

Welcome to the Sabbath, everyone.

As this world continues to plummet into its own destruction (because that is actually where it is heading, to its own destruction, because of the choices of mankind, the choices of mankind's thinking), we will see the Seventh Thunder increase, because the Seventh Thunder is the accelerated revelation of God to man. Now, mankind does not know God, and over the period of 6,000 years man has not wanted God in their life. And within man's society we have seen this demonstrated because man doesn't really want to know any of God's laws or any of God's commandments. And because of his thinking, his human reasoning, he has now developed a society that he's actually against God. And somebody that desires to obey God is then persecuted or punished because of their obedience to God. Because that is man's system.

So this accelerated revelation of God to man *has* taken place in part (in a small part), to God's Church, because in 2005 God the Father revealed His true identity to His Church, to His called out ones. And in doing that, it revealed the true Jesus Christ. Well, we are soon to see this accelerated revelation of God to man, which will take place as the two witnesses begin this final work that they are to do, this last period of time that is covered and takes us up to a Pentecost. And that, of course, is outlined in the post that has just been released.

So we "see" what man is like, but mankind cannot "see" what he is like. God has not revealed Himself to most of mankind over this last 6,000 years. We, brethren, have been called out to understand, to come and "see" who God is, or a part of who God is. Because we don't fully know God in the sense of, we don't know His total being, but we know aspects of God and we know God's plan. We know the outline of God's plan.

Now, as we move further in time we begin to "see" that people's priorities are going to begin to change. Well, our priority is important to God, and our priority (what we place first) is very relevant at this time. Now, as things become more difficult over these last few years before the return of Jesus Christ and the 144,000, our priority (what we place first) is going to be of greater importance to us, because what is happening now around us is the beginning of this implosion, this beginning of the collapse of the way man's society is. And because of that, the pressure is going to come on us, God's people. A greater pressure is going to come on us in many ways—physically, financially, and also spiritually—because of this very system. Because we understand that Satan and the demons understand they have "but a little time," and therefore, their pressure is going to continue on God's Church until there is a time (of course, we understand) when they are then directing their attention to the world. And that happens mainly at that 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet period.

So our priority in life is what is important today and going forward over these last few years of mankind, mankind's rule or mankind's *self*-rule before Jesus Christ returns.

Now, it's important to consider our thinking in this because *before* we were called by God the Father our priority in life was one of selfishness, self-satisfaction. And now *that* is the current state of man's thinking. Even though he doesn't understand it, mankind is all about satisfying his own needs, this selfish satisfaction or satisfaction of the self. And because of that, they don't have to have self-control. And

that's what we see going on in society, a lack of self-control. Now, that will just get worse and worse and worse as we come up to the very end, that very last year where we're going to see mankind's self-control virtually disappear, because mankind will go into a state of destroying one another.

Now, although we have been *called* out of this self-satisfaction, we did not know what we were really being called into, but it *is* one of controlling the self, and it is one about having a priority in life, the right priority in life. Although we did not "see" that we were satisfying the self, that's the way we were, which is natural, carnal, or selfishly motivated. So the important aspect of all of this is about, what is our priority *now* and what is our priority over the next few years before Jesus Christ returns. And it *is* important because *this* will describe how we will go on a spiritual level, whether or not we will succeed on a spiritual level based on what we set as a priority.

So the title of today's sermon is, *What Is Our Priority?*

The purpose of this sermon is to look at what is our main priority in life *and* what it should be. And it's going to be based on what *God* has established as what our priority should be. Now, previously we had been looking at the Proverbs, and considering the physical part of it and also the spiritual application, so we're going to backtrack. And we left off in Matthew 6, so we're going to go back to Matthew 6 as a foundation of this particular sermon.

Matthew 6:33. Now, we covered this in a lot of detail in the last sermon, but we're just going to touch on it now because this really gives us what our priority should be. **Matthew 6:33—But seek first**, so we understand that this "seeking" requires action, it requires work, and it requires us setting our minds to do something. **But seek first**, so this is the very thing we have to do first as a begotten son of God, someone called into a relationship with God. This is the first thing we must do. This is our highest priority. God is giving it to us, to ensure that if we establish this first in our thinking above everything else, before everything else, we *can* live a successful life. **But seek first the Kingdom of God and His (God's) righteousness**, so we are to *seek* this transformation of the mind that we know has to take place, this change of thinking. We need to seek God's thinking on a matter. And that is on *every* matter in life. We should be referring back to use God's word in our life. So whatever we are doing in life, whether it's within a family relationship, whether it's in work, no matter what situation we are in, we should always be referring back to seeking God's opinion or God's view on any matter. And *that's* what we will establish in our life that gives us the direction in life, which is God's righteousness, which is God's character, which is God's thinking on any matter.

**...and all these things**, all these other physical things that are needed for the body, **shall be added to you**. Because our priority *is* God first, God says that He will add the physical needs (not the wants but the physical needs) to us. So the important part about our life is to challenge ourselves, to ask ourselves what really *is* our priority?

Now, we're going to go through various scriptures about having a right priority in life and what the consequences of that are.

Proverbs 21:5. The reality is, having a priority in life requires meditation (which is thinking it through), and it requires a plan. And the best thing that we can do is once we have established that God *is* our priority and we're seeking a right relationship with God, we're seeking God's character, and we're seeking eternal life (because that's what it's about, "seeking first the Kingdom of God"), we desire to enter Elohim (that is our whole focus in life and nothing else on a physical level matters), well, once

we've established that in our mind it requires, then, action. So we have this thinking process, this meditation, we have this *desire*, but then, of course, we have to face reality, which is this world. And once we face this reality we then have to implement it, because knowing these things is one thing, but actually doing them is something else.

So once we think it all through, and then we begin to implement it into our life, there is going to be tests and trials to see whether or not we are actually putting *first* God in our life, or putting God first in our life. Are we truly seeking eternal life? Are we really seeking the mind of God, really? Well, this is what our life is about.

Well, there are degrees in all these things, because we have to show balance in the way that we live our life, because we have these relationships, and we have to work, and we have all these other aspects of physical life going on. The most important thing is to always have God's thinking on a matter in our life. And that's what the Proverbs are because the Proverbs are wisdom. It's *how* to live life on a physical level. For us, is how to live life on a spiritual level.

**Proverbs 21:5—The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty...** Now, this "plans of the diligent," someone that is actually diligent, someone who has priorities established in their life, "lead surely to plenty." On a physical level, this person is working hard, they have these plans, they're very focused, and they're very determined, and it will lead to plenty, in the sense they'll be able to provide the needs for themselves and for their family, and potentially for others. **...but those (the plans) of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.** So someone who doesn't think it through, someone who's not diligent and doesn't plan it properly and rushes into a matter, it will lead to poverty on a physical level, because they have not sat down and have accurate plans and to have thought through the consequences of these physical plans.

Now we'll look at it another way. "The plans of the diligent," someone who's *spiritually* diligent, someone who is focused in their prayer, their study, and fighting the wrong thoughts that is going on, because these are the diligent. We have to be diligent on a spiritual level and we have to have plans on how to fight it. So when thoughts come into our minds what is our plan to defend our spiritual condition? What is it? Well, we have to be diligent about it, and one way, of course, is that effort in prayer and the effort in turning to God's word to see how God says we should fight these matters.

So "the spiritual plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty." Well, this is on a spiritual level. It will lead to spiritual growth, it will lead to this righteousness that is mentioned in Matthew 6, because we are seeking first *God's* thoughts. We are seeking first eternal life, we are seeking God's thoughts, God's character, God's righteousness, and because of this, God says it will lead to plenty. In other words, all these things will be added to you. God's character will be added to our thinking because we've established in our minds that the only way is God's ways.

