

Welcome to this seventh-day Sabbath, brethren.

In the western world we hear a lot about sex, fast foods, alcohol, and smoking, and also drugs, all the different drugs that are out there in this world for the purpose of mind control or altering the mind. These items are openly promoted by businesses which provide or produce these desires for mankind, because these are the desires of the flesh.

If we'd like to look now at a particular scripture which outlines these desires in 1 John 2:15. **1 John 2:15—Do not love** (do not desire) **the world**, which are the ways of the world, the thinking of the world, **or the things in/of the world**. Now, we understand, brethren, that these things are of Satan because "things of the world" are natural. They're from the natural carnal mind and they're also part of Satan's system, system of get. **If anyone loves the world**, "If anyone desires the world, if anyone desires the ways of the world, the things in the world and things of the world, the things of the natural carnal mind," **the love (the agape) of God** (the agape of the Father), which is God's very thinking, **is not in him**. If we think like God, we will not desire the things of the world. We will not desire the things of Satan.

Verse 16—For all that is in the world—the lust (the desires) of the flesh, the lust (the desires) of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. Because they are Satan's way of get. They are based on selfishness. So if we have these things in us, in our thinking, in the way that we live our life, if we are out to fulfill these desires that are natural in us - the desires of the flesh, these desires of our eyes, what we see, we like to consume to self (take to self), and the "pride of life," which is this way of thinking that we are better than others, that we are better than we really are - well, none of this is of God the Father. It doesn't come from God's holy spirit.

Verse 17—And the world (this age) is passing away. Satan's rule is passing away; it's only temporary. So the world and the world's ways, and everything in the world are actually going to pass away; it's going to be destroyed. It will come to an end. Now, "The world is passing away." It's destroying itself. By the way that it has been designed, it is aging and it is passing away. Now, man's ways are also destroying itself. It's passing away because of these lusts. **...and the lusts of it** (the desires, or the way of thinking that come from the world), they're passing away, because there is a period of 7,100 years and it will come to an end.

...but he who does the will of the Father (he who does the will of God) **abides forever**. Obedience to God leads to spirit life in Elohim. We must be doers of the word. We must implement change into our thinking. Because "he," anybody, man or woman, "who does the will of God," that's anybody *called* to do this, called to obedience, "abides forever," will live forever, will have everlasting life granted to them. Because the gift of life comes from God the Father and it *is* a gift. It cannot be earned by a person's

actions, God must give life, because God must give His holy spirit in the first place so that a person can live this particular way of life and be a doer of the word, to do the will of God.

The point, then, we should not put *anything* that is of our nature before God or God's ways. God must be first in all things. To put God first we must overcome our selfish desires that are in our thinking, that are *natural* to us. We are required to overcome these lusts (desires). Now, how can this be achieved? How can we overcome the human desire for unlawful sex, excessive consumption of fast foods, excessive use of alcohol, and the urges to smoke or take drugs to alter our thinking? Because this is the way of man. This is in all of the TV programs. This is in all the advertising, this unlawful sex. Now, it's rampant in movies, it's rampant in music, it's promoted as being "the norm." It's promoted as being normal. But according to God's word, it is *wrong*; it is actually sin. Because it's not lawful sex, it's *unlawful*. Now, lawful sex is something that has been ordained by God the Father, which means a man and a woman have been married, they have consented to each other to be faithful to each other, and God has blessed that union according to God's word. But, of course, mankind has taken that and twisted and perverted it. So lawful sex is within the bounds of God's word. Unlawful sex is anything that is outside of the relationship between a man and a woman in marriage.

Excessive consumption of fast foods... Now, there are fast foods that can be quite healthy for the human body. A lot of it isn't, of course, because of what man has done to it with the chemicals they put in it. Now, mankind puts chemicals in foods for the purpose of profit (money) because they need something to last longer. And it's often been shown that particular buns, and they're exactly the same after six months or more because there are so many chemicals which involves sugar and salt or the wheat flour that was in it or the oat flour that was in it has been so processed, so beaten down and so fine that it actually can't decay. So a lot of fast foods are actually very unhealthy because of the fats and the sugars and the salts that are put in them. But there are some fast foods that are healthy. Now, how much we consume of it is the issue. Now, this excess consumption of fast food is what mankind has now moved into. That is his will and desire. He is so busy he hasn't got time to prepare food for himself and he will go and eat fast foods, and normally it's too much or it's excessive amounts of it, hence, the obesity that exists within mankind or within society. That obesity is a major issue because it's all about this excess consumption of fast foods.

This excess use of alcohol... Now, this is also promoted in the media. And we can see, particularly in Australia at certain times, we have what's called "schoolies week," which means at the end of school, a school period, which is normally in November/December, that the younger adults that are leaving school and they've finished their education, where they say they've actually *finished* their schooling, before they go to university they actually have what's called a "schoolies week." Well, they go off to a particular town, and it is involving, of course, all of these things: unlawful sex, excess consumption of fast foods, excess use of alcohols, and the urge to smoke or take drugs to alter a person's thinking. Now, that's what "schoolies week" is really all about. It's *not* about rejoicing from leaving school. This is, basically, unlawful acts within the natural carnal mind. This is about a *lack* of control.

Now, unlawful desires (which are all sin) start within a person's thinking. It starts within *our* thinking. It's about thoughts. The first thought is not sin, but if these thoughts are allowed to develop in our thinking, it will lead to sin, and possibly the very action itself. Because we understand that sin starts in the mind. So we can be living our life and a thought may come into our mind, and that thought could be an unlawful thought, according to God's word; well, that's not sin, because that is basically the temptation. The desire has not been developed yet. But the thought comes in to act a particular way or say a particular thing or do a particular thing, well, now that is the battle, to reject that. Now, in rejecting that, that is overcoming this wrong thinking. But if we allow those thoughts to develop and we get a *pleasure* from them and we allow them to develop, that now leads to sin *within our thinking*. And this is where the problem comes within mankind.

When Jesus Christ walked the earth He turned around and said that it was in the thinking that the problem was; that if a man lusts for a woman (if he dwelt on this desire that he had and allowed it to develop in his thinking) that was sin, even though the action may not be fulfilled. Just the simple thought, of allowing that thought to develop and process was a sin. Now, man, and particularly men, have these thoughts of sexual immorality. They will enter the mind. Well, a man must deal with them. And that is not sin as long as they're dealt with. The problem is that man doesn't desire... of his natural mind he doesn't actually desire to get rid of the thoughts. He actually gains a pleasure from that thinking. But we, brethren, have been called to overcome, to reject this very thinking.

