

The title of this sermon is *Begotten Sons*.

We are within months of the establishment of the Millennium. We understand that the seventh day Sabbath pictures the Millennium. We understand that six days of the week picture the 6,000 years of man's self rule, a time when man was left to himself under the influence of Satan and the demons, and that God only worked with a select few that He was grooming for a purpose.

We also understand that the seventh day, the Sabbath, pictures the one thousand years of rest, because it reflects a time when Satan will be removed at the end of 6,000 years, when he will actually be removed from the presence of mankind and mankind will be given rest, a Sabbath rest, a one thousand year period where man will not have to endure the temptation and the way that Satan thinks and the way that he broadcasts that affects the mind of man, because man was made with a mind that was subject to this influence.

So we are now at the Feast, we are at a day of rest. We are picturing over these seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles, this one thousand year period of rest; a rest from Satan and his demons and that *influence* which is *in* the mind of man. Now, man can't resist these temptations and this influence because his natural carnal mind is subject to this sway because of the way his mind is created.

Now, before we enter this Millennial period with the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings, we have got to look at, and we're going to look at now, the period from now until the return of Jesus Christ and we're also going to examine now *who* it is that is going to enter the Millennium, and if we stand back and have a look at it firstly there is a group of people who are currently begotten sons of God, they are members of the Body of Christ.

So this group that exists to now, a remnant, and those that have been called in the last 4-5-6 years that make up the begotten sons of God. They have God's spirit dwelling in them. So there is a group there that will live into the Millennium. Some of those begotten sons, will actually be changed at the sounding of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trump. There is another group yet to come into the picture, and it is all those that God will now draw and call into the truth.

When this process starts it's going to start in a way that we have seen in 2008, because we had an experience of that where God opens the minds of people and people are then drawn into the truth and can be drawn into the thousands, the hundreds of thousands, into the millions, but it does take a time and it does take a process, so everyone is at a different level when they are called or when they are drawn into the truth. There is a group that will experience between now and the return of Jesus Christ, some may have access to the Church of God, and they may have access to the ability to be able to be baptized and receive God's spirit and become begotten sons of God – because until that person repents and then is baptized and receives the laying on of hands of a true minister of God, they are *not* begotten sons of God.

So there is another group that we see that are going to be called soon that will enter into the Millennium, and there are millions of them, brethren. Some will have that opportunity to be baptized, others won't, they will simply be *aware* of the truth and be being drawn *into* it.

Then of course, there is another group which we often think about and we are aware of, and they are called scattered members of the Body. They were members of the Body of Christ. They were begotten sons and yet they have fallen asleep, and God will draw many of those back in, and we know there are 63,000 that God is going to directly work with to give them the potential to enter the Millennium. So they are called what we would call 'awakened brethren'.

Then there is another group of people which exist in the Gentile nations of the world. Now, we understand on a spiritual level what a Gentile is...it's an unbeliever – but God is also working with the physical nations of Israel. So all of those that have been drawn into the physical nations of Israel, as we understand them, America, Australia, Great Britain, aspects and parts of Europe, and also New Zealand. We understand brethren that God has drawn a people in there and He is working with those people in those nations.

But there is another group that exist in the Gentile nations of the world, as we understand them, like Russia and China, like India, and there are many other nations where these people have never heard of God's true Church. They have never heard the truth, and God is not working with them directly at this point, but there is a day when God will directly intervene into the lives of those nations. And that of course is on the very last day, 'the Day of the Lord' when God will pour out His plagues on the nations that have been destroying the earth.

Now, from that there are going to be people at the end of that day that will actually live through. They will not have heard of the truth as we understand it – 57 Truths. They may not have even heard of the true Church of God, the Church of God – PKG. They may not understand *anything* of that truth other than the fact that God has intervened into the world on that last day, of 'the Day of the Lord' and He is now giving *them* an opportunity. Because if they lived through it they now have their opportunity to learn the truth and work through the process of repentance, baptism, laying of hands to receive God's spirit, to begin to understand the truth, to become begotten sons of God.

So there are different people that will be living into the Millennium. I would like to look at one part of this agreement that God is going to give to all of those that live into the Millennium, and it's found in Jeremiah 31:31.

**Jeremiah 31:31** – and the heading here, of course, in my version of the Bible here is 'A New Covenant'. **Behold, the days are coming, says the Eternal, when I will make a new covenant/a new agreement with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.**

**Verse 32** – **Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.** So we have an agreement there which was given, of course, on Mount Sinai, where God made an agreement. On the Day of Pentecost at Mount Sinai He actually made an agreement with them and they said 'All that the Lord has said we will do'. So they entered into an agreement with Him. This was, of course, a spiritual agreement, but to them it was a physical agreement because they did not have God's spirit to be able to understand or to keep the law in its spiritual intent. They could understand it on a physical agreement and they could understand it on physical terms and that's what they agreed to do on a physical level.

**Verse 32** – **...My covenant, which they broke;** and of course on a physical level they did but from the very outset on a spiritual level they broke it from the very beginning because they didn't have God's spirit therefore they couldn't keep it. **...though I was a husband to them, says the Eternal.** So God

looked at this agreement as a covenant, like a marriage covenant, an agreement, and they, of course, had the opportunity to obey their husband in this aspect, and God as a husband, and He does say in other scriptures what a husband should do, and that command is to love your wife. So God, in His greatness, entered into this agreement like a marriage covenant, married to Israel, and He loved them. He loved them, He did everything He could in the sense of loving a nation that was actually deep down hostile to Him, but He did everything to love them. He sacrificed Himself for the benefit of Israel.

**Verse 33 – But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days,** so after a period of time God did make a new agreement, and of course that agreement started when we get to the death of Jesus Christ, which God did on our behalf because it was God sacrificing for the sake of all mankind, but there was a new agreement from that point, there was a New Testament, or a new agreement that was made, because now sin could be forgiven. And of course 31 A.D. the Church starts, and it starts with a new agreement because it required God's spirit to enter this new agreement. Well, God had said that after these days, and He's also now looking for *after* 6,000 years of man's self rule, **says the Eternal, I will put My law/My law of intent into their minds and write it on their hearts.** Now this happened, of course, at Pentecost 31 A.D. where part of this was fulfilled. But God is talking here about a much larger agreement with mankind, and this can only take place after the return of Jesus Christ where all mankind will be given access to the power of God's spirit.

**...and I will be their God and they shall be My people.** So to *be* 'My people' as Gods says 'to be My people', a person must be begotten of His spirit. We must become begotten sons. Once we are begotten of God's spirit we become members of the Body of Christ, we are part of God's Church. We are the called out ones because we are called begotten sons.