"But," and we understand that the "but" is the contrary to it; it's the complete opposite. One is black, one is white. So this is the black part of it. "But, those, those plans of everyone who is hasty," to be hasty on a spiritual level is to rush into it without counting the cost, without referring to God's word, referring to God and God's thinking about a matter. There is no detailed thinking about it on a spiritual level. Well, if we rush into things and we haven't considered the way that God thinks about a matter, "surely it will lead to poverty," spiritual poverty, because we're not referring back or we're not using God's thinking to understand a matter.

So it is important that we have these plans, we have this priority in life to put God first. And the way we do it is through prayer, study, and the desire to fight any wrong thinking. Now, if we rush hastily into anything in a spiritual matter without referring back to God's word, we will *not* get it right, because we have to think about it, we have to meditate, we have to pray about a matter, and it will lead to something great. It will lead to something plenty on a spiritual level. If not, it will lead to spiritual poverty. And what is "spiritual poverty"? Spiritual poverty is when we lean on our own understanding, on human reasoning, the way that *we* see it, the way that *we* think it should be, our opinion rather than God's opinion. Because we need to be trusting in God and referring to God's opinion.

**Proverbs 27:23—Be diligent to know the state of your flocks.** This physically, is somebody, that they need to understand the state or the number of their flocks, whether they have the number they have, how many lambs they have, how many sheep they have, how many rams they have, and they need to understand it's physical condition, because they don't want them to be starving to death. And therefore, if they did understand it they would be able to move them. For example, if they were in an area, because they understood the state of the flocks, if they are in an area where there was no food, they would actually get a shepherd and move the sheep to where the food is. So they have to be diligent to know the state of their physical flocks.

**And attend to your herds,** so they are to attend to them. They are to make sure they look after them and that they have the food and water that is necessary because this is being *diligent*. This is actually making sure that they have a physical priority to look after the well-being or the health of the animals. Because what does it do? Well, it leads to wealth, physical wealth. So if they understand the state of the flocks, whether they have food and water, and they should then attend to those herds, the cattle, etcetera, because it actually is the outline of wealth for them. Therefore, they have a physical priority.

Well, here, brethren, we are to "be diligent to know the state of your flocks." We are to know the state of our spiritual condition, our *own* spiritual condition. What is the condition of our mind? What is the condition of our mind? *Is* it dependant on God's word, or do we lean on our own understanding? "And attend to your herds." Now, this is what we have control over. We have control over our thoughts, words, and actions. *We* have control over our attitude. We should attend to our own thinking and ask the question: Is it in unity with God? Now, that's one thing that we can do, brethren.

So we need to be very diligent on a spiritual level. And how do we be diligent on a spiritual level? To trust in God, to make sure we're turning to God for the answers. "To know the state of your flocks." What is the condition of our mind? What is the condition of the way we behave? What is the condition of our prayer life? What's the condition of our fasting life? What is the condition of our thinking? Is it one of humility or is it one of pride?

"And attend," which means *action* is required, "attend to your herds," so we'd best do something about it. So we need to be careful. We need to be monitoring and we need to "attend to your herds." We need to attend to our priority in life. What is our priority? Is it God first? Or is it physical? And that's the question that we need to ask ourselves because it is going to be so important as we lead to this end-time of man's self rule. Because there's not many years left, and *this* will be the greatest aspect in our life that we need to consider, which is our own spiritual condition. And what is our priority? Is it our spiritual condition? Or is it physical condition?

Now, the reason for this "being diligent" and this "attending" is answered in **verse 24—For riches are not forever, nor does a crown endure to all generations.** So this is the reason why we need

to be attending to our spiritual condition and be diligent to know our own thoughts, words, and actions, what condition they are, "for riches," for wealth, "are not forever." Nothing is guaranteed. So we have to make sure that we are focusing on the spiritual and not on the physical, because if we focus on the physical this wealth, these physical things, are not forever. They're going to be passing away! There is no guarantee that we're going to have anything for any period of time. Although a person may think that they have money in the bank, that means nothing! Because they're not forever! It's all temporary. And the security that is around physical wealth is going to pass away.

"Nor does a crown," and a "crown" is one of authority. So this authority doesn't endure to all generations. So the authority that we currently have in our life, it doesn't endure. It passes away. It will pass away when we die. And kings die. That authority doesn't endure all generations. It passes away.

Everything is physical and temporary. Only the spiritual endures forever and is true wealth. So from that proverb we can see that we need to be diligent, to be attending to our own spiritual condition. We need to make sure we have the right priority, which is one about spiritual matters, our relationship with God.

1 Timothy 6:17. The reason we're going through this particular sermon is because we face a time of great distress, and if we're not careful our priority can be one of focusing in on the physical and seeking to be *physically* supported, physically wealthy, or physically secure, when really our priority must be that of turning to God and trusting in God, and whatever situation we find ourselves in, God is with us and God will provide for us.

So right now, where we have time ahead of us—not much, but we have a little bit of time—it is so important while this "Measuring of the Temple" is taking place, that we check our priority. We have to ask ourselves: What is our priority? Is it about physical matters and securing physical things around us? Or acquiring wealth? Or is it one of acquiring spiritual wealth, something that comes from God, which is revealed to us by the power of God's holy spirit, and much of it comes through the posts, where we "see" God revealing so much to us. What a great blessing it is. What great mercy God is having on His Church. Well, we must be sure that we have this as our highest priority—God is first. Our prayer life is so important, our study is so important, and meditating on the way we respond to others, our attitudes, and adjusting them (by the power of God's holy spirit) *is* so important. *They* are the most important things in life.

Now, as we come up to the Feast, many will face various trials because of the pressure of Satan and his demons. This ability to change our focus, to have us think about ourselves, to focus in on self, to have this self pity is what Satan transmits to us, that we look at ourselves. Rather than looking at our spiritual condition, we tend to look at our physical condition, and hence, we can lose our focus, and we can start to spend more time on acquiring, on getting physical, rather than seeking first the Kingdom of God and God's spirit, God's righteousness, God's thinking on a matter.

**1 Timothy 6:17—Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty,** and that is "proud, take to self," because when we're proud, we take to self the credibility, what we think is the credibility of who we are. So "command those that are rich," on a physical level "in this age" who have possessions, who have been granted by God the very things that they have (because all things come from God), but they are rich on a physical level, "not to be proud," not to be haughty, **nor trust in uncertain riches.** Now, *this* is the problem, this trusting in uncertain riches, this reliance on self-acquired wealth or perceived wealth. So we're not to trust in these physical things, "the uncertain riches," because they're all going to pass away very soon (the whole lot is disappearing), and anything that we

think we might have on a physical level is all going to be passing away because we're going to enter into a time of great distress. And in that time, the end result will be the return of Jesus Christ, and mankind's pride has to be brought low. Mankind has to be humbled. So this is a time for us to double-check, to see whether we are proud, and that we're not trusting in self, not trusting in our *own perceived riches*. This pride, this taking to self, is conceived by the mind as something rich. It's wealthy, because, "I'm better than others." Well, it's not, because these things are going to pass away.

So we're not to trust in these things, **but in the living God**, because that is our key. This is about our priority, **who gives richly all things to enjoy**. So it's God that provides all physical things and it's for the purpose of enjoyment. Because God desires that we enjoy life. Now, if we have the physical as our focus and not the spiritual, well, we can get drawn away by enjoying these physical things, because physical things, these riches that are coming to us, or we have this prosperity that we can enjoy, does provide. It provides nicer housing; it provides nicer clothes; it can provide a nicer car, nicer meals. All of these things can come from these things that God allows us to have. Well, it's important in all of that to make sure that we still rejoice in God for them because it is God that has provided them.

**Verse 18—Let them do good**, it's talking about the person, what they should do is not to trust in these things that are physical. **But let them do good**, and that is with a spiritual intent to *give* without expecting in return, **that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for a time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life**. "Seek first the Kingdom of God." Seek first eternal life. And this is about repenting and seeking to live according to God's word.