Some of mankind's ways require self-control, but all self-control is based on human reasoning, their own efforts. Now, we have come from this. We have had areas or demonstrated areas of *self-control* before we were called. Various people do various things, which are things of self-control, but that motivation of why they're doing it is actually based on selfishness. The reason behind it (the motive behind it) is one's own image. For example, let's talk about, briefly, weight control. Now, man desires to have his weight in control, and in the aspect of that is *self-control*. It's about what is consumed. So a person will go out and establish *self-control* about what he eats and what he puts into his body, not for the right reason, not for a godly principle of looking after the body, but because of an image, of what they desire to portray. It's based on their *reasoning*, what they have worked out, the way that they want to look. Now, many people that have weight issues, they have got into a habit of eating a particular way or not exercising or whatever it may be. There are lots of reasons why people have excess weight, but the reason is about a way of thinking.

Now, some will enter into altering their weight. For example... I'm using this as an example only because there are many other things in life that a person has exercised *self-control*, and it's all for a reason and it's normally connected to, and it is *always* connected to the natural carnal mind, which is one of *self*; it's about self. Mankind's motive for self-control is based on pride. A person controls their weight because they want to *look* a particular way or they want to remain that way because of their *image* they have within their mind, what they've built up in their mind. So vanity and selfishness drives *any* of man's self-control. And that applies not only to weight, but it can apply to many other things, because people are motivated by a particular reason, and it is all about self.

Well, God requires something different from us. God requires self-control from us, but it has to be powered by God's holy spirit.

If you'd like to turn to Acts 24:24. **Acts 24:24**—Now, this is Paul before Felix. **But after certain days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was Jewish, and sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Jesus Christ.** So Paul was here explaining why he had the faith *in* Jesus Christ, what he believed.

Verse 25—And as he reasoned about righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment, which is that Hundred-year period, **Felix was afraid (he was terrified) and answered, Go away for now; and when I have a convenient time I will call for you.** Now, we can see that there were four areas that Paul actually talked about here with Felix. And they were, firstly, "the faith *in* Jesus Christ." Now, this is the belief of God's word. Paul believed that Jesus Christ *was from* God the Father. So he had faith in what Jesus Christ spoke and he *believed* everything that Jesus Christ spoke. So this is his faith. He *believed* God and he implemented it into his life.

The second point was "righteousness." He expounded about righteousness. Now, righteousness *is* the very *thinking* of God because we are not righteous of and by ourselves. It's impossible. Now, when somebody says someone is *self-righteous* it means they are from self; they've lifted themselves up to be better than others. Well, this righteousness that Paul was expounding here was about the very thinking of God, that it's only by the power of God's holy spirit that makes one righteous, which is the power to think like God, to implement God's thinking into a person's life, because it's God working *in* a person that makes a person righteous. Of and by ourselves we are not righteous, but God *in us* makes us righteous because it's God doing the works *in us*, therefore, righteousness can come out from us because it's the flow of God's holy spirit through us out to the benefit of others.

Point three, "and self-control." Now, the title of this sermon is *Self-Control*, and this will be *Part 1*. Because self-control is an important aspect within a person's life who has been called.

And the fourth point there is, "the judgment to come." And we understand that to be the Hundred-years, that what God has set up for mankind is 7,000 years and then there is a Hundred-year period where a judgment will come for all mankind. All those that are resurrected to life, or all those that live into that period will be placed under the judgment. Now, that judgment lasts 100-years and it's a *discernment* about what a person is going to choose in life. And then comes the *outcome* of the judgment, which is either life or death.

So the title of the sermon being *Self-Control* is about the very topic of what man does with regards to self-control. Now, we've looked at it already, that mankind has self-control. He controls himself, aspects of his nature, all for a wrong motive because nobody can control themselves or have self-control of and by themselves in a godly way without God's holy spirit. We have been called to live our life believing God's word.

Self-control is conquering or overcoming our selfish desires by the power of God's holy spirit. Now, that is the outcome of whether or not we are demonstrating *self*-control. So let's just break down this self-control. "Self" is about *self*; it's about the way we think. So it's within a man's mind. It's within a person's mind. And this is about control. Now, this control is about making a judgment to do one thing or another, whether or not we will *act* a particular way. So the controlling of self means the conquering or the overcoming of a particular desire.

Now, mankind demonstrates this self-control based on vanity, but we, brethren, have been called to have self-control, this overcoming, this conquering of our selfish desires (which we read about previously) by the power of God's holy spirit. That's what makes us different. Self-control is *learning* to control self. Now, we have to be able to "see" self before we can control it. So God (through the power of His holy spirit) calls us and grants us the gift of His holy spirit, based on the process of repentance and baptism and the laying of hands. Now, by the power of God's holy spirit, we can actually have *self*-control. We can *learn* to control the self.

Now, this is the life of a converting person, this controlling of self. Self-control is fighting the selfish desires within the thinking, within *our* thinking. Self-control is sacrificing the self. It's about putting down the self because we're controlling it; we're putting it to death. And that's what the "control" is. No one will enter into the family of God (Elohim) unless they engage in the battle of self-control or the controlling of self.

Firstly, we will establish what is wrong with our human condition. **Jeremiah 17:9—The heart** (the inner thinking, the motive, the intent, the thinking) **is deceitful**, which is "deceptive" above all *things*, and **desperately wicked** (incurably sick). **Who can know it?** Well, brethren, this is us. This describes us before our calling. Now, this aspect of our thinking still lives within us because we are human, and all humans have this "desperately wicked," or "incurably sick" mind. It's a deceptive mind because it deceives. And the way that it deceives is that it builds up its image of what it thinks it is and what it wants to be, and therefore, it sets out to portray it to others. And it's deceitful! It's not the real person at all, because if we could only "see" ourselves (which we can't unless we have God's holy spirit), we would come to see that we *are* deceitful, that all men are liars. We all are involved in trickery, of image protection or changing the perception of ourselves to others so that others can see us as "better." So this mind, this evil that dwells within us, in our thinking, this deceptive mind is desperately wicked. It's actually incurably sick. It's actually *sick* compared to God's thinking. And it's not curable of and by itself. So all mankind, without a calling, is incurably sick.

"And who can know it?" **Verse 10—I, the LORD** (Yahweh Elohim), **search the heart**, which is this inner thinking, its motive and intent. **I test the mind**, which is the secret parts that go on within a person's thinking, the *motive* of why a person does what he does (he or she does), **even to give every man according to his ways**, based on what choices are made, **according to the fruit**, and "fruit" is "what is produced," **of his doings**, of his actions. So this mind, this natural mind that we have is evil. It is something that is very deceptive and it tricks itself.