Everyone will be called and given the gift of repentance, because repentance *is* a gift. Nobody can come to God of and by himself. There are people in the world that say that they worship God and they diligently seek Him, but it's all a vanity and a waste of time, because unless you are drawn by God, unless God *calls* you, unless God *chooses* you, you cannot come to know God, you cannot come to know the truth, you cannot build a spiritual relationship with God – it's impossible! These people will enter into the very battle that we have been called to enter into. They will enter into the battle of conversion.

Now, what is really conversion that these people will enter into, these groups that we talked about? Well, those that are begotten sons now that live into the Millennium must continue the battle of the self, because the way that God created mankind was with a selfish carnal mind, and we look at aspects of that. And of course the goal and the purpose is a wonderful one. It's not something to be depressed about, it's actually an exciting challenge, because within this mind God then opens it up to see itself, because God must reveal what this mind is within each and every one of us. Every man, other than Jesus Christ, was born, and in the future will be born, with this same selfish mind; but it is all for a purpose, and the purpose is to one day enter Elohim.

God set out a plan that He had, that He would achieve a Family, and the only way to achieve it was to create man with this mind that was hostile to God, so God would, when He chooses, at His time, open up an aspect of that mind spiritually to see itself, and then the mind that man or woman has, has a choice and that choice simply is, "What will we do? Will we," once we're given repentance, "continue to fight the self to obey God?" Now man of and by himself doesn't see his selfishness. He cannot see what he is really like. But by the power of God's spirit, once a person is granted the gift of repentance, man begins to see what he is really like. And I'm talking about mankind there.

We begin to see what we're really like, that our motives are selfish, that when we do good on a human level it's still selfishly motivated. Now, this is something that is difficult for the mind to grasp, but over time – called conversion – mankind begins to see what it is really like. Then there is a choice, and the choice is: Will we follow God? Will we take the correction that God gives us? Will we believe God and reject our own selfishness? Will we sacrifice ourselves? So that is the process of conversion. It's about the transforming of one mind to another.

When it talks about 'let this mind be in you, which is in Jesus Christ', it's talking about transformation, it's talking about conversion. We are to allow the very thinking of God to dwell in us, to flow out to the benefit of others. It's not selfish. It's not something we just take to ourselves and it remains dormant. It must flow out by the power of God's spirit, out to the benefit of others. So it's about the way we think, whether we think forgiveness, whether we think mercy, whether we think love. Now, the natural mind can't do that, but with the power of God's spirit, when a calling is given, the gift of repentance, and we receive God's spirit, this is the opportunity and the power that can exist within us.

Mankind will be given this very opportunity, the opportunity to live into a millennial period and to take on this battle of conversion, the battle of the self.

**Verse 34 – No more shall every man teach his neighbour and every man his brother saying, Know the Eternal; for they all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them, says the Eternal. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.** So everybody had to be brought to a point of repentance, and part of that repentance is seeing the purpose of Passover, seeing the purpose of the Days of Unleavened Bread, seeing the purpose of Pentecost, of Trumpets, Atonement, the Feast and the Last Great Day, seeing God's plan as clearly outlined in Leviticus 23.

Now, the very first thing that man must begin to see, of course, is the Sabbath, and once they begin to see the Sabbath they understand the purpose that God has laid out for mankind, which is to enter Elohim. But the greatest thing of all things is the gift of repentance that God has granted them, and begin to see what they're really like. And then only through the power of God's spirit, with humility they can move forward, being repentant, accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. So these things are important within each and every one of us as we move forward.

God is going to forgive the sin once they're granted repentance and they will move forward; and God will not remember their past, which is a tendency we have. We tend to hang onto the past. We think that when we approach God as begotten sons, and when we pray and we repent before God because He grants us ongoing repentance – well, God says He has forgiven us and He forgets it. He is willing to move forward by the power of His spirit living in us, but we tend not necessarily to forget it, and within our own natures our human nature does not forgive. We actually hold onto things. We hold onto grudges. We get seared and burned in the carnal mind and it is difficult sometimes to forgive what we consider our offenses...but yet God tells us we have to. Because He is forgiving, we must. We have no right to hold onto anything as far as anything toward anybody else, any offense that may come – we're the problem, it's not the person, we are, because God's mind is one of forgiveness, one of mercy.

God will pour out His spirit on all mankind enabling a spiritual relationship with Him. So once the Millennium has started we see these people that are all different, all on different levels, all having different relationships as far as a spiritual level with God and with the Church – but the purpose of the Church is to bring all mankind into unity with God and with each other. Unity is the key!

I want to now move into one aspect of the Millennium that's started, and let's look at Zechariah 14:16. So here the Millennium has started, Jesus Christ has returned with 144,000 that are now ruling the earth. Satan has been removed from mankind; from being able to influence mankind – and his demons – therefore the world will be different. The structure of society will be different. So mankind will now be required to take on the very thinking of God and manage society the way God has outlined it, which is with the intent of love, the intent of sacrifice, the intent of sharing.

**Zechariah 14:16 – And it shall come to pass, *that everyone who is left of all the nations*, now, we talked about that, because there are going to be different groups of people in different nations that are left, which in other words, have been allowed for a purpose to live into the Millennium; and to live into the Millennium is a wonderful and great blessing no matter who we are. If we are alive to live into the Millennium there's a wonderful blessing because we're going to see things and come to know things that are just staggering, things that have not entered the mind of man at this point – to see Jesus Christ ruling as King of kings and Lord of lords, to have interaction with 144,000 that God has chosen, just to be part of the Church, to bring up families – it's going to be an incredible time to live into that millennial period.**

**...which came against Jerusalem;** so all these nations that have come against Jerusalem, **shall go up year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.** Isn't that an incredible statement? Because here it's clearly saying that Leviticus 23 and the Holy Days that are listed there, the Sabbath and Holy Days, aren't done away, because God requires mankind to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and here it says that the nations that are left after the return of Jesus Christ *will* be required to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Yet today of course, in the religions of the world, they'll say, "Oh, that's done away! It's all irrelevant!" But here it's quite clear! It doesn't mean that every single person is going to have to go up to Jerusalem, because it's not talking about that. There will be representatives, I'm sure, of various nations that *are* required to go up, but not every single individual. It's talking about a spiritual intent. So a person can keep the Feast by themselves at home, because it's about a relationship with God first and foremost....so a person can keep the Feast no matter where.

There are seven days and then the eighth day, the last day, is to be kept as a command. So here God is saying that people will keep the Feast of Tabernacles. They'll be required to.