So let's backtrack here in verse 18. "Let them do good," well, this is something on a spiritual level, that we know it is more blessed to give than to receive, and if we do give (by the power of God's holy spirit inspiring us to give), we should give without expecting anything in return. Because if we're giving and then expecting something back (even a thank you), we're actually giving for the wrong motive. We need to use God's holy spirit which *does* operate slightly differently, because all things return to God. But for us, we are required to give *knowing* that we shouldn't expect anything in return. And if we don't get anything in return, we still can rejoice because we have fulfilled God's thinking in us, which is one of giving.

"That we may be rich in good works." So these "good works," brethren, are about an attitude. It's a way of thinking. Its things that are motivated by God's holy spirit. So to have a "good work" has to be motivated by God's holy spirit. It must come through God's spirit and we must yield to it so that we then provide for the needs of others.

"Ready to give." And there's two things here with "ready to give" on a physical level. We're willing to *sacrifice* the self, we're willing to give of the self, we're willing to put the self down so that someone else will benefit.

"Willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for a time to come." Well, brethren, this foundation needs to be layed *now*, not only for the future so that we may lay hold of eternal life, but a time to come. This last period of time where there is going to be great distress in this world, we need to have a good foundation, a good spiritual foundation. The physical is going to pass away, so it won't matter, but we need to have a good spiritual foundation. Well, what's that foundation? Well, the foundation is on Christ, our reliance on God, our trust in the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and also

this thinking through, to be *diligent* to have attended to our spiritual condition. We are to be in control over our thoughts, words, and actions.

Now, that's the key to this "good foundation." This "good foundation" is based on God's word, and God's word tells us that we are to come into unity of thinking with Him. So we trust in God's word and we are seeking to have a spiritual control over our thoughts, words, and actions, because as we go into this end-time period of tribulation, which is soon to come upon us, we need to make sure that our thoughts, and our words, and our actions are those of God. We have to watch our *attitude*, because our attitude has to be one of love for all; love of the brethren, and love for all. So anything that is taking place, we have to come to understand, we have to come to "see" that it is God's love, that God is humbling mankind for the purpose of giving them this same vision we have, this same hope, that they one day will be able to have the right attitude, to be able to be called so that they can lay hold on eternal life, by their turning to God, by trusting in God and not in the uncertainty of riches. All mankind is going to have to come to learn "to live by the very word of God" and "to trust in the living God," because that is the purpose of life, to come to learn, to have the right priority—God first, no matter what.

**Mark 10:17.** This is referring to Jesus Christ. **Now, as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, Good (upright) Teacher/Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?** Now, we go back to that very scripture, which was, we are to have a priority of "seeking first the *Kingdom* of God." Well, this is the same question: "What do I do... what shall I do that I may have eternal life?" So this is actually now, God is going to give us the answer through Jesus Christ.

Now, the reality of this, of course, he was carnal. So in reality, this was actually a *selfish* question, because he has asked not, "What shall *we* do to inherit eternal life?" but "What shall *I* do?" So there's a lot of self-interest in this question.

Then Jesus Christ answers, **verse 18—So Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.** Because it is Yahweh Elohim where righteousness comes from. It is Yahweh Elohim that provides all things. It is Yahweh Elohim that is good. Because only God is good, as Jesus Christ has said. All good, all righteousness comes from God. Now, for us to do any good or to do any righteousness, it *must* come from God by the power of God's holy spirit. Now, here Christ is saying it was God in Christ that made Him who He was. It was God's holy spirit in Him that made Him who He was. Jesus Christ's priority was God first, no matter what.

So Christ has answered him saying, "Well, no one is good but God," which his true. And it's only through the power of God's holy spirit that we can live any form of good or righteousness.

**Verse 19—You know the Commandments,** which is referring now to some of the 10 Commandments, as in outlined in Exodus 20. **Do not commit adultery,** which is, "No unlawful relationships," none, none at all, nothing that is considered by God as unlawful relationship. Well, today's world, relationships are all over the place and they do not use the word of God. They have not considered God's word or God's thinking in anything to do with relationships, hence, there are all types of relationships that man has now legislated as being lawful. But God has said they are all unlawful, except for a man and a woman, and that is, "Do not commit adultery." And it's broader than that, of course. It goes into premarital sex and many other things.

**Do not commit murder,** and that, mankind has a rule that you're not to murder. And somebody murders somebody else and they think they can prove it. They may get five years, they may get twenty, they may get seventy, it all depends. And man's rules are slightly different than God's because God says you're not

to murder, and if you do murder and it is proven by the mouth of two or three witnesses then it is the death penalty. As we know, Jesus Christ magnified the law, and therefore, "Do not murder," it's, "No hate. No ill will." And we should desire the best for everyone. And that is something that we will come to "see" in time. And I understand, have come to "see," that the best for everyone is that they be called and be granted repentance. That is no ill will to our neighbor because we desire that they are called by God and that they repent. That is the best thing that can happen to any human, is the gift of repentance.

**Do not steal.** Do not take from others. Well, we understand that it's not just a physical taking from them, it's actually, "Do not destroy their character." Don't take their character. So we have to be on guard about our words, that we are not taking someone's character from them by imputing a motive on them, by implying something that we actually didn't witness or we just simply do not know. We just don't know.

**Do not bear false witness.** "Do not speak error or lies about a person."

**Do not defraud, Honor your mother and father,** which is to respect God as our authority, respect the God-ordained authorities that God has placed over us.

And **verse 20—And he answered and said to Him, Teacher, all these things I have kept,** "All these things I have observed," **from my youth.** Now, this young man would have said this based on a physical application, because he wouldn't have understood the spirit of the law, because without God's holy spirit it's impossible to understand the spirit of the law. So he's now said, "Well, I've kept all these things," and he's now virtually declared before God that he believes that he is righteous. That's what he's really doing. "Look, I've kept all these things. I've done all these things." And he would have been thinking physically.

**Verse 21—Then Jesus, looking at him, loved,** and that is "agape" him, **and said to him, One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the stake,** the burden you must carry, **and follow Me.** Now, *this* is the difficulty for mankind, because he can't give up what it is that he trusts in. He can't give up his wealth. And this is about this priority. This young man's priority was acquiring wealth. And when Jesus Christ revealed to him the opportunity to follow Him, to follow God's ways and he would have treasures in heaven, he would build up righteousness, character, the character of God...and if he did that, he was to follow, he then would be considered to have the opportunity to enter eternal life—which, that was the original question, "What do I have to do to enter eternal life?" Well, Christ is virtually saying, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you on a needs basis." Well, the young man had a lot of wealth, and therefore, it's a big problem to him.

So God has now given him the opportunity here to come to understand what he must do, but he lacked one thing, and that was he wasn't able to do it...he wasn't able to do it.

Christ knew that the man had a priority of acquiring wealth. The man's acquiring of physical wealth was his main focus, it was his priority; therefore, it was his idol. *Wealth* was his self-worth. Now, this becomes the issue, because of a way of human reasoning, human thinking. People get their self-worth, (their value in the eyes of others), from what they have. Now, this is a common thing amongst society, that if somebody drives a particular type of car, they are considered wealthy, and the person driving the car is passed up because they have gained their self-worth from it. Now, they don't understand that this priority, that they've set it about acquiring wealth and about where they live and what type of car is actually their idol. It reflects their thinking. But mankind doesn't understand it and mankind actually looks to it, that if someone lives in a particular suburb and drives a particular type of car people look up to them. And people *love* to be looked up to. That's the natural carnal mind!

Now, what Christ asked him to do was to sell what was in his control and give it up. Now, Christ didn't really mean that he was to give everything away and come into poverty and walk around in rags. That's not what it was about. This was about, what was his priority in life. He was to give up one priority, which is this acquiring of physical wealth, and have a *different* priority, which is "seeking first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness."

So this was the question, "Give up one physical priority for a spiritual one. Change your priority in life." And that's what Christ was asking him. Christ was testing to see if the man would sacrifice everything, which is a thought process, to follow God's way of life.