Now, the area that we're looking at today, which is self-control, the natural carnal mind would think it has self-control, but its *motive*, its intent is very *deceitful*. It's deceptive. It doesn't even know it itself. And a lot of people will have motives. For example, another level of human deception about self-control would be somebody that controls themselves, that they would get up every Sunday morning and go off to a particular religious service. Now, that would be an aspect of *self-control*. They believe within themselves it makes them righteous, so they're controlling themselves. Because if they didn't want to control themselves, they wouldn't go there. But they believe within their thinking that this is a righteous act and that that will make them better before God, that they are now justified. So this self-control of getting up early in the morning (or whenever it is on a Sunday morning) to do a particular thing, this is about a deception within the mind. And the motive behind it is what? For vanity. For pride. Because they're doing it either to be seen of others within the community (the Protestant approach), which is, "Look at me. Can't you see that I'm righteous?" Or it can be they have a better relationship within their mind with God, that God *is* involved in their life when God is not, because they're not obedient to God. But this is the natural carnal mind; it is very deceptive and it *is sick*. Because compared to God, it is. And the secret parts of its mind, it doesn't even know what's going on within its mind. It's *self-deceived*.

We can look now at Romans 8. Now, we look at Romans 8 often. We're going to look at aspects of Roman's 8. Romans 8:1 for a start. **Romans 8:1—There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ**, now, "who are repenting and battling to control the selfish desires within the mind." Because there is no condemnation because the sacrifice for sin has been paid, and therefore, if we have been *called* to accept this sacrifice, well, we're not under condemnation. We are no longer going to have to pay the penalty for sin, which is death, *if we are in Jesus Christ*. And we're in Jesus Christ if we are repenting (through this gift of repentance) and battling to control the selfish desires within the mind. So if we are not repenting we are under condemnation. It's as simple as that.

So if we are repenting and battling to control the selfish desires in the mind— **who do not walk according to the flesh**— so we're living a different way of life; we're walking differently. We're not walking without control, we're walking in self-control, we're battling to control the self. "Do not give themselves over to selfishness," is another way to put it. So if we "do not walk according to the flesh," if we do not give ourselves over to this selfishness that's in us, **but according to the spirit**, we are walking in the power of God's holy spirit, we are walking/fighting the unlawful desires. That is our way of life.

Drop down to verse 5—**For those who live according to the flesh**, which is this lack of self-control, set their minds on the things of the flesh, so there is no battle going on. They actually are setting their minds to live out their desires, which we went through. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"; these are the "*things of the flesh*." They're *natural*. Well, anybody that is not called, this is what they are living. They're living a way of life. ...**but those who live according to the spirit**, which is the spirit of the law, which is *powered* by God's holy spirit, it needs God's holy spirit to be able to *live* the spirit of the law, the *things of the spirit*. **For to be carnally minded** (naturally minded) *is*

death, that's the outcome. That will be the result of anybody that does not have self-control powered by God's holy spirit. Every single human who does not learn self-control powered by God's holy spirit will die. It will lead to, potentially, a second death for a lot of people. ...**but to be spiritually minded**, which is to have self-control powered by God's holy spirit, **is life and peace**, because of this self-control, because of this battle that's going on within the mind.

Because the carnal mind is enmity (hostile) against God... So this natural mind of no self-control will be just going out and working *against* God. It's not going to be subject to God and the laws of God in any way because it's *natural* and it's just looking after *its self*; its motivation is pride. ...**for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be**. Because it's all natural. **So then, those who are in the flesh**, those that are walking in a lack of self-control powered by God's holy spirit, **cannot please God**. So unless a person is called they cannot please God. It's absolutely impossible! It's only somebody that is called, that is now working at *self-control*, powered by God's holy spirit, that can please God.

We have to learn to control the eyes, which lead to the mind, to thinking. We have to learn to control the *desires* that are created by the mind. We have to learn to control the tongue, which *reveals* the mind.

Well, brethren, we can learn from particular examples in the Old Testament that outline particular elements of a *lack* of self-control, and what we can learn from it because we have to engage *in self-control*. Those lusts, those desires that are of the eyes, that are of the flesh (the natural carnal mind), and the pride of life *has to be controlled*, but it requires God's holy spirit. We can't do it of and by ourselves.

Now, we're going to look at a particular example, and we'll start in this sermon series. I don't know how far we'll actually get through it, but we're going to start this example of a lack of self-control and other elements about *controlling one's own thinking* so that we can learn from it, about what we have to do, what we have to learn to control—our thinking—powered by God's holy spirit. Because we've got to compare what we think against what we *should* think based on God's word, and therefore, make a choice to *control* what we're thinking.

Now, this very example brings out much about man's mind and the way man thinks on a natural level. And that's what we're coming from. We've been called out of that, therefore, we have to learn to *overcome* this way of thinking. Now, this example in 2 Samuel 13:1-39 we're going to read because there are a lot of examples within it. Now, it's a bit of a distressing example, but it's worth going through just to see how people think and how they *did not control* their thinking, and the outcome of that thinking.

2 Samuel 13:1—Now, this is the story of Amnon and Tamar. **After this Absalom**, "Absalom" means "my father is peace," **the son of David**, so this is Absalom, David's son, **had a lovely sister, whose name was Tamar**. Now Tamar was a sister, a direct sister of Absalom. In other words, they had the same father, had the same mother. Absalom was the third son of David. Tamar was a daughter of David by

Machaah, a sister of Absolom because Machaah was her mother. So here we have David as the father of Absolom and David was the father of Tamar. Tamar and Absolom had the same mother.

...and Amnon the son of David loved her. Now, there were six sons born to David in Hebron; Amnon was the first. This made Tamar a half-sister to Amnon, same father, different mother. So Absolom and Amnon were brothers because their father was David, but they had different mothers.

Verse 2 (hope that was clear), **Amnon was so distressed**, and this is "been narrow in thinking." So this "distressed" means he's fixated on it, it's a narrow way of thinking, **over his sister**, which is his half-sister, **Tamar, that he became sick**. So this is physically upset, emotionally upset. He's distressed in his thinking because it's "narrow." He's now honing on and thinking only about her! **...for she was a virgin.** So this, now, is a sexual way of thinking. Now, this can be a problem within man, within men in particular, that they can become distressed, become very narrow thinking about a woman. And the reason and motive is sexual, **self-gratification**. **And it was improper for Amnon to do anything to her.** Now, this is about a lack of self-control in the mind. He has a problem within his mind.

