp that! In the deep South, especially in what's called the 'Bible belt', people think they love God. "I love Jesus Christ!" No you don't! You don't even know Him yet. But they don't understand that. They think they love God and they talk about 'love' a lot and 'love of God' and 'love of Christ' and "Do you love Jesus...and Jesus loves me... Does Jesus love you?" Some of the songs that I'm so glad are out of my mind, "Jesus loves me, yes I know, for the Bible tells me so..." some of these things that are so distorted and they make it so sick, so syrupy; and that's not the way of God! Yes! Jesus does love us. God Almighty loves us! But not in that syrupy Protestant way! It's real and it's alive if we understand what it means. I don't want to get off into another sermon there...

Having abolished in us ...the enmity, again, that which we could never come through as far as human beings are concerned by all that we did in rituals...in order **to make in Himself of both**, in Himself, *in Him, in Christ, in the Body of Christ, of both a new man, into one...* it's not really 'one' here, but it's into, speaking of us, **into a new person/into a new being**, if you will, **making peace; And that He has reconciled both unto God; 'both unto God'**, yes, Jew and Gentile, **in one Body**, but it's about in the Body of Christ. It's in the Church of God that these things are accomplished no matter who we are on this earth, **by/through the impaling to a pole, having put to death the enmity thereby**: two Greek words used here meaning 'giving a relationship of peace in themselves'; a relationship of peace in themselves...incredible here... **thereby, a relationship of peace. And came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them who were near.**

Verse 18 - For through Him we both have access, yeah, it doesn't matter who it is on this earth that God draws and works with; all human beings in time are going to be able to **have access by/through one spirit unto the Father**. Through Jesus Christ; but everyone has to come into the same Body, into the Body of Christ, into the Church of God.

Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; So we're fellow citizens with those who have died in times past as well as those who are alive now who are a part of the same Body, **and the household of God**. Great household, awesome household: 144,000 that are sealed and many more who've been added now that are going to go through that process as well on into the Millennium. It's an awesome thing that God is doing. We live in a very unique time.

Verse 20 - And you are being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; This is how we grow; this is how we're taught. The things that God gave to Jesus Christ...look at all we've focused upon and there is so much more that He just gave in the last couple of weeks of His physical life here on this earth. We went through that; teaching about, going through and seeing some of those things that are recorded and written about what Jesus Christ gave...and most of that geared toward what? Toward His Body, the Church that was going to come from a result of all that; why He was dying, the purpose of why He was dying so that they could go and read those words and have them live within them. That's why we went through all that. God's giving us more of that and being able to see those things and appreciate and grow more because *you have such an incredible opportunity* right now, more than Philadelphia ever had, more than Ephesus, Thyatira, Pergamus ever had. They didn't live at the age when all of a sudden they're going to be thrust into a new world, when God's spirit is going to blanket the earth in incredible power. We can talk about it, but it's like talking to someone who's never attended the Feast of Tabernacles yet. And the first time you attend for the full period of time you'll come to understand why it's so important, why it's so exciting to people when they discuss it. There are certain things you can't comprehend until you're there, until you've lived it; and there are things we can't begin to comprehend of what this world is going to be like until we're finally there. And then it's going to hit us in a far greater way than it does now. We only receive it at differing levels right now, but once you've experienced it – what an incredible thing! To understand what it means that God's spirit blankets the earth, that every human being is going to have access to His spirit, that over a period of time on this earth, 144,000 who have great power to do so, that people are going to continue to *turn to*, because not everybody turns to God immediately – those of Buddha that I talked about last week.

Jeremy was going through the sermon that I gave down in Hawaii. This one hotel has these different statues around; and talking about some of these different things out here where they worship the

creation more than the creator; and this one area here had so many of these different gods from different areas. He was reminding me of something about Buddha, the big fat Buddha, he reminded me that there's a skinny one too. Different parts of the world, Asia, China has different ones, different areas where there is a Buddha that is fat, but there's a skinny one too and he showed me the picture site to go see it and I always thought it was a woman. I didn't realize that was the Buddha. I guess when I looked at it, it looked so effeminate that I thought it was...I didn't know it was a Buddha, or of the same kind of religion. Different places of the world, they have different statues like that and you think about some of them when different ones are called.