Now, often we may be asked to sacrifice certain things, to give up in our mind, to have set our mind and our will to give up *everything*. In other words, "It doesn't really matter what happens, this is what I'm going to do, no matter what the cost." We've counted the cost and we're now determined that that's what we'll do, and then we set out to do it. Well, often it doesn't take place, because God intervenes because He knows our heart. He knows that we *would* give it all up for Him. And this is what it's about. It's a test to see what we will do. And once we've determined and set our mind to do something, God often intervenes because He knows our heart. And therefore, sometimes God doesn't intervene, because we have to be tested on these matters. We have to be tested to see what we will really do. What is *really happening* within a person's life? What is really happening in *our* life? What will we really do? Now, we may say we'll do something, but the only way to really find out is to go through the test, to go through the trial to see what we will do in certain circumstances.

**Verse 22—But he was sad at this word**, he was sorrowful, from a word that means "hated." So it says there that he was "sad." He actually "hated" what Jesus Christ said. He was sorrowful because he hated it, because he didn't want to give it all up. **...and went away sorrowful.** He was "grieved or offended" — why?—**for he had great possessions.** The man *hated* Jesus Christ's answer, because he wanted to seek eternal life, and at that point of time he thought that he was willing to do whatever it required to have eternal life. And when Christ outlined the fact that he'd just have to keep the Commandments, he said, "Ah, yes, I've done all that!" And the moment Christ touched on something that he loved, that was his priority, that was his idol, he *hated* that answer. Why? Because he had these possessions. Christ's question was about what a person would place as a priority—something physical or something spiritual.

**Verse 23—Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom of God!** To have eternal life. So how hard is it? Well, it's because of a thought process. It's because of this idol that has been established in a person's thinking.

**Verse 24—And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the Kingdom of God!** Now, *why* is it hard? Because the natural mind desires to get for self. Self-worth comes from what a person has acquired or gotten. Self-worth comes from what a person is in his own thinking, his/her own thinking, because it's the way the mind builds up. It's about this credibility or esteem. It's about this building up of worth, and it's generally done through what a person has acquired. And often it'll be... in sports, it's about, "I'm the fastest runner," or "I can throw the ball the furthest," or, "I can hit the baseball out of the stadium so many times." That's a person's worth. Well, wealth is the same, "I live in 'such and such' a suburb." "I have a five bedroom house." "I have 'such and such' a car." "I have 'such and such' a business." "I do 'this'." "I do 'that'." "I'm really educated." "I have all these things." And it's all about "I" and "self." It's about *gaining to self*. But the opposite of that is that God's way is one of giving. A person's *value* is in how much they give of themselves. A person's true value is how much they *sacrifice themselves* to the *benefit* of another, the complete opposite to what is taking place here.

So this priority in life isn't about the physical wealth, about what a person acquires. It's about what a person *gives*. How much a person sacrifices of themselves is what is the greatest value to God.

So it's important, brethren, we consider *our* priority in life.

**Verse 25**—Christ continues...**It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.** Now, that statement, if you looked at that physically, it would blow a person's mind. "It's easier for a camel," which is rather large, "to go through the eye of the needle," which is so small that you can sometimes hardly get a piece of cotton through it. It's easier for that to happen, "than a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven," because it's not about the *rich* man. It's actually about *his thinking*. It's about what he has put down in his life as a priority. Having wealth is not a problem, but it's the thought process behind this wealth, whether or not it's relying on God.

Because, if you go back and realise that Abraham was a wealthy man, Abraham was actually a rich man. King David was wealthy. King David was rich! Now, they are great examples of the fact that it is not impossible for someone that is rich to enter the Kingdom of God, which they will at the return of Jesus Christ, but this statement by Jesus Christ is about something different! It's about this desire to get or this inability to give up and sacrifice. So it requires God's spirit. So somebody that has riches without God's spirit, it's impossible for them to enter the Kingdom of God, because they have set their priority and they have set *that* as their idol. That is first in their life. But somebody with God's spirit that *has* wealth, it's not a problem. They *can* enter the Kingdom of God because their priority is God first (and they understand that), and God has blessed them so that they do have wealth. But in amongst that, they still have God first in their life. And God will always be first, no matter whether they have it or they don't have it, as far as riches is concerned.

**Verse 26**—**And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?** So no one is going to enter the Kingdom of God, because certain amount of wealth that everyone has.

**Verse 27**—**But Jesus looking at them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.** So they're saying, "Well, no one is going to enter the Kingdom of God." But Jesus Christ is saying, "But God makes it all possible," because king David is a great example. Abraham is a great example of that, that it *is* possible with God. It *is* possible with God's holy spirit, then, if God blesses a person to have riches, to have wealth, as long as a person has the right priority (which is God first), they *can* enter the Kingdom of God.

So how is it possible that we can enter the Kingdom of God if we do have wealth? By a transformation of the mind, by this thinking differently, by a conversion from one way of thinking (from physical) to another way of thinking (which is spiritual). And this is what this is about. This is about a priority in life. Are we going to rely on the physical or are we going to rely on God, which is the spiritual.

**Verse 28**—**Then Peter began to say to Him, See, we have left all and followed You.** Now, what Peter was saying was, "Well, we've done this. We've given up everything. We've walked away and we're following You, so are we going to get eternal life?"

**Verse 29**—**So Jesus answered and said, Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left home/house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands,** so all of these things God is saying, yes, we may have to give them all up, but God is going to provide it all now in this time **with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.** So, let's back track on that, what Christ is saying.

So nobody that has left the physical priority of life, which is acquiring the wealth, and has now turned their priority in seeking God, seeking the righteousness of God, seeking the Kingdom of God, "for My sake," for the sake of Jesus Christ, because that's why we do it, because we believe in the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We trust in Christ and what Christ did for us. We trust in Christ as the Head of the Church. "And the gospels," well, what's the gospel? The gospel is the Kingdom of God. So if we have left all of these things...and many of us, brethren, have had to do it. We've had to leave our homes in the sense of change locations. And some have actually lost their physical home over following Jesus Christ, and they have lost their brothers or sisters, some have lost parents, where parents have turned on them, and some have had to leave their wives because their wives have been hostile against them, and their own children, and their lands. Some have relocated completely because of persecutions over time. And they've all done it for the sake of Jesus Christ, of following God, of obedience to God and God's law. "...and the gospel." Because of the good news, people have been persecuted for it.

**Verse 30—Who shall not receive a hundredfold now,** so the greater blessings are now, and they are spiritual in nature. Some have received physical things back. We know the story of Job where Job lost everything physical, but God gave it all back to him because God came to see his heart. God came to *know* Job. Well, us, brethren, we've received a hundredfold now in *this time*. Houses—how? Because we are provided for by God. Brothers and sisters—well, those that have lost physical brothers and sisters because of a relationship, have gained spiritual brothers and sisters, members of the Body of Christ. And mothers—because the Church is the "mother" of us all. And children and lands—the Church of God and those called out of this world, the brethren, are all of these things. They encompass what God has given us. We have received a hundredfold on a spiritual level, not on a physical, on a *spiritual* level. And we've received all this with persecutions.

So God says that, yes, we might give up all the physical and we will have gained all this spiritual, but it's all going to come with persecutions, because that is what being part of the Body of Christ is about. That's what being called out of this world is all about. We are going to *suffer* persecutions, all for the benefit of, entering Elohim. Because of these tests and trials, because of these persecutions, it gives us the ability to re-establish our priority in life—God first no matter what. We've counted the cost, prepared to give up everything to follow this way of life, to walk in the truth, to follow Jesus Christ in the Church.

"And in the age to come," which is the return of Jesus Christ, "eternal life." So at some point, if we are willing to give up all these physical things and "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," (and there will be persecutions involved in all of this), we will receive the gift of eternal life. Which is what the young man said, "What do I have to do to inherit eternal life?" Which is, change your priority. Change your priority.