**Verse 17 – And it shall be, *that whichever of the families/tribes/nations on the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain.*** So there is a physical effect. Now, we know, brethren, that there is also a spiritual effect. So firstly the physical effect – no rain – which means that you can't grow crops, which means you're going to move into famine, but more importantly for us, brethren, we understand no rain. We're talking about no spiritual food, no growth, nothing can happen, and when there is no food, to enter into a famine spiritually is a terrible thing. I've actually been through a spiritual famine, and if we get further into this I'll hopefully discuss a little bit of that. But it is a terrible thing because in the beginning you actually don't fully understand you're starving to death. You know something is wrong but it's not until you are *fed truth* that you understand how much famine you were really in.

**Verse 18 – If the families of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.** So the first part of it is there is no rain, but the second plague, the next aspect of that is **they shall receive the plague which the Eternal strikes the nations.** What is that plague? It's actually death. Because when a person enters into a spiritual relationship with God and then they're cut off and

then they enter into famine, because they cannot be fed, because God's spirit is not there anymore, the end result is death. So, we can look at it on a physical level, yes, you can starve to death and you will die without food, without rain. But the other part of it is, on a spiritual level, yes, you can be cut off, and yes, you will starve to death, and unless God calls or awakens a person out of that they will die; because without God we are nothing, we deserve death. But here, this is rebellion, and it may be from a lack of knowledge or a lack of understanding or choices, to grow in that. We realize we are required to obey God, because that is the best for us, because that is part of God's plan, which is to come into the unity and the thinking of God, 'Let this mind be in you which was in Jesus Christ.' It's the same thinking as God Himself, and God requires mankind to keep the Feast of Tabernacles because it provides wonderful opportunities to grow spiritually.

**Verse 19 – This shall be the punishment of Egypt;** now you can look at that either way. Egypt is like today's world society, like Babylon, **and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.**

**Verse 20 – And in that day HOLINESS TO THE LORD will be on the bells of the horses, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar.** So brethren, there is a time when God is going to pour out His spirit so that mankind can obey God, so they can see the truth. For those who obey God He will open their eyes to see the truth, to hear spiritually, to understand the very Word of God. Now, if we were ever called we understand that process. Spiritual knowledge can be poured out, and then understanding given, and understanding will lead to wisdom, which is the application of the knowledge and understanding. It's a wonderful time.

So who is it that is actually going to enter the Millennium and continue through? Well, we've covered those groups but it is those that God decides and it's those that God calls and it's those that are God's that live into the Millennium. There is an aspect of one of these groups that I'd like to cover in a little bit more detail, and that is in relation to awakened brethren, those from the apostasy. Now, *I am* one of those awakened brethren. There was a period when I was a begotten son and I then went to sleep, just like everybody else did before the apostasy, became lukewarm, and God spewed me, and others, out of His mouth. We were cut off from the flow of God's spirit. And there, after that, we had decisions to make, and we'll go into some of that, and part of it is that without God's spirit you cannot make wise judgments; you cannot use wisdom because you no longer can see spiritually.

Everybody had decisions to make. So I'm looking at awakened brethren that are soon going to be given that opportunity to enter back into the truth, to come into fellowship with God's Church, and more importantly come back into fellowship with God Himself. And that term we're going to cover now is about 'awakened brethren'.

Why does the Church of God – PKG use the term 'awakened brethren'. The Bible does not state this exact term or wording. To my knowledge none of the Church of God groups from the scatterings uses this term. Now, there's a reason for that. The reason they do not use the term 'awakened brethren' is because they do not acknowledge or believe what God has revealed in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2. They just simply don't believe it, they don't see it. I know for a fact a lot wouldn't be fully aware of even 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2 in its true intent, and they would read it completely differently. So let's look at 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:1, because here is the beginning of understanding for an 'awakened brethren', because without understanding this or acknowledging it it is impossible to move forward, to take the next step.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1 – Now brethren**, so this is Paul talking to the Church, **concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him. We ask you** – so there are two parts being addressed here. What is being addressed is the return of Jesus Christ, and the second part is the gathering together with Jesus Christ at His return. It's talking about the 144,000 that *will* be resurrected and changed to spirit at the blowing of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet. Now, what had happened was that within the Church there were things going around and being said that Jesus Christ had already returned and that the 144,000 had already been resurrected. So it was causing dissension in the sense of people were starting to debate these matters and people became a little worried about it because that's what happens when rumor runs around and the truth is not listened to.

**Verse 2 – Do not be soon shaken in mind, or troubled;** in other words, don't be worried; **neither by spirit or by word or by letter**, in other words, somebody's written this or someone is speaking it, **as if from us**. In other words, as if it came from one of the apostles...**as though the Day of Christ had come**, in other words it's already happened. **Let no one deceive you by any means; for unless the falling away/apostasy comes first.** So here is the sign for the Church at that time, which was unless there is an apostasy, unless there is a large falling away, Jesus Christ has not returned, because this was the sign of the end-time. This was the sign, this falling away was a major sign for God's people, **and**, the next part, **the man of sin is revealed**, in other words, he was revealed to the Church. There had to be an understanding of who the man of sin was, **the son of perdition**. So unless these two things took place we could not say that the return of Jesus Christ was imminent.

**Verse 4** – talking about the man of sin, **Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sits**, and this is talking about authority, he sits in authority in the Church, **as God in the Temple of God**. And we know the Temple of God *is* God's Church. *We* are the Temple of God if we have God's spirit dwelling in us. **...showing himself as God**. He's showing himself as God because he's making decisions that were overruling God.

I remember that very day that I heard the sermon. Now, in Australia it was a little different, it wasn't on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 1994, it was actually in the first week in January. I remember the very venue where we went to for Sabbath services. Now, what was played in Australia was slightly different than the longer version that was given on that day and then since edited. We received a quite edited version of that sermon, less than a two hour sermon, and in that sermon it was a bit unclear about what was really being said because there was a lot of double talk, and a lot of the editing, the very direct approach had been taken out. So after the sermon many of us when we gathered around talking were a little unsure *exactly* what had been said.

So, I remember ending up in the car park and we were talking about some of those things but it wasn't really clear. And it wasn't really until 3-4-5-6 weeks after that sermon that we started to really see a lot of the effects of the apostasy, the falling away, because one day you'd go to church and all of a sudden on Sabbath there were people missing, and you'd ask, "Well, why have they left? What's gone on?" and people wouldn't talk to you even much about it because one day you could be talking to someone who would be fully against what had been said, and you were talking about it, two weeks later they were for it and decided that they wanted to follow this so called 'new direction' while others who were more conservative held back and said nothing, because they were unsure about what was happening.