I think about the Muslim world. It's not going to be a quick change that takes place with them. That's why God says what He does about Egypt, they don't come to keep the Feast of Tabernacles and observe God's law, they're going to go through some suffering. It's not going to rain; they're not going to be able to grow crops and if they still don't listen then there are going to be plagues, they're going to die. People don't automatically start saying they want the Church, they want the truth, they want what has been seen as Judaism to them; anything that smacks of anything to do with Judaism. And to have to address certain things about Mohammad? They're going to have a tough time with some of that. Incredible! People don't want to talk about it; that's how deep it is in certain people in the world, people don't want to say anything about it. Incredible the hypocrisy in this world!

I hope you're seeing more and more as time goes along through the news how religions don't mix and they create war, they bring about war, they bring about deep hatred and that's what we see taking place right now in the world, a clash of these things that are coming together. This is very much prophesied about the Middle East and so much of it has to do with what happened in Judaism and what happened in the Islamic world and what's happened in Traditional Christianity. Incredible what's taking place.

Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are being built upon the foundation... so again, what an incredible thing that you've been given, that I've been given that the rest of the world hasn't, but in time they will and in time they'll begin to change and grow and receive the same thing of the power that God's going to cast over all the earth, but what an incredible thing when city after city and place after place turn to God, especially within the scattered nations of Israel. It's going to be an incredible experience! **And you are being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.** And so this is mentioned because this is how God teaches the Church. As I was mentioning, we've gone through these things about what Jesus Christ just talked about in the last couple of weeks and everything else that God has given that's so far above and beyond. He's made the Old Testament come alive because of what was given to the Church starting with the apostles, starting with the 12 disciples and then with Paul and what was given to Paul and those things that continued to be added in scripture and so forth through time; and then in time what was given to Mr. Armstrong, and in time what's been given to me to give to the Church because it's about how God leads the Church, it's about how God moulds and fashions the Church. It's an awesome process if we understand it. It's just a reality and a process we live through. It's an exciting one! And, it's how Gods building and forming and fashioning us.

In whom, in Jesus Christ; it just talked about the chief cornerstone. **In whom all the building is closely framed/joined together to grow into a holy Temple in the Lord:** again, awesome! It's a process we go through of being constructed, moulded and fashioned. **In whom you also are being built/constructed together for a habitation of God through the spirit.** This is exciting! See, we only begin to receive a

portion of God into our life because of the flow of that spirit that lives within us and we begin to grow spiritually; and that which was in Christ... we don't even come close to that, that life, that mind and who He was. But we're able to imbibe of; we are already pretty set by the time we come along. By the time we come along we are so carnal, we're so steeped in carnality. I was drawn at 19, baptized when I was 20 so I was just turning 19 when I came into seeing the truth and understanding the truth and then 3 months later baptized and my carnality was deeply set. Some of you may have been baptized when you were 30-40-50-60... your carnality is pretty set, isn't it? And so we're able to imbibe in and drink in of God and drink in of God's way and we grow and conquer and we overcome and it takes a lifetime of growing through those things until finally we can be born into God's Family. What an incredible process though for every one of us and what we go through; all for the purpose of, as God said, 'a habitation of God to dwell in'. That's what we are. We're tabernacles and God's dwelling in us. His desire is to dwell in us to bring us into His Family and then His dwelling doesn't stop. That was an exciting thing to me when God revealed that – that when we're in the Family of God, when we're members of the God Family, God is dwelling in us powerfully, mightily so. It's His spirit, we're united in one, one spirit, one mind. Now you don't have His mind, you're going to be growing through time; but it's an awesome thing, far above and beyond what we're experiencing now in this physical body that still resists God.

Ephesians 3:1 - For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. So he's saying here that this is what his desire is, this is what God has called him to; in a sense, to be a 'slave' to them, to enslave his life. He was excited by this, what he understood; willingly so for the purpose of serving the Gentiles. **If you have heard of the admonition, the management,** that's what this word means (dispensation)... **of the grace of God,** it's the process whereby God administers and manages us, the Body and how we grow and how we are strengthened and built, as we read earlier, into a holy Temple, **of the grace of God which is given to me toward/for you: How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote before in few words...)** And the reason he uses this word over and over again; I love the way he uses it; it is a mystery to the world, but not to you because of God's spirit there are things you can see that He gives. And so just like any time when something new is given; it's a mystery until God reveals it – to us, coming out of Philadelphia and into Laodicea and what we went through, understanding that Jesus Christ didn't eternally exist. There was a mystery there in our life that we didn't grasp and comprehend and then God revealed and God gave us understanding. Over and over again there are things that God gives to us. And so by revelation, by God's spirit He gives to apostles, prophets and so forth to give to the Church. He says, **(as I wrote before in few words, so that when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).** And so he's saying here this is how God works; He has given me things to give to you. There are things that He's revealed to me to be revealed to you; that you can understand the same mystery of the knowledge that God has given to me. And that's just; Paul, he's just explaining here exactly how it works.