**Verse 31—But many *who are first will be last, and the last first.*** Now, *this* very principle, that (Jesus Christ making this statement) has been misunderstood or not understood by many through history of mankind. But what Christ is really saying is, "But many who are first," on a physical level, have wealth, "will be last," because they won't have *spiritual* wealth. They'll be poor, in other words, because they don't have anything spiritual. "But the last," as far as anyone that has put down the wealth and made themselves "last" on a human physical level (which is humility), willing to give it all up, "will be *first*." Will be first spiritually! So this is talking about a priority in life. This covers physical wealth versus spiritual wealth. The first, physically, their priority is physical wealth, will be last spiritually, have no spiritual wealth. They'll be poor spiritually—not be physically wealthy—but spiritually they will be poor. Spiritual wealth is the thinking of God. So by having this wrong priority and seeking first physical things we're

going to be spiritually *poor*, because we can't have God's thinking on a matter. It's one way (physical priority) or the other way (spiritual priority).

So, brethren, what is our priority? "The last," because of their priority, which is not physical wealth but spiritual wealth, "will be first," spiritually. They will have *spiritual wealth*. Isn't that exciting to understand? That we understand what Jesus Christ is talking about. We either have a physical priority or a spiritual one. We either have a physical focus in life and everything we're doing is about physical and it's about using the natural carnal mind, leaning on our own understanding, or we have a spiritual one, which is leaning on the word of God and what God is placing in His Church, the truth He is placing in His Church, that we're trusting in that and relying on that.

Well, if we have that we are considered the last, but we're going to be first. Whereas the other way, if we're relying on self, we're going to be first now in this world, but we're going to be last on a spiritual condition. We're going to be poor spiritually. So the question begs: What do we desire in our life?

Now, the time that we're approaching, brethren, is so important to re-establish our priorities now. Before we go to the Feast we need to establish our priorities now. Have them firmly grounded. Have meditated on them, thought about them, and cried out to God to re-establish our priority as "seeking first the Kingdom of God." *That* is our number one priority ahead of everything else! And the reason that we should even logically look at it (if we want to use the word "logical"), is that everything physical—*everything physical*—is passing away. Everything physical is passing away! Only the *spiritual* will remain. Only the spiritual will remain.

When we look at the end of 7,100 years, when we see that the physical ceases, physical life ceases, the only thing going to be left is Elohim and the angelic realm that has followed God. That's the only thing that's going to live. So how much more should we now focus on God's way of life, on God's word, of seeking first eternal life and God's righteousness, God's thinking on every single matter in life. So whenever we have to be faced with various judgements in life, we should turn to the word of God and see what God says about a matter.

Now, I believe that God has provided the Church with *such spiritual knowledge*, such *wisdom* through the 57 Truths, and more within all the posts that we have received where there is a lot more truth adding to some of the truths that we had, a greater understanding being added. It is *amazing* what we have. Hence, we should have set our priority now that we're going to endure to the end *no matter what!* Our focus will *not* be wealth acquisition but it will be spiritual wealth acquisition. We will give up *everything* to obey God. This is what this event was about when the young man asked, "How do I inherit eternal life?" And God's answer was, through Jesus Christ, "Well, first you have to seek first the Kingdom of God. That's what you have to do. That's your main priority." And if you are first on a physical level now, if you're not prepared to give it up, you're going to be last. You're going to be very poor spiritually; you're not going to have anything! But if we're willing to give up everything now for God and be last (considered by the world as last, because we would be willing to give it all up), we will be first before God. We will be first spiritually because our focus is on the spiritual.

Those who are considered "first" in this world, because of their wealth and their priority is wealth will in fact have it taken from them at some point in time *soon...soon*. Very soon it's all going. It's all disappearing. But those that consider God as first (He's the first priority), because they are willing to give up physical wealth, give up the physical now, give up any of the physical benefits now, for God's way of life (to obey Him) will in fact be first to receive *true* wealth, spiritual wealth. The first on a physical level, those with pride and have a self-focus, or self-wealth focus, will be humbled to be last. They have to have their focus changed, and it's all done out of loving correction. Then, once humbled, once they

become last and this physical focus has changed, and repentant ("last," in other words, they become last, they've had their focus changed to something spiritual, "seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"), they now *can* become "first," have a spiritual focus, have spiritual wealth. Isn't that a beautiful event that takes place, and the fact that we understand what this is about?

**2 Timothy 2:10—Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Jesus Christ with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him,** now, this death is at baptism, where we were baptised. We buried the old self, and that was when we were fully immersed and we buried the self. **We shall also live with Him.** So we're going to live with Him by the fact we're going to walk in the spirit of the law. We're going to walk in love.

Now, this can only take place if we receive the gift of God's holy spirit, which enables us to live *in* Jesus Christ or live *with* Jesus Christ, which is to walk in the spirit of the law, to walk in the spirit of a matter, to have a priority, God's way of life first.

**Verse 12—If we endure,** and this is "to the end" in faith, because we have to "endure to the end." It's no use starting this race, starting this journey, this walking with a right priority and then giving it up half way through or near the end. And how foolish we would be now when we see the finish line, where we can endure to the end. There's not long to go before the actual removal of Satan. We just have to endure this period of time that we are in, and we must have this right priority now. And by having this right priority of God first, we can endure to the end in faith because we believe what God has given us, we believe what God has placed in the Church. **...we shall also reign with Him.** And this is as spirit beings in the Family of God. This reigning with Jesus Christ *is* the part of the 144,000 (when this was written, it was referring to this very matter) that they will be spirit beings in the Family of God. Well, we can reign with Him in time. There will be the next resurrection after the 144,000. At the end of the 1,000 years we know there is another resurrection where people will enter as spirit beings into the Family of God to help support the next great event, which is that resurrection of all of mankind for the last Hundred-years, where *they* will have that opportunity, where Satan is no longer in their life at all, where they will have that opportunity to come to set the right priority.

**If we deny Him,** which is not allowing Him to dwell in us, **He also will deny us.** This is about this reigning with Jesus Christ, because of a priority we have set in our life and because we have not denied Him to live in our life. So the power of God's holy spirit cannot be denied in our life. That's the point about all of this. This enduring is about enduring to the end by allowing Jesus Christ and God the Father to live and dwell in us so that righteousness, so that good works can flow out from us to the benefit of others. But if we do deny Him, He will deny us. Because? We have denied Him the ability to live out to the benefit of others. What a tragedy that would be in our life.

**Verse 13—If we are faithless,** in other words, we don't believe His word, we don't believe the very word of God, **He remains faithful,** because God's not a liar. He remains faithful to us. **He cannot deny Himself.** Because this is referring to God's holy spirit. God's holy spirit in us, He will provide it as long as we're willing to yield to it and be repentant. So He is faithful even though we aren't. He is faithful to provide us His holy spirit and to live in us. It's all about what choices we make.

**Verse 14—(This is Paul writing to Timothy.)Remind them,** the brethren, **of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit,** so not to get into arguments about things or start to debate things, because there's no value in that, because it will lead **to the ruin of the hearers.** So not word battles, not arguments over vanity, not the puffing up of the self, you know, the nothingness. We're arguing about nothing, really! Because any argument is the lifting up of self. It's

done in pride. Any raising of the voice, any disagreement is about our opinion versus another person's opinion, which is vanity. It's all an emptiness.

**Verse 15—Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.** Now, this "rightly dividing the word of truth," is to apply the knowledge that we have with understanding that we have (on a spiritual level) into our life, which is wisdom. So we're to "divide the word of God," we're to come to understand it, to "see" it on a knowledge level, and then to come to "see" it and understand it, the "why" of the truth that we have, and then to live it. So we're to apply these things into our life. We're to "divide the word of truth," which is given to us through an apostle to the Church where we can "see" God's Word, we can "see" the Word of truth in our life, which is God's thinking in our life, God's thinking in our mind. And this is part of that "seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," which is this "rightly dividing the word of truth." And once we do that, by living it, by applying it into our life, by establishing the right priority, the right focus in life, which is God first no matter what, and make sure we have balanced our time—because, the reality is this is where we can fall down.