So brethren, it was a very distressing time because it wasn't always that clear as it is now, having God's spirit, to see it. Where at the time, not having God's spirit and being asleep, I couldn't make spiritual decisions.

**Verse 5 – Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining.** In other words, what is holding back Christ's return was until there was an apostasy and the man of sin revealed...**that's what's holding back, that he may be revealed in his own time.** And of course we know that took place.

**Verse 7 – For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, only he who now restrains,** or holds back, **will do so until he is taken out of the way.** Now, we know that took place, that Mr. Tkach died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, 1995, 280 days later just as God said. So, to understand the term 'awakened brethren' we have to acknowledge that we went to sleep, that there was a time where the apostasy happened. We have to acknowledge what happened to us.

Let's look at what happened to us, what happened to those who were part of the Body of Christ, begotten sons up until that time. The opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was the beginning of an apostasy, a falling away from the truth, and great spiritual destruction upon God's Church. And I remember it well, as all of the awakened brethren who are now begotten sons in the Body of Christ now today know and acknowledge. Those that are scattered don't acknowledge this 1<sup>st</sup> Seal being opened. They don't acknowledge an apostasy, a falling away from the truth, and they are aware of some level of destruction because it's all fallen apart, but they can't acknowledge why and they can't acknowledge what God has clearly revealed in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2.

The opening of this Seal served as a warning and an announcement to God's people that the end-time was at hand and that the return of Jesus Christ was now imminent. The countdown for Christ's return had begun. There was great spiritual tribulation upon the Church during the opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal and only continued during the first 4 Seals. Two-thirds of the Church went by the wayside during the first few months of this devastation. Now, there are people in the Body of Christ today, the Church of God, that know of this, they experienced it, and everybody went through different things, different experiences during this devastation. I remember people that had lasted 3-4-5 weeks and continued not sure what was happening. There was one particular time that I remember a particular person being in the Church 20-30 years and was continuing on in the truth and resisting against what was being said, the apostasy, you could worship God on any day, basically, Sunday worship, going very protestant. And yet all of a sudden he disappeared, and when I asked about what happened they said, "Oh no, he's walked away from it all." In actual fact he went back to working on the Sabbath!

These things are very hard to grasp in the mind when it happens. But there was two-thirds that strayed very quickly. One-third just gave up all together and went back to the world 'like a dog going back to its vomit', because "If this was God's true Church, *how* could it be that everything that I had been taught about the Sabbath and Holy Days was now changed? ...therefore, obviously, it's all wrong." Because they couldn't understand 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2 because it hadn't been shown to us yet, God has not revealed that. So they just went by the wayside.

Another third decided that they would say with the so called 'new truth', and they stayed with the Worldwide Church of God and fellowshiped continually with them and accepted the changes. There was one particular Sabbath during the early part of the apostasy, in around February-March if I remember rightly, and I'd been asked to continue to give sermonettes, and I had said to the pastor that I couldn't do it because I did not agree with the changes that were being taught. And he said, "Well, if you feel that you don't want to speak anymore, I understand," because at that point he was actually *resisting* the changes. And there was another minister in the congregation that had said, "No, you should do it. It's your duty, Wayne, to continue to give sermonettes." And I said, "Well, I can't in all



good faith. I can't! I just don't agree with it and if I do continue up there I'll be speaking against the current Church structure because I don't agree with where the Church is going." And there ended up a time where we were on the side of the whole front and there was the pastor and the minister and myself and we were talking about this. And in the end I walked away and said, "Look, I'm not going to do it. I can't do it because I just can't. It's not me, it's not right." And I walked away. And I remember the pastor and the minister were virtually in this heavy debate, argument, about the situation. And that's the type of environment that we were in. And of course then everybody had decisions to make.

So, one third went to nothing, one third stayed with Worldwide, but the remaining third had to make decisions. What happened to them? Although the remaining third of the Church was shaken bitterly by these events, it *was* scattered into several hundred separate feuding organizations. So people had choices to make.

Now, many people that I know of, that left in this final third that moved into various Church of God groups, most of them made decisions based on personality or family connections, because it was very difficult. And if you put yourself in that situation we did not have God's spirit flowing through us, therefore trying to make decisions was difficult because we were relying on our human nature. We were making judgments without God's spirit being active in us. So we could not perceive and did not perceive what was happening, *why* it was happening – and this is the early parts – and therefore had to make decisions using human wisdom or human reasoning.

Some said things like, "Well, I can't go to that group of Church of God because we know that minister, we know that leader, and we know they're wrong. It's just obvious!" "I can't go to this group because of this reason." So everyone ended up somewhere. They were washed up into various Church organizations. Most of them were feuding, because you see, everybody is right in their own eyes. I ended up in a particular group believing that that was the right group because I was making the judgment based on my own thinking – because what else could I do? What else could anybody else do when that happened?

The Church had strayed far away from the spiritual application of God's way of love. The love of many *had* waxed cold amongst God's own people just as Jesus Christ had said it would in Matthew 24:12. So now without God's love we have to rely on our human reasoning – unless God was to awaken us from that spiritual sleep, that lukewarmness. So a lukewarmness is where we *can* go through the process of simply keeping the Sabbath on a physical level, which I did for many a year where I kept the Sabbath. I didn't work on the Sabbath. But as far as keeping it spiritually? Far from it! I would go and listen to a sermon, but with the sermons there was no spiritual life in it, therefore I listened to a sermon, I didn't work, so I kept the Sabbath. But it was all on a physical level! And I kept the Feast days; I kept all the Holy Days. So many people did that in these various organizations, and *today* they do the same. They continue to keep the Sabbath the best that they see fit, not knowing that it's all on a physical level and that God is not *in* their organization, God is not *in* those ministers. Because God says there is only *one* true Church, there is only *one* faith, there is only *one* way of life, *one* spirit – so they were all feuding.

I can remember times when there was two groups trying to have a discussion *about* coming together, but one of the congregations knew that that would never happen because the ministers weren't going to give up *their* power of authority by making one organization, by having one person lead the Church under Jesus Christ. They wanted to have committees, they wanted to have other people managing their affairs so that we could come to consensus. It was a very difficult time for God's Church.

God's Church, small by the world's perspective, was scattered throughout the world and no longer in unity as one true Church. The first three Seals allowed for the self-destruction of two-thirds of God's own Church as a result of her sinful pride and spiritual lukewarmness.