I think of Mr. Armstrong when I think of things like this. I think of Pentecost, when he came to understand it, and that knowledge that he gave to us. I think of before that when he came to understand there's a spirit in man and he began to give that very early on then when I was coming into the Church and then finally in 1972 in a book that he wrote called 'The Incredible Human Potential', that, as so many things do, prepared for a greater book that was going to be written, 'The Mystery of the Ages'. So all these things stepped into another. It's an exciting process that God leads us through; but it's how He teaches us and it's what He gives to us that can be given then to the Body. It's how God works, and when we understand that we are so blessed. That's why when I go through something like this, the picture that is embedded in my mind, and I wasn't there, is a sermon I heard when Mr. Armstrong was talking about different ones in the auditorium there in Pasadena and he said, "Where are the ministers?" ...and one individual clear at the back held up his hand. That's imprinted in my mind

in such a bold way because it reveals something so traumatic and so dramatic within the Church at that time. They were rich and increased with goods. They didn't need God's apostle to give to them anymore – and *THEY FORGOT* how God taught them and how God was *continuing* to teach them! What a horrifying thing that the Church lived through at that time, that the leadership of the Church, department heads, evangelists did what they did and they would no longer sit at Mr. Armstrong's feet because in their minds they didn't need him and they were telling God, "I don't need to be taught that way." What an incredible thing that took place! They lost understanding because the love of many was waxing cold.

...so that when you read you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) I'll be candid with you. *I desire more and more that you would understand more of what God has given to me, but I can't give it to you. But as you grow and as you receive Sabbath by Sabbath, you can grow more; that's just because it's a reality of how God works. That's not me trying to lift myself up and say, "Look who I am." It's because I understand how God works and I know you do too, but to the degree you do reveals much. If we grasp what we're given every Sabbath that God brings us together; if we grasp how God nurtures us and helps us to grow... see, I know what God is giving to us and offering to us right now that goes above and beyond ANYTHING WE'VE EVER BEEN GIVEN – BECAUSE OF WHERE WE ARE IN TIME... BECAUSE HE'S GETTING READY TO POUR OUT HIS SPIRIT ON ALL THE EARTH AND HE'S GIVING IT TO US FIRST TO SEE THINGS IN A GREATER WAY THAN WHAT WE REALLY HAVE POTENTIAL FOR, because we don't have that ability.* He has to give it to us, and so He's offering us more and more and more the closer we get so we can go through what is ahead of us in a greater way. Oh, I'm looking forward to giving the sermons on Pentecost! ...because of what God gives, we can understand and receive more and understand what it means in simple things by when God told Joshua, "*Be strong and of good courage!*" ...and of what that means for us of what we need to have in what we're getting ready to go through to enter into *THE promised land* that God has offered mankind. And what we're getting ready to do is *far greater* than what Joshua did – truly.

Which in other ages was not made known... has not been revealed. 4,000 years before Christ came, of man living on this earth and they never grasped and understood what Paul was teaching. It was never given to Abraham, it was never given to Moses, it wasn't given to Ezekiel and Isaiah and Jeremiah, but it was given to Paul because of God's timing. Exciting, inspiring when we understand what God is doing and the process we go through and He said in times past *it wasn't there*. How much have you been given? When you understand certain things... 4,000 years of human history and only a few people were ever called and they never understood a smidgeon of what you understand and see and know; they truly didn't. They were judged though by what God gave to them. God knew their mind and God worked with them and knew fully well what their spirit and what their mind was. Some are going to have such *incredible* places in the Government. Moses! Abraham! ...in the height of God's Government in the Kingdom and yet they didn't come close to having received spiritually knowledge, the kind of knowledge, the things you have. Now, as soon as they're resurrected, it's going to be a quick download, there's going to be so much given to them so far above and beyond all the human history of time that's gone up to that point in time of things they're going to have in their minds that they're going to be able to see and grasp and comprehend in ways we don't even begin to comprehend what they're going to know; because see, their mind is at one with God, their choices are there, their character is there, what God was moulding in them is there. So how blessed are we to have more ability to see and understand, to go through this life, to do the things we're going through? We've been given far greater opportunity, far greater blessings of going through it. Sometimes we don't grasp what we've been given, we truly don't.