Now, the reason it's improper is based on Leviticus 18. Now, we're going to quickly turn there, so hold your place where we are and turn to Leviticus 18:1. Because this is about what God says, it's about God's law. It's not what we think or human reasoning that a man can use to justify his wrong sexual or wrong motives towards anybody. Now, this is law about sexual behavior that a man and a woman should use as a guide in life.

Leviticus 18:1—Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: I am the LORD your God. Now, God is almighty, all-powerful. He created everything, everything in the universe, and that included mankind. And the purpose for mankind was to multiply, to fill the earth. Why? So that God could have many sons in His family, bring "many sons to glory." God's purpose, God's plan in creating mankind was to have a family. Now, *this* is a profound truth that we understand. Now God is now saying to Israel, through Moses, that He is the creator of all things, He is Yahweh Elohim. Now, mankind should do the following.

Verse 3—According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do! Now, Egypt was polluted sexually. There was a lot of intermarriage. There was a lot of *unlawful* sexual conduct going on within Egypt, and therefore, God is now telling Israel, "Well, you won't be like Egypt! You have to come out of this." And God took Israel out of Egypt for a purpose, to be a holy nation, a separate nation, to demonstrate God's way of life. But Israel, of course, failed in that because they were *natural*. They lacked *self-control*. **...and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you...** So, "We're going to go into the promised land," because the Canaanites were there, along with the Hittites and others in the land of Canaan. Well, they were also in the areas of unlawful sex (or immoral) or immorality was a common thing in these lands. **...you shall not do.** So they weren't to do anything in the way of these sexual behaviors or these marriages or the things that they did in either land, in Egypt or in Canaan, the promised land where they were going, because those nations were polluted sexually and morally. **...nor shall you walk in their ordinances.** So they were no longer

to walk in these ways, these rulings, these ways of living, because they were against God. They were of *self*. They were of pride.

Verse 4—You shall observe **My judgments** and keep **My ordinances** (**My laws**), to walk in them: **I am the LORD** your God. You shall therefore keep **My statutes** and **My judgments**, which if a man does, if they're a doer, he shall live by them: **I am the LORD**. So if he was to do them the outcome would be blessings for obedience. And therefore, God says, "You are Israel. This is what you are to do. This is *My* standards. These are *My* laws. This is the way to happiness. This is what you shall do. You shall *not* be like the world." Well, brethren, that's exactly the same for us today. "Come out of her, *My* people. Do not desire the world and the things of the world and the things in the world because they are of Egypt and they are of Canaan. They are manmade! They are man's thinking! They are man's way of living. It's the *natural* carnal mind that's hostile to God, not *subject* to the law of God, and indeed can't be." That's exactly what we have been called out of! "To come out of her, *My* people." Well, we are God's people. We are a "separate nation." We are the Church of God—PKG. We are different because we are living *self-control* powered by God's holy spirit. Isn't it a wonderful and beautiful thing to come to understand that we are of God and that we are about coming out of Egypt and we're not going to go into "the land of Canaan" and do the things of the world, the things that man is doing? And that's all around us.

Now, we're going to go through some of these aspects here because we will see the world in them. What God says is not to be done, this is what man is doing. Now, when we're looking at this story here of Amnon and Tamar, aspects of this come out, about *why* it was not lawful. And he knew it. He knew exactly what he was doing. But his mind had gone a particular way and he now demonstrated lack of self-control. He couldn't control himself and he became emotionally sick and so narrow in his thinking (because this is what he did) he was fulfilling "the lust of the eyes, and the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life"—were all at work within him.

Leviticus 18:6—None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: **I am the LORD**. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, and their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own nakedness. Because they're related. The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she is your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. Now, this is where we're at with Amnon and Tamar.

Verse 12—You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she is your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness.

If you drop down now to verse 20—Moreover, you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, nor defile yourself with her.

Verse 22—You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It *is* an abomination. And this is referring to homosexuality. You shall not mate with any beast, nor defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before a beast to mate with it. It *is* a perversion. This is now very sick mind, an incurably sick mind that it goes this far.

Verse 24—Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by these the nations are defiled, which is Egypt and Canaan. Now, this is the world, brethren. These nations *are* defiled. Everywhere we go this defiling, this perversion, this abomination is taking place—all over the world. We are to come out of her. We're not to think like this. We're not to go down this path. We're not even to meditate or consume these things in our minds. ...which I am casting out before you. So God is saying He's casting them out because they have polluted the land.

Verse 25—For the land is defiled; therefore, I will visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You shall, therefore, keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or a stranger who sojourns among you. So we're to come out, brethren, from these things.

Verse 27—(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomits out the nations that *were* before you. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the person who commits *them* shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore, you shall keep My ordinances, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that *you* do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the LORD your God. So we can see also from Leviticus 20 there are penalties to be paid, which goes into the death penalty and the actual removing from the people, being cast out from the people.

So the laws of God are there for the benefit of mankind.

So now we'll go back to 2 Samuel 13:3 where we see Amnon who now has this wrong desire. He has this wrong desire, this lust, and it's now built up in his mind because of a lack of self-control. Verse 3—But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother. Now Jonadab was a very crafty man. And he said to him (Amnon), Why *are* you, the king's son, so he's built him up, becoming thinner day after day? Will you not tell me? So why are you becoming sick? Because he's not eating, and he's so intent, he's focused on it. He is now unbalanced in his thinking. Amnon said to him, I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister. Now, this human love was sexual, "a selfish desire to have affection for someone sexually or otherwise," is what it's really talking about. So this is this "love Tamar," well, it's human love. It's a sexual desire. It's an unbalanced, unlawful desire, because God says he shouldn't have these emotions or feelings or these desires (these lusts) towards his own flesh, his own kin.

Verse 5—So Jonadab said to him, Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill. This lack of self-control leads to now something where he's being told to do something that is hypocrisy. He's lying. He's going to pretend to be ill. **And when your father (which is David) comes to see you, say to him, Please let my sister Tamar come and give me food, and prepare the food in my sight,** which is a key here. He wants to be able to just see her. ...that I may see *it* and eat it from her hand. In other words, "Have her feed me personally." If we look at the motive behind this and we can see clearly that he is now, his intent... first of all, he's pretending to be sick. So he's lacking control of his thoughts. But now the evil, or the motive or intent comes out here, that he says, "to give me food, prepare the food *in my sight*." So it's not as if it's going to be prepared in some other location out of his house. He wants it in his house, in his sight where he can see it, "that I may see it." So his motive is very clear here. It wasn't as if she could go and prepare it somewhere else and just bring it to him. No, he wanted her around him. "And eat from her hand." He wanted to get very close to her. Because he's already set up in his mind what he's going to do, because the thought comes first, then the action.