Now, to be lukewarm is not to continue the fight in the mind. We become very complacent. So if we go three or four days where we have not fought our thoughts, we have not fought a battle, we are in a state of being lukewarm. Now, fortunately when I was called I was called out of the world and I did, by God's mercy, see the carnal natural mind, and I could see how it operated. It operates in a mode of just continual thought with no checking, no bringing into check, life just simply happens and we adjust, we defend ourselves, we are very opinionated. We're strong with those opinions because we're right in our own eyes. And what God calls us into and out of this state of mind is into a mind that has to be corrected on an ongoing basis. It has to be adjusted – our thinking has to be adjusted, transformed, on a regular basis *every day*. We cannot become lukewarm by not fighting a battle.

So if we are not fighting our thoughts, fighting our attitudes, bringing into check our attitudes towards others and situations, to bring our thinking into the line with the way God thinks, we are becoming lukewarm and it's a dangerous, dangerous state to be in.

The period of the 4<sup>th</sup> Seal was a prophetic revelation of what would occur to the remaining third of the Church that was scattered. Since this last third, the third of the Church that was scattered in total, would not repent of its guilt in causing the devastating results from the opening of the first three Seals the Church began to fall asleep once again. So there's this period from 1994 up until 1998 where the Church continued on in scattered groups but it was asleep and God began to awaken members of the Body and bring them back into one group. So the third that was left there, that were being scattered, had to go through the repetition of the same kind of destruction as in the first three Seals. During this same time God began to chasten, mold, and fashion a remnant, a remnant of the last third through whom He would finish His work in this last era of the Church. And of course that era finished, we know, on the Feast of Trumpets in 2008 with the sealing of the 144,000.

So the Church of God – PKG was established, the remnant came together as one group in unity under Jesus Christ, and it was established as the true remnant on Pentecost of 1998. So let's continue at looking at what happened in Revelation 12.

**Revelation 12:13 – Now when the dragon, referring to Satan, saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the Church, the 'woman' it says there, but it is the Church, that gave birth to the male child. But the woman/the Church was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place.** This is a place of spiritual protection, it's not physical. It's a spiritual protection so that Satan could not destroy God's begotten sons. Because people are begotten, and when they go to sleep they just have to be awakened by the power of God's spirit to become begotten sons again. **...where she is nourished for a time, times, and a half a time, which was 980 days from the 17<sup>th</sup> of December, 1994 to Pentecost of 1998, from the presence of the serpent/Satan.** God protected a remnant so that Satan could not destroy His Church.

**Verse 15 – So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth, like a flood, now that flood was a flood of false doctrine. There was so much false doctrine that people became confused about what the truth was. So, Satan spewed out this flood of false doctrine after the woman, after the Church, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.** So in other words, Satan decided that with this false

doctrine, with the man of sin saying what he did, that he would destroy the Church completely – but it's only God that can keep us in the truth, or bring us *back into* the truth.

**Verse 16 – But the earth helped the woman;** so God allowed for this to happen for a purpose, for a lesson. So God **helped the woman/the true Church, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.**

**Verse 17 – And the dragon/Satan was enraged with the woman and he went out to make war with the rest of her offspring.** So Satan is now furious because God has now started to draw a remnant out and he can see what's happening, but he wants to destroy this remnant. And who is this remnant? **...who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.** Now, to have the testimony of Jesus Christ one requires God's holy spirit living and dwelling *in* a person. So a testimony is a witness.

The awakened brethren that came through as a remnant have the testimony, they have a witness of Jesus Christ living and dwelling within in them. They believe the truth! They live love out to the benefit of others! So that is the only way that a member can be called a begotten son, because to be a begotten son one requires God's spirit.

So the term 'awakened brethren' is based on a spiritual understanding that God has given. Awakened is used because someone has gone to sleep spiritually, become Laodicean in spirit, the love of many have waxed cold. So that's what it is. They have to have been through a particular stage within the Church of God. They have to be part of the member, or a member of the Body of Christ, a begotten son before a set time. 'Awakened' is used because someone has gone to sleep spiritually, and it's based on a fact that only God can awaken, or awake, somebody to a spiritual level. That's a new spiritual level, it's called 'awakening', awakening out of a spiritual sleep.

To be called and awakened, brethren, a person should be baptized and have God's spirit dwelling in them before the apostasy of the 17<sup>th</sup> of December, 1994. Now, on the Church website the Church of God – PKG does address 'awakened brethren', because I actually went through this process as many members of the Body have, and it's an interesting process. This is what it states on the Church of God website under [FAQ-Topics] - Awakened Brethren.

It is exciting to see God working with those whom He is awakening and bringing back to His Church. But being highly weakened from being spiritually asleep (which all such individuals must come to acknowledge)...

So here is the first part of it; it's an acknowledgment that we were spiritually asleep. It is an acknowledgment of what actually happened. It's called repentance. The gift of repentance must be given to an individual that was once considered a begotten son of God, and they need to come to acknowledge it, to acknowledge exactly what happened.

...there is much that such people must prove to themselves as they begin to work at catching up on all that has continued to be revealed by God since the time when they were spewed out of God's Church.

Now, this is an incredible situation, and fortunately I have been through that. I have been through the first love like many members of the Body of Christ have. You go through a calling. Now, you go through

this calling in the sense of a first love, you begin to see the truth – and it is exciting! It's exciting and it's so obvious to you as an individual that you want to share it with others because you want to share this good news to others! Well, we know the outcome of that, that unless a person is called and granted God's spirit they can't see the truth.

The Church at the time when the apostasy happened had 21 Truths. There were three foundational truths, then there were eighteen that Mr. Armstrong had placed in the Church by the power of God's spirit – that God had given them to Jesus Christ, to Mr. Armstrong, and they were given to God's people. So, there were 21 Truths. After the death of Mr. Armstrong we then saw truth being watered down slowly, because as we became lukewarm we couldn't see truth to the degree that we should, so we became lukewarm and it came to the point of being spewed out. And since that time God has now introduced more truth to the Church – 36 new Truths – making a total of 57 Truths. So God has not stopped.

Now, when I went to sleep and when I was awakened, that God drew, fortunately, my wife and myself back into the Church to become begotten sons once again in the sense of active with God's spirit, we began to see the truth. There is an aspect of that where you see knowledge. You go, "Wow, this is incredible!" But then part of that was there is an aspect of shame because of what I had done, what I had caused because of my spiritual lukewarmness, what I had done. I deserved to be spewed out of God's Church because of choices that I had made. So then comes understanding. So just knowing 57 Truths and reading them is one thing, but understanding them, understanding the spiritual ramifications of the truth, the spiritual need that is for each person to take the truth *in* their minds and begin to *live* the truth, because we can just understand it and say, well, we see it, but not fully grasp the spiritual intent of it – in other words, not fully understand it spiritually.