Which in other ages was not made known/revealed unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by/through the spirit; to give then to the Church, **that even now the Gentiles should be fellow heirs**, even that alone of and by itself, that knowledge that was given them – that God was revealing to them that His plan is for *all mankind*; it isn't just for the Jews, and it wasn't just for Israel. They began to understand the spirit of it and it's for *all* mankind in a very powerful way. **That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same Body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the good news: ... Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints**, he believed that. These aren't just words. Paul believed that with all of his being. You know why? Because it wouldn't leave his mind, couldn't leave his mind when he was there and he told them to kill Stephen and all the others he said, "Kill." He was there, by his word. It's by his words that permission was given to kill some that were a part of God's Church and Paul came to understand that because of the authority and the power that was given to them, and he saw his mind and he knew his mind and what he was like. He wasn't one of those who as a very young man became Christ's disciple and was able to be worked with and brought out of this world before they had become corrupted by the world and they were able to begin to make changes and God moulded and fashioned them in a very quick way in 3 – 3½ years with Jesus Christ; and of the things they were learning during that period of time before they began to do what *they* had to do.

Backing up here, **Unto me, who am the least of all saints has this grace been given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable**, in other words meaning 'unable to find'. You can't *find* it unless God gives it, **riches of Christ**; they're not there until God just gives it. **And to make all men see**, and that word 'to see', 'to illuminate' in other words, when it's illuminated in your mind, when it's given in your mind; **what is the fellowship of the mystery**, 'fellowship'. I love that word. A fellowship that you're able to have with the truth, with the word of God, with that which the world doesn't know. That's what every one of us has been given. When God opens up your mind and He draws you into the Church there is that which we're able to have with the word of God, the truth of God and a fellowship we're able to have because of the same thing given to one another, the same mind; **a fellowship of the mystery**, and the more we're at one with one another, the more we're at one with every truth that God has given to us the better the fellowship is, the richer the fellowship is. See, I've lived through times when I've seen the fellowship not so good, when people *weren't* in unity and oneness with God, when people found fault with things like Pentecost, things like the spirit in man. And on and on it goes; found fault with what Mr. Armstrong was doing and how he was doing it and what he did and what he didn't do and so forth and what they were hearing and *"Is he going to teach us anything else but these two trees?!"* Isn't that one of the series? Series after series of different things and He would always teach something new from it. And some people, because of their attitude, their stinking, rotten, filthy, defiant attitudes making comments, *"Is he going to... When...?"* They were tired of listening, fell asleep in the auditorium, the audiences because, "...here he goes again, that old man. He's in his 90's. Would to God that somebody would replace him!!" It was their attitude and he meant what he said and he was right when he said it, "they're waiting around like vultures..." Who do you think he was talking about? "They're waiting around like vultures waiting for me to die to see who's going to be able to lead, who's going to have the power." Who do you think he was talking about?

I didn't grasp the magnitude of what he said back then. Because the evangelists...the *evangelists*; those who sat at his feet at Ambassador College at the beginning of Ambassador College...and look what they did. Look at what Dr. Hoeh did. Horrifying what some of these people did. And there are ministers in the scattered body to this day who still, in essence, look up to him and revere him and respect him... when I want to put my finger down my throat and puke because of what he taught and how much he hurt the Church and how much he hurt the Body of Christ. Incredible!

So what have you been given? How much are you able to see? ...that which is given to you? It's an awesome thing.

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, unity of spirit and the fellowship. The greater the unity, the greater the oneness, the richer the fellowship within the Body. I know what it's like, some of you know what it's like when everybody's not in agreement; and you *can't have* the same fellowship with them, you *can't have* the same oneness with them, you don't even want to get around some at times because you know what...you're afraid of what's going to come out of their mouth because you realize that they're off base in different things and they say things that aren't right and something comes out of their mouth that is in disagreement with what Mr. Armstrong taught; going back in that period of time in the 80's and the 70's. Incredible! That's why it's a beautiful thing indeed, like the oil that ran down Aaron's beard; when there's unity, when there's oneness, when God's people dwell together in harmony. That's where it comes from in unity.