Verse 6—Then Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, Please let Tamar my sister come and make a couple of cakes for me in my sight, that I may eat from her hand. So now he's said exactly what he had planned to do.

Verse 7—And David went home to Tamar, saying, Now, go to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him. So now the king has commanded her (which is David's daughter) to go and prepare food for David's son.

Verse 8—So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house; and he was laying down. Then she took flour and kneaded *it*, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. And she took the pan and placed *them* out before him, but he refused to eat. So it was there, so he in his mind has now thought through this process, about what he really wanted to do. Because this is set before him but he won't eat it because it's not from her hand. She's not close enough. **Then Amnon said, Have everyone go out from me.** So his motive is now continuing to get more perverted, "Have everyone go out from me." "Leave us alone," so that now he could fulfill his desire, this lack of self-control. It's manifesting into an action. **And they all went out from him.**

Verse 10—Then Amnon said to Tamar, Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand. Now, this goes back to the very intent. This is exactly what he had planned in his mind, in the perversion of his thinking, in the sickness of his mind. And he knew all along that this was not lawful. **And Tamar took the cakes which she had made, and brought *them* into Amnon her brother in the bedroom.**

Verse 11—Now when she had brought *them* in to him to eat, he took hold of her and said to her, Come, lie with me, my sister. So he knew exactly what he was doing.

Verse 12—But she answered him, No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! So here she is, she's resisting. She's saying, "No! I don't want to be part of this!"

Verse 13—And I, where could I take my shame? So in other words, "What about me? If this takes place, what will happen to me? What's my future?" **And as for you, you would be like one of the fools in Israel. Now, therefore, please speak to the king,** "Please speak to David," **for he will not withhold me from you.** So she's now virtually pleading, in many ways, for him not to do it, because she was trying to get an out here and she said, "Well, talk to David. Talk to your father, because he won't withhold me from you." Now, David knew the law. Most likely he *would*, but she's using this anyway and saying this, trying to reason with him.

Verse 14—However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and layed with her. In other words, he raped her. He actually raped his own sister, his half-sister!

Now, once it's fulfilled, he's actually raped her and he's fulfilled his desire, his lust from his lack of *self-control*, then what goes on in the thinking? **Verse 15—Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love which he had loved her.** And Amnon said to her, **Arise, be gone!** Now, this emotion that he's going through, because of his lack of self-control, is similar to what happens to all men where they do something that they know is wrong and their conscience is seared. In the world, sexually, whether it's going into a prostitute, whether it's having illicit sex, whether it's rape, whatever it is, there *is* an emotion connected to it or a self-gratification, that after that follows there is a tinge of guilt within the mind. Now, there are some, of course, because they are hardened so much, their conscience is *seared* so badly, that they don't, and therefore, we see serial killers or serial rapists. But within this environment here, that he's fulfilled his desire, and now this desire that he had, which he's called here, "love," because of this selfish desire he had, now the hate is greater. Now, this, also, is a lack of self-control. Hatred is a lack of self-control. Envy, jealousy, hatred, murder is a lack of controlling the thinking, a lack of controlling the self. So here he is, he's now saying, "Well, get away from me!"

Verse 16—So she said to him, No, indeed! This evil of sending me away is worse than the other (than the rape) that you did to me. So she's saying, "Well, now that you have raped me, we've had this sexual relationship," she's saying, "Well, if you just send me away it's going to be much worse!" **But he did not listen to her.** Because she's now thinking, well, so who's going to believe her and who's going to believe Amnon!

Verse 17—Then he called his servants who attended him, and said, Here! Put this woman out, away from me, and bolt the door behind her.

Verse 18—Now she had on a robe of many colors, for the king's virgin daughters wore such apparel. Well, they had a particular robe that they used to wear that had many colors, which signified they were the king's daughters and they were virgins; they weren't married. **And his servants put her out and bolted the door behind her.**

Verse 19—Then Tamar put ashes on her head, which is a sign of mourning, and tore her robe of many colors that was on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly. So she's very distressed by this.

Verse 20—And Absalom her brother said to her, Has Amnon your brother been with you? So Absalom's obviously quite astute and he's seen it and he's worked out because of the tearing of the robe and the grief and what has happened. But now hold your peace, my sister. He is your brother; do not take this thing to heart. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house. Well, there's much here, brethren, that we can see about human behavior, about pride, about controlling one's anger, about motive and intent. Here Absalom, which is Tamar's brother, has said, "Has Amnon done this to you?" You know, "Have you lost your virginity to him? He is your brother." So he's saying, "Well, hold your peace. Don't say anything. Don't go and tell anyone else."

Now, if you looked at this, who would believe her anyway? Because if you take it on a physical level the law required the mouth of two or three witnesses, and here she could say, "Well, my brother, my half-brother, has raped me." Who's going to believe? Who's going to believe *her*? Because, after all, in today's society, who would believe a woman over a man? Well, that would be a problem within itself. Well, it's no different in those days. Here we have one man who turns around, Amnon, and he says, "I didn't do it!" And she says, "Yes, you did!" Who's going to believe her? It would get quite complicated and it would cause a lot of distress within a family. Because that's important to remember through this whole event, is this is talking about *family*! This is all about family! And it's all to do with *David's family*!

So Absalom says, "He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart." Well, that'd be impossible for her to do. But he's saying, "Well, don't take it... don't think about it too much. Try to forget it." So, "Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house." So she remains there. Now, the word "desolate" here means, "to be stunned or to grow numb, to be devastated." She had been forced. She had been raped, so her emotional state impacted her *mightily*! Now, we see from various programs that when a person is raped they grow *numb*. There's an emotional numbness. They become *stunned*. They are actually *devastated* emotionally.

Now, some people don't overcome it. Some people become reclusive and cannot have contact with men, fully stop! And others can get through it (to a degree) but it's always there. And many will say, "I've forgiven and forgotten," but the reality is it's one of those things that is very difficult to forget. And most human beings, it's impossible to forget these things.

Well, we have Tamar now who is actually in Absalom's house and she is devastated, she is stunned, and she is emotionally affected by it.

Verse 21—But when King David heard all these things, he was very angry. Now, we could ask the question: Was anger enough? What would a person be angry at? Would they be angry at the offender? Would they be angry because they allowed such a thing? Because if he can look at it, because of what Amnon did, he requested from David, "Well, will you send Tamar to me? Will you 'do this'? Will you 'do that'?" And then David commands her and tells her that's what you do. So David would have felt pretty bad about it as well because he would have sat there and thought, "Well, if I had..." "If I only..." "If I hadn't of done 'this'..." "If I hadn't of done 'that'..." But it wouldn't have made any difference, because there was a plot, there was an intent of Amnon to get hold of Tamar, because of his wrong thinking, his lack of self-control. Well, here we have David was very angry. Well, David could have done certain things, but it appears that he lets it go and he gets through it by doing nothing.