Then, of course, the application of it which is how do we live this truth? So now the awakened brethren have to go through a process to be restored back into fellowship with God. There is a lot to catch up on when you consider 36 new truths since that time, yet alone going back over the 21 which have been lost. Because without God's spirit we, brethren, go backwards, we lose truth, because the truth is spiritual in nature. So we might have some knowledge of it, and the Church that's scattered has knowledge of the truth, the 21 – reject the 36 – but they have knowledge of the 21 but they don't know how to live it. They can't live government, for example. It's impossible for anyone outside of being a begotten son to live government, because government is God's spirit living in us so that it governs our life. And if God's spirit governs our life we are then under government. But if we use our natural carnal mind, we are not under government, it's impossible!

So those that are scattered out there still are *not* under government. It's impossible until God brings them back *under* government by the power of His holy spirit.

In order to be restored to the fellowship of the Church, [the Church of God and in fellowship with God] all who were part of the scattering from the Worldwide Church of God will need to read the publications and listen to the sermons outlined below, [which there is a list of on the website] if they are to fully prove to themselves all that God expects of them in order to come back into full unity and harmony with His Church.

So everyone has got to go through this process of coming back into *zeal* for God, because that's what God's spirit does, it will bring us back into unity with what He has given to His Church, it will bring us

back into *harmony* with God. And of course, there are booklets that cover that and much of that is available on the website.

Once a person has read and listened to this material [which is one of the main ones of course, 'Time is Running Out' and 'Time Has Run Out, and of course Chapter 7 of '2008 – God's Final Witness'].... Once a person has read and listened to this material and believe he/she is in full unity and agreement, then a request for reinstated fellowship can be made.

Now, we know that there are 63,000 who will be given this opportunity, brethren. At some point going forward in the months ahead they will be given this opportunity to come into unity and agreement with the truth.

**1 John 4:6 – We are of God: he who knows God hears us;** So it's going to be somebody that hears the truth that the Church preaches – they can then begin to see God. This is a sign that God is with them, because if they hear the truth they can now come into unity with God. **...he who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us;** so we know that anybody that hears the truth and can hear what we say, that God is working with them. **By this we know the spirit of truth** – the same word, it's the same truth – **and the spirit of error**, someone who's not listening to the truth, who cannot hear it. So it's all about God's thinking, it's about unity of thinking. Believing the truth, being of the same mind and thinking is proof God is in and with a person. They will understand and see spiritually, they will understand spiritual matters, they will see the truth, they will come into unity of doctrine, they will speak the same things.

**Verse 7 – Beloved, let us love one another;** in other words, there is no ill will or ill thought towards another person; **for God is love; and everyone who loves is born/begotten of God and knows God.**

**Verse 8 – He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.** So once God starts to work with an 'awakened brethren', somebody that has been asleep, God will draw them out of a scattered group.

There is a parable that covers part of this, to come to understand what God is going to do, and more importantly, how we should respond to what God is doing, and that's found in Luke 15. This parable is about repentance but it's also about how we should view what God is doing with people whether they're called or whether they're awakened.

**Luke 15:1 – Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him/Christ to hear Him. And the Pharisees and the scribes complained saying, This man receives sinners and eats with them.** In other words, they had judged who they thought was a sinner through a judgmental self-righteous attitude, and that of course is motivated by pride. They were just simply trying to put Jesus Christ down, to make Him little in their own eyes and little in the eyes of others.

**Verse 3 – So He spoke this parable to them saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does he not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it?** So we know, brethren, that Jesus Christ is the shepherd and that we are the sheep. And there are times when people stray. So here God is saying He will go out diligently in the wilderness, out into where they've gone, and He will look for them and He will look to find it to bring it back.

**Verse 5 – And when he has found it he lays it on his shoulders;** so here it is, God will *personally* draw us back, carry us back into the truth. So **when he does this, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.** Now this is incredible because here is God rejoicing about somebody that has been called out of the world – a calling is being drawn, being found out of the world – but it’s also an awakened brethren, somebody that was once a begotten son and the flow of God’s spirit no longer flows through them. Now He’s going to activate it, grant them repentance, and draw them back. He’s going to carry them back and He is going to be *rejoicing*. He’s going to be rejoicing! Now, to rejoice means to be thankful, because the only way that we can rejoice in anything is that we are thankful, we *see* the situation that existed and we can now *rejoice* about things because we’re thankful to God for all that He has done, for even the fact that He called us in the beginning, or that He has awakened us to become part of a remnant, and in the future awakened the 63,000 to draw them back, to give them opportunity to live into the Millennium, and an opportunity for those who live in the world, that they can be called or live into the Millennium.

We can rejoice. We can be thankful for others! We can be thankful and rejoice in it.

**Verse 6 – And when he comes home he calls together his friends and neighbors saying to them, Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost.** In other words, God’s granted the repentance and drawn them back into the fold, *into* the Body, *into* the Church of God.

**Verse 7 – And I say to you likewise, there will be more rejoicing, or more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over the ninety-nine just or upright persons who need no repentance.** And of course, we’ve been granted repentance and this is a process of ongoing repentance. We are to repent daily. We’re not to hold onto what we have in our life, which is sin. We’re to repent of it and to admit to God everyday that we were wrong and He was right. We are to admit our own nature where we *think differently* than God, where we choose attitudes that are wrong. We are to repent daily on those things.

Hold your place there and we’ll go to Matthew 18:10.

**Matthew 18:10 – Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones;** it’s talking about the brethren. We have to be very, very careful with what God owns and what God draws into fellowship. We cannot go despising them and looking down on them in any way, holding anything against them, whether they are newly called, whether they exist as begotten sons today, or whether they are awakened brethren. We are not to despise anybody in the Body or anybody in the world, for that matter, in any way. But here, of course, it’s talking about brethren.

**For I say to you, that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.** So these people, of course, once called have access to God, have direct access to God, so we need to watch our attitudes and watch our thinking that we make sure that we are using God’s spirit to love and to sacrifice for them. We’re to never look down on *anybody* that is called or drawn into the truth.

**Verse 11 – For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost.**

**Verse 12 – What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go into the mountain to seek the one that is straying?**

**Verse 13 – And if he should find it, assuredly I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep...** So anybody that is awakened, God is *delighted* in it. It's a joy to God and it should be a joy to us. **...than over the ninety-nine who did not go astray.**

**Verse 14 – Even so, is it not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish?** It's not God's desire that anybody should perish, and once a person once had God's spirit and for God to reactivate it is a very exciting and motivating time. God's love is for all mankind. He desires a relationship with them all that will lead one day to enter Elohim.