...**which from the beginning of the world has been hidden in God**, the world didn't know it, the world can't see it until God gives it to them because it's spiritual, it's not physical. You can't find it, as he said earlier, you're unable to find it. ...**who created all things by/through Jesus Christ**: through. He didn't create everything... see, we used to use this in a wrong way. Some of the Protestant world use this in a wrong way because they believe in the trinity and there are only three beings in the trinity and they've eternally existed. No they haven't.

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly, again, showing the source; in other words, in God's spiritual purpose revealed from heaven that comes from God, the source is God, **might become known by the Church the many fold**, in other words 'the greatly varied' or 'the multiple variety' if you will; that's what it's showing, **wisdom of God**. And that's what God gives to us. We grow in that; we have so much more. I think of what God's given to us since the apostasy. Those things give me incredible strength because I have lived through it, I have witnessed it, I have seen it, its been given. Not by wisdom, not by intellect; on the contrary, *by God's spirit!* The source is God and when we understand God and what God gives to us it's such an awesome thing! And when you understand that you don't take anything to yourself; you *know* the source, you *know* where it comes from and that's what gives you confidence and boldness – *especially* because of what is ahead for us and what we're going to be going through and what we're living through and what we go through now. It's much easier now than it was 9 months ago, a year ago – isn't it? I hope it is for you. I hope your faith, your confidence; your boldness is much greater than what it was back then.

Verse 11 - According to the eternal purpose which He... 'eternal purpose'. How far back does it go? A long ways... **which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith of Him**. So again, everything about Jesus Christ that He has revealed to the Church, what we've been given in and through Him, of things we went through and talked about in the last series of sermons.

Verse 14 - For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for this cause, because we see and understand what God has given to us, because we're in *awe* of what He's revealed to us, we bow our knees indeed, because we understand He is our *Father* and our God. **Of whom the whole Family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man**; that which we're able to have as a part of us in our mind and in our being. **That Christ may dwell in your hearts**, in your being, in your mind, in your life, **through faith**; so that you, being rooted and grounded in love, in God's love, **may be**

able to comprehend along with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; to know the *magnitude* of what God has given to us, what He's offered to us.

And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, you can't learn it by knowledge. The Protestant world, when they talk about 'love', it's not of knowledge, it's fake, it's not real, it's not there. It's something lived, it's something experienced because of our calling. And how's it manifested? Relationships. *Relationships* and how we think toward others and how we treat others and what we say toward others and how we judge others or don't judge them and so forth; if we understand what those things mean.

Verse 19 – And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, so that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we may ask or think, according to the power that works in us. And we can think about a lot of things. How *abundantly* has God blessed us if we understand that which is spiritual. **Unto Him be glory in the Church**, in the Body of Christ. You want to make sure you're always *in* the Body of Christ and you're not cut off from it; that God's spirit lives in you and dwells in you, that you're repenting. That's what the Passover's about; that we're utilizing the blessing of the grace God has given to us to be able to be forgiven of sin, that you acknowledge your sins. Every time you acknowledge your sin, what you are, every time something wrong comes out of your mouth toward someone else, every time your attitude is wrong toward someone else; when you're walking down a sidewalk, or *whatever it might be*. The simplest of things. If we can't see those, then we can't see the greater things in our life, in our dealings with one another. And every time we see our attitude and our mind and we repent of that, we acknowledge God is right and we're wrong and we grow in character, the mind of God more and more and more. Holy, righteous character is something that you grow in through experience and time; and that's what we're talking about here – life experiences that are multiplied over and over again where you become stronger. The more you see self and the more you repent the easier it is to grow, the easier it is to see self for what it is and to grasp the greater picture of what God's offering us. **Unto Him be glory in the Church through Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen**

Ephesians 4 – there's so much on this subject about being *in* the Body of Christ that God has given over and over again through scripture and that's our focus in this series here. **Verse 1 - I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you that you walk in a worthy manner**, because we're not worthy; but God says in a worth manner. That means we better be responding to what God gives to us, to seek to grow in the truth, the way of life and to live it, to seek to be that way, **in a worthy manner of the vocation**, it's a word that means 'a calling', **wherewith you have been called**, There's a calling and we understand God the Father did it. God the Father *chose* you, *picked* you out of all the *billions* on this earth. Can we even begin to grasp that? God has called you, personally, to do a great work in you, to mould and fashion you now ahead of time. You don't have to wait a thousand years like so many do. (You wouldn't know it anyway, but...) What an incredible thing that we get to do this early. **With all lowliness and meekness**, 'lowliness', **with all lowliness**; it's an attitude of mind, **lowliness, meekness**, humility, not being lifted up with pride; in meekness which means 'a teachable spirit', an attitude... attitude means so much when it comes to the calling God has given to us; **with longsuffering**, willing to suffer, especially when we understand the context of what it means to deny self, to say no to self, to say no to our selfishness in order to love someone else, in order to give to someone else; that sacrifice that has to be there fighting against the carnal spirit, the carnal mind; **forbearing**, I love this. Interesting, it's actually a compound word meaning 'to hold between', **one another in love**; forbearing; **hold between one another in love**.