Verse 22—And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar. Well, if we look at this: "Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad," so now he's not raising it, he's not *doing* anything about it. He's building it up in his mind about an event that is going to take place because he's not criticizing him for it. He's not making a ruckus about it. He's not trying to do anything. He's not being appearing to be good or bad to him. In other words, he's nonchalant about it towards Amnon. So Amnon would have thought, "Well, it's probably not that big a problem." He might have been a bit wary at the beginning, but he's not thinking it's a big problem because Absalom's not doing anything. And Amnon might have even thought Absalom is not even aware of it because nothing's happening to him. Nothing's happening from David and nothing's happening from Absalom. Amnon may have got into a sense of false security in his thinking because of this.

Now, we understand, brethren, that these events that take place affect everybody. It would have affected David and it would have affected Absalom. Just like these events would affect us. Things happen in our life that affect us that alter our thinking. Well, this is exactly what happened to Absalom. His thinking was changed. He now moves into a lack of self-control. He was probably thinking he was controlling himself by doing nothing, but deep down his motive and intent was to get even. He was going to lose *self-control*. Rather than take it to the king, rather than taking it to the priesthood to have something done, to have it discussed and worked through, he says, "No, cover it all up. Don't you say anything, Tamar. Don't say anything." And to Amnon he's being nonchalant or not doing anything.

Verse 23—It came to pass, after two full years, so Absalom's had this in his mind for two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim; so Absalom invited all the king's sons. So all of David's sons were invited where they were to shear the sheep.

Verse 24—Then Absalom came to the king and said, Kindly note, your servant has sheepshearers; please, let the king and his servants go with your servant. But the king said to Absalom, No, my son, let us not all go now—why?—lest we be a burden to you. So David's thinking, "Well, there's too many there. It's too much with the sheepshearers and with all the servants and the king and everybody. It's going to be too much, a lot of organizing, a lot of meals to be organized, etcetera. It's too much." **Then he urged him, but he would not go; and he blessed him.** So David's turned around and said, "No, it's all too much. I'm not coming with my servants."

Verse 26—Then Absalom said, If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said to him, Why should he go with you? It's a relevant question. "Why have you just asked for him to go with you?" Now, did David have any suspicions here? Doesn't say. **But Absalom urged him...** So now Absalom is now pushing at his father saying, "Well..." giving reasons why, urging him to let him go, **so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.** So now *all* the king's sons are going.

Verse 28—Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, so when he's had a little bit too much to drink, and when I say to you, "Strike Amnon!" then kill him. So the servants were going to obey their master, Absalom. They're going to do exactly what he said. Then Absalom said to them, **Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? "I'm your boss!" Be courageous and valiant.** In other words, he was implying, "Nothing's going to happen to

you. I am Absalom; I have commanded you. You're my servants. Be courageous. Be valiant. Just do it; nothing is going to happen to you. There will not be a consequence for killing Amnon."

Verse 29—So the servants of Absalom did to Ammon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons rose, and each one got on his mule and fled. So here he is, he's sitting there, he's drinking, he's drunk too much and then Absalom's yelled out, "Strike Ammon!" They have. They've come up and they've killed him. And then all the other sons arose; they've seen it. And each one got on his mule, and they've fled. They got out of there because they would be thinking, "This is going to happen to me! Absalom's going to kill us as well."

Verse 30—And it came to pass, while they were on the way, that news came to David, saying, Absalom has killed all the king's sons, and no one, not one of them is left! Now, this *misinformation* is a common thing in today's society. I remember seeing a program not long ago about a particular terrorist attack, and it came out, first of all, that there were three or four people and there was so many, you know, fifty hostages. And it ended up there was one person and there was fifteen hostages, because misinformation, this first lot of information is not always accurate because of exaggeration, and people build things up in their mind because of a lack of self-control, of dealing with the facts. People exaggerate. People don't *control* themselves. They don't control their tongue. They don't control their thinking. And before you know it, "*all* the king's sons are dead. Not one of them is left!" Which is misinformation.

Verse 31—So the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the ground, and all his servants stood by with their robes torn. So he's gone into grief. King David has gone into this mourning. He's torn his gowns; he's laid on the ground. And this is a sign (as you remember, when his first son from Bathsheba was sick, this is exactly what he did), he's torn his garments, he's cast himself on the ground, and he would have been praying to God because it's a moment of grief when he was thinking all his sons are dead. And his servants who are supporting him are with him and they've torn their garments, but they stood by him. They're not laying on the ground.

Verse 32—Then Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, Let not my lord suppose they have killed all the young men, the king's sons, for only Ammon is dead. For by the command of Absalom this has been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar. So this was determined. So this was a pre-meditated act. Absalom, at the time that it happened, soon as he found out that his sister had been raped, it had been determined from that date. It was in his heart. So this vengeance or revenge is a way of thinking.

Now, this is a difficult process within a person's mind, because self-control, when it comes to thinking about revenge, is a very, very difficult matter. Now, I speak from personal experience in this. And by no means is anyone in God's Church *exempt* from these emotions or feelings. Because it happened to me at a particular time (and I have covered this previously), when something was said or was going to be said to be done to my son. And I remember trying to place it in God's hands that God's will be done. But within five minutes I was there getting revenge *within my mind*. I was doing *all* sorts of things. Then I would pull myself up and go, "No! You should *not* be thinking like that, Wayne! That is *wrong thinking*! That is a lack of control of my mind!" Well, then I would pray about it a bit longer and place it before

God, to leave it in God's hands. Well, within minutes I was back *getting revenge*, all the things I would like to do.

Now, I've had many examples of these things. There was another time when somebody had loud music going and it was going on until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, and I would pray about it and ask God to intervene according to His will. Well, things went on and on and on sometimes, and I would lay there and think about *all the things* that I would *like* to do. Now, being a member of the Body of Christ I know, and I understand what I can and cannot do when it comes to retaliation or "getting even," or desiring murder, which is ill will, desiring ill will to that person. Now, I understand that I have to place it in God's hands and I have to use the right process that man has set up, which is generally the law. My experience in that hasn't always been good. But I understand that. But to have self-control of the mind and thinking about not taking revenge or retaliating is a very, very difficult matter, and my experience is that these things are a major battle because of self because self wants to get even. Self *desires* ill will. Self desires to retaliate, to get even. That is *normal*!