Because of the pressures of life, of earning a living and living life, the priority in life changes to be that of physical. And in the end it's about our time allocation. We need to plan our time. Remember the Proverb we were looking at, about that planning? Well, *it is* about that planning. We have to plan our time with God. Now, if we don't plan it, we're going to fall into trouble. We *must* plan time with God, time to meditate about God's word, time for prayer, and time for study. Now, each individual handles life differently, but the moment we begin to falter, it will be about this planning, the need to allocate time for God, which is all about having a priority of God first no matter what.

So how are we now to handle this being diligent to approve ourselves before God, this "be diligent to present yourself approved to God?" How?

Well, **verse 16—But shun (avoid) profane (empty) or idle babblings, for they will increase to more unGodliness.** So there is no point in getting involved in these "idle babblings," this "empty speaking," and we should avoid them. There is no use getting into debate and arguments with people about God's way of life, because it's all pointless. It's just going to be a waste of time. We are to focus on ourselves. We are to focus *our* lives, set *our* priorities first, and what others do. It's their problem. It's what they have to do. And we know this arguing (if we get into these arguments) it will just "increase to more unGodliness," —what's that?—to sin. We will have sinned. By getting into an argument, by discussing and raising our voice and getting all anxious about it (which is only a form of self-justification, self-righteousness, because we're right, and therefore, we're going to prove the point by arguing with them), that just leads to more sin because of our pride. So we are to avoid, we're to shun all this empty talking, this empty babblings, and getting into these arguments about nothing. It's just word battles, all a waste of time.

So that's how we can "present ourselves approved to God," which is to be showing wisdom in our thinking, wisdom in our words, wisdom in our actions.

**Proverbs 10:5—He who gathers in summer is a wise son,** so someone who understands, **he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame,** well, disappointment. So if you were a farmer and you had a son and he was out there gathering, you would say, "Well, he's wise because he understands the seasons," "but he who sleeps in harvest," when it's time to get out there and take the crop off, "is a son who causes shame." It'd be great disappointment, because you'd see all the fields out there with the wheat and it's time to gather them and he's doing nothing. He's just sleeping in every morning. It's never going to happen, the crops will rot and die.

Well, this same principle applies when we look at it on a spiritual level. If we are wise, we are working hard to overcome the self, the overcoming and the building of Godly character *now* while it is time for the harvest. The sun is shining, the crops are growing, well, it's time to get out there and work. Well, this is it now, brethren. The sun is shining within God's Church. There is so much to be *harvested*! By the power of God's holy spirit there is so much truth. There are so many documents now within the posts, that as we've been instructed to go back over them and read them, well, "it's time for making hay." It's time to harvest those things, to get involved, to go out and read them and to put in the work and the effort in building this knowledge, building this understanding, and building God's character, God's thinking now, while we have access to the truth and to God's thinking, while we have access to God's Church, now.

This is a dangerous time. This "Measuring of the Temple," brethren, is about us coming to understand where we stand. What is our priority? Well, this is a time to rethink our life on a spiritual level. And it's time now to "make hay." It's time now to be out there working (as it says in this Proverb), "He who goes out in the summer is a wise son." This is a time for us to be wise, to come to understand this is a dangerous time.

But if we are to sleep during this harvest, during this time now, it will cause shame. It will cause great disappointment. And it *is* disappointing when somebody (when there is so much truth in the Church), when they decide to let down, to have a focus that is different than being on God or God's ways, and to seek their own understanding and leave God's Church. It *is* disappointing when that happens. So if we sleep now and let down on spiritually while there is so much spiritual food on offer to be harvested, we will bring shame *on ourselves* and we'll bring *disappointment on ourselves* as well, because there's going to be a time of reckoning where we're going to have to be brought to judgement.

Now, whether it's a matter of dying and being resurrected in the Hundred-years, well, that is still going to be a great time of disappointment, when we will have seen we have neglected such a great opportunity. This is a very exciting time to live within God's Church. It's a very exciting time to live in the world. And what we face is a difficult time. And as the world spirals down we need to reconsider our position before God.

**Verse 6—Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.** So spiritual blessings occur on those that are striving to obey God in spirit and truth. So "blessings are on the head of the righteous," because God, if He sees our priority of seeking Him first and the Kingdom of God, eternal life, if that's our life, that's what our life is about, God will bless us. God will bless us spiritually and physically. And I believe God has blessed the Church mightily on a spiritual level! "But violence covers the mouth of the wicked," but the mouth of a sinner utters words of ill will about his neighbor. Spiritual violence starts in the mind, in the thinking. So we can see this, brethren, that "violence covers the mouth," because we're going to be speaking foolishness, we're going to be speaking pride. That's what's going to come out. And generally when we speak pride it's about self and it's about putting down others, which is violence to others. The pulling down, the pushing down of others is actually violence towards them. So we have to be very careful about what we speak.

**Proverbs 10:11—The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.** So we can look at this, brethren. "The mouth," or word spoken, "of the righteous," —who's righteous? Someone with God's spirit. "Is a well," or a spring, or a fountain, "of life," because it's one of encouragement; it builds up and sacrifices itself for others. So this "mouth of the righteous," well, we, brethren, should be considered as righteous because we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. So "our mouth," the words that we speak, "should be a well," should be a fountain or a spring, "of life."

So it should be one of encouragement, encouraging to follow God's way. And the best way to encourage somebody to follow God's way is not by words, necessarily, it's by actions. It's by living it.

Now, all of those that are in relationships where their wife or their families or those around them, the best way is not "by words spoken," but it is by actions. Because one day they will get the opportunity to "see" who you really are as an individual, who we really are as individuals, which is, we are members of the Body of Christ. We have God and Jesus Christ living and dwelling in us. We take no credit to self for any righteous acts, for any good. All the credit will always be given to God. So we need, as righteous people, people of God (because God's living and dwelling in us), we need to have a mouth, of the words that we do speak, ones that encourage others, not to preach to others, not to tell others their wrong, but to build them up, to encourage them. And when it comes to the right time soon, to encourage them to follow God's way of life, so that they can enter eternal life one day. And that's what we will be able to speak.

"But," the opposite, "violence (that is 'hate, pulling down, to destroy, injustice') covers the mouth of the wicked." So this "violence" that comes out of it is by words, words spoken. They are words of ill will. They're about pulling down. And this word "covers" is "conceals" "the mouth of the wicked." Their words may not reveal their intent. So their attitude is one they might say certain words, but deep down their attitude is one of ill will, because their words (they can say nice things to us), but those words are not the true intent. They actually despise us or hate us. Well, we have to be careful that we don't use words that are building others up with a wrong motive and intent. So our words must reveal our *intent*. We cannot be a hypocrite and say something different! Why would somebody do this? Why would somebody speak nice things (words of encouragement) but have underneath this concealing of their real intent? Well, it's because of pride, envious, and a murderous or ill will is in their intent. So our words need to be genuine and sincere. They need to be words of the righteous. They have to come from God's holy spirit. They have to be genuine and sincere. And we're *not* to have the natural carnal mind, which is one of violence, "and the mouth of the wicked," which is all from this human reasoning. Because even though something good could be said to somebody, it's actually done with a wrong motive. It's done for *vanity*...not necessarily ill will, just simply vanity. We want to get credit back from them, that they think good of us. Well, that's all just an empty vanity.

So we have to be careful of what we do and why we do it and when we do it. We have to measure all these things. We have to think it all through.

**Verse 12—Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.** So "hatred," this is that murderous attitude or this ill will, this intent to destroy because of this attitude that is coming out, "stirs up strife." Well, what does it do? Causes contention and discord, words that cause division. And it can cause division in any relationship, cause disunity. So we have to be very careful what we do. So this attitude of dislike (or ill will) will cause nothing but trouble. It will stir up issues.