Going back to **Luke 15:8 – Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin does not light a lamp;** so she finds, lights a lamp, swept the house looking for it, **and searches carefully until she finds it.** Well, that's God's attitude. God desires that nobody should perish. God is diligent in everything that He does, and of course, the apostasy was for a purpose and it will be used in the Millennium as a warning, and in a hundred years, as a warning of what we can do with God's spirit dwelling in us, what we can still do. We can become complacent, we can become lukewarm, we can stop fighting, because it's our choice. God doesn't desire that we stop fighting. He will continue to feed and grow us and give us foods, spiritual food, but what we do with it is a choice.

**Verse 9 – And when she has found it she calls her friends and neighbors together saying, Rejoice with me!** Be thankful! **...for I have found the piece which I lost.** This is all about an attitude of how we should reflect this attitude toward others that God is going to awaken. **Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.** They rejoice because they know and see spiritually what the implications of repentance are. They rejoice because they see the potential salvation *from* a second death. So somebody that has been *awakened* spiritually now has the opportunity for life – true life – God living and dwelling in them, but then the next part is eternal life, immortal life, life everlasting, being changed from mortal to immortal, from one mind to a new mind, the mind of God, from being a begotten son to an actual son of God, born as a son of God. Exciting to look forward to that for all of us!

**Verse 11 – And He said, A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me. So he divided to them his livelihood.** So here he is giving them an aspect of their inheritance, to both of them – both of them had the same opportunity, they were with the father, in fellowship with the father, had a relationship with the father, and now one wants to leave, wants to leave this fellowship with the Father, and the other one is staying on with the father...both received their inheritance, both have been called, obviously. This is just a type, it's symbolic of that. Both have been called and have a relationship with their father.

**Verse 13 – And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living,** which is wasteful living. In other words, he's gone back to the world, back to Egypt, back to bondage, back to no food. That's what it's really saying – back to nothing. He believes in his mind that this is a better way of life, that he wants the world, he desires it, he wants it that way.

**Verse 14 – But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in the land and he began to be in want.** So he's now humbled because he's realized that he has nothing physical. On a spiritual level, it's like the scattered Church. They are in *severe famine* but they don't know it...they simply don't know it. I went through that very process where you think you are being fed, but you do know something is wrong – something doesn't quite fit – but you can't grasp it on a spiritual level, because without God's spirit

you simply can't. But over time, because the ministry was teaching falsehood in the sense of truth to a degree, without God's spirit it becomes protestant in time. So when you're fed that over time you just become worse and worse, you become skinnier and skinnier spiritually, you cannot grow, it's impossible.

**Verse 15 – Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country;** in other words he gained employment, **and he sent him into his fields to feed the swine.**

**Verse 16 – And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.** So here he is actually starving to death on a physical level. Well, that's exactly what happens when you're cut off from the flow of God's spirit.

**But when he came to himself,** so he started to think about his situation and he thought about, "Here I am in this pig pen and I'm starving to death!" **and he said, How many of my fathers hired servants have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger.** So in other words he came to realize that there was no spiritual food, if you look at it on a spiritual analogy, there is no spiritual food, but there is food available and it's in my father's house. So he's starving to death and he thinks, "I'm going to go back where the food is."

So we know only God can bring somebody to see their true spiritual condition. It requires God's spirit to be reactivated *in* a person for a person to see themselves and to see the condition they are in, to see that they are in the spiritual pig pen eating spiritual trash...and it's an incredible thing to come to. Chris and myself went through that process, and there is a level of that humbling process that is very exciting as well. It's amazing to see once you *see* where the truth is, that you do run there – you don't actually walk, you run there when you're given that opportunity by God to be awakened.

**Verse 18 – And I will rise and go to my father and I will say to him; Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you...** so now God has granted repentance and God in His mercy *will* forgive and He will forget.

We do not have the authority not to forgive anybody that returns into fellowship. We need to be very careful that we check our thinking. If God is merciful and forgiving, why wouldn't we be?

**Verse 19 – And I am no longer worthy to be called your son;** so here is a very repentant person; **make me like one of your hired servants** – so here is an attitude of humility, not wanting anything, happy to come back into the father's relationship just as a servant. He is a son, he was a begotten son, he was cut off, now he's saying, I just want to be a servant, just leave me here, I will do whatever is required, father, just take me back into the family, but I want to be a servant. Which is our attitude, of what we should be – we want to be servants. Well, awakened brethren will have the same attitude, I'm happy to be awakened; I just want to be a servant again of God. He knows that he is not worth of God's mercy. He's not worthy of his Father's mercy.

**Verse 20 – And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.** It is God that calls, it is God that draws us back into a relationship with Him. **And the son said to him, Father I have sinned against heaven and in your sight and I am no longer worthy to be called a son.** And that is actually true, but it is *God* that makes us worthy. It is God *in us* that gives us any value.



Just quickly go now to Romans 8:5 – because what makes a person a son of God? We are begotten sons – so what makes a person a begotten son? Romans 8 covers it.

**Romans 8:5 – For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh**, in other words they remain in this carnal mind and they don't fight on a spiritual level, it's all physical thinking and it's all about selfishness. **But those who live according to the spirit, the things of the spirit.** So in other words, once God activates His spirit *in* a person, they then begin to think spiritually, and then spiritual things become more important. We measure ourselves against God's word, we check ourselves, we measure ourselves against the way we should think verses the way we do. We check our attitudes.

**For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, because the carnal mind is enmity/hostile against God, for it is not subject to the law of God nor indeed can be.** And that's something that takes God's spirit to see. God has to reveal this statement to us for us to begin to see it. Now, depending on the depth of our conversion we can only see aspects of this, we don't see the full intent of it. To come to see the full intent of it takes years, because we don't see our own pride and we don't see the way that we really think. And often we live our life using much of our carnal mind verses God's spirit.

So then, **those who are in the flesh**, thinking selfishly, **cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the spirit**, if God's spirit dwells in us, of course; **if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he is not His**, in other words, we're not begotten sons if we are not in a relationship with God the Father on a spiritual level and with His begotten Family; we are not God's, we are not Christ's, because it requires God's spirit in us.

**Verse 10 – And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.**

**Verse 11 – But if the spirit of him who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit which dwells in you.**

Dropping to **verse 14 – For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God.** We are begotten sons of God. So if we are begotten sons of God we will be in full unity of doctrine, we will believe the 57 Truths that God has placed in the Church, we will have the witness of Jesus Christ in our lives, we will be living God's way of life out to the benefit of others.