Well, here we see Absalom had determined from the very day that Amnon had raped and forced himself on his sister, that Absalom had determined that he was going to get even. Now, this would have taken and consumed his mind, but he was very cunning to wait two years and to plan it all through. But we can see this can happen within the human mind. We think we've overcome things. We think we have conquered things. But the reality is that many a things affect us differently. Sub-consciously we're not even *aware* of the way we think or the motive behind what we're doing because the natural carnal mind is very *deceptive* and incurably *sick* because we don't even "see" what we're really thinking.

Well, here we see that Absalom lacked self-control, and he didn't follow the right process and he took it to himself to bring what he considered justice for his sister Tamar.

Verse 33—Now, therefore, let not my lord the king take the thing to his heart, to think that all the king's sons are dead. For only Amnon is dead.

Verse 34—Then Absalom fled. And the young man who were keeping watch lifted their eyes and looked, and there, many people were coming from the road on the hillside behind him. So here we have that Absalom has now fled and we see that all the people are heading back to king David.

Now, if we look at this, brethren, what does it bring us back to? It brings us back to Cain and Abel. Because this is about intent and motive. The intent and motive behind why Cain killed Abel was one of jealousy. And here we have Absalom killing Amnon for revenge. And both are lack of controlling the self, the desires within one's mind. Because of jealousy, because of wrong thinking Cain killed Abel. Because of revenge, of ill will, of hate, Absalom has now had Amnon killed.

Verse 35—And Jonadab said to the king, Look, the king's sons are coming; as your servant said, so it is. So it was, as soon as he had finished speaking, that the king's sons indeed came, and they lifted up their voice and wept. Also the king and all his servants wept very bitterly. But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. And Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. And king David longed to go to Absalom, because he was his son. For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was

dead. So after a period of time David came to realize that he missed his own living son, Absalom, because he had comforted himself in his thinking, because Amnon had received "the wages of sin," death. He had paid the penalty for what he had done. The penalty for rape *is death*.

A lack of self-control caused *so much* pain and sorrow for one family! Isn't this incredible? Because of decisions that were made, we see this lack of controlling of self, the lack of following God's law, the lack of implementing God's law, the lack of *thinking the right way*, of implementing the right thinking into a person's mind—caused all this sorrow, this pain for one family, for king David's family.

I'd like to just finish that aspect of this sermon, *Self-Control, Part 1*, there and just insert this aspect of what I learned from the trip to the United States.

We had visited the U.S. and went to three areas in the U.S. and there were a few things that became obvious to me, personally, that I had learned on that trip. Now, often people see that when somebody visits within God's Church they get encouragement and they learn things from that trip. Well, for me personally I learned a lot from it. The sermons were pre-recorded for a particular reason. I didn't want to carry the recording equipment around so the three sermons that were given over those three weeks were all pre-recorded before I actually left with my wife to go to the U.S. That was because I didn't want recording equipment, but also, I'd felt that if anything went wrong with regards to my health (if I had a health issue) and I wasn't able to give a live sermon, therefore, the Church had access to the material.

But when giving those particular sermons, none of them were exactly the same as the recording. Now, that is something that is within me, personally, but I'm unable to give exactly the same sermon each time. They'll be similar but they won't be exactly the same. But at each particular location something different came out in a particular sermon. Some of the sermons that I gave live were basically only maybe 50% of the sermon, others were only about 25% of the sermon as far as material that was given in scriptures. So each of those three sermons were not alike in any way; they were actually different.

And I wanted today just to explore some of the things that I learned from it and what it was that came out as extras with regards to what was given in these sermon series. So in the live sermons there were some diversions from what I had as far as notes. And they were, in the California area, in the sermon given there the first thing that came out was how unique was a calling. Now, these are aspects that I have seen and come to see more deeply within myself. Because often when a sermon is given what I have found, that much of the sermon is actually about my own self, what I learned from it, and what others hear can be often different than what is given from the point of view of what I am learning out of it personally.

So on this one particular sermon what came out was the uniqueness of a calling. How incredible is a calling; that God the Father, Yahweh Elohim, the Great God, the Almighty God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the universe, *all* of the spirit realm, out of *all* the physical creation and out of the creation of man, at some point in time called you and me individually?! *How incredible is THAT?* How *unique* is that? And what I gained out of that particular sermon was that we should *never devalue our calling by neglecting it!* Because that is a danger within each and every one of us that this calling, that God the Father called us for a purpose.

Now, what also came out is we don't always understand the reason for the calling. We think we do, but we don't always know what part we're going to play and where we're going to play it within the Church. Now, I know when I was first called in 1982 and baptized in 1983 that I never knew my calling to the degree I know today. I never knew or understood where I would go in life. I never envisioned it. I never envisioned the Apostasy, never envisioned being awakened and being part of the Body of Christ *now* and having access to God's spirit *now*. Never knew any of that. So the uniqueness of a calling came to me, that how valuable *is* this calling! I am one of very few in this world of 7 billion people to be called by God the Father for a purpose! I understand aspects of that purpose. Just like you do, brethren. You understand an aspect of your calling, and that aspect of the calling that we understand is that we have to be transformed. We have to move from the world, these carnal selfish desires that we have, the natural mind, to a new way of thinking, to God's way of thinking. We are to exercise *self-control*. So let's not *devalue* our calling! Let's keep it at the forefront of our mind during this "Year of Dedication," that we dedicate ourselves now to God, to *value* our calling.

Now, whether we fast or we don't during this twelve month period will actually signal the value we place on our calling. The value we place on our calling is demonstrated to God by our *actions*! So how unique is our calling! That is something that came out to me personally during that sermon in California.

Then I had the blessing to be able to go and visit Ron in prison, and that was a very exciting, emotional, yet sobering, yet uplifting experience. And it's hard to relay how I really felt about that, but I gained so much from it! I gained so much from it.

Then I went down to Cincinnati and spoke in Cincinnati. Now, there was a lot more came out in Cincinnati than what I had envisioned in the sermon. And one of the main points that came out in the sermon was about government, because I related the story of when I was first called and attended an organized meeting of God's people in 1983, one thing that struck me a lot was *why* people left God's Church. And I often heard it explained by Mr. Armstrong that it was about government, but what does that mean? I used to ask people that had been in the Church for ten, twenty, thirty years, "Why would anyone...? Why would someone leave God's Church?" And of course, at that time I never fully grasped (being a babe in Christ), I never grasped that the answer was actually spiritual in nature. Now, what I did come to learn in the last three or four years, I came to "see" this answer so profoundly within myself. We could leave God's Church because it's a spiritual matter. We have to govern ourselves by the power of God's holy spirit to be under government. Because it *is* what Mr. Armstrong said. Mr. Armstrong said it was about government! And it is! Because it's about whether or not we are governing ourselves by the power of God's holy spirit. We have to have God's spirit to be under government in our life. So we have to be *governing ourselves*—and this goes back to self-control—because if we are *governing ourselves* by the power of God's holy spirit, we are implementing self-control! We're conquering *self*! That's quite profound thing!