So again here, an attitude of mind we're to have toward one another in love; something that holds us together. Awesome! **Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit**, you have to work at it, you can't just go through life, get up in the morning and go to your job, and come home, relax and not be focused on God, not think about God, not pray to God, not ask God to forgive you when you get up in the morning and you have a wrong attitude in something you've said to your mate, or to your child, or to your parent, or as you go to work and you've done something wrong when you're driving to work and you have a wrong attitude toward someone on the highway. Oh, that's easy to do if you live in a large city. It doesn't take too long to get out here on the highways... that's why I love where I'm living and I have to fight that all the time and have to fight those attitudes. Life is hard enough by itself, but when you're in it all the time like that you have to fight it, you *have* to fight it, you have to fight your nature that you don't get caught in...so often you know exactly what the other cars going to do before they ever do it. Why? Because you're an expert at it yourself. You've done it so many times yourself. "I know what they're doing and why they're doing it. I'm going to speed up here – they're not going to get in here!" You pull up a little closer because you're not going to let them in because I know what he's trying to do in that lane over there... and it's a constant battle as you're driving into town; you're fighting with everybody on the highway. We get caught in those things; and our attitude then is all wrong. We get into an attitude of mind.

You get to work and someone that treated you wrong the day before, some co-worker said something wrong to you and you snubbed them, or you walk away so you don't have to go past them. All you can change is yourself. You can't change them; they don't have what you have. Go up and treat them with a good greeting; maybe you'll change something, maybe you'll help them; but at least your mind will be right. All you can do is react properly yourself toward others, sacrifice yourself toward others. Be smart – let them in. I have a battle with that, carnality get's me, I have to fight it. So much better when you get control of it and you just go with the flow; don't let it bother you, don't let others bother you and if somebody else gets upset they're getting upset. You don't have to get upset. You have to control your own mind, your own feelings, your own responses toward people. It's so incredible how quickly we can get involved in that, isn't it?

So the point is that when you do those things that are wrong in attitude – are you repenting and saying, "Father forgive me, I don't want to be like that. I don't want to be like the world around me." If you get caught up in it, *you're just like the world!* ...and what *is this all about then if we're no different from the world?* When you walk through the mall, when you go to work, when you're driving down the highway, when you're treated at work by someone a certain way and you treat them back the same way... *what different are we then?* And in your own families? Your own mate talks to you in a certain way and you respond back and... whatever happened, *I don't know*; maybe they just got up on the wrong side of the bed, maybe they *fell* out of bed, I don't know... maybe they hit their toe, maybe they need to eat, maybe they need a cup of coffee – I don't know; but you have a responsibility in how *you* treat the other person – even in your own marriage! All you can do is change yourself.

Sometimes you can change your environment because some things become so horrendous that they can destroy you spiritually – choices and decisions sometimes that are agonizing that we have to make in life. But again, you have to fight self in how *you* think toward someone else. The sin then is in you. The sin that's in them? You look forward to the day that they will repent, and if they're in the Church even more so; you want the other party to repent. You look forward to that because you don't want them to be imprisoned in their minds and their feelings and their emotions and things that someone goes through. Love; *love*; God's love and how He thinks towards us and how we're able to live toward one another. ...**endeavouring, working hard to keep the unity of the spirit**. And so within the Church, even

more so in these things, you have to **work hard to keep the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace**. In a bond of peace...if we don't have peace something's wrong with us. It may be obvious that something's wrong with the other person, but you're the one held accountable with what you do in your relationship before God as to whether or not you're going to *continue in the Body of Christ*. Isn't that an awesome thing to understand? If you live it, if you do it, if you live by that kind of faith, because of what you believe; therefore you realize that you have to change and you have to repent when you say something wrong, when you think wrong, when your attitude is wrong because you're working hard to keep the spirit of peace. And if the other party never does, it never gives you a right not to endeavour with this spirit. You must do what is right. You must think right toward others. It's how you respond – that you look forward to the time that they're going to repent or that they will be able to say, "I'm sorry." Hopefully you come to it quickly and say, "I'm sorry, I was wrong." *You* have the responsibility to make peace.