Now, this can happen within the Body of Christ. Somebody that doesn't like somebody, because they're not yielding to God's holy spirit (they're using the natural carnal mind), it will stir up division within the Body of Christ because of words. It will cause disunity. It will cause division. So we need to be on guard about our thoughts, why we do what we do. "But," which is the opposite, "love covers all sin." Love conceals all sins. If we love somebody we would never table anything negative *about* them for the purpose of destroying them.

Now, there may be times when a discussion must take place, and it's a limited area, mainly within the ministry now and again, where something must be discussed, that necessarily it may be a negative matter. But it's all done for the benefit of gaining an understanding so that we may be able to help

another person, help a member of the Body of Christ. It's not about hurting them or pulling them down; it's about trying to bring them to come to "see" themselves (by the power of God's holy spirit), which is about repentance. So "love," genuine concern for the welfare of another person, "will cover all sins." It will conceal them. And how is that done? Because it's done out of love *for* them...it's done out of love for them. No need to broadcast it everywhere, but this love for them may mean intervening into a situation to help them to "see" their thoughts, or words, or actions may not be right. It's not for the purpose of hurting them, but for the purpose of bringing them to repentance (by the power of God's holy spirit) that will be granted to them.

There may be times to table something negative, but it would be done out of a sincere and loving intent, to help them, not to destroy them. It goes back to our motive and intent.

**Proverbs 10:13—Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, but a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.** So this "wisdom is found in the lips," which is in the speech, which is in the words, "of him who has understanding," who has God's holy spirit. So we can see this on a physical level, where people may say certain things and they may be doing it because of an understanding they have on a physical level. But for us, how much greater. "Wisdom," which is the mind of God, "is found in the mouth (which is in the lips)," which is the words of him/her, "who has spiritual understanding." They understand on a spiritual level the power of the tongue. And we understand that *words can destroy!* This is a great responsibility that we have, brethren, that our words can *destroy* another person's character. We can actually *destroy* another person by our words. And the opposite is, "but a rod," which is authority, "is for the back of him who is devoid of inner thinking." Now, this "rod" can be "rod of correction," which is a physical rod, it can mean authority, "but this rod," this physical rod "is for the back," which is this beating, "for him who is devoid of inner thinking." This person is just not willing to think. This person is not willing to submit or yield to an authority—well, they have to have the rod of correction, because it's the best thing for them. It's done out of love for them, to shock their mind into reality, that this rebellion will lead to death, this rebellion hurts others, and you can't keep going on hurting others, and therefore, "this rod on the back," is the best thing for you. And the reason this is happening? Because they are *not* using their inner thinking. They're devoid of it!

Authority over someone that lacks control over their tongue is the only way to deal with someone who is destitute of wisdom. So anybody that is lacking wisdom (on a physical level, but also on a spiritual level) there is going to be a control or an authority placed over them because they have to be dealt with, because everyone must come into unity of thinking with God. Everyone must be at-one with God. Hence, the Day of Atonement. Everyone must come to be at-one with God. Now, the human logical thinking that man has is actually human reasoning. It is *not* of God. It is not subject to God, and therefore, over time man must be humbled to be brought into this way of thinking, this unity of spirit with God, and it takes time. It takes a process of a lifetime.

**Verse 14—Wise people store up knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.** So, "wise," and the word "people" there is actually added, but "wise stores up knowledge." So a wise person, someone with God's holy spirit, "stores up" or treasures, "knowledge." And what is knowledge? The truth! So if we are truly wise with God's holy spirit, we'll be storing up this knowledge, this truth, which is this priority. We will have this priority of "seeking first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness," and if we have that we will be demonstrating *wisdom*, and therefore, we'll be storing up this knowledge, this experience, this truth that we have of God's way of life.

"But the mouth," the words spoken, "of the foolish is near destruction," near ruin. So somebody that doesn't have God's holy spirit will be speaking foolishness. It'll be from the natural carnal mind. It'll be their opinion and human reasoning, and "they are near destruction," because they have to be

destroyed. God has to destroy human reasoning. God, in His mercy, has given us the opportunity to change from this human reasoning to God's thinking by a calling. God's thinking versus human thinking. And this is the transition that's going to take place. We have to be *transformed* from human reasoning (human thinking), the natural carnal mind, to God's thinking, to righteousness. We are to "treasure up" God's way while we have this opportunity. *Now* is the time to set our priority in life.

And this is the most important time in the history of mankind to do this because we face a terrible time ahead. It's going to be very, very difficult. It's not going to be a joyous time, in one way, but in another it is, if you understand what I mean. And what I'm referring to—for God's people it's going to be a joyous time because we "see" the return of Jesus Christ. We "see" the removal of Satan and his demons. We "see" the ways of man and the suffering of man coming to an end. This is a joyous time. But in another way, it's not that joyous on a physical level because this is going to be difficult.

God's people will always be hated because that's what Jesus Christ said. We are going to be hated right up to the end. Yes, there will be those that will (during this period of time) turn to God. They will be called and they will repent, and *this* will bring great joy to God's people. But there is also going to be those that hate us with a passion and will desire the death of many of God's people. Well, there is going to be joy and there is going to be sorrow. There is going to be disappointment. There is going to be a lot of things take place on an emotional level, hence, the need for us now to really set our foundations on God, to establish our minds in the word of God now, to *set our priority* now as God first *no matter what*.

God's way leads to life. Man's ways lead to ruin.

**Proverbs 10:31—The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut off.** So "the mouth," the words spoken, "of the righteous," which are those that have God's holy spirit, "brings forth wisdom," well, brings forth God's mind, God's thinking. It uses God's word as its guide, so the words spoken will be Godly. They will come from God's word and they will have the spirit of the matter involved in them. "But the perverse," now "the perverse" is someone that is filled with pride or has turned the other way, "this perverse tongue will be cut off." It *will* be destroyed. It *will* be eliminated. It *will* face the second death.

Now, those that don't have God's holy spirit are going to face a very difficult time ahead. And God will grant mercy to those whom He will grant mercy, but "many will be cut off." They will be destroyed. They will be eliminated at this time for a resurrection, to be given their opportunity so that their mouth can be righteous and they can bring forth wisdom by speaking the truth. But those that want to desire to be perverse, they will be cut off and they will face a second death.

To speak against the truth is to have a "perverse tongue." So anybody that is speaking against God's Church, which really is speaking against God, has a perverse tongue. They speak against the truth of God, what God has placed in the Church. This is a perverse tongue, which is one which is filled with pride and they've turned the other way. To speak against God's servants is to have a perverse tongue. To pull down anything of God's is to have a perverse tongue. To speak with pride is to have this perverse tongue. And unless it is repented of, a person will be destroyed.

**Proverbs 10:32—The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse.** So these "lips," the word spoken coming out of the mouth "of the righteous," which is someone with God's holy spirit, "know what is acceptable," so we know God's word. We know what is pleasurable...and the word "acceptable" here is "pleasurable delight, favor, words that benefit the hearer." So we, brethren, should be speaking words that are acceptable. We should be speaking the truth. They should be pleasant to the hearer. They should show favor. And they should be words that benefit the hearer. There should be no pulling down of anybody for any reason.

"But the mouth," the words spoken, like the lips, "of the wicked," and the "wicked" is someone that is a sinner, an unrepentant sinner, "what is perverse." So this mouth, the words spoken of a sinner, is what is perverse. It is filled with pride. They have turned another way. So this is what God is referring to, this "perverse mouth." We have to be very careful that this tongue, this mouth, these lips, do not utter perverseness, which is something that is motivated or the intent is driven by pride. It's against God. It's something of the self.