But that's what our calling's about. So it goes back to the first point, the uniqueness of our calling is that we've been called to *govern ourselves*! And if we're governing ourselves, by the power of God's holy spirit, if we're implementing *self-control* and governing ourselves according to God's word, we will

be under government within our own life! We will be under government, *God's Government, Church government* because we're under *government*! All powered by God's holy spirit.

So *why* does somebody leave God's Church? *Why* does somebody leave God's fellowship? The reason is because they *don't* have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them. That's why somebody leaves. They disfellowship themselves from God's presence before they even leave fellowship of God's people because they've been cut off, because they are no longer *under government* within their own life. Because God's holy spirit is not *in* their life. They are not exercising *self-control* or control of self within their life because God's spirit is no longer there. And any self-control is done from human effort. So they may attend a Sabbath service based on *human reasoning*, *human effort*, self-control based on *human reasoning*. But, we are controlling self powered by God's holy spirit because it's God's *thinking in us*, and if God's thinking is *in us*, we are governing ourselves (by the power of God's holy spirit) and we are under *government*.

Well, that's what came out in Cincinnati. I gained so much from that because I saw a lot about myself as well.

Then we had the blessing to go down and to be with Johnny and Myrtle and the brethren down in the Georgia area. And that was a very exciting time, just like the other places were. Very moving, very exciting, and it was powered by God's holy spirit. I knew what God was doing at this particular time in the sense of it was me learning something about myself as well. And I know people were getting encouragement from having Chris and myself there, and Johnny and Myrtle, and Laura at different times, and Audra, but I also realized that much of this was about myself and what I could gain from this on a spiritual level.

I'm not being selfish there, but it's something that I saw within myself, that I learned more about my own calling and that I shouldn't devalue it (in California). In Cincinnati I came to see that it *is* about government, and it's a fearful thing to lose God's spirit. It's a fearful thing and I don't want that to happen to me. I want to be under government. And I came to see more deeply what that really means, about governing self and being under *Church government* for myself.

In Georgia, I believe what God gave then was about remembering about we are begotten sons of God and what that really means... what that really means. *To be a begotten son of God*, what that really means to be a begotten son of God. How incredible is that? To come to understand it, to be *begotten of God*, because that's what it's about. It's about the impregnation of God's holy spirit, a *begettal of God*, Yahweh Elohim's thinking *in the mind!* How incredible? And not to devalue that, that we are *begotten sons of God*, the *Creator* of the universe! That He's called us to this! And to remember that and not to forget it! And how glorious it is to carry the name "*a begotten son of God*," Yahweh Elohim.

Then I looked at a particular scripture that was something that jumped out at me more when I was actually reading that. And we didn't get much further past this. But it's a scripture about the future and it was talking about the ninth plague of darkness, which was symbolic of this world's system, this darkness, which is no self-control or any self-control, which is from the natural carnal mind of selfishness. And that the people were not called *into darkness*, they were called *into the light*. They came from the darkness *into the light*.

I want to close this particular sermon today looking at this Exodus 10:25-26. Because this came out more during the actual live sermon than it did during the recorded sermon, or the pre-recorded sermon. **Exodus 10:25-26—But Moses said, You must also give us sacrifices and burnt offerings,** which is the animals that Pharaoh had said they had to leave behind, **that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind.** Why? **For we must take some of them to serve the LORD our God, and even we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there.** Now, that aspect had not come out previously, about "until we arrive there." We do not know what is yet required of us over the next four years *until* we get there! Now, this is an exciting time that is ahead of us! We know aspects of what is ahead of us, and we've just been through part of a sermon series, which is *Man's Last Days, Part 1-4*, and there is another component of that which is yet future that we'll get into. But we don't know what is yet ahead of us *until* we arrive there. We have an outline, but to live it, to experience it, to be there at that exact time, for example, at the return of Jesus Christ, *we do not know what it's going to be like UNTIL we arrive there.*

So during this next four years we have to serve God, but we don't know exactly what's going to be required of us until we are there. Because we're all going to be serving God in different ways because different things are going to be required of us as individuals. Although we are in unity with God, each person will have a different role to fulfill during the next four years. We understand the main role of the ministry, the main role of all of us is to support the two witnesses. The main role is to support God's work, the work of God that He is doing. But we don't know the other things until we arrive there.

The final point which I did see was something that had been said to me, and I experienced it. I was aware, I was *made* aware of a particular sin in my life some two years ago. Although I was aware of it, I knew of it, I must say that I did not understand it to the depth that now I have come to see it on this last trip. Now I "see" it! What a horror! What a horror it is to see it! Because I was aware of it. Because one day I was advised in a loving way of a particular trait that is within my nature, and I thought I saw aspects of it and it was difficult to understand, to understand, to hear it. But to understand and really "see" it, I can honestly see now I didn't. And I don't know to the degree that I actually do now. But when I was on this trip, when I got home back to Australia, God revealed to me this particular aspect. Now I "see" it and I am horrified of it, because *now* I have to overcome it! Now I have to overcome it by the power of God's holy spirit and I have to work at *self-control*. I have to work at *controlling myself!*

Now, this is not going to be easy! Now, self-control, brethren, is not an easy thing, because it requires *work*, it requires *labor*, it requires *thinking*, and it requires *effort*! And when we are aware of certain things we have to learn to *control* ourselves powered by God's holy spirit. Our motive, our intent is to be more like God.

Now, God doesn't have to exercise *self-control* because God has no "self" in Himself. He has no natural carnal mind. God is Yahweh Elohim. His nature is love, therefore, that's the way He *is*. He doesn't have to exercise self-control like we do. Because we have "self," therefore, we have to control it. We have to exercise controlling of self. Well, now this particular sin that I have come to see, after two years of

thinking I saw it, now I have to *overcome it*. I have to overcome it. I've got to work at it. I've got to work at my *own* personal self-control. I've got to start to control myself more in that particular area. Well, brethren, I know that these principles can apply to each and every one of us, that we all have things in our life that we need to start controlling more. And in *Part 2*, God willing, we'll get into more detail about self-control.□