Started with Jesus Christ didn't it? ...for the Church? He's the one that made peace. That's *exactly* what we just read about. He was the one who made peace, made it possible. Now it's up to us to respond; but you've got to do it individually and be willing to sacrifice along the way; not to strike back. All the way to His death that's what was taught. He didn't revile, He didn't strike back, He didn't threaten. *What do we do so often in our life? That's what we do! We threaten* someone because they don't respond in a certain way to us so we get mad at them; we get upset with them and...*our own mates, our own children, our own parents, our own members in the Body of Christ – and we say things we should NEVER say in a threatening tone, in a threatening way.* Should never come out of our mouths. And the more we understand about what it means to have peace and to make peace and that it starts with us; that's how this way has to spread into the world and that's what God is getting ready to do to bring things to an end; and then to give this way to more so that people can then work at this. It doesn't just magically happen – we've got to work at it, we've got to make peace because you've got to fight this... self; and those of you who can't see me I'm pointing at self and hitting my chest. That's my area of work in the sense of what I can change. I can't even change you! I can strive to influence you and with God's spirit to inspire you and to move you but you've got to choose to change! Isn't that the way it works? Same thing with your children when you have young children or whatever... whatever age; your hope is that you give something that will help them to have a better life but it's up to them whether they receive it and take it and make the change that's good for them. You can't *force them* to and if you do force them you can't *control their lives*. Parents have a tough time with that sometimes when children get into teenage years and certain things happen. We all stand before God in time, don't we?

You can't control life; and sometimes we try to control other people's lives – even within the Church. I have learned such awesome lessons as a minister of what it means to be a shepherd; and sometimes being a shepherd means I pull back and I watch people suffer in their sins and it hurts. I can't control, I can't change. Some in times past used to try to come in and control those situations and *make* people change or *tell* them and *get* onto them and tell them what they had to do. Sometimes a person has to intervene because of harm it may cause or will cause to others, or whatever; and those are delicate things to be determined and I don't even try to determine them. I leave it to God just as much as anything revealed to me in the truth; I leave it to God and when God brings it to the surface then I deal with it when He lets me know it's to be dealt with. Otherwise I leave it alone. Shepherd: it's how Jesus Christ works with us in so many things.

God doesn't force you to make changes in your life. He works with you patiently. It's an awesome thing if you understand. God is so incredibly patient with us; Jesus Christ is so incredibly patient with us. I look to my own life sometimes and I don't know why He bothers. I'm glad He does; because I know

what I am. I'm just thankful I don't have to stay this way. I am so looking forward to being out of this. I know what Paul was talking about in a very deep way that I didn't understand a year ago or ten years ago, that I didn't even come close to grasping and comprehending; and the more we grow the more we understand the more we look forward to that – being in a spirit body. Doesn't mean we're anxious to die, as Paul was explaining, that isn't what he's talking about, but to be out of this body and in the one that God offers and has placed before us is so incredible. Because we see ourselves and we see the need to change and we see what is needed in life.

Ephesians 4:4 – in one Body, these are such beautiful verses; I have read these so many times and so many different contexts and every time... I don't care where it is in the Bible; when God is there, when God's spirit is there it comes alive because of His spirit, we're always learning more, you can read the same things and you're growing more, or you see something in a little bit different way. Just like with Mr. Armstrong when he talked about the two trees. *Every time* there was something new that God was giving to us and some closed their minds like a trap door as soon as he said, "Let's turn to Genesis." ...and started talking about the trees. Some peoples minds are like a trap door slammed shut and they wouldn't listen to one more word; and they didn't have a chance to understand what God was giving. Incredible!

In one Body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one belief, one faith – that's what it's talking about; **one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all**. What an awesome blessing that God can be in us, all of us, in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God. What an awesome thing that God is going to dwell in, be in (in a short time) millions. What an incredible thing that in short time God is going to dwell in billions. We can't comprehend that. I don't *comprehend that!* Whether it be physical life or even spirit life; because I don't comprehend the magnitude and the greatness of God Almighty. I just know that He is almighty.

Verse 7 - But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He said when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, beautiful; captivity, that which man is held in and *He* led it captive, **and gave gifts unto men**. 'Gifts', blessings. You know what it starts with? Forgiveness. The first gift He gave; that you could be forgiven of your sins because He sacrificed His life, willing to die for all of us.