**Proverbs 14:3—In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.** So, "the mouth," the words spoken, "of a fool," that's somebody using their natural carnal mind or human reasoning, "is a rod/branch of pride." The motive is self-exaltation and justification. So this is "the rod of pride," (verse 3) which is "the mouth," the words spoken or the thought, "is the rod." Now, this is the branch. It's coming from pride. It's about the exaltation of the self. It's about *their* opinion, *their* way of seeing it, "What I see." "But," the opposite, "the lips," the words spoken, "of the wise," someone yielding to God's holy spirit, "will preserve them." This is what protects us. It's God's holy spirit. It's this turning to God, turning to God's word where there is no pride. It will actually help us.

"Pride comes before a fall," so if we look at that. If we're going to trust in ourselves and speak rubbish, which is pride, we will fall. But if we speak wisdom, which is the Word of God, we yield to God's thinking. This is what protects us from this destruction because there is no pride in God's Word.

**Proverbs 15:2—The tongue, words spoken, of the wise, someone yielding to God's spirit, uses knowledge rightly.** Now, we have knowledge, brethren, so we've been given this knowledge from God and it's been placed in the Church, this spiritual knowledge that we have. Well, we have to use it rightly. It has to be used the correct way. And it is about our motive and intent. So we have this knowledge, but we also have this spiritual understanding that goes with it. Now, this spiritual understanding is what gives us the ability to use the knowledge rightly. There is a right time to use it. And there is coming a time where we're going to have to use this knowledge with understanding, which is going to reveal this wisdom of God. We're going to be required to speak wisdom, to use knowledge and understanding rightly. Because there are going to be people that will need to hear the words of God. And we face a time ahead of us where we're going to have to speak the Word of God. We just can't hide away. There is a right time to be saying things and there is a time to use wisdom and not say anything. But there is a time when we're going to have to speak these words of wisdom, which is using God's knowledge, using God's understanding, using God's wisdom, which dwells in us by the power of God's spirit, to the benefit of others, because they will need the hope. Because of the destruction, they're going to need encouragement, and there are going to be many that are going to listen to God's words.

**...but the mouth of fools,** and a "fool" is someone not yielding to God, who doesn't have God's spirit, **pours forth foolishness.** There is no self-control going on in the person. They speak from their *own understanding*, or their own knowledge, or their own human reasoning, their own opinion. So this "mouth of fools," now, this is what we need to be on guard about, that we don't step into this "mouth of fools," that we speak things of foolishness, which is from our own opinion, the way *we* see it. So we can only speak of the things that we know. We shouldn't add to or take away from what God has revealed to the Church through the posts and through the 57 Truths. We should just speak the words of knowledge and the spiritual understanding that we have from what God has given to His Church. And we would be very foolish to pour forth our own opinions or our own reasoning's by adding to or taking away from what God has provided.

**Proverbs 15:14—The heart, the inner thinking, of him who has understanding seeks knowledge,** they seek new truth from God's word, **but the mouth, the words spoken of fools feeds on foolishness.** So this heart, this inner thinking that we have, we seek to understand more of God's way. So we have this

knowledge, we seek to understand it, the "why" of a matter, so that we can live it. And it's all based on God's truth.

Now, this goes back to "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." So our heart (our inner intent) must be one of seeking God. We seek knowledge, first of all, then we seek to understand it, then we seek to implement it into our life.

"But," which is the opposite, "the mouth," or the words spoken, "of fools feeds on foolishness." In other words, it just goes down the path of human reasoning. This foolishness, the mind of man adding one foolish thought to another foolish thought, and therefore, because of that foolish thinking without God's spirit, the words that are spoken are just foolishness and the mind feeds on it.

There are many examples of that, where people have gone down the path of studying a particular topic, like UFO's or unidentified flying objects, and they speak about this foolishness (because they don't have God's spirit to understand what it's really about and what is actually happening) and one thing just feeds on another, and therefore, foolishness adds to foolishness, and therefore, words that are spoken are just foolishness, human reasoning, human opinions about a matter without the word of God and what God has said about a matter.

**Proverbs 15:28—The heart of the righteous**, we understand who that is, someone with God's spirit, **studies how to answer**—the opposite... **but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil**. So "the heart," the inner thinking, "of the righteous," someone with God's spirit, a member of the Body of Christ, "studies how to answer," so we're going to have to think about our answer. Is it coming from our own human reasoning? Or is it being driven/motivated by God's holy spirit? Is it based on the Word of God? So our inner thinking, our heart, which is one of thinking through, meditating, and studying how to answer: What is the best way?

Now, we know the proverb, "answer a fool according to his folly, and don't answer a fool according to his folly." This is what it's about, studying how to answer. There is a time we're to answer somebody based on *their* motive and intent, of why they're asking the question. Now, *if* they are asking for the wrong reason, which is one to cause contention, which is one about this "perverse lips," which is they just want to fight, you know, "I'm going to argue to make you look like a fool," or they already know you're a fool, they're just going to prove it to you, well, then we've studied how to answer. What do we do? "Don't answer a fool according to their folly." Don't answer somebody without God's spirit according to their folly, because they're just wanting to argue. They're just wanting strife and contention. They want to belittle you (or me) because of it. So the question's been asked with a wrong motive.

So we should "study how to answer." When should you say something, how much should be said is all based on relying on God's holy spirit and by having this priority of seeking God first in our life; therefore, we will then study how to answer. We will know what to answer, when to answer, and more importantly, we will know that God has said in scripture that we shouldn't worry about what we're going to say because God will do it in us. God will provide His holy spirit on how to answer a matter. Isn't that exciting? That we don't have to worry about, "Oh, I need to think about this, and I should have said that. I could have said that..." No, at the right time God will provide His spirit so that we provide the right answer, as long as we have studied how to answer, which is we've relied on God's word and we *know* God's word, so that we then are yielding to God's spirit so that God will do the works in us and He will provide the right answer to a person at the right time.

"But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil," because it is something that is coming from their own reasoning or the person's own opinion.

We will finish up with **Proverbs 26:7—Like the legs of a lame man that hang limp, is a proverb in the mouth of fools.** So, "like the legs of a lame man that hang limp," so we can picture that, where there is a person there and the legs are worthless. They're dead. They're virtually paralyzed. They're worthless because they do not fulfill their intended purpose, because God gave us legs to walk, to move the body around. Well, these legs, for whatever reason, are now limp. They hang there. They're worthless. They do not fulfill their purpose, "is a proverb," which is a saying of God, "in the mouth of a fool," someone that is arrogant, someone that does not have God's spirit. So "the proverbs of God," that God has given, they are being used by humans, by the thinking of man with the natural carnal mind, this proverb is useless to them. It's actually like the legs of a lame man. They're just hanging there. Well, they're useless. They don't have the right intent. They can't fulfill their intent.

So this proverb, all of God's proverbs that we've been through, are worthless to mankind because they can't fulfill their purpose and intent, because they're spiritual in nature. And it's because somebody without God's spirit cannot understand them, because they do not live the Proverbs. That's the reason why. Why is this proverb worthless to them? You know, useless, it's like these legs that are useless, "in the mouth of somebody that is carnal," because they cannot *live* the proverb. They live *something opposite*. They cannot understand them on a spiritual level, therefore, they can't implement them because they do not have God's spirit. They do not and cannot fulfill the intent of the Proverbs. And the intent of the Proverbs is to have the mind of God. And understanding the Proverbs is all about this "seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," seeking the thinking of God. Now, we can seek the thinking of God by coming to see and understand the Proverbs.

And the most important thing in our life at *this* particular time, brethren, is that we can now stop and think and consider and ask the question of ourselves: What is our priority in life? Is it physical? Or is it spiritual? Because "many who are first," on a physical level, have wealth, "will be last," because they won't have *spiritual* wealth. They'll be poor, in other words, because they don't have anything spiritual. "But the last," as far as anyone that has put down the wealth and made themselves last on a human, physical level, which is humility, willing to give it all up, "will be *first*," be first spiritually!□