**Verse 15 – For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you receive the spirit of adoption, by whom/by which we cry, Abba, Father.**

**Verse 16 – The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.**

**Verse 17 – And if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.** So that is the outcome of the promise that God has given us, that we will be glorified with Jesus Christ to enter Elohim.

Going back to **Luke 15:22 – But the father said to his servants, Bring out the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.** So in other words, he was placed back into the family. He was honored as a son, not as a servant, but as a son and he had authority over the servants.

So what attitude will we have, what attitude will we choose if this took place in the Church of God? That if a returning begotten son was placed in authority over us, how will we react? What sort of attitude will we choose?

**Verse 23 – And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry;** let's rejoice, let's be thankful for the return of a brother.

**Verse 24 – For this, my son, was dead...** Now, we can look at that on a spiritual level when a son of God returns; they were dead spiritually! **...and is alive again;** they've been awakened spiritually, they have life dwelling back in them. **He was lost,** he was part of the scattering **and is found,** he comes back into fellowship with God and back into fellowship with God's true Church, **and they began to be merry.** So there is great rejoicing because of the return of a son. The father rejoiced at it.

**Verse 25 – Now, his older son,** in other words the older brother, **was in the field:** so in other words, it's similar to being in the Church of God for a long period of time, working, laboring, not leaving the relationship with the Father, **and as he came and drew near to the house he heard the music and the dancing.** So he heard all this rejoicing that was taking place. **So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, Your brother has come and he,** because the father, **he has received him safe and sound your father has killed the fatted calf. But he,** the older brother, **was angry and would not go in.** So he chose an attitude of jealousy, of *resentment* against his brother that had come back *into* fellowship with his father, come back *into* a relationship. **Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him;** so here is the father saying, "Why are you choosing this attitude? Why don't you accept your brother coming back *into* a relationship with us?"

**Verse 29 – So he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years have I been serving you. I never transgressed your commandment at any time;** that's what he thinks, that's in his mind; **and yet you never gave me a young goat.** So this is an attitude of, "It was owed to me! It is owed to me because of my works! You should be looking after me more, you should be rejoicing at me, and you should be giving me more." Well, this is a terrible attitude. This is 'owed to me' attitude, a terrible attitude to have. **...that I might make merry with my friends.** So we *never* should expect anything from God. We should not want recognition from others; we should never want to be promoted. It is God that promotes on a spiritual level, it's not about us, it's about what God is doing *in* His Church with *His* sons, with His begotten sons.

**Verse 30 – But as soon as this son of yours came,** so here he is saying, but as soon as this son of yours...he's not talking about 'my brother'. Isn't that a terrible attitude, brethren? ...that he would not look at it as being his brother returning. **...who has devoured your livelihood with harlots,** in other words in sin and rebellion; **you killed the fatted calf for him.**

**Verse 31 – And he said to him, Son, you have always been with me, and all that I have is yours.** The 57 Truths are ours, brethren. They belong to God and God has given them to us through an apostle to His Church. Isn't it a wonderful thing that God is willing to share? So everything that God has He's willing to give and share with us – but here is a son that is now saying, "Well, I'm not happy with the fact that you are going to share these truths with others, those that are called, those that are awakened." We should want to share! *Surely*, we'd want to share with a begotten son. *Surely* we'd want to share the truth with others! That's the attitude we should have.

**Verse 32 – It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.** So we need to look at our attitude when anyone comes into fellowship with God's Church. We need to look at our attitude when God awakens somebody or calls somebody into the Body of Christ. They are our brothers! They are begotten sons of God! If we cannot rejoice *with* them something is missing in us. We know what that is, brethren, we should know. If we cannot rejoice and be thankful for the return of a begotten son, something is missing and what is missing is *God's spirit* dwelling in us.

Just look at another principle in **Luke 16:1 - He also said to His disciples, There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to Him that this man was wasting His goods. So He called him and said to him; What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship for you can no longer be a steward.** Now this is a terrifying thing for us brethren in the Body of Christ. We are to give account of our stewardship, what God has given us. We give an account every day and it's through the process of repentance. We have to give account for our thoughts, words, and actions, to God every day, and it comes through that very gift of repentance, through prayer where we give account to God the way we are handling His word, the way we are handling His truth – because that's what it is.

So we are called at this time and we are called to give an account of our thoughts, words, and actions, and we shouldn't fear that very process because it is a wonderful and marvelous gift that God has given us.

Brethren, we have been called at this time to come into unity with God, unity of doctrine, unity of belief. We have been called to fight a fight that is in the mind, it is of the spirit. It's not an outward physical war but we have been called to fight against ourselves. Once we are called, once we have been baptized and accept Jesus Christ as our Passover, once we have had hands laid on us and God has granted us the gift of repentance, the gift of His holy spirit living and dwelling in us, we have now entered a process called conversion, the transforming of the mind.

Now, awakened brethren are those that have once, previously, had God's spirit active, living in them. They were begotten sons but now God has cut off that flow of the spirit because of their sin, because of their unrepented sin. So we have to address the same issue in our life every day. Unrepented sin cuts us off from the flow of God's very spirit and it is a terrible state to be in. To be in an unrepentant attitude means we're in a state of rebellion and we have sin that cannot be forgiven. It can be forgiven if we approach God's throne and ask for repentance; ask that God apply the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ to our life, and then implore Him for the gift of His spirit, the power of His spirit, the power to stay *in* the truth, the power to believe God and to continue this fight in the mind.

So our battle is in the mind. We all have to come to know God in a deeper way. We all have to come to understand ourselves, to understand our very motives. We all need God's spirit. We all need God's spirit of love.

So, awakened brethren are those that are going to come back into unity with God, back into unity with God's truth, back into a relationship with God and back into a relationship with God's people. They will become of the same mind and the same thinking as us. They will become begotten sons of God because God's spirit will be active in them.

Life is about the way we think, the way we think toward others. We have been called to think differently, to think differently than our natural carnal mind.

So we look forward to the day that God will call more people into fellowship with Him. We look forward to the day that God will awaken brethren, those that are scattered, and they will be called back into a relationship with God.

We pray, 'Thy Kingdom come' while we also look forward greatly to the time when people will come into fellowship with God's people – come into fellowship with us, come into unity of doctrine, believe the truth. We pray, "God, bring this day quickly." We look forward to the very return of Jesus Christ and we look forward to a relationship with all of those people that live on into the Millennium.

~~~end