Verse 11 - And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; now this is a part of what He gave to help the Church; to mould and fashion and work in the Church, to help *us* in the Body; **For the perfecting of the saints**, for all of us. It's a process then of administration as we read earlier, of management, **for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ**: which we're all blessed to be a part of; **until we all come in the unity of the faith**, God's desire over and over and over again through scripture – that we be at one, 'at-one-ment', atoned to, reconciled fully with God. What an incredible thing we go through, an incredible process and what we have to live through in order to get this mind in control, to bring it under subjection to God because our carnal nature fights and resists. We fight new truth when it comes along! We do! We fight when God gives us something because we've gotten used to something being a certain way and then it doesn't happen *exactly* that way because God is showing us something different we're to learn from; and for that *very purpose* we've gone through it so that He can show us and so that He can lead us and so that He can mould and fashion us and dwell in us more fully to conquer and overcome something that's in us anyway that needed to be conquered and overcome. What an incredible process we go through to become at one and have a unity of belief within the Church; **and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect/mature man/person**, it's a process of maturing spiritually; **unto the measure of the**

stature of the fullness of Christ/in Christ: So again, it's a matter of growing to that point that we be of the fullness that we're capable of that God wants us to be *in* Christ, in the Body of Christ so that we have grown to a point where we can be changed. That's why there are many that are already sealed that are alive to this day that God has already judged and knows us inside and out and will bring us to that point of time whether we die or whether we live at the time of Christ's return. We'll be there because the judgement has already been given because God knows us; as He told Abraham, "Now I know you." And he had much life ahead of him yet; but God knew him, knew his mind inside and out and knew how to work with that mind, knew his response; what Abraham's response would always be to God as He moulded and fashioned him.

Verse 14 – So that we are no longer as children who can be tossed around and carried off with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of others, by the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive; But instead speak the truth in love, what an awesome thing – to be able to speak God's truth in love. It's one thing to share the truth with others, but it's an awesome thing to understand what it means when you share it in love, for the right motivation, for the right reasons – in humility, with humility; not being a teacher but a sharer of something God has given that's precious, that's mighty; not lifting ourselves up, but as a brother to a brother, sister to a sister. Hate some of these words and how they're used in the English language, but anyway... **whereby they lie in wait to deceive.**

I'll read it again here; **but instead speaking the truth in love may grow up in Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ:** so it's a matter of maturing and growing to where we're able to grow to that point in time where we're able to be changed.

From whom the whole Body is closely joined/framed together and compacted/bound together/united by that which every joint supplies, It's an awesome thing how the body works and how the spiritual Body works; and the more we grow the more we conquer and overcome the stronger we become spiritually, the more God can give to us, He truly does. And He's brought us to a time, and has been for some time where we have far greater unity, where we have... Laura and I see it continually when we go from one area to another; to see how people are growing and to see the progress that's being made and all the knowledge and the ability to see and perceive that God has given to us now. In many cases people don't have all the experiences that are there, but because of that added knowledge and the power that God is offering... I have never seen a time like this in God's Church since 1969 when I came into it. It's exciting, it's inspiring what God has brought us to, it truly is; but it's something that God is working in us because of a purpose and because of a timing. It's exciting to be a part of it. Do you know what you have? Do you *grasp* what God has offered to you and given to you in its full magnitude? I'll tell you right now you don't. You see it in partial magnitude, but not in its full magnitude. We can't.

From whom the whole Body is closely joined/framed together and compacted/bound together/united by that which every joint supplies according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, we all need each other; if we could only see it and understand those things. We need each other in the Body. We are a Family. What an incredible thing to grasp that! *Above and beyond anything any physical family could ever have in human life...* how very blessed you are when you have both in the Body of Christ; physical and spiritual; but spirit is so far above and beyond anything that's physical, it truly is – incredibly awesome. And when we have both then you're blessed even beyond in such an incredible way...but God is doing it, it's always because God does it and because what God offers, because of what God moulds and fashions.

...according to the effectual working in the measure of every part which makes increase in the Body and to the edifying of itself in love. It's just the more we respond to God the more we're fed; the more we are unified, the more we're fed. The more we grow in love, the more we grow in... Because to grow in love means you're growing, we grow more in God's spirit; and the more we do, the more God'll give to us and can give to us. It's an awesome thing to understand the process